

December 1, 1982

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

A black and white illustration of a woman sitting in a chair, holding a cup of coffee. She is wearing a plaid pajama set. To her left is a television on a stand, and a vacuum cleaner is leaning against it. A wicker basket filled with laundry sits on the floor to her right. Her slippers are on the floor next to her chair. The background is a plain, light color.

TV Serials-
*Can They Corrupt
the Heart?*

December 1, 1982
Vol. 103, No. 23

The Watchtower®

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

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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 since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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Soap Operas-



“WHEN I started watching the television serials, or soap operas, I soon was absorbed in the lives of the characters,” reported one Christian woman. “I became like part of their family. In time my heart was as much involved with these characters as it was with members of the Christian congregation.”

Such viewer involvement is a characteristic of most television serials commonly called soap operas. For this reason *Time* magazine called them “the most powerful entertainment on or off television,” and added, “no play or film commands such long-term devotion; no TV show regularly attracts such numbers.” Four soap-opera serials in the United States have lasted over 25 years!

These serials are written to reach your heart. “I look for things that touch people’s lives,” explains serial writer William Bell. “I’m disappointed if my shows don’t produce tears from the audience three

How They Can Affect You

times a week.” Millions of women *and men* of all ages, races and backgrounds will rarely miss a show. These include common laborers as well as wealthy professionals, among them a United States Supreme Court justice and a former governor. In Brazil the *telenovelas* (television novels) are a dominating influence during the prime time evening hours. In the United States from 30 million to as many as 70 million persons may watch the serials.

What factors should you consider with regard to these programs if your heart is devoted to Jehovah God? Are such serials mere harmless entertainment, a means of relaxing and getting your mind off the cares of the day? Remember, the Bible urges: “More than all else that is to be guarded, safeguard your heart, for out of it are the sources of life.” (Proverbs 4:23) Because the heart is deceitful and can be easily influenced, a Christian continually has to appraise what is being fed into it. (Jeremiah 17:9; Proverbs 28:26) But what is it that makes the serials so appealing?

“You build up a relationship with a character on the show because you see him almost daily,” admitted one 32-year-old viewer. “The more I learned about him the more I wanted to know. It was something very natural.” The shows capitalize on this natural desire. Once these

characters are "entrenched in the hearts of listeners," wrote an earlier serial writer, Elaine Carrington, the viewers will "have to tune in . . . because of what they feel for them."

The characters become real and you care about them. Some viewers even

"talk to the screen" in an effort to advise their favorites! As one therapist said, the characters truly become "a circle of friends." Is this enticing feature a subtle danger? Can these shows gradually corrupt a Christian's heart? What have research and experiences shown?

Are They Corrupting Your Heart?

THOSE we choose as "friends" can affect our heart. Proverbs chapter seven describes a young man who was associating with an immoral married woman. His emotions surged by listening to "the smoothness of her lips." He committed adultery with her. But what led to such an act? Verse 25 warns others: "May your *heart* not turn aside to her ways." His heart was misled by his association.

What kind of characters have been portrayed in the serials? A minister who cheats on his wife; a rapist; a prostitute; an unwed mother who shot her lover because he was sleeping with her mother; and on and on. Adultery is commonplace, as are abortion and illegitimate pregnancies.

Is this the "circle of friends" you want to influence your heart? If these were your neighbors, would you invite them into your home and gleefully listen as they described their escapades?

"What right do you have to enumerate my regulations?" asked Jehovah of those who claimed to be his people. "Whenever you saw a thief, you were even pleased with him; and your shar-

ing was with adulterers." (Psalm 50:16, 18) Do not fool yourself. "Bad associations spoil useful habits."—1 Corinthians 15:33; Proverbs 13:20.

"But not all the characters are overtly bad," reported one Christian housewife. "I could readily identify with one who really was a good person. She was what I wanted to be. I imitated her personality." Using soap characters as "role models" is commonplace. But should a Christian do so?

Rather than encouraging Christians to imitate the conduct of people who are in "darkness mentally" and morally corrupt, the apostle Paul told fellow believers: "You did not *learn the Christ* to be so, provided, indeed, that you heard him and were taught by means of him, just as truth is in Jesus." (Ephesians 4:17-21) A dedicated Christian must concentrate on, be instructed by, the example of Jesus, or of those who closely follow the same pattern as approved servants of God. Other models have proved to be traps.—1 Corinthians 11:1; Hebrews 11:1-12:2; 1 Peter 2:21.

Hearts Enticed in Secrecy

The faithful man Job admitted how easily his heart could be enticed by what he watched. "If I used to see the light when it would flash forth, or the precious moon walking along, and my heart began to be enticed in secrecy . . . , that too would be an error for attention by the justices," confessed Job.* A view of the starry heavens, with the moon beaming, is touching. But Job's neighbors worshiped the moon as a symbol of fertility. Alluring sex orgies were often a part of moon worship. If Job constantly thought about these his 'hand would have proceeded to kiss his mouth' in an act of worship. His heart could have become more open and permissive, to the point that idolatry would not have seemed so bad. But he caught himself.—Job 31:26-28.

