

The Watchtower

June 15, 1990

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



EARTH-WIDE SECURITY
HOW?

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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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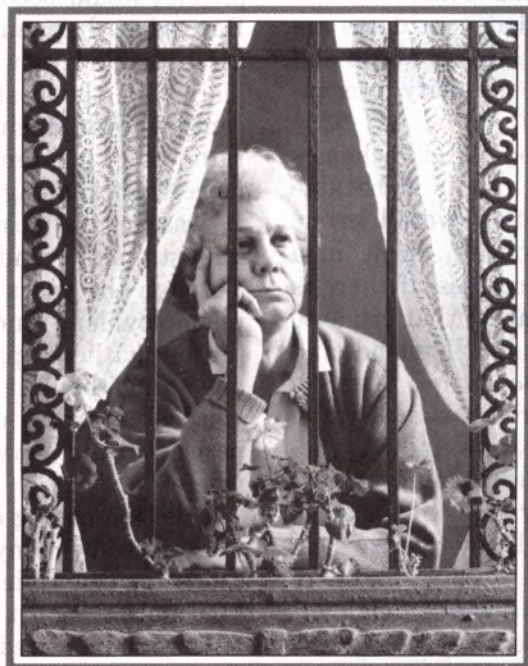
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The quest for SECURITY



SECURITY. World leaders negotiate for it. Religious leaders pray for it. Yet, to the ordinary man in the street, security seems an elusive dream. Take, for example, Ron, who was walking to work in South Africa's largest city, Johannesburg.

"There were five men around me, one with a knife at my throat and another with one at my back. They went through my pockets in seconds. I felt like a plucked chicken. People passing by simply ignored me." Ron did not resist and escaped unhurt.

For many, walking the streets of any large city is stressful. 'How can I avoid being mugged?' lurks in the back of their mind. They hurry to complete their shopping so they can return to the security of

home. But how safe is home? "The odds of your experiencing someone invading the sanctity of your home, seizing part or all of your

possessions and vanishing without a trace are increasing dramatically each year," states the book *Total Home Security*.

As a result, homeowners put up notices warning intruders that vicious dogs are on the premises or that these are monitored by an armed patrol. In many neighborhoods householders join forces in an effort to combat crime. "There are more than 60,000 schemes in Britain alone, involving 750,000 households," states the journal *Security Focus*. "With crime on the increase, it is a thing of the past for neighbours not to be on friendly terms," said an insurance broker in Africa.

Members of neighborhood-watch schemes look out for one another's welfare and report any suspicious activity to the police.* But a newsletter explained to a group member whose house was burglarized: "Unfortunately the scheme is not a guarantee that you will never be burgled again. No security scheme in existence can make that claim. . . . You must still ensure that your doors are locked, that you have a burglar alarm and have taken reasonable security precautions."

Though neighborhood-watch schemes have had some effect, it is debatable whether they reduce the overall crime rate. "Claimed reductions in crime in a small area are only 'successes' if there is little or no 'displacement' of that crime to adjoining areas," explain Shapland and Vagg in *Policing by the Public*. Thus, in some cities where neighborhood-watch groups have reported outstanding success, there has been a phenomenal increase in crime in other areas of the same cities where it is difficult to organize such schemes.

"There are some areas where neighborhood watch is not as effective," admits the secretary of a countrywide scheme involving over 20,000 members. She was referring to large sites "out of town where the neighbors cannot see each other and where patrolling does not work." For example, one couple moved from an American city to a 50-acre site near a small village. Within a few years, their house was broken into twice. The wife voiced the feelings of many rural dwellers: "I try to be normal, but I'm afraid. . . . I never feel safe." In countries plagued with political

conflict, rural dwellers face additional violence and are often pressured into taking sides.

No wonder many long for 'the good old days.' "Around the beginning of this century," states the book *The Growth of Crime*, "there was . . . a general belief that [crime] would become milder in quality." But what happened instead? Authors Sir Leon Radzinowicz and Joan King explain: "In the first twenty years of the century, even during the first world war, rates of crime remained fairly level, no more than keeping pace with population. It was in the post-war depression that a sustained trend became discernible. Through the years of economic upheaval, unemployment and another great war, [crime] gathered pace inexorably . . . The one thing that hits you in the eye when you look at crime on the world scale is a pervasive and persistent increase everywhere."

This "increasing of lawlessness," though unexpected by many, was actually foretold. The major calamities that have struck mankind since the start of the first world war in 1914 were indicated aforetime in the Bible. Jesus predicted that man's wicked system was drawing to an end: "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be food shortages and earthquakes in one place after another. And because of the increasing of lawlessness the love of the greater number will cool off." —Matthew 24:3, 7, 12; see also Luke 21:10, 11.

"As these things start to occur," Jesus added, "raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." Thus, you have reason for optimism. Man's quest for earth-wide security is about to be satisfied.—Luke 21:28-32.

* When urged to become members of protective patrols, Christians are pleased to have for guidance the principles at Isaiah 2:2-4 and John 17:16.—See *The Watchtower*, July 15, 1983, pages 23-5.

Earth-wide security HOW?

IMAGINE living on an earth free from danger and want. That is what earth-wide security means. Is it just a dream?

No. Consider the days of ancient King Solomon. Respecting his wise rule, the Bible states: "Judah and Israel continued to dwell in security, everyone under his own vine and under his own fig tree . . . all the days of Solomon."—1 Kings 4:25.

A Lesson From Solomon's Reign

Unusual Bible accounts, like the above, are passed off by skeptics as exaggeration. Thus, someone may ask: 'How can I be sure that Solomon's rule is not just myth?' Indirect archaeological evidence is presented following this article. Of course, the best evidence of the reality of Solomon's rule is that it is reported on in the infallible Word of the living God, Jehovah.—John 17:17; 1 Peter 1:24, 25.

The secret of the security enjoyed under Solomon's reign lay in applying Jehovah's righteous laws. Before the Israelites entered the Promised Land, God had said: 'If you continue walking in my statutes and keeping my commandments, the land will indeed give its yield.

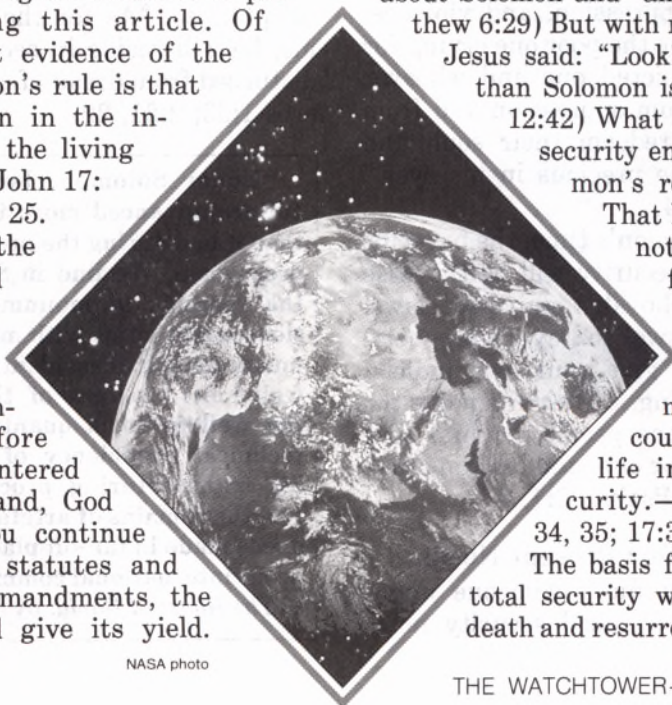
And you will indeed dwell in security in your land. And I will put peace in the land, and you will indeed lie down, with no one making you tremble.'—Leviticus 26:3-6.

Sadly, after Solomon's death the Israelites stopped obeying Jehovah; they turned to idolatry and filthy sex worship. As a result, they lost their security, and the land was invaded by Pharaoh Shishak of Egypt. (1 Kings 14:21-26) "You, for your part, have left me, and I, too, for my part, have left you to the hand of Shishak," Jehovah explained to an assembly of rulers in Jerusalem.—2 Chronicles 12:5.

Someone Greater Than Solomon

Jesus Christ confirmed the historic truth about Solomon and "all his glory." (Matthew 6:29) But with respect to himself, Jesus said: "Look! something more than Solomon is here." (Matthew 12:42) What did he mean? The security enjoyed under Solomon's reign was limited. That human king could not free his subjects from sickness, sin, and death. Jesus, however, taught sinful men how they could attain perfect life in everlasting security.—John 10:10; 13:34, 35; 17:3.

The basis for attaining such total security was laid by Jesus' death and resurrection. (John 3:16;



NASA photo

1 Corinthians 15:20) From God's right hand in heaven, he will soon bring earth-wide security to all who submit to his rule. King David of old was inspired to write about this in the poetic 72nd Psalm. These words had a partial fulfillment during the reign of David's son, hence its superscription, "Regarding Solomon." Yet, the main fulfillment concerns the Kingdom rule of the Greater Solomon, Jesus Christ.

According to Psalm 72:7, 8, the security to be enjoyed under Christ's rule will be both global and everlasting. "In his days the righteous one will sprout, and *the abundance of peace until the moon is no more*. And he will have subjects from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth."—Compare Zechariah 9:9, 10.

Subjects of Christ's rule will also enjoy freedom from want, for Psalm 72:16 assures us: "There will come to be plenty of grain on the earth; on the top of the mountains there will be an overflow." Naturally, there will also be freedom from discrimination, oppression, and violence. "For he will deliver the poor one crying for help, also the afflicted one and whoever has no helper. From oppression and from violence he will redeem their soul, and their blood will be precious in his eyes."—Psalm 72:12, 14.

As in King Solomon's time, the basis for such earth-wide security will be the wise application of Jehovah's universal laws. This will be in answer to David's prophetic request: "O God, give your own judicial decisions to the king . . . Let him judge the afflicted ones of the people, let him save the sons of the poor one, and let him crush the defrauder."—Psalm 72:1, 4.

What About Our Present Needs?