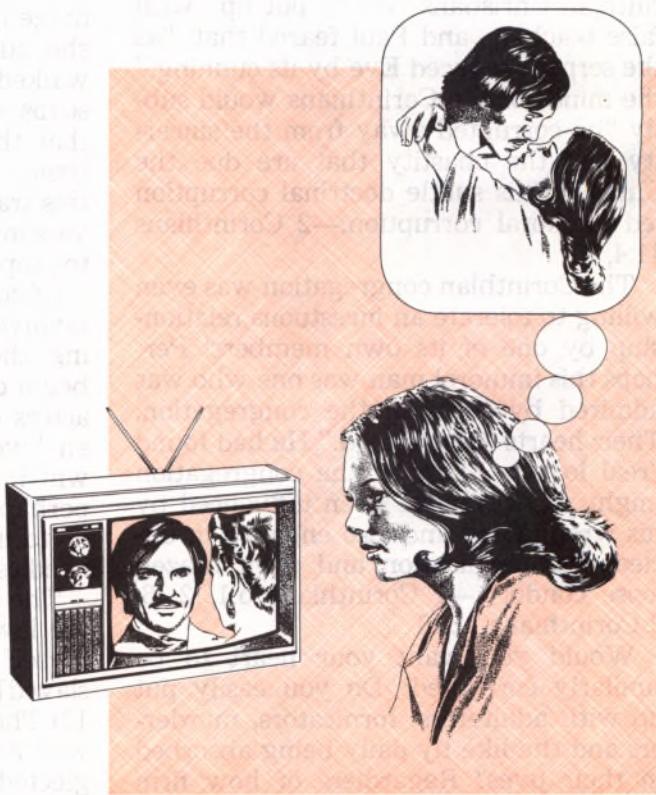
Television serials are just as subtle. The search for love is used to justify any conduct. For instance, one unwed pregnant youth says to a friend: "But I love Victor. I don't care. I'll lie, cheat and steal to be with him. He's worth it. Victor's worth any cost. To have his baby is worth everything to me!" The soft background music makes it hard to consider her course to be so bad. You too like Victor. You feel sympathy for the girl. You "understand." "It is amazing how you can rationalize," stated one viewer who later came to her senses. "We know that immorality is bad. . . . But I realized that mentally I was taking part."

However, some feel that 'what

is shown is no worse than what you see in everyday life.' But is this what a Christian should choose in order to be *entertained*? The apostle Paul wrote: "Let fornication and uncleanness of every sort or greediness *not even be mentioned* among you, just as it befits holy people." (Ephesians 5:3) Was Paul unrealistic? No. The point he was making was that Christians should not be entertained by discussing such sordid acts. This applies also to genuine "holy people" today.

Minds and Hearts Corrupted

Some in the first-century Corinthian congregation were defiled, no, not by television, but by false apostles. According to second-century professed Christian



* The Hebrew word translated "enticed" basically means "to open, to expand."

Irenaeus, these apostates claimed: "For even as gold, when submersed in filth, loses not on that account its beauty . . . so they affirm that they cannot in any measure suffer hurt, or lose their spiritual substance, whatever the material actions in which they may be involved." So these ones associated with unbelievers, attended the cruel gladiatorial games and even committed sexual immorality.

The apostle Paul charged that the Co-

A steady diet of material that justifies immorality can corrupt one's moral standards

rinthian Christians "easily put up" with false teachers, and Paul feared that, "as the serpent seduced Eve by its cunning," the minds of the Corinthians would subtly "be corrupted away from the sincerity and the chastity that are due the Christ." This subtle doctrinal corruption led to moral corruption.—2 Corinthians 11:4, 3.

The Corinthian congregation was even willing to tolerate an incestuous relationship by one of its own members! Perhaps this immoral man was one who was admired by those in the congregation. Their hearts "understood." He had found "real love"! Others in the congregation might possibly have been influenced by his wrongdoing and also engaged in uncleanness, fornication and even brazen loose conduct.—1 Corinthians 5:1, 2, 6; 2 Corinthians 12:21.

Would you want your heart to be similarly corrupted? Do you easily put up with adulterers, fornicators, murderers and the like by daily being absorbed in their lives? Regardless of how firm

we may be in the way of the truth our hearts can subtly be affected by a steady diet of material that justifies immorality.

"You think that it doesn't bother you," said one Christian woman who was a regular viewer of soap operas for years. "But in the deep part of your heart you are accepting the wrongdoing. You see things that you want. And if your husband isn't as affectionate as those you see on the soap operas, you feel that something is missing."

This Christian woman who had developed an appetite for these TV soap operas let her guard down to the extent of committing immorality. She was immediately cut to the heart and eventually gained the forgiveness of her husband and the congregation. But what an emotional scar! "Everything was fine until the circumstances made it possible to indulge in what I had stored in my heart," she admitted. "Satan set a trap and I walked right into it. Do not be fooled, soaps can affect you. I hear some say that they are strong enough to handle them. Well, time will tell." Even after this tragedy she found it difficult to stop viewing them. "It was worse than trying to stop smoking," she concluded.

Of course, most viewers do not become involved in immorality simply by watching these shows. However, could you begin comparing your mate to the characters on the show? Will this strengthen love or foster doubts? If unmarried, will it increase your desire for a mate, perhaps leading to an unwise marriage or to immorality? Could you experience needless mood swings?

The apostle Paul wrote: "All things are lawful for me; . . . but I will not let myself be brought under authority [enslaved] by anything." (1 Corinthians 6:12) The addictive nature of the serials is well attested. Some Christians have neglected congregation meetings and their

ministry, rushed through household duties, skipped school, neglected personal and family Bible study—all to catch the serial. Should not these persons take an honest look at the amount of time they devote to such viewing?

Of course, this is true no matter what one watches, but the special danger of the serials is that they grab your heart so that you *have* to see the next daily episode. Dr. Hendrie Weisinger, a psychologist who was quoted in a serial fan magazine, admitted: "Research testifies that television does affect our behavior and influences thinking. . . . A person who stays home and watches shows regularly may form too strong an identification with the characters. They let soaps become an extension of their lives, and they can become neurotic about never missing an episode."

Alternatives

One Christian woman who fell into the bad habit of regularly watching the serials became quite depressed. She confided in a fellow Witness who encouraged her to spend more time in the Christian ministry helping others. "Working with others in the field ministry became a joy," reported the woman. "I was not depressed because I did not have to worry about other people's problems. I was starting to fill my life with something satisfying. The soaps were no longer important. I became a full-time evangelizer." Many have found such stepped-up sacred service to be the answer.—Compare Revelation 7:15.

Some have solved the problem by becoming more involved in caring for household duties, devoting more attention to the spiritual and physical welfare of their children. Since most of us like to become involved with other people, some have shared spiritual and material gifts. You do not have to be wealthy.

Often just baking some special goody for a friend can be very rewarding.—Proverbs 31:10-31.

"Now I know what I had been missing," confessed a former soap-opera addict. "Personal study and prayer. Philippians 4:6-9 concerning prayer and clean thoughts really helped me. Now I start the day with the daily text and some other Bible literature. Jehovah has provided plenty of real-life dramas in the Bible,

I know what I had been missing—personal study and prayer.'—A former soap-opera addict

such as the accounts of Jesus, Job, David and others. Or I consider the experiences of modern-day Witnesses. Though there is still a little part in me just dying to find out 'what's going on' with the soaps, my desire to obey Jehovah stops me."

Yes, it really comes down to our desire to please Jehovah *from our heart*. This is not to say that all TV programs are corrupting. However, a Christian must be selective, for experience has shown that programs that justify the violation of Bible standards can corrupt a Christian's heart.

"O you lovers of Jehovah, hate what is bad." (Psalm 97:10) To obey this command is not always easy. Our heart has to be carefully protected. May all of us feel as did King David: "I shall walk about in the integrity of my heart inside my house. I shall not set in front of my eyes any good-for-nothing thing. The doing of those who fall away I have hated; it does not cling to me [like a daily habit]. My eyes are upon the faithful ones of the earth."—Psalm 101:2, 3, 6.

Why a Letter to the Ephesians?



GREAT is Artemis of the Ephesians!" Can you imagine a theater, capable of holding twenty-five thousand spectators, packed with people in an angry religious frenzy who were shouting the above phrase incessantly for two hours? It happened!—Acts 19:28, 34.

Why such ardent fervor? Who was Artemis? For that matter, who were the Ephesians? Who sent them a letter—and why?

An Ancient Religious Center

Ephesus was one of the most prominent cities of the first century of our Common Era, with an estimated population in excess of a quarter million. The city was a wealthy center of trade and culture, but it was not just the wealth, mild climate and beauty of the area that attracted multitudes. Ephesus was a re-

ligious center of the ancient world and boasted a temple so great that it was called one of the seven wonders of the world.

The goddess Artemis, or Diana, was worshiped in this plush temple, where gold is reputed to have been used between the joints of marble blocks. On occasion, as many as seven hundred thousand from Ephesus and distant lands would line the streets as the "virgin goddess" was paraded through the city. The making and selling of silver images of this multibreasted goddess of fertility was a thriving business in Ephesus.—Acts 19:24, 25.

It was into a city of this kind that the man Paul came preaching Christianity to the Ephesians. He had been commissioned by Jesus Christ to be "an apostle to the nations." (Romans 11:13) A congregation was formed and grew rapidly in Ephesus. The new ones quickly discarded their images and books on magic. (Acts 19:19) Because this fast-growing new religion opposed the use of images, Demetrius, the silversmith, incited the people to near riot, resulting in their crying, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"

The Ephesus congregation had essentially been formed by Paul, the writer of the letter. It was a congregation made up primarily of Gentiles, that is, non-Jews, or people of the nations. (Ephesians 3:1) Those who became Christians in Ephesus had abandoned a degrading form of worship.—Ephesians 4:17-19.

Restoring Unity and Peace

From Rome Paul wrote to the Ephesians while he was in prison, about the year 60 or 61 C.E. (Ephesians 1:1; 6:20) Near the letter's outset he provides

a statement of God's grand purpose for restoring unity and peace, as outlined in the Scriptures. It becomes the focal point around which the rest of the letter hinges.