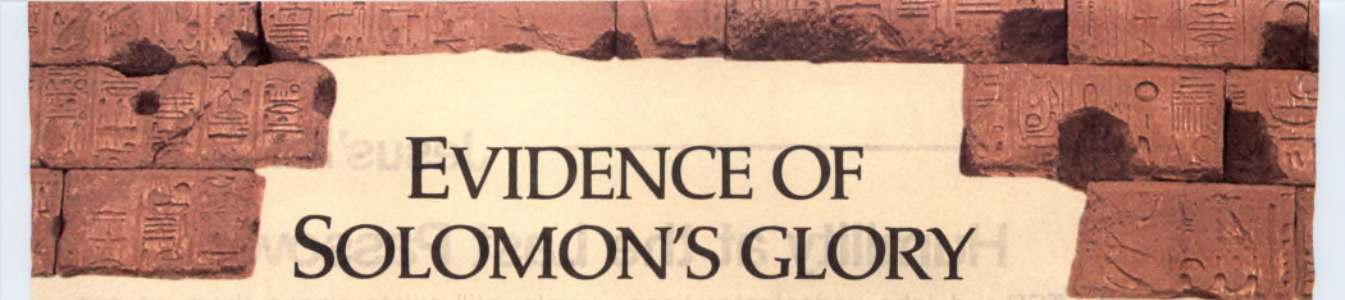
'That's all very nice,' someone might say, 'but I need physical security now.'

True, Christians are still subject to the insecure conditions plaguing mankind—crime, disease, natural disasters, old age, and death. Experience around the globe has shown, however, that with Bible knowledge, they are better able to cope. (Proverbs 15:1; 22:3) Also, they have the satisfaction of a valid hope. A new Bible student from a crime-ridden suburb of Johannesburg, South Africa, explained one way in which the Scriptures helped him: "Now I know that crime is not permanent; it's only temporary."

Why, there is even hope for those who have died as victims of criminal violence. "I am the resurrection and the life," Jesus promised, and then he added: "He that exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life."—John 11:25.

To enjoy such a feeling of security, you need strong faith, which comes from studying Jehovah's Word. By daily setting aside time to study the Bible, you can experience the fulfillment of this wonderful promise: "As for the one listening to me, he will reside in security and be undisturbed from dread of calamity."—Proverbs 1:33; 2:21, 22.

"Under Solomon, Israelite material culture advanced more in three decades than it had during the preceding two hundred years. We find in Solomonic strata the remains of monumental constructions, great cities with massive walls, the mushrooming of residential quarters with well-built clusters of the dwellings of the well-to-do, a quantum jump in the technical proficiency of the potter and his manufacturing processes. We find, too, the remains of artefacts representing goods made in far-off places, signs of vigorous international commerce and trade."
—*The House of David*, by Jerry M. Landay.



EVIDENCE OF SOLOMON'S GLORY

ACCORDING to Bible chronology, King Solomon ruled Israel from 1037 B.C.E. to 998 B.C.E. Interestingly, the book *The Archaeology of the Land of Israel*, by Professor Yohanan Aharoni, reveals how a revolutionary advance in Israelite civilization took place "about 1000 B.C.E."

One example given by Aharoni is the evidence of solid city walls built with large stones "cut into oblong, rectangular blocks, fitted together with precision." In contrast, in countries neighboring Israel, parts of the city walls "were made of brick and wood."

Furthermore, cities rebuilt at about the time of Solomon give evidence of careful planning, with neat lines of houses and carefully laid-out streets. Aharoni analyzes the ruins of "four towns in Judah built according to the same fundamental plan . . . Beer-sheba, Tell Beit Mirsim, Beth-shemesh, and Mizpah." How this contrasts with another great center of civilization—the earlier Mesopotamian city of Ur! Respecting it, Sir Leonard Woolley wrote: "There had been no attempt at town-planning . . . The unpaved streets, many of them blind alleys . . . formed a maze in which it would have been easy to lose one's way."

Aharoni also comments on the improvement in household utensils about the time of Solomon's reign. "The change in material culture . . . is discernible not only in luxury items but also especially in ceramics . . . The quality of the pottery and its firing improved beyond all recognition . . .

There suddenly appeared a rich repertoire of various types of vessels."

The most glorious feature of Solomon's reign was the magnificent temple, the palace, and the government buildings in Jerusalem. A vast quantity of gold was used to decorate these structures. (1 Kings 7:47-51; 10:14-22) Five years after Solomon's death, Pharaoh Shishak of Egypt came and stripped Jerusalem of its treasure.—1 Kings 14:25, 26.

In both Egypt and Palestine, archaeological inscriptions confirm that Shishak indeed conquered Israel. In fact, many historians acknowledge that Shishak's plunder of Jerusalem revived a weak Egyptian economy and enabled Shishak to finance the massive enlargement of an Egyptian temple on which he recorded his conquest, as seen on this page. Shishak died soon afterward, and another inscription records that his son donated about 200 tons of gold and silver to the temples of Egypt. The inscription does not reveal the source of this wealth, but archaeologist Alan Millard, in his book *Treasures From Bible Times*, suggests that "much of it was the gold which Shishak carried away from Solomon's Temple and palace in Jerusalem."

No wonder that even an atheistic source acknowledges the reality of Solomon's glorious reign! *Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia* (Great Soviet Encyclopedia), under its entry "Solomon," calls him "ruler of the Israelite-Judean kingdom," adding that he ruled during "the kingdom's zenith."



Humility at the Last Passover

PETER and John, under instructions from Jesus, have already arrived in Jerusalem to make preparations for the Passover. Jesus, apparently along with the ten other apostles, arrives later in the afternoon. The sun is sinking on the horizon as Jesus and his party descend the Mount of Olives and cross the Kidron Valley. This is Jesus' last daytime view of the city till after his resurrection.

Soon Jesus and his party arrive in the city and make their way to the home where they will celebrate the Passover. They climb the stairs to the large upper room, where they find all preparations made for their private celebration of the Passover. Jesus has looked forward to this occasion, as he says: "I have greatly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer."

Traditionally, four cups of wine are drunk by Passover participants. After accepting what is evidently the third cup, Jesus gives thanks and says: "Take this and pass it from one to the other among yourselves; for I tell you, From now on I will not drink again from the product of the vine until the kingdom of God arrives."

Sometime during the course of the meal, Jesus gets up, lays aside his outer garments, takes a towel, and fills a basin with water. Ordinarily, a host would see to it that a guest's feet were washed. But since on this occasion no host is present, Jesus cares for this personal service. Any one of the apostles could have seized the opportunity to do it; yet, apparently because some

rivalry still exists among them, no one does. Now they are embarrassed as Jesus begins to wash their feet.

When Jesus comes to him, Peter protests: "You will certainly never wash my feet."

"Unless I wash you, you have no part with me," says Jesus.

"Lord," Peter responds, "not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."

"He that has bathed," Jesus answers, "does not need to have more than his feet washed, but is wholly clean. And you men are clean, but not all." He says this because he knows that Judas Iscariot is planning to betray him.



When Jesus has washed the feet of all 12, including the feet of his betrayer, Judas, he puts his outer garments on and reclines at the table again. Then he asks: "Do you know what I have done to you? You address me, 'Teacher,' and, 'Lord,' and you speak rightly, for I am such. Therefore, if I, although Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash the feet of one another. For I set the pattern for you, that, just as I did to you, you should do also. Most truly I say to you, A slave is not greater than his master, nor is one that is sent forth greater than the one that sent him. If you know these things, happy you are if you do them."

What a beautiful lesson in humble service! The apostles should not be seeking

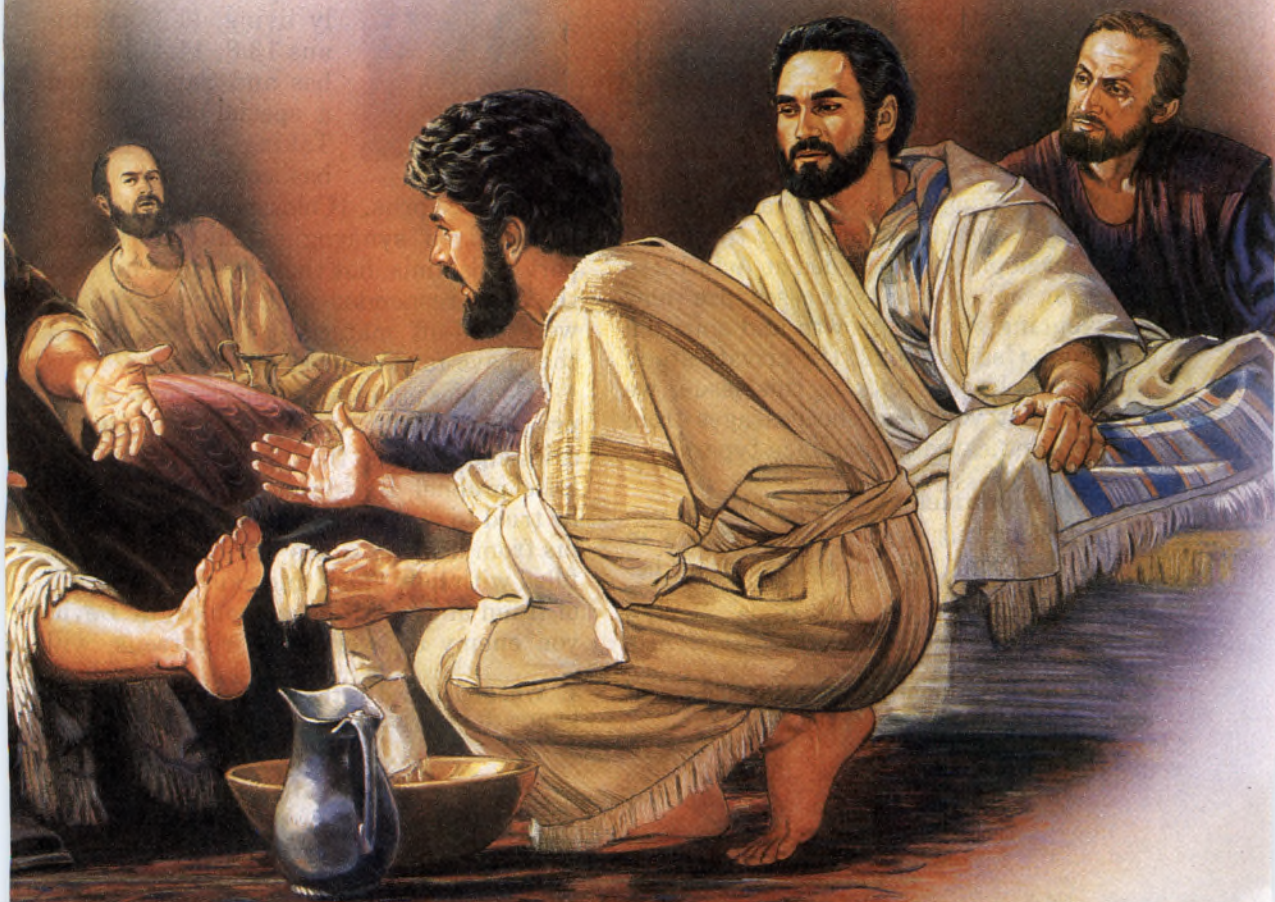
the first place, thinking that they are so important that others should always serve them. They need to follow the pattern set by Jesus. This is not one of ritual foot washing. No, but it is one of willingness to serve without partiality, no matter how menial or unpleasant the task may be. **Matthew 26:20, 21; Mark 14: 17, 18; Luke 22:14-18; 7:44; John 13: 1-17.**

♦ What is unique about Jesus' view of Jerusalem as he enters to celebrate the Passover?

♦ During the Passover, evidently what cup does Jesus have passed to the 12 apostles after saying a blessing?

♦ What personal service was customarily provided guests when Jesus was on earth, and why was it not provided during the Passover celebrated by Jesus and the apostles?

♦ What was Jesus' purpose in performing the menial service of washing his apostles' feet?



JEHOVAH'S PEOPLE MADE FIRM IN THE FAITH

"The congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day."—ACTS 16:5.

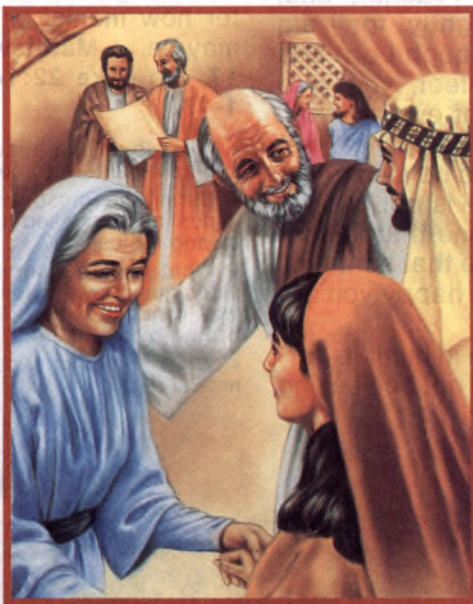
JEHOVAH GOD used Saul of Tarsus as "a chosen vessel." As the apostle Paul, he 'suffered many things.' But through his work and that of others, Jehovah's organization enjoyed unity and wonderful expansion.—Acts 9:15, 16.

²Gentiles were becoming Christians in growing numbers, and a vital meeting of the governing body did much to promote unity among God's people and make them firm in the faith. It will be highly beneficial to consider these and other developments recorded at Acts 13:1-16:5, for Jehovah's Witnesses are now experiencing similar growth and spiritual blessings. (Isaiah 60:22) (In private study of the articles on Acts in this issue, we suggest that you read the passages from the book indicated by boldface type.)

Missionaries Go Into Action

³Men sent out by the congregation in Antioch, Syria, helped believers to be-

1. How did God use the apostle Paul?
2. Why will it be beneficial to consider Acts 13:1-16:5?
3. What work was done by "prophets and teachers" at Antioch?



come firm in the faith. (13:1-5) In Antioch were the "prophets and teachers" Barnabas, Symeon (Niger), Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen, and Saul of Tarsus. Prophets explained God's Word and foretold events, while teachers gave instruction in the Scriptures and in godly living. (1 Corinthians 13:8; 14:4) Barnabas and Saul received a special assignment. Taking along Barnabas' cousin Mark, they

went to Cyprus. (Colossians 4:10) They preached in synagogues in the eastern port of Salamis, but there is no record that the Jews responded well. Since such ones were well-off materially, what need did they have for the Messiah?

⁴God blessed other witness work in Cyprus. (13:6-12) At Paphos, the missionaries encountered the Jewish sorcerer and false prophet Bar-Jesus (Elymas). When he tried to prevent Proconsul Sergius Paulus from hearing God's word, Saul became filled with holy spirit and said: 'O man full of fraud and villainy, you son of the Devil, you enemy of everything righteous, will

4. What happened as the missionaries continued to preach in Cyprus?

you not quit distorting the right ways of Jehovah?" At that, God's hand of punishment blinded Elymas for a time, and Sergius Paulus "became a believer, as he was astounded at the teaching of Jehovah."

⁵ From Cyprus, the party sailed to the city of Perga in Asia Minor. Paul and Barnabas then went northward through mountain passes, likely 'in dangers from rivers and highwaymen,' to Antioch, Pisidia. (2 Corinthians 11:25, 26) There Paul spoke in the synagogue. (13:13-41) He reviewed God's dealings with Israel and identified David's descendant Jesus as the Savior. Though Jewish rulers had demanded Jesus' death, the promise to their forefathers was fulfilled when God resurrected him. (Psalm 2:7; 16:10; Isaiah 55:3) Paul warned his hearers not to scorn God's gift of salvation through Christ. —Habakkuk 1:5, *Septuagint*.

⁶ Paul's speech aroused interest, as do public talks given by Jehovah's Witnesses today. (13:42-52) The next Sabbath nearly all the city gathered to hear Jehovah's word, and this filled the Jews with jealousy. Why, in just one week, the missionaries had apparently converted more Gentiles than those Jews had all their life! Since the Jews blasphemously contradicted Paul, it was time for spiritual light to shine elsewhere, and they were told: 'Since you are thrusting God's word away and do not judge yourselves worthy of everlasting life, we turn to the nations.' —Isaiah 49:6.

⁷ Now the Gentiles began to rejoice, and all those rightly disposed for everlasting life became believers. As the word of Jehovah was carried throughout the coun-

try, however, the Jews stirred up reputable women (likely to pressure their husbands or others) and principal men to persecute Paul and Barnabas and throw them outside their boundaries. But that did not stop the missionaries. They simply "shook the dust off their feet against them" and went to Iconium (modern Konya), a major city in the Roman province of Galatia. (Luke 9:5; 10:11) Well, what about the disciples left in Pisidian Antioch? Having been made firm in the faith, they "continued to be filled with joy and holy spirit." This helps us to see that opposition need not hamper spiritual progress.

Firm in the Faith Despite Persecution

⁸ Paul and Barnabas themselves proved firm in the faith despite persecution. (14:1-7) In response to their witnessing in the synagogue in Iconium, many Jews and Greeks became believers. When unbelieving Jews incited the Gentiles against the new believers, the two laborers spoke boldly by God's authority, and he showed his approval by empowering them to perform signs. This split the mob, some being for the Jews and others for the apostles (ones sent forth). The apostles were not cowards, but when they learned of a plot to stone them, they wisely left to preach in Lycaonia, a region of Asia Minor in southern Galatia. By being prudent, we too can often remain active in the ministry despite opposition. —Matthew 10:23.

⁹ The Lycaonian city of Lystra next got a witness. (14:8-18) There Paul cured a man lame from birth. Not realizing that Jehovah was responsible for the miracle,

5, 6. (a) When Paul spoke in the synagogue at Pisidian Antioch, what did he say about Jesus?

(b) What effect did Paul's talk have?

7. How did Paul and Barnabas react to persecution?

8. What happened as a result of successful witnessing in Iconium?

9, 10. (a) How did inhabitants of Lystra react to the curing of a lame man? (b) How did Paul and Barnabas react at Lystra?

the crowds cried out: "The gods have become like humans and have come down to us!" As this was said in the Lycaonian tongue, Barnabas and Paul did not know what was occurring. Since Paul took the lead in speaking, the people viewed him as Hermes (the eloquent messenger of the gods) and thought that Barnabas was Zeus, the chief Greek god.

¹⁰ The priest of Zeus even brought bulls and garlands in order to offer sacrifices to Paul and Barnabas. Likely speaking commonly understood Greek or using an interpreter, the visitors quickly explained that they also were humans with infirmities and that they were declaring the good news so that people would turn from "these vain things" (lifeless gods, or idols) to the living God. (1 Kings 16:13; Psalm 115:3-9; 146:6) Yes, God formerly allowed the nations (but not the Hebrews) to go their own way, though he did not leave himself without witness to his existence and goodness 'in giving them rains and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts to the full with food and good cheer.' (Psalm 147:8) Despite such reasoning, Barnabas and Paul scarcely restrained the crowds from sacrificing to them. Yet, the missionaries did not accept homage as gods, nor did they use such authority to found Christianity in that area. A fine example, especially if we are inclined to crave adulation for what Jehovah allows us to accomplish in his service!

¹¹ Suddenly, persecution reared its ugly head. (14:19-28) How so? Persuaded by Jews from Pisidian Antioch and Iconium, the crowds stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. (2 Corinthians 11:24, 25) But when the disciples surrounded him, he rose up and entered Lystra unnoticed, possibly under

cover of darkness. The next day, he and Barnabas went to Derbe, where quite a few became disciples. Upon revisiting Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, the missionaries strengthened the disciples, encouraged them to remain in the faith, and said: "We must enter into the kingdom of God through many tribulations." As Christians, we also expect to undergo tribulations and should not try to escape them by compromising our faith. (2 Timothy 3:12) At that time, elders were appointed in congregations to which Paul's letter to the Galatians was written.

¹² Going through Pisidia, Paul and Barnabas spoke the word in Perga, a prominent city of Pamphylia. In time, they returned to Antioch, Syria. Paul's first journey now over, the two missionaries informed the congregation of "the many things God had done by means of them, and that he had opened to the nations the door to faith." Some time was spent with the disciples in Antioch, and this undoubtedly did much to make them firm in the faith. Visits by traveling overseers today have similar spiritual effects.

A Vital Question Is Resolved

¹³ Firmness in the faith called for unity of thought. (1 Corinthians 1:10) If Christianity was not to be split into Hebrew and non-Jewish factions, the governing body needed to decide whether Gentiles streaming into God's organization had to keep the Mosaic Law and get circumcised. (15:1-5) Certain men from Judea had already traveled to Syrian Antioch and had begun teaching Gentile believers there that unless they got circumcised, they could not be saved. (Exodus 12:48) Hence, Paul, Barnabas, and others were

12. When Paul's first missionary journey ended, what did the two missionaries do?

13. If Christianity was not to be split into Hebrew and non-Jewish factions, what was needed?

sent to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. Even there, believers who had once been legalistically minded Pharisees insisted that Gentiles had to get circumcised and observe the Law.

¹⁴ A conference was held to ascertain God's will. (15:6-11) Yes, disputing took place, but there was no strife as men of strong convictions expressed themselves—a fine example for elders today! In time Peter said: 'God chose that through my mouth Gentiles [such as Cornelius] should hear the good news and believe. He bore witness by giving them holy spirit and made no distinction between us and them. [Acts 10:44-47] So why are you testing God by imposing a yoke [an obligation to keep the Law] upon their neck that neither we nor our forefathers could bear? We [Jews according to the flesh] trust to get saved through the undeserved kindness of the Lord Jesus in the same way as those people.' God's acceptance of uncircumcised Gentiles showed that circumcision and keeping the Law were not required for salvation.—Galatians 5:1.