Paul wrote: "He [God] made known to us *the sacred secret* of his will. It is according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself for an administration at the full limit of the appointed times, namely, to gather all things together again in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth." (Ephesians 1:9, 10) As shown here, it was God's will to right all the wrongs that had occurred throughout the universe as a result of the rebellion of Satan.

Paul wanted these Gentile Ephesian Christians to get the full import of what an unspeakable privilege it was for them to be so intimately involved in the out-working of God's will. So, immediately after his opening greeting, Paul pointed to their privileged situation. They had become part of a group that God had chosen "before the founding of the world" to be with Christ in his heavenly Kingdom.—Ephesians 1:3-7.

Truly, what a privilege for the Gentile Ephesians, once "alienated" and "without God in the world," to enjoy the prospect, along with Jews, of becoming heavenly rulers with Christ in God's Kingdom! This was the "sacred secret" that Paul repeatedly refers to in this letter, "namely, that people of the nations should be joint heirs and fellow members of the body and partakers with us of the promise in union with Christ Jesus."—Ephesians 2:11-13; 3:3-6.

So the letter to the Ephesians reveals that Jehovah God purposes to restore unity and peace universally. As Paul wrote, God will "gather all things together again in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth." It was only prior to Satan's rebellion that

true unity existed in all the universe. But by means of God's "administration," that is, his handling, or managing, of affairs, such unity will again be realized.

By accepting Christ as their ransomer, "the things in the heavens"—that is, those persons who are adopted to be heavenly sons—"are gathered together again in the Christ." However, in keeping with God's purpose, the due time must come for the accomplishing of the second feature of His "administration," namely, to gather together "the things on the earth." This occurs during Christ's presence in Kingdom power when he gathers his "other sheep" who are destined for life on the earth under the heavenly Kingdom.—John 10:16.

Following along on his theme, Paul shows how peace and unity need to be pursued by all within "the congregation, which is [Christ's] body." (Ephesians 1:22, 23) Thus there is no longer to be a distinction between Jew and Gentile, circumcision and uncircumcision. *All* must be willing to work for unity and peace.—Ephesians 2:11.

All together Paul uses the word "union" 13 times in this letter, more than in any other letter of his. And he uses the word "peace" eight times, more than in any other letter except the one to the Romans. We can better understand the need of emphasizing unity and



peace when we appreciate the sharp differences that had existed for centuries between Jews and Gentiles. (Acts 10:28) Paul stresses the important role of Christ in this matter. "For he is our peace," Paul says, "he who made the two parties one and destroyed the wall [the Law of Moses] in between that fenced them off."—Ephesians 2:14.

Working for Peace and Unity

The last three chapters of Paul's letter address situations and provide counsel that would make for peace and unity in the immediate circumstances of those Ephesians. And how can peace and unity be achieved? The exercising of love is vital. To emphasize this fact Paul uses the words "love," "loved," "loves" and "loving" 19 times, more often than in any other letter of his! Thus he urges "putting up with one another in love, earnestly endeavoring to observe the oneness of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace."—Ephesians 4:2, 3.

Paul goes on to describe God's provisions for unified activity. As he says, God "gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelizers, some as shepherds and teachers . . . until we all attain to the oneness in the faith." Then Paul uses the illustration of the unified workings of a human body, which make "for the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."—Ephesians 4:11-16.

So things that disrupt peace and unity must now be avoided. These would include speaking falsehood, being wrathful or lazy, and uttering rotten sayings rather than sayings that are good and upbuilding. Stealing was actually encouraged in Ephesus, since a thief could flee to the temple of Artemis and escape arrest. But Paul said: "Let the stealer steal no more."—Ephesians 4:25-30.

Just imagine how the application of Paul's following admonition would make

for peace and unity: "Let all malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you along with all badness. But become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving one another just as God also by Christ freely forgave you."—Ephesians 4:31, 32.

Fornication, uncleanness, greediness, shameful conduct, foolish talking, obscene jesting, drunkenness—all such things lead to trouble not only with fellow humans but also with God. So Paul urges: "Quit sharing with them [people of the nations] in the unfruitful works that belong to the darkness." "Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons . . . because the days are wicked."—Ephesians 5:1-20.

Paul describes that following the loving example of Christ and the counsel of God's Word will make for peace within families. He also emphasizes how employees and employers can get along together peacefully by remembering their obligations to God. (Ephesians 5:21-6:9) Yet it is necessary to realize that the one who first disrupted universal peace and unity, Satan the Devil, will strongly oppose all efforts of Christians to do God's will. So they must "put on the complete suit of armor from God" to resist the Devil and his demons successfully.—Ephesians 6:10-18.

When we consider all that it contains, how thankful to God we are that he inspired Paul to write the letter to the Ephesians! His letter has been praised by many scholars, one describing it as "embracing in its brevity the whole field of the Christian religion." Not only does it expound on God's grand purpose to right the wrong in all the universe but it also gives much practical counsel and admonition to help us serve God in such a way as to win his everlasting favor and blessing.