¹⁵ The congregation became silent when Peter concluded, but more was to be said. (15:12-21) Barnabas and Paul told about the signs God performed through them among the Gentiles. Then the chairman, Jesus' half brother James, said: 'Symeon [Peter's Hebrew name] has related how God turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name.' James indicated that the foretold rebuilding of "the booth of David" (reestablishment of kingship in David's line) was being fulfilled in the gathering of Jesus'

14. (a) Though disputing took place at the conference in Jerusalem, what good example was set? (b) What was the essence of Peter's reasoning on that occasion?

15. What basic points did James make, and what did he suggest writing to Gentile Christians?

disciples (Kingdom heirs) from among both Jews and Gentiles. (Amos 9:11, 12, *Septuagint*; Romans 8:17) Since God purposed this, the disciples should accept it. James advised writing Gentile Christians to abstain from (1) things polluted by idols, (2) fornication, and (3) blood and what is strangled. These prohibitions were in Moses' writings that were read in synagogues every Sabbath day.—Genesis 9:3, 4; 12:15-17; 35:2, 4.

¹⁶ The governing body now sent a letter to Gentile Christians in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. (15:22-35) Holy spirit and the letter writers called for abstinence from things sacrificed to idols; blood (regularly consumed by some people); things strangled without draining their blood (many pagans viewing such meat as a delicacy); and fornication (Greek, *pornei'a*, denoting illicit sex relations outside of Scriptural marriage). By such abstinence, they would prosper spiritually, even as Jehovah's Witnesses now do because they comply with "these necessary things." The words "Good health to you!" amounted to saying "Farewell," and it should not be concluded that these requirements primarily had to do with health measures. When the letter was read in Antioch, the congregation rejoiced over the encouragement it provided. At that time, God's people in Antioch were also made firm in the faith by the encouraging words of Paul, Silas, Barnabas, and others. May we too seek ways to encourage and upbuild fellow believers.

Second Missionary Tour Begins

¹⁷ A problem arose when a second

16. On what three points does the letter of the first-century governing body give guidance down to this day?

17. (a) What problem arose when a second missionary tour was proposed? (b) How did Paul and Barnabas handle their dispute?

missionary journey was proposed. (15:36-41) Paul suggested that he and Barnabas revisit the congregations in Cyprus and Asia Minor. Barnabas agreed but wanted to take along his cousin Mark. Paul disagreed because Mark had abandoned them in Pamphylia. At that, “a sharp burst of anger” occurred. But neither Paul nor Barnabas sought personal vindication by trying to involve other elders or the governing body in their private affair. What a fine example!

¹⁸ This dispute caused a separation, however. Barnabas took Mark with him to Cyprus. Paul, with Silas as his associate, “went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the congregations.” Barnabas may have been influenced by family ties, but he should have acknowledged Paul’s apostleship and selection as “a chosen vessel.” (Acts 9:15) And what about us? This incident should impress us with the need to recognize theocratic authority and to co-operate fully with “the faithful and discreet slave”—Matthew 24:45-47.

Progress in Peace

¹⁹ This dispute was not allowed to affect the peace of the congregation. God’s people continued to be made firm in the faith. (16:1-5) Paul and Silas went to Derbe and on to Lystra. There lived Timothy, a son of the Jewish believer Eunice and her unbelieving Greek husband. Timothy was young, for even 12 to 15 years later, he was still told: “Let no man ever look down on your youth.” (1 Timothy 4:12) Since he “was well reported on by the brothers in Lystra and [some 18 miles away in] Iconium,” he was well-known for his fine min-

18. What resulted from the separation of Paul and Barnabas, and how can we benefit from this incident?

19. What example do present-day Christian youths have in Timothy?

istry and godly qualities. Christian youths today should seek Jehovah’s help to build up a similar reputation. Paul circumcised Timothy because they would be going to the homes and synagogues of Jews who knew that Timothy’s father was a Gentile, and the apostle wanted nothing to bar access to Jewish men and women who needed to learn about the Messiah. Without violating Bible principles, Jehovah’s Witnesses today also do what they can to make the good news acceptable to all sorts of people.—1 Corinthians 9:19-23.

²⁰ With Timothy as an attendant, Paul and Silas delivered to the disciples for observance the decrees of the governing body. And what resulted? Apparently referring to Syria, Cilicia, and Galatia, Luke wrote: “The congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day.” Yes, compliance with the governing body’s letter resulted in unity and spiritual prosperity. What a fine example for our critical times, when Jehovah’s people need to remain unified and firm in the faith!

20. Compliance with the first-century governing body’s letter had what effect, and how do you think this should affect us?

How Would You Answer?

- ☐ How did Paul and Barnabas react to persecution?
- ☐ What can be learned from the statement: “We must enter into the kingdom of God through many tribulations”?
- ☐ What counsel do we derive from the three points in the letter sent out by the first-century governing body?
- ☐ How do factors that made Jehovah’s first-century witnesses firm in the faith apply to us today?

JEHOVAH'S WORD PREVAILS!

"In a mighty way the word of Jehovah kept growing and prevailing."

—ACTS 19:20.

JEHOVAH was opening a door to activity. Especially would Paul, "an apostle to the nations," spearhead that work. (Romans 11:13) Indeed, our continuing study of Acts of Apostles finds him engaged in thrilling missionary travels.—Acts 16:6-19:41.

² Paul was also a divinely inspired penman. From about 50 C.E. to 56 C.E., he wrote 1 and 2 Thessalonians from Corinth, Galatians from that city or from Syrian Antioch, 1 Corinthians from Ephesus, 2 Corinthians from Macedonia, and Romans from Corinth. And as God blessed Paul's ministry and that of others, "in a mighty way the word of Jehovah kept growing and prevailing."—Acts 19:20.

From Asia to Europe

³ Paul and his associates set a fine example in accepting direction by holy spirit—

1. What will be covered in this study of the Bible book Acts of Apostles?

2. (a) How did the apostle Paul serve as a divinely inspired penman from about 50 C.E. to 56 C.E.? (b) What happened as God blessed Paul's ministry and that of others?

3. How did Paul and his companions set a fine example in connection with direction by holy spirit?



it. (16:6-10) Perhaps by audible revelations, dreams, or visions, the spirit prevented them from preaching in the district of Asia and the province of Bithynia, later reached with the good news. (Acts 18:18-21; 1 Peter 1:1, 2) Why did the spirit block earlier entry? Laborers were few, and the spirit was guiding them into more fruitful fields in Europe. So today, if the way is blocked into one territory, Jeho-

vah's Witnesses preach elsewhere, sure that God's spirit will lead them to sheep-like ones.

⁴ Paul and his associates then 'passed by' Mysia, a region in Asia Minor, as a missionary field. In a vision, however, Paul saw a Macedonian man pleading for help. So the missionaries promptly went to Macedonia, a region of the Balkan Peninsula. Similarly, many Witnesses are directed by holy spirit to serve now where the need for Kingdom proclaimers is great.

⁵ Jehovah's word prevailed in Macedonia. (16:11-15) Philippi, a colony

4. What was the response to Paul's vision of a Macedonian man pleading for help?

5. (a) Why can it be said that Jehovah's word prevailed in Philippi? (b) In what way are many present-day Witnesses like Lydia?

inhabited mostly by Roman citizens, apparently had few Jews and no synagogue. So the brothers went to "a place of prayer" beside a river outside the city. Among those found there was Lydia, possibly a Jewish proselyte from Thyatira, a city in Asia Minor known for its dyeing industry. She sold purple dye or fabrics and clothes colored with it. After Lydia and her household got baptized, she offered hospitality so earnestly that Luke wrote: "She just made us come." We are grateful for sisters of that kind today.

A Jailer Becomes a Believer

⁶ Satan must have been enraged over spiritual developments in Philippi, for demonic activity there led to the imprisonment of Paul and Silas. (16:16-24) For days they were followed by a girl who had "a demon of divination" (literally, "a spirit of python"). The demon may have impersonated Pythian Apollo, a god that supposedly killed a serpent named *py'thon*. The girl brought her masters much gain by practicing the art of prediction. Why, she may have told farmers when to plant, maidens when to marry, and miners where

to look for gold! She kept following the brothers and crying out: "These men are slaves of the Most High God, who are publishing to you the way of salvation." The demon may have made her say this to make it seem that her predictions were divinely inspired, but demons have no right to make proclamations about Jehovah and his provision for salvation. When Paul got tired of the harassment, he expelled the demon in Jesus' name. Their business ruined, the girl's masters dragged Paul and Silas into the marketplace, where they were beaten with rods. (2 Corinthians 11:25) Then they were jailed and their feet put in stocks. Such devices could be adjusted so as to force one's legs apart, causing great pain.

⁷ This imprisonment led to blessings for the jailer and his family. (16:25-40) About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and praising God in song, sure that he was with them. (Psalm 42:8) Suddenly, an earthquake threw open the doors and loosened all bonds as fetters became detached

7. For whom and how did the imprisonment of Paul and Silas at Philippi lead to blessings?

6. How did demon activity lead to the imprisonment of Paul and Silas at Philippi?

Jehovah's word prevailed in

1. Philippi
2. and 3. Athens
4. and 6. Ephesus
5. Rome



1



2

from beams or walls. The jailer was fearful of suffering the death penalty because his prisoners had escaped. He was about to commit suicide when Paul called out: "Do not hurt yourself, for we are all here!" Bringing Paul and Silas outside, the jailer asked how he could get saved. "Believe on the Lord Jesus," was the reply. Upon hearing the word of Jehovah, "he and his were baptized without delay." What joy that brought about!

⁸ The next day, civil magistrates sent word to release Paul and Silas. But Paul said: "They flogged us uncondemned, men who are Romans, and threw us into prison. Are they throwing us out secretly? Let them come and bring us out." If the magistrates acknowledged their error publicly, they might be reluctant to beat and imprison other Christians. Unable to expel

8. What action was taken by Philippi's civil magistrates, and what might be achieved if they acknowledged their error publicly?

Roman citizens, the magistrates came and asked the brothers to leave, but these did so only after encouraging fellow believers. Such interest now moves members of the Governing Body and other traveling representatives to visit and encourage God's people earth wide.

Jehovah's Word Prevails in Thessalonica and Beroea

⁹ God's word next prevailed in Thessalonica, Macedonia's capital and main seaport. (17:1-9) There Paul reasoned with Jews, "explaining and proving" that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead. (Paul did so by comparing prophecies with events in fulfillment, as Jehovah's Witnesses do.) Thus, some Jews, many proselytes, and others became believers. When some jealous Jews formed a mob but were unable to find Paul and Silas, they took Jason and other brothers to the city

9. By what method, still used by Jehovah's Witnesses, did Paul 'explain and prove' that the Messiah had to suffer and rise from the dead?

Photo No. 4: Manley Studios



rulers and accused them of sedition, a false charge still leveled against Jehovah's people. However, the brothers were released after giving "sufficient security."

¹⁰ Paul and Silas next went to the city of Beroea. (17:10-15) There the Jews 'carefully examined' the Scriptures, as Jehovah's Witnesses encourage people to do today. Those Beroeans did not doubt Paul but did research to prove that Jesus was the Messiah. The result? Many Jews and some Greeks (perhaps proselytes) became believers. When Jews from Thessalonica agitated the masses, the brothers escorted Paul to the coast, where some of his party may have boarded a ship for Piraeus (modern-day Piræus), the port city of Athens.

Jehovah's Word Prevails in Athens

¹¹ A bold witness was given in Athens. (17:16-21) Because of Paul's words about Jesus and the resurrection, philosophers spoke with him controversially. Some were Epicureans, who emphasized pleasure. Others were Stoics, stressing self-discipline. 'What would this chatterer like to say?' asked some. "Chatterer" (literally, "seedpicker") implied that Paul was like a bird picking up seeds and doling out bits of knowledge but lacking wisdom. Others said: "He seems to be a publisher of foreign deities." This was serious, for Socrates lost his life on such a charge. Soon Paul was taken to the Areopagus (Mars' Hill), possibly where the open-air supreme court met near the Acropolis.

¹² Paul's talk on the Areopagus was an

10. In what sense did Jews in Beroea 'carefully examine' the Scriptures?

11. (a) How did Paul witness boldly in Athens, but who spoke with him controversially? (b) What did some imply when they spoke of Paul as a "chatterer"?

12. (a) What aspects of good public speaking are evident in Paul's talk on the Areopagus? (b) What points did Paul make regarding God, and with what results?

excellent example of one having an effective introduction, logical development, and convincing argument—as taught in the Theocratic Ministry School of Jehovah's Witnesses. (17:22-34) He said that the Athenians were more religious than others. Why, they even had an altar "To an Unknown God," perhaps to avoid slighting any deity! Paul spoke of the Creator who "made out of one man every nation of men" and "decreed the appointed times and the set limits of the dwelling of men," such as when to uproot the Canaanites. (Genesis 15:13-21; Daniel 2:21; 7:12) This God can be found, "for we are also his progeny," said Paul, alluding to man's creation by Jehovah and quoting their poets Aratus and Cleanthes. As God's progeny, we should not think the perfect Creator is like an idol made by imperfect man. God once overlooked such ignorance but was now telling mankind to repent, for he had set a day to judge people by his Appointee. Since Paul had been "declaring the good news of Jesus," his audience knew he meant that Christ would be that Judge. (Acts 17:18; John 5:22, 30) Talk of repentance irked the Epicureans, and Greek philosophers could accept remarks about immortality but not death and resurrection. Apparently, like many who now shrug off the good news, some said: 'We will hear you another time.' But the judge Dionysius and others became believers.

God's Word Prevails in Corinth

¹³ Paul went on to Corinth, capital of the province of Achaia. (18:1-11) There he found Aquila and Priscilla, who had come there when Claudius Caesar ordered Jews who were not Roman citizens to leave Rome. To sustain himself in the ministry, Paul made tents with this Christian couple. (1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Corinthians

13. How did Paul sustain himself in the ministry, and what modern-day parallel do we find?

11:9) Cutting and sewing stiff goat-hair cloth was hard work. Similarly, Jehovah's Witnesses provide for their material needs through secular work, but their vocation is the ministry.

¹⁴ Corinth's Jews kept speaking abusively as Paul proclaimed Jesus' Messiahship. So he shook out his garments to disclaim responsibility toward them and began to hold meetings in the house of Titius Justus, likely a Roman. Many (including the synagogue's former presiding officer Crispus and his household) became baptized believers. If Jewish antagonism made Paul wonder about remaining in Corinth, doubt vanished when the Lord told him in vision: 'Have no fear. Keep on speaking, for I am with you and no man will do you injury. I have many people in this city.' So Paul kept on teaching the word of God there, altogether for a year and six months. Though Jehovah's people do not now receive visions, both prayer and direction by holy spirit help them to make similar wise decisions affecting Kingdom interests.

¹⁵ Jews led Paul to Proconsul Junius Gallio. (18:12-17) They implied that Paul was proselytizing illegally—a false charge Greek clerics now make against Jehovah's Witnesses. Gallio was aware that Paul was not guilty of villainy and that Jews cared little about the welfare of Rome and its law, so he drove them away. When onlookers beat Sosthenes, the synagogue's new presiding officer, Gallio did not interfere, perhaps thinking that the apparent leader of mob action against Paul was getting what he deserved.

¹⁶ Paul sailed from the Aegean port of

14. (a) Faced with persistent opposition by Jews in Corinth, what did Paul do? (b) How was Paul assured that he should remain in Corinth, but how are Jehovah's people directed today?

15. What happened when Paul was taken before Proconsul Gallio?

16. Why was it acceptable for Paul to have his hair clipped short in connection with a vow?

Cenchreae to Ephesus, a city in Asia Minor. (18:18-22) Before that trip 'he had the hair of his head clipped short, for he had a vow.' It is not said whether Paul made the vow before becoming Jesus' follower or if this was the start or the end of the vowed period. Christians are not under the Law, but it was God-given and holy, and there was nothing sinful about such a vow. (Romans 6:14; 7:6, 12; Galatians 5:18) In Ephesus, Paul reasoned with the Jews, promising to return if God was willing. (That promise was fulfilled later.) His return to Syrian Antioch ended his second missionary tour.

Jehovah's Word Prevails in Ephesus

¹⁷ Paul soon began his third missionary trip (c. 52-56 C.E.). (18:23-19:7) Meanwhile in Ephesus, Apollos taught about Jesus but knew only of John's baptism in symbol of repentance for sins against the Law covenant. Priscilla and Aquila "expounded the way of God more correctly to him," likely explaining that being baptized as Jesus was included a person's undergoing water immersion and receiving the outpoured holy spirit. After baptism with holy spirit occurred at Pentecost 33 C.E., anyone baptized with John's baptism needed to be rebaptized in Jesus' name. (Matthew 3:11, 16; Acts 2:38) Later in Ephesus, about 12 Jewish men who had undergone John's baptism "got baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus" in the only rebaptism recorded in the Scriptures. When Paul laid his hands upon them, they received holy spirit and two miraculous indications of heavenly acceptance—speaking with tongues and prophesying.

¹⁸ Paul was certainly kept busy in

17. Regarding baptism, what instruction did Apollos and some others need?

18. Where did Paul witness while in Ephesus, and with what results?

Ephesus, a city of some 300,000 residents. (19:8-10) Its temple of the goddess Artemis was one of the ancient world's seven wonders, and its theater could seat 25,000. In the synagogue, Paul 'used persuasion' by presenting convincing arguments but withdrew when some spoke abusively about The Way, or manner of life based on faith in Christ. For two years, Paul spoke daily in the school auditorium of Tyrannus, and "the word" spread throughout the district of Asia.

¹⁹ God showed approval of Paul's activity by enabling him to perform cures and expel demons. (19:11-20) But the seven sons of the chief priest Sceva failed to expel a demon by the use of Jesus' name because they did not represent God and Christ. They were even wounded by the demon-possessed man! This made people fearful, and "the name of the Lord Jesus went on being magnified." Those who became believers denounced their occult practices and publicly burned their books that apparently contained incantations and magic formulas. "Thus," wrote Luke, "in a mighty way the word of Jehovah kept growing and prevailing." Today, too, God's servants help to free people from demonism.—Deuteronomy 18:10-12.

Religious Intolerance Does Not Succeed

²⁰ Jehovah's Witnesses have often faced angry mobs, and so did Christians in Ephesus. (19:21-41) As believers multiplied, Demetrius and other silversmiths lost money because fewer people bought their silver shrines of the many-breasted fertility goddess Artemis. Incited by Demetrius, a mob took Paul's associates Gaius and

19. What took place in Ephesus that caused 'Jehovah's word to keep growing and prevailing' there?

20. Why did the silversmiths of Ephesus foment a riot, and how was it ended?

Aristarchus into the theater, but the disciples did not let Paul go inside. Even some commissioners of festivals and games pleaded that he not take that risk. For about two hours, the mob shouted: "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" Finally, the city recorder (who headed the municipal government) said that the craftsmen could present their charges to a proconsul, authorized to make judicial decisions, or their case might be decided in "a regular assembly" of citizens. Otherwise, Rome could charge those in this irregular assembly with rioting. With that, he dismissed them.

²¹ God helped Paul to face various trials and blessed his efforts to help people reject religious error and embrace the truth. (Compare Jeremiah 1:9, 10.) How thankful we are that our heavenly Father similarly blesses our work! Thus, now as in the first century, 'the word of Jehovah is growing and prevailing.'

21. In what way did God bless Paul's work, and how does he bless that of Jehovah's Witnesses today?

How Would You Answer?

- ☐ What example did Paul set in accepting direction by holy spirit?
- ☐ By what method, still used by Jehovah's servants, did Paul 'explain and prove' matters?
- ☐ What parallel is there between responses to Paul's speech on the Areopagus and the preaching of Jehovah's Witnesses?
- ☐ How did Paul sustain himself in the ministry, and what modern-day parallel does this have?
- ☐ As he did with Paul's work, how has God blessed the work of Jehovah's Witnesses today?

BOLDLY PROCLAIM JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM!

"He would kindly receive all those who came in to him, preaching the kingdom of God to them."—ACTS 28:30, 31.

JEHOVAH always upholds Kingdom proclaimers. How true that was of the apostle Paul! With divine backing, he appeared before rulers, endured mob action, and boldly proclaimed Jehovah's Kingdom.

² Even as a prisoner in Rome, Paul "would kindly receive all those who came in to him, preaching the kingdom of God to them." (Acts 28:30, 31) What a fine example for Jehovah's Witnesses today! We can learn much from Paul's ministry as reported by Luke in the final chapters of the Bible book of Acts.—20:1-28:31.