Insight on the News

"Urgent Hunger for Peace"

Pollster Louis Harris cannot recall in his more than thirty years of conducting opinion polls when he has seen more of an "urgent hunger for peace" than now, according to a recent interview in *The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. In his latest findings on public attitude toward the threat of nuclear war he states: "Perhaps the most striking number in all the research we've done on the subject is that by 74 to 22 percent, a big majority of the American people, say that they want all countries that have nuclear weapons to destroy them." He attributes this mainly to "a growing distrust of the rulers of the two superpowers." And he describes these findings as "an incredible phenomenon . . . an idea that will not go away."

The European Nuclear Disarmament movement is sweeping Europe with similar effect, involving all types of people including professionals. For instance, 160 scientists and scholars from 37 countries attended the Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs in Poland during August. A call for a nuclear weapons freeze by 97 Nobel laureates was unanimously adopted by the conference and its final statement cautioned: "The menace of nuclear war has increased."

Mankind's hunger for peace can only be satisfied by God himself when he makes "wars to cease to the extremity of the earth" through his heavenly Kingdom. Then "the

righteous one will sprout, and the abundance of peace until the moon is no more" will become a global reality.—Psalm 46:9; 72:7.

UN Ignored

The past year has witnessed an unusual increase in armed conflicts and world tension. Has the United Nations lived up to its charter as an instrument of peace and relieved this strain? No—and neither are nations giving heed to its advice, according to the UN's new secretary-general, Javier Pérez de Cuéllar. "The United Nations itself has been unable to play as effective and decisive a role as the Charter certainly envisaged for it," he said in his blunt report on "The Work of the Organization." One of the main reasons why the UN has failed to keep peace and to serve as a forum for negotiations is the ineffectiveness of its primary organ for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council. The Council finds that "its resolutions are increasingly defied or ignored," laments Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar. This prompted the secretary-general to say: "We sometimes appear still to be in the grip of the dead hand of a less fortunate past." As the world sinks deeper toward disaster, what is needed is a sure hand to pull honest-hearted people to safety. Where can such a hand be found? Certainly not among human institutions! The psalmist David trusted God and said: "Your right hand will save me," and the prophet Isaiah wrote: "Look! The

hand of Jehovah has not become too short that it cannot save."

—Psalm 138:7; Isaiah 59:1.

Herpes—The "Bug" That Will Not Go Away

Participants in the sexual revolution are paying a high price for their promiscuous pleasure—genital herpes. This viral infection, with symptoms that include fluid-filled blisters in the genital area, is generally, though not always, transmitted by sexual contact and there is *no known cure*. The disease now infects an estimated twenty million Americans. A *Time* magazine cover story calls this sexual scourge "the new Scarlet Letter" and centers on the reason for its surge: "Not only are more people indulging in [promiscuous] sex, they are also more active—starting younger, marrying later, divorcing more often."

However, more and more of the "sexually liberated" are questioning the value of casual "sex," according to New York Group Therapist Dominick Riccio. He says: "They're disillusioned with free sex and terrified of getting herpes and having it forever." One prominent advocate of "free sex" says: "It may be there is a god in heaven carving out his pound of flesh for all our joys." The sexually loose are indeed "receiving in themselves the full recompense, which was due for their error." (Romans 1:27) This, of course, does not apply to clean-living persons who contract the disease from sources other than sexual contact.

“The God of All Comfort” Is With Us

“Blessed be . . . the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation.”—2 CORINTHIANS 1:3, 4.

JEHOVAH is “the God of all comfort.” The apostle Paul knew this from personal experience. Thus, for the encouragement of fellow Christians, he wrote these heartening words:

² “Blessed be . . . the Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation. . . . Now whether we are in tribulation, it is for your comfort and salvation; or whether we are being comforted, it is for your comfort that operates to make you endure the same sufferings that we also suffer. And so our hope for you is unwavering, knowing as we do that, just as you are sharers of the sufferings, in the same way you will also share the comfort.”—2 Corinthians 1:3-7.

³ Yes, Paul knew Jehovah to be “the God of all comfort.” He had experienced his heavenly Father’s comforting and tenderly merciful dealings with him, especially when he was suffering “for righteousness’ sake.” (Compare Matthew 5:10.) The apostle could, therefore, comfort others and encourage them to endure tribulation. Surely, by their example of

1, 2. At 2 Corinthians 1:3-7, what did the apostle Paul say about comfort in times of tribulation?

3. (a) Why did Paul know Jehovah as “the God of all comfort”? (b) On what basis can fellow Witnesses be comforted and encouraged to endure tribulation?

faithfulness and their expressions of trust in Jehovah, Christian witnesses of Jehovah who have endured tribulation provide encouragement that prompts fellow believers to remain faithful to God. And in the enduring of sufferings Paul was exemplary.

A Record of Faithful Endurance

⁴ About 55 C.E. Paul wrote his second inspired letter to Christians in the city of Corinth. There he was opposed by those whom he sarcastically termed “superfine apostles.” He courageously defended his apostolic position, not for his own sake, but “for God,” that is, to save the congregation belonging to Jehovah. (2 Corinthians 11:5, 12-14; 12:11; 5:12, 13) The apostle showed that he was equal to his opponents genealogically and then pointed out that he was superior to them in labors, sufferings, travels, perils and hardships as a ‘minister of Christ.’ He wrote:

⁵ “Are they [his opponents] ministers of Christ? I reply like a madman, I am more outstandingly one: in labors more plentifully, in prisons more plentifully, in blows to an excess, in near-deaths often. By Jews I five times received forty strokes less one, three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I experienced shipwreck, a night and a day I have spent in the deep; in

4, 5. (a) When did Paul write Second Corinthians? (b) How was Paul equal to Corinth’s “superfine apostles,” but how was he superior to them?

journeys often, in dangers from rivers, in dangers from highwaymen, in dangers from my own race, in dangers from the nations, in dangers in the city, in dangers in the wilderness, in dangers at sea, in dangers among false brothers, in labor and toil, in sleepless nights often, in hunger and thirst, in abstinence from food many times, in cold and nakedness."

—2 Corinthians 11:21-27.

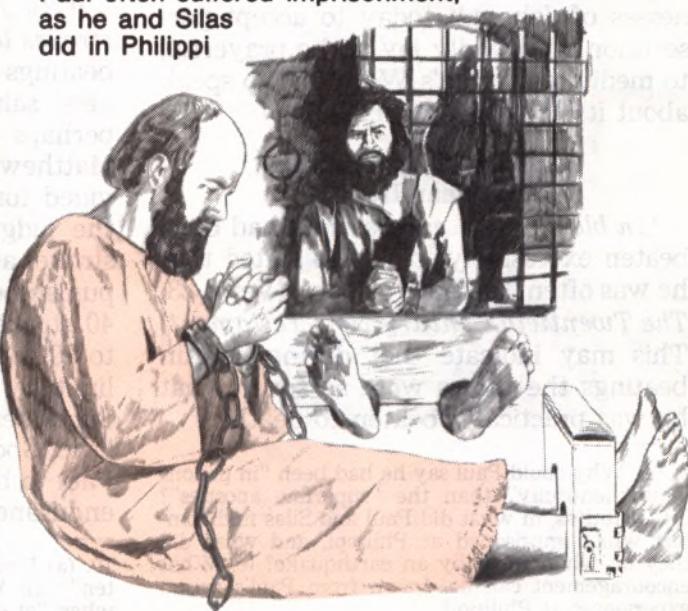
⁶ The Bible book Acts of Apostles (9:3 to about 20:4) mentions some of the foregoing features of Paul's life from the time he became a Christian until he wrote Second Corinthians. Now let us reflect on his record of faithful endurance. No doubt this will encourage us to endure tribulation with confidence that "the God of all comfort" is with us.

'More Plentiful Labors and Imprisonments'

⁷ *In labors more plentifully:* As a proclaimer of the "good news," Paul "worked much harder" than his opponents. (2 Corinthians 11:23, *Today's English Version*) He, of course, had engaged in the preaching work for a longer time and often in very difficult territory. For instance, in Ephesus, where the pagan goddess Artemis was worshiped and Paul was the victim of mob action, his efforts in the ministry and in behalf of fellow believers were very strenuous,

sometimes even heartrending. But fine spiritual fruitage resulted. Later, he could appropriately say to the "older men" of the Ephesus congregation: "I did not hold back from telling you any of the things that were profitable nor from teaching you publicly and from house to house. But I thoroughly bore witness both to Jews and to Greeks about repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus." (Acts 20:17, 20, 21, 31; 19:1-41) So, then, before these men who were now elders had become Christians, the apostle Paul had taught them the basic truths of Christianity in the "house to house" preaching activity. It was the operation of Jehovah's Word and holy spirit on Paul's heart that spurred him on to labor vigorously in spreading the good news and promoting Kingdom interests. (Isaiah 61:1, 2; Romans 10:8-10) In such vigorous activity the apostle set 20th-century Christians an excellent example.

Paul often suffered imprisonment, as he and Silas did in Philippi



6. (a) Where do we find a record of some features of Paul's Christian life before his writing Second Corinthians? (b) How will we benefit from reflecting on Paul's record of faithful endurance?
7. (a) What work is meant by Paul's 'more plentiful labors'? (b) According to the apostle's words to the "older men" of the Ephesus congregation, how did he carry on his ministry? (c) What spurred Paul on in vigorous labors for the good news and Kingdom interests?

⁸ *In prisons more plentifully:* Clement of Rome, writing toward the end of the first century C.E., says that Paul had been imprisoned on seven occasions. Before the writing of Second Corinthians he had already been in prison more often than the "superfine apostles." The record in Acts tells of one such imprisonment—in the Macedonian city of Philippi. Obviously Paul and Silas were happy to suffer "for righteousness' sake," for while imprisoned there they prayed to God and praised him with song. They found comfort in reflecting on the Scriptures as well as in the realization that God heard their prayers and was answering them. (Psalm 65:2; 119:52) When freed by an earthquake, they did not make a fast getaway, but, rather, "spoke the word of Jehovah to [the jailer] together with all those in his house." The result? Why, the jailer and his household became Christians! (Acts 16:16-40) Truly, this account encourages imprisoned witnesses of Jehovah today to accept persecution with godly joy, to be prayerful, to meditate on God's Word and to speak about it boldly!—Acts 4:29-31.