Fellow Believers Upbuilt

³ After the riot in Ephesus subsided, Paul continued his third missionary tour. (20:1-12) When about to sail for Syria, however, he learned that Jews had plotted against him. Since they may have planned

- 1, 2. What evidence of divine backing did the apostle Paul have, and what example did he set?
3. What happened at Troas, and what parallel may be drawn with our day?



to board the same ship and kill Paul, he went through Macedonia. At Troas, he spent a week upbuilding fellow believers as traveling overseers among Jehovah's Witnesses now do. On the night before his departure, Paul prolonged his speech until midnight.

Eutychus, seated at a window, was apparently weary from the day's exertions. He collapsed in sleep and fell to his death from the third floor, but Paul restored him to life. What joy this must have caused! Think, then, of the joy that will result when many millions are resurrected in the coming new world.—John 5:28, 29.

⁴ En route to Jerusalem, at Miletus, Paul met with the elders of Ephesus. (20:13-21) He reminded them that he had taught them "from house to house" and that he "thoroughly bore witness both to Jews and to Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus."

4. As regards the ministry, what did Paul teach the Ephesian elders?

Those who ultimately became elders had repented, and they possessed faith. The apostle also had been training them to proclaim the Kingdom boldly to unbelievers in a house-to-house ministry like that performed by Jehovah's Witnesses today.

⁵ Paul was exemplary in accepting direction by God's holy spirit. (20:22-30) "Bound in the spirit," or feeling obligated to follow its lead, the apostle would go to Jerusalem, though bonds and tribulations awaited him there. He valued life, but maintaining integrity to God was the most important thing to him, as it should be to us. Paul urged the elders to 'pay attention to all the flock among which the holy spirit had appointed them overseers.' After his "going away" (apparently in death), "oppressive wolves" would "not treat the flock with tenderness." Such men would arise from among the elders themselves, and less discerning disciples would accept their twisted teachings.—2 Thessalonians 2:6.

⁶ The elders needed to remain alert spiritually to guard against apostasy. (20:31-38) The apostle had taught them the Hebrew Scriptures and Jesus' teachings, which have sanctifying power that could help them to receive the heavenly Kingdom, "the inheritance among all the sanctified ones." By working to provide for himself and his associates, Paul also encouraged the elders to be hard workers. (Acts 18:1-3; 1 Thessalonians 2:9) If we pursue a similar course and help others to gain eternal life, we will appreciate Jesus' words: "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving." The sense of this statement is found in the Gospels but is quoted only by Paul, who may have received it orally or by inspiration. We can

5. (a) How was Paul exemplary in regard to direction by holy spirit? (b) Why did the elders need counsel to 'pay attention to all the flock'?
6. (a) Why could Paul confidently commit the elders to God? (b) How did Paul follow the principle of Acts 20:35?

enjoy much happiness if we are as self-sacrificing as Paul was. Why, he had given of himself so much that his departure saddened the Ephesian elders greatly!

Let Jehovah's Will Take Place

⁷ As Paul's third missionary trip neared its end (c. 56 C.E.), he set a fine example in submitting to God's will. (21:1-14) In Caesarea he and his companions stayed with Philip, whose four virgin daughters "prophesied," foretelling events by holy spirit. There the Christian prophet Agabus bound his own hands and feet with Paul's girdle and was moved by the spirit to say that Jews would bind its owner in Jerusalem and deliver him into Gentile hands. "I am ready not only to be bound but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus," said Paul. The disciples acquiesced, saying: "Let the will of Jehovah take place."

⁸ Paul told the elders in Jerusalem what God did among the Gentiles through his ministry. (21:15-26) If we ever find it hard to take good advice, we can recall how Paul accepted it. To prove that he was not teaching Jews in Gentile lands "an apostasy from Moses," he heeded the elders' counsel to undergo ceremonial cleansing and cover the expenses for himself and four other men. Though Jesus' death moved the Law out of the way, Paul did no wrong by carrying out its features regarding vows.—Romans 7:12-14.

Mobbed but Undaunted

⁹ Jehovah's Witnesses have often maintained integrity to God in the face of mob violence. (For example, see the 1975 Year-

7. How did Paul set an example in submitting to God's will?
8. If we sometimes find it hard to take good advice, what might we remember?
9. As to mob violence, what parallel is there between the experiences of Paul and those of Jehovah's Witnesses today?

book of *Jehovah's Witnesses*, pages 180-90.) Jews from Asia Minor similarly fomented mob action against Paul. (21:27-40) Seeing Trophimus the Ephesian with him, they falsely accused the apostle of defiling the temple by taking Greeks into it. Paul was about to be killed when Roman tribune Claudius Lysias and his men quelled the riot! As foretold (but caused by the Jews), Lysias had Paul put in chains. (Acts 21:11) The apostle was about to be taken into the soldiers' quarters adjoining the temple court when Lysias learned that Paul was not a seditionist but a Jew allowed to enter the temple area. Getting permission to speak, Paul addressed the people in Hebrew.

¹⁰ Paul gave a bold witness. (22:1-30) He identified himself as a Jew instructed by highly respected Gamaliel. The apostle explained that en route to Damascus to persecute followers of The Way, he had been blinded upon seeing the glorified Jesus Christ, but Ananias had restored his sight. Later the Lord had told Paul: "Get on your way, because I shall send you out to nations far off." Those words fell like a spark in a forest. Shouting that Paul was not fit to live, the crowd threw their outer garments about and tossed dust into the air in anger. So Lysias had Paul taken to the soldiers' quarters for examination under scourging to learn why the Jews were against him. A scourging (with a device having leather thongs with knots or embedded pieces of metal or bone) was prevented when Paul asked: 'Is it lawful to scourge an uncondemned Roman?' Learning that Paul was a Roman citizen, Lysias became fearful and took him before the Sanhedrin to learn why he was being accused by the Jews.

¹¹ When Paul opened his defense before

10. How was Paul's speech received by the Jews in Jerusalem, and why was he not scourged?

11. In what respect was Paul a Pharisee?

the Sanhedrin by saying that he had "behaved before God with a perfectly clear conscience," High Priest Ananias ordered that he be struck. (23:1-10) Paul said, "God is going to strike you, you white-washed wall." "Are you reviling the high priest?" some asked. Because of poor eyesight, Paul may not have recognized Ananias. But noting that the council was made up of Pharisees and Sadducees, Paul said: 'I am a Pharisee being judged over the resurrection hope.' This split the Sanhedrin, for Pharisees believed in resurrection and Sadducees did not. So much dissension arose that Lysias had to rescue the apostle.

¹² Paul next escaped a plot on his life. (23:11-35) Forty Jews had sworn not to eat or drink until they had killed him. Paul's nephew reported this to him and to Lysias. Under military guard, the apostle was taken to Governor Antonius Felix at Caesarea, the Roman administrative capital of Judea. After promising Paul a hearing, Felix kept him under guard in the Praetorian palace of Herod the Great, the governor's headquarters.

Boldness Before Rulers

¹³ The apostle soon defended himself against false charges and boldly witnessed to Felix. (24:1-27) Before Jewish accusers, Paul showed that he had not incited a mob. He said that he believed the things set forth in the Law and the Prophets and hoped in "a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous." Paul had gone to Jerusalem with "gifts of mercy" (contributions for Jesus' followers whose poverty may have resulted from persecution) and had been ceremonially cleansed. Though Felix postponed judgment, Paul later preached to him and his wife Drusilla (daughter of Herod

12. How did Paul escape a plot on his life in Jerusalem?

13. About what did Paul witness to Felix, and with what effect?

Agrippa I) about Christ, righteousness, self-control, and the coming judgment. Frightened by such talk, Felix dismissed Paul. Later, however, he sent for the apostle often, hoping in vain for a bribe. Felix knew that Paul was innocent but left him bound, hoping to gain favor with the Jews. Two years later, Felix was succeeded by Porcius Festus.

¹⁴ Paul also made a bold defense before Festus. (25:1-12) If the apostle was deserving of death, he would not beg off, but no man could hand him over to the Jews as a favor. "I appeal to Caesar!" said Paul, availing himself of a Roman citizen's right to be tried in Rome (at that time before Nero). The appeal granted, Paul would "bear witness in Rome," as foretold. (Acts 23:11) Jehovah's Witnesses also avail themselves of provisions to 'defend and legally establish the good news.'—Philippians 1:7.

¹⁵ King Herod Agrippa II of northern Judea and his sister Bernice (with whom he had an incestuous relationship) heard Paul when paying Festus a visit at Caesarea. (25:13-26:23) By witnessing to Agrippa and Caesar, Paul fulfilled the prophecy that he would bear the Lord's name to kings. (Acts 9:15) Telling Agrippa what had happened on the road to Damascus, Paul remarked that Jesus said: "To keep kicking against the goads makes it hard for you." As a stubborn bull hurts itself in resisting the prickings of a goad, Saul had hurt himself by fighting against Jesus' followers, who had God's backing.

¹⁶ How did Festus and Agrippa react? (26:24-32) Unable to understand the res-

urrection and amazed at Paul's conviction, Festus said: "Great learning is driving you into madness!" Similarly, some now accuse Jehovah's Witnesses of being mad, though they really are like Paul in "uttering sayings of truth and of soundness of mind." "In a short time you would persuade me to become a Christian," said Agrippa, who ended the hearing but acknowledged that Paul could have been released if he had not appealed to Caesar.

Dangers at Sea

¹⁷ The trip to Rome exposed Paul to "dangers at sea." (2 Corinthians 11:24-27) An army officer named Julius was in charge of the prisoners sailing from Caesarea to Rome. (27:1-26) When their ship landed at Sidon, Paul was allowed to visit believers, who refreshed him spiritually. (Compare 3 John 14.) At Myra in Asia Minor, Julius made the prisoners board a grain ship bound for Italy. Despite strong headwinds, they made it to the harbor of Fair Havens, near the Cretan city of Lasea. After leaving there en route to Phoenix, a northeasterly gale seized the ship. Fearful of running aground on the Syrtis (quicksands) off north Africa, the sailors "lowered the gear," perhaps the sails and masts. Ropes had been run around the hull so that the ship's seams would not part. Still tempest-tossed the next day, the ship was lightened by throwing freight overboard. The third day, they threw away the tackling (sails or spare gear). As hope seemed to fade, an angel appeared to Paul and told him not to be fearful, for he would stand before Caesar. What a relief it was when the apostle said that all the travelers would be cast ashore on a certain island!

¹⁸ The voyagers did survive. (27:27-44)

17. How would you describe the dangers encountered at sea during Paul's trip to Rome?

18. What finally happened to Paul and his fellow voyagers?

At midnight on the 14th day, the sailors perceived that land was near. Soundings confirmed this, and anchors were lowered to escape disaster upon the rocks. At Paul's urging, all 276 men partook of food. Then the ship was lightened by throwing the wheat overboard. At daybreak, the sailors cut away the anchors, unlashed the oars, and hoisted the foresail to the wind. The vessel lighted upon a shoal, and the stern began to be broken to pieces. But everyone made it to land.