Undaunted by Beatings and Near-Deaths

⁹ *In blows to an excess:* Paul had been beaten excessively. It is also stated that he was often "at death's door." (Verse 23, *The Twentieth Century New Testament*) This may indicate that during certain beatings the blows were so severe that he was practically beaten to death.

8. (a) Why could Paul say he had been "in prisons more plentifully" than the "superfine apostles"? (b) Doubtless, in what did Paul and Silas find comfort while imprisoned at Philippi, and what did they do when freed by an earthquake? (c) What encouragement can be drawn from Paul's prison experiences at Philippi?

9. What is indicated by the words "blows to an excess"?

¹⁰ *In near-deaths often:* This would not necessarily pertain only to certain beatings. Earlier in the same letter Paul had said: "Always we endure everywhere in our body the death-dealing treatment given to Jesus." (2 Corinthians 4:10, 11) The apostle had been in life-threatening peril or even deathly pain at Damascus, Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Thessalonica and Beroea. (Acts 9:23-25; 13:49-51; 14:1-6, 19, 20; 17:1, 5-9, 13, 14) In fact, he may have been exposed to the death-dealing dangers of the Roman games, in view of his reference to 'fighting wild beasts at Ephesus.' (1 Corinthians 15:32; compare Acts 19:23-41; 2 Corinthians 1:8-11.) Having his life imperiled so often, the apostle could certainly say: "Daily I face death." (1 Corinthians 15:31) Undoubtedly, the help of Jehovah's holy spirit and Paul's faith in God's precious promises sustained the apostle when he was often "at death's door."—2 Corinthians 1:20-22.

¹¹ *By Jews I five times received forty strokes less one:* Paul indicated that five beatings he experienced "for righteousness' sake" were carried out by Jews, perhaps in their synagogues. (Verse 24; Matthew 10:17) The Mosaic Law provided for beating by stick or rod, with the judges determining the number of strokes according to the misdeed. But the punishment humanely was restricted to 40 strokes, and the Jews reduced them to 39 so as to avoid exceeding the legal limit by mistake. (Deuteronomy 25:1-3) Such beatings were very painful. But "the God of all comfort" strengthened Paul to bear this treatment with faithful endurance.

10. (a) How had Paul experienced "near-deaths often"? (b) What apparently sustained the apostle when "at death's door"?

11. What was the nature of Paul's beatings by Jews?

¹² *Three times I was beaten with rods:* Evidently these three severe beatings were administered by rod-bearing Roman officers. (Verse 25) These beatings with the rod were carried out after the victim had been stripped of his outer garments. As a Roman citizen, Paul was legally exempted from such beatings. However, that did not save him and Silas from receiving "many blows" before their imprisonment as proclaimers of the good news at Philippi. (Acts 16:19-24, 33, 35-40) Such beatings could be quite brutal, but with the help of God's spirit Paul faithfully endured this harsh treatment "for righteousness' sake." And with similar divine support, many present-day

12. (a) Evidently, to what treatment did the apostle refer when he said "three times I was beaten with rods"? (b) With what help can beatings "for righteousness' sake" be endured?

Christians have maintained integrity to God despite comparable physical abuse.

¹³ *Once I was stoned:* At Lystra fanatical Jews "stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, imagining he was dead." Of course, that stoning had death as its objective. (Compare Leviticus 20:2; Acts 7:58-60.) But "when the disciples surrounded him, he rose up and entered into the city," resuming his ministerial travels the very next day.—Acts 14:19-22.

Shipwreck and Peril at Sea

¹⁴ *Three times I experienced shipwreck:* The book of Acts records only

13. Where was Paul stoned, but did that stop his ministry?

14. What shipwreck experiences did Paul mention, and what effect did they have on his travels in behalf of the good news?



Four times
in the course of his ministry
Paul experienced shipwreck



one shipwreck, and that occurred after Paul wrote to the Corinthians. It happened when Paul was en route to Rome. (Acts, chapter 27) However, prior to this the apostle often traveled aboard seagoing vessels, and it was not uncommon for shipwrecks to occur during coastal voyages. Hence, although the Scriptures provide no details regarding the three shipwrecks here cited, it is evident that the hazards of voyages on the Mediterranean did not cause Paul to curtail his travels in behalf of the good news.

¹⁵ *A night and a day I have spent in the deep:* Of course, the apostle did not say that he miraculously endured a 24-hour period under water. As a shipwreck victim, he may have spent those perilous hours partly struggling to swim in turbulent waters or clinging to floating timber or debris from the wrecked vessel. Even if he was on a raft, this harrowing experience (not mentioned elsewhere in the Scriptures) called for courageous endurance until the apostle was rescued or made it to land. Surely, Paul 'cried out to Jehovah in his distress, and out of the stresses upon him God brought him forth.' (Compare Psalm 107:23-31.) That same "God of all comfort" can answer our prayers too.—Compare 1 John 5:13-15.

15. (a) What did Paul mean when he said "a night and a day I have spent in the deep"? (b) How did "the God of all comfort" help Paul in the foregoing case, and what confidence should this give us?

Our God Provides Unfailing Comfort

¹⁶ We have noted some sources of comfort that helped Paul to remain faithful to Jehovah despite tribulation. These merit emphasis, for they will help present-day witnesses of Jehovah to endure sufferings "for righteousness' sake."