¹⁹ Soaked and weary, the shipwreck victims found themselves on Malta, where the islanders showed them "extraordinary human kindness." (28:1-16) As Paul laid sticks on a fire, however, the heat revived a dormant viper that fastened itself on his hand. (There are now no poisonous snakes on Malta, but this was a "venomous creature.") The Maltese thought Paul was a murderer that "vindictive justice" would not allow to live, but when he did not drop dead or swell up with inflammation, they said he was a god. Paul later cured many, including the father of Publius, Malta's chief official. Three months thereafter, Paul, Luke, and Aristarchus departed on a ship with the figurehead "Sons of Zeus" (Castor and Pollux, twin deities supposedly favoring mariners). Landing at Puteoli, Julius moved on with his ward. Paul thanked God and took courage when Christians from the Roman capital met them at the Marketplace of Appius and Three Taverns along the Appian Way. Finally, in Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, though guarded by a soldier.

Keep on Proclaiming Jehovah's Kingdom!

²⁰ In his quarters in Rome, Paul boldly proclaimed Jehovah's Kingdom. (28:

19. What happened to Paul on Malta, and what did he do for others there?

20. With what activity did Paul keep busy in his quarters in Rome?

17-31) He told principal Jewish men: "Because of the hope of Israel this chain I have around me." That hope involved accepting the Messiah, something for which we must also be willing to suffer. (Philippians 1:29) Though most of those Jews did not believe, many Gentiles and a Jewish remnant had the right heart condition. (Isaiah 6:9, 10) For two years (c. 59-61 C.E.) Paul received all who came in to him, "preaching the kingdom of God to them and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with the greatest freeness of speech, without hindrance."

²¹ Nero apparently pronounced Paul innocent and released him. The apostle then renewed his work in association with Timothy and Titus. However, he was again imprisoned in Rome (c. 65 C.E.) and likely suffered martyrdom at Nero's hands. (2 Timothy 4:6-8) But to the end, Paul set a fine example as a courageous Kingdom proclaimer. With the same spirit in these last days, may all those dedicated to God boldly proclaim Jehovah's Kingdom!

21. To the end of his earthly life, what example did Paul set?

How Would You Answer?

- ☐ What ministerial training did Paul give the Ephesian elders?
- ☐ How did Paul set an example of submission to God's will?
- ☐ As to mob violence, what similarity is there between the experiences of Paul and those of Jehovah's Witnesses today?
- ☐ Of what legal provision did Paul avail himself when before Governor Festus, and this has what modern-day parallel?
- ☐ With what activity did Paul keep busy in his quarters in Rome, setting what example?



PUNCTUALITY AND YOU

A CHRISTIAN overseer in a South American congregation had many fine qualities. But his closest friends jokingly called him Armageddon. Why? "We know he's coming," they would say, "but only God knows when!"

Yes, punctuality—or the lack of it—has much to do with one's reputation. Wise King Solomon illustrated it this way: "Dead flies are what cause the oil of the ointment maker to stink, to bubble forth. So a little foolishness does to one who is precious for wisdom and glory." (Ecclesiastes 10:1) A Christian may have many fine qualities, but he will tarnish his good name if he is not conscious of time.

"Punctual people give me confidence," said an overseer. "They are the ones I prefer working with." They are also appre-

ciated in the business world. "Get to work on time; be prompt for meetings; turn in reports when they are due," advises *Emily Post's Etiquette*. Similarly, *The New Etiquette* (1987) states that, in general, "late arrivals are rude arrivals." The authors then add: "Religious services are also another inappropriate occasion to arrive late."

All of us appreciate it when others are punctual. The apostle Paul evidently felt that way, for he wrote to the Christians in Colossae: "I am with you in the spirit, rejoicing and beholding your good order." (Colossians 2:5) And surely we share King David's sentiments regarding Jehovah's promises when he wrote in the Psalms: "O my God, do not be too late."—Psalm 40:17; 70:5.

"Become Imitators of God"

Actually, Jehovah is never late. He is outstanding in his awareness of time. This is reflected in all his creative works. From the boundless universe to the smallest living things, all of them operate as if governed by an invisible clock. For example, a type of sea lily near Japan releases its sex cells once each year in October at about three in the afternoon on the day of the moon's first or third quarter. In the spring the little grunion times its breeding cycle to within a few minutes of the high tide on the California coast.

Jehovah's timing is also precise when it comes to fulfilling his promise. For instance, we read at Exodus 12:41 that "it came about at the end of the four hundred and thirty years, it even came about on this very day that all the armies of Jehovah went out of the land of Egypt." Thus Jehovah kept the promise he made centuries earlier to Abram.—Genesis 15:13-16; Galatians 3:17.*

Jehovah sent his Son, the Messiah, into the world at the exact time foretold by the prophet Daniel more than five centuries earlier, so that he "died for ungodly men at the appointed time." (Romans 5:6; Daniel 9:25) As for the end of this system of things, the Bible indicates that Jehovah knows "that day and hour." (Matthew 24:36) He will not be late. Clearly, Jehovah's example in being punctual is worthy of our imitation.—Ephesians 5:1.

"At Their Appointed Times"

Jehovah has always expected his servants to be aware of time, especially with regard to his worship. A "daily schedule" was followed when the Israelites offered sacrifices. Jehovah commanded them: 'You should take care to present to me my

offerings . . . at their appointed times.' He also gave Moses this instruction about meetings: "The whole assembly must keep their appointment."—Leviticus 23:37; Numbers 10:3; 28:2.

Later, the Jews observed "the hour of offering incense." (Luke 1:10) "The hour of prayer, the ninth hour," was observed by both Jews and others. (Acts 3:1; 10:3, 4, 30) And regarding Christian meetings, Paul wrote: "Let all things take place decently and by arrangement."—1 Corinthians 14:40.

What would all of this have required of the Israelites and the early Christians? That they be punctual in keeping their appointments, especially with regard to their worship. There is no reason to think that Jehovah would expect any less of his servants today.

Why Some Find It Hard

Attitudes toward time vary considerably from one part of the world to another. A missionary reports that in a small South American town, his wife would sometimes be the only person in the audience when he announced the opening song at the beginning of a Christian meeting. But when he announced the closing song, 70 people would be there. On the other hand, in a Western European country, about a thousand people were asked: "If you were invited to dinner at 7:00 p.m., should you arrive five or ten minutes early, or five or ten minutes late, or exactly on time?" The majority responded that "courtesy requires scrupulous respect for the host and arriving at the exact minute."

Nonetheless, being punctual is more than a matter of regional preference. It is a habit, much as being clean, tidy, or polite is a matter of habit. Of course, we are not born with such habits; we must cultivate them. If you were taught to be punctual as a child, that is a blessing. But many come

* For a detailed discussion of this prophecy, see *Insight on the Scriptures*, Volume 1, pages 460-1 and 776-7.

from families and backgrounds in which there were few deadlines and little need to coordinate one's efforts with the efforts of others. Only on becoming part of the Christian congregation and taking part in its meetings and public ministry does the need for punctuality become a reality for them. They may find it hard to correct the habit of tardiness learned early in life. Nevertheless, love for Jehovah God and for one's neighbor can motivate one to change. Yet, why make the change?

Why Be Punctual?

"Dost thou love life?" Benjamin Franklin once asked. "Then do not squander time, for that is the stuff life is made of." All of us recognize the truth in that statement. Equally important to Christians, though, is not wasting other people's time. "The latecomer," observes a missionary, "seems to say by his action, 'My time is more valuable than yours, so *you* can wait until *I* am ready.'" The person who is not punctual appears not only disorganized and unreliable but also somewhat egotistical and inconsiderate. True Christians want to be "doing nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with lowliness of mind considering that the others are superior."—Philippians 2:3.

Some might feel that they do not like to live by the clock, having every move governed by it. However, being punctual is not simply a matter of being controlled by the clock. It is a matter of having other people's interests and benefit at heart, "keeping an eye, not in personal interests upon just your own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others."—Philippians 2:4.

Consider, for example, the Bible's counsel: "Welcome one another, just as the Christ also welcomed us." (Romans 15:7) To the extent that this applies to literal greetings, it clearly is more difficult to do

if one is habitually late at the meetings. By arriving early for meetings, you can contribute to the loving, friendly, and welcoming spirit of such gatherings to a greater extent. And the benefits really go both ways. Arriving early enables you to share in the opening song and prayer—an important part of united congregation worship. Hearing the theme or title announced will help you better to follow the development of the program.

Punctuality on your part enables others to coordinate their efforts, and much can be accomplished as a result. When attacking the city of Ai, Joshua sent part of his forces to lure the enemy away from the city while the rest of his men lay in ambush to take the city. Then, at the crucial moment, Joshua gave the signal. His men "began to run at the instant that he stretched out his hand," and the city fell before them. Can you imagine what would have happened if they had not acted punctually?—Joshua 8:6-8, 18, 19.

Christian ministers today have many reasons to be aware of time. Sharing in Kingdom preaching with others, rehearsing assembly or meeting parts, even cleaning the Kingdom Hall, all require us to coordinate our actions with others. By being punctual, we can accomplish more. This is true even in something as simple

In Our Next Issue

- "Ruining the Earth"
—How Much Longer?
- The Coming Finale of
"the Book of the Wars
of Jehovah"
- Honor Jehovah
With Your Riches

as reporting one's preaching activity at the end of the month. When everyone cooperates in doing so promptly, then accurate and encouraging congregation and worldwide reports can be compiled.

Being punctual also involves keeping appointments and meeting deadlines, of which there are many every day. Some are momentous, others trivial. Your wedding, for example, should start at the selected time. You may like to have your egg boiled for just so many minutes. Whatever it is, the punctual person does not need to dash frantically from one thing to another, late for everything. Rather, he is calm and organized. He gets more done because he plans his day and starts on time or even a bit early.

Indeed, there are many reasons why Christians should be conscious of time. Above all, it is one way to demonstrate our unselfish love for fellow Christians and our respect for theocratic arrangements for true worship.

How, though, can one develop the habit of punctuality?

'Know the Appointed Times'

"Even the stork . . . well knows its appointed times" to migrate, and the ant "prepares its food even in the summer" to be ready for the winter, says the Bible. (Jeremiah 8:7; Proverbs 6:8) Therein lies a secret of being punctual and getting things done.

We too must 'know our appointed times.' While not being rigid or fanatical, we should be time conscious. We need to know not only what we have to do but also when we have to do it. We need to get into the habit of thinking ahead, making allowance for possible delays, and being willing to cut short the activity at hand for something more important, such as our meetings, field ministry, and other theocratic activities.

In this regard, family cooperation is essential. It has been observed that the father often leaves it to the wife to get the family ready. Then he goes out the door alone, calling over his shoulder, "Hurry up, or you'll be late!" Jacob was not like that; he helpfully "got up and lifted his children and his wives onto the camels" when it was time to depart.—Genesis 31:17.

How, then, can the father help his family? Children can be taught to allow time to get ready for important things instead of leaving everything to the last minute. They can be helped to develop a sense of responsibility and pride in doing things promptly. As a family, consider Bible examples that show the importance of being ready and on time. (Genesis 19:16; Exodus 12:11; Luke 17:31) Probably the best or most effective lesson is provided by proper parental example.

Christian overseers can also help the congregation by setting the proper example. They would not have been appointed unless they were "orderly." (1 Timothy 3:2) Other brothers and sisters probably will be more punctual if they know that elders will be there to greet them and to take the lead. So conscientious overseers will strive to be at the Kingdom Hall early to help the congregation. Ministerial servants who arrive early to greet their brothers and serve their needs are greatly appreciated.

Of course, to be punctual takes self-control and discipline. No, not for the sake of achieving military precision, but out of love for our fellow Christians and respect for theocratic order. This is part of the new personality that we are endeavoring to put on. (Colossians 3:10, 12) Above all, we want to be like our heavenly Father, Jehovah God, who teaches us that "for everything there is an appointed time." —Ecclesiastes 3:1.

Insight on the News

Why Evangelize?

The lack of evangelizing on the part of churchgoers has been cited by some authorities as related to the decline in church membership among mainline religions. Concern over this problem in 1988 prompted the United Church of Christ to adopt as a four-year priority the issue of "evangelism and membership growth."

The *St. Petersburg Times* reports that other mainline denominations in the United States, including the Presbyterian Church and the Episcopal Church, have acted similarly. However, a recent survey of over 200 congregations of the United Church of Christ revealed that many of its 1.6 million members manifest little interest in talking to others about their faith. One member asked: "Why do we have to talk to others if we're doing good?" Another said: "If you live your faith, you don't have to talk about it."

Yet, in his book *American Mainline Religion*, coauthor Wade Clark Roof admitted that "how people talk about their religious and spiritual lives is integrally related to the survival of faith itself."

If "doing good" and having "faith" is enough to please God, why did the apostle Paul write: "Woe is me if I did not declare the good news"? He explained to fellow believers in Rome: "If you publicly declare that 'word in your own mouth,' that Jesus is Lord, and exercise faith in your heart that God raised him up from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one exercises faith for righteousness, but with the mouth one makes public declara-

tion for salvation."—1 Corinthians 9:16; Romans 10:9, 10.

Exploiting Sex

More than half of some 1,100 comic stories that appeared in various Japanese publications, including those for children, portrayed sexual acts, said Professor Mamoru Fukutomi. He headed a survey in Tokyo of more than 390 magazines and other publications purchased in one month.

'Most depictions of the sexual act,' says Professor Fukutomi, 'follow the pattern of men coercing reluctant women [into sexual intercourse] and women finally responding actively.' Almost 80 percent of the 6,861 photographs in popular Japanese magazines that were analyzed "depicted women in a sexually provocative manner," reports *The Daily Yomiuri*. Whereas most of the women in the pictures were "in underwear, swimming suits or in the nude" and only 40 percent were clothed, 75 percent of the males in the surveyed pictures were clothed.

How will such sexploitation affect the young? The Bible book of Proverbs graphically describes a young man "lacking good motive" being attracted to the house of a prostitute. (Proverbs 7:7, *Reference Bible*, footnote.) And the prostitute? "Now she is outdoors, now she is in the public squares, and near every corner she lies in wait. And she has grabbed hold of him." (Proverbs 7:8-13) In modern times even the printed page 'lies in wait to grab hold' of youth. However, the Bible admonishes: "May your heart not turn aside to her ways. Do not wander into her roadways."—Proverbs 7:25.

Who Is the "Better" Christian?

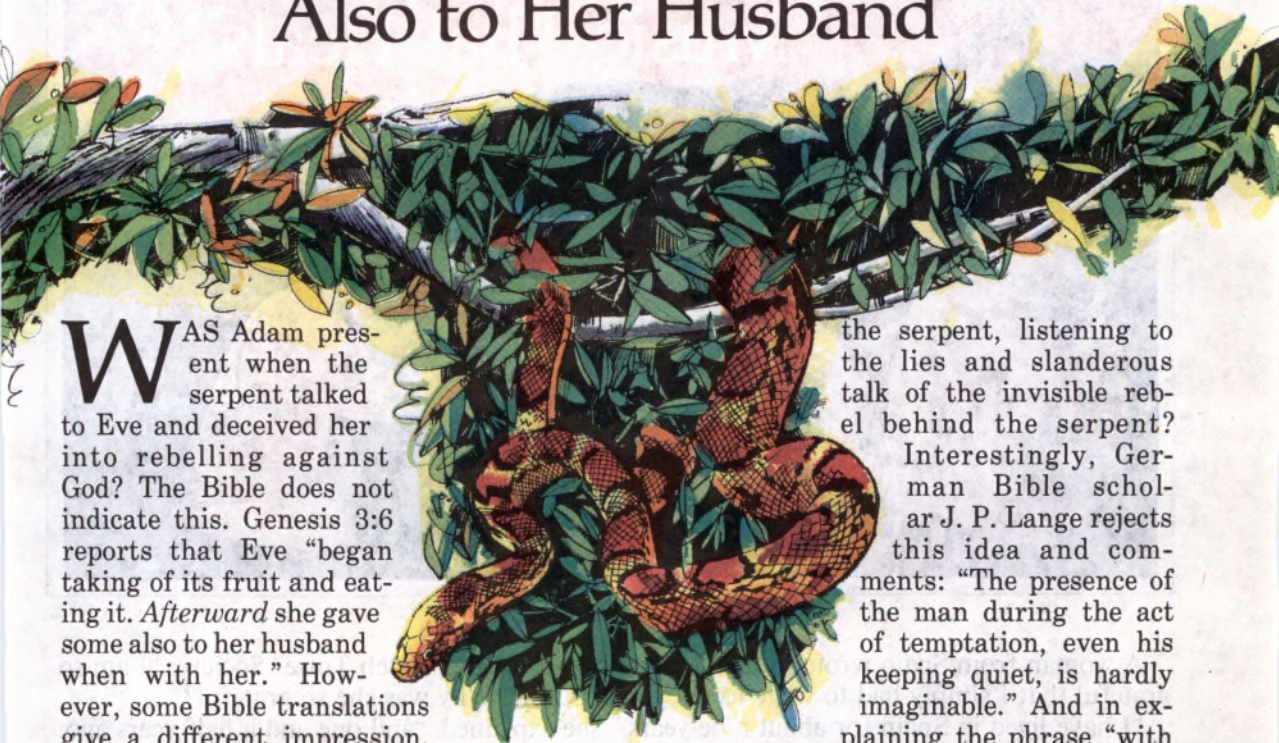
"Regardless of the decision a Christian makes, whether to be a soldier or to be a conscientious objector, it would be wrong for him to claim a higher degree of Christianity for himself than for the other, or even to call into question, for supporting a position different from his own, the other's being a Christian."

This statement was released by the Evangelical Lutheran Church Council of Germany in July 1989. Why? Officials said that it was to counteract the position taken by some in the church that conscientious objection is a more "positive sign" of being Christian than is military service. While agreeing that Christians could eliminate war by "personally refraining from violence," the Church Council argued that this could also be done by fighting violence with military might in order to ensure peace.

In his book *History of Christianity*, Edward Gibbon wrote that first-century Christians "refused to take any active part in the civil administration or the military defence of the empire," and that "it was impossible that the Christians, without renouncing a more sacred duty, could assume the character of soldiers, of magistrates, or of princes."

The question, therefore, is not who is the "better" Christian but whether a person pursuing a course contrary to early Christianity is indeed a Christian at all. Paul wrote: "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage warfare according to what we are in the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly."—2 Corinthians 10:3, 4.

"Afterward She Gave Some Also to Her Husband"



WAS Adam present when the serpent talked to Eve and deceived her into rebelling against God? The Bible does not indicate this. Genesis 3:6 reports that Eve "began taking of its fruit and eating it. *Afterward* she gave some also to her husband when with her." However, some Bible translations give a different impression.

The *King James Version* renders the text as follows: "She took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat."

The Hebrew verb translated as "gave" is in the imperfect tense and is associated with a special form of the conjunction "and" [Hebrew, *waw*], thus indicating a temporal or logical sequence. Therefore, the *New World Translation* translates the several occurrences of *waw*, which connect the chain of events at Genesis 3:6, not only with "and" but also with other transitional words, such as "consequently," "so," and "afterward." The *New World Translation* thus has a solid basis for the above rendering.

Would Adam have passively observed the conversation between his wife and

the serpent, listening to the lies and slanderous talk of the invisible rebel behind the serpent?

Interestingly, German Bible scholar J. P. Lange rejects this idea and comments: "The presence of the man during the act of temptation, even his keeping quiet, is hardly imaginable." And in explaining the phrase "with

her," Jewish commentator B. Jacob mentions that it does "not [mean] who was standing with her (during the previous act or while she ate)."

Eve's conversation with the serpent revealed that her husband had informed her about God's command not to eat from the tree. (Genesis 3:3) So as Eve's head, Adam had fulfilled that responsibility. The Devil ignored God's arrangement of headship and cleverly took advantage of the fact that Eve was alone. She later replied: "The serpent—it deceived me and so I ate." (Genesis 3:13) Eve was deceived because she believed a lie, but this did not justify her transgression. This warning example illustrates that we can never have an excuse to do something wrong in Jehovah's eyes.—1 Timothy 2:14.



“Music That Heals”

A woman from Spain wrote to the German branch of the Watch Tower Society: “I am so grateful that I simply had to write to tell you about it.” Why was she so grateful?

“I have lived in Spain for about nine years,” she explained, “and one and a half years ago, two of your young people started to study the Bible with me. Having read in *The Watchtower* an article about music that heals, I asked them to get the cassettes for me.

“Some time later, feeling depressed and in some pain, I put the music on. What a difference! Within a short time, the emotional pain was gone, and my mood had improved considerably. How pleased I was to have those music cassettes! Since then, I have often listened to them during sleepless nights. It really is music that heals.”

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