¹⁷ *The help of Jehovah's holy spirit* is invaluable. Especially during tribulation should we pray for the spirit, yield to its direction and manifest its fruitage. (Luke 11:13; Psalm 143:10; Galatians 5:22, 23) Jehovah's spirit operating on our hearts makes us conscious of his love, and this comforting assurance will help us to endure tribulation.—Romans 5:3-5; 8:35-39; 2 Thessalonians 3:5.

¹⁸ *Faith in God's precious promises*, as set forth in the Scriptures, will also comfort us. (Romans 15:4) Remember, "for the joy that was set before [Jesus Christ] he endured a torture stake." (Hebrews 12:1, 2) Even if we should suffer to the point of passing through "death's door," there is the marvelous prospect of a resurrection and of endless life in God's new order, whether our hopes are heavenly or earthly. (Matthew 10:28; Luke 23:43; John 5:28, 29; 17:3; 1 Corinthians 15:53; 2 Peter 3:13) How "momentary and light" tribulation is when we have

16, 17. Why can it be said that the help of Jehovah's holy spirit is invaluable when we are suffering "for righteousness' sake"?

18. During tribulation as Christians, how can faith in God's precious promises comfort us?

Do you recall these points?

- Why did the apostle Paul know Jehovah to be "the God of all comfort"?
- How may Christians who have endured tribulation encourage fellow believers to remain faithful to Jehovah?

- What work was included in the apostle's 'more plentiful labors'?
- How can we benefit from Paul's prison experiences?
- What are some ways in which Jehovah God provides unfailing comfort?

eternity in view!—2 Corinthians 4:16-18.
¹⁹ God's providing us peace of mind and strength in answer to our prayers is also a great source of comfort during tribulation. (See Luke 22:32; Acts 4:23-31; James 5:16-18.) Jesus earnestly supplicated and petitioned Jehovah, "who was able to save him out of death, . . . and he was favorably heard for his godly fear." Yes, Jehovah sent an angel to strengthen Jesus in a time of trial. (Hebrews 5:7; Luke 22:43) Surely, when we see that

19. How does prayer bring us comfort amid tribulations?

Jehovah is answering our prayers amid tribulations, we are comforted.

²⁰ If we are earnestly striving to endure faithfully as Christian witnesses of Jehovah, "the God of all comfort" will be with us, even as he was with the apostle Paul. So far, we have considered Paul's labors and sufferings. But his defense as a 'minister of Christ' shows that he also surpassed Corinth's "superfine apostles" in travels, perils and hardships. What can we learn from these experiences?

20. We will next consider what other ways in which Paul surpassed Corinth's "superfine apostles"?

We Can 'Endure to the End'

"He who patiently endures to the end, will be saved."—MATTHEW 24:13,
THE EMPHATIC DIAGLOTT.

JESUS CHRIST, in the great prophecy regarding his "presence," made this hope-inspiring statement: "He that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved." (Matthew 24:3, 13) For us as individuals, "the end" may be either "the conclusion of the system of things" or our death, perhaps after long, hard testing. Yet, for ultimate salvation, faithful endurance is vital.—1 Peter 1:8, 9.

² Jesus provided a perfect example of

1. (a) For us as individuals, what may be "the end" Jesus mentioned, as recorded at Matthew 24:13? (b) What is vital for salvation?

2, 3. (a) Why can we be confident that we, though being imperfect, can attain to salvation? (b) What will we now consider?

endurance. (Hebrews 12:1-3) But as imperfect humans we can be faithful to God despite intense suffering and persecution "for righteousness' sake." (Matthew 5:10) Yes, by Jehovah's undeserved kindness we can attain salvation to everlasting life through the ransom sacrifice of his beloved Son, Jesus Christ.—John 3:16; 1 John 2:1, 2.

³ The apostle Paul, though he was an imperfect human, furnishes us a fine example of endurance leading to salvation. In considering a portion of his defense recorded at 2 Corinthians 11:23-27, we have learned that in labors and sufferings he was "more outstandingly" a 'minister of Christ' than were Corinth's "superfine apostles." As we shall see, he also surpassed them as 'Christ's minister' in journeys, dangers and various hardships.

Perilous Travels to Further the Good News

⁴ *In journeys often:* Paul traveled frequently to proclaim the good news, far outstripping his Corinthian opponents in this regard. (Verses 23, 26) Of course, he faced dangers common to travelers in the Roman world. But his journeys were very extensive and quite fatiguing. His travels took him to such cities as Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Philippi, Thessalonica, Beroea, Athens and Corinth.—Acts 13:14-14:26; 16:11-18:17.

⁵ The apostle's journeys were even more taxing and dangerous because he was 'an object of hatred on account of Christ's name.' (Matthew 10:22) Nevertheless, Jehovah gave Paul the vitality and courage needed for his arduous travels. (Isaiah 40:28-31) Certainly, as a

4. To what travels did the apostle Paul refer when indicating he 'journeyed often'?

5. What made Paul's journeys especially taxing and dangerous, and how could he endure such arduous travels?

hardworking minister, the apostle set present-day witnesses of Jehovah a fine example in promoting Kingdom interests.—Matthew 6:33.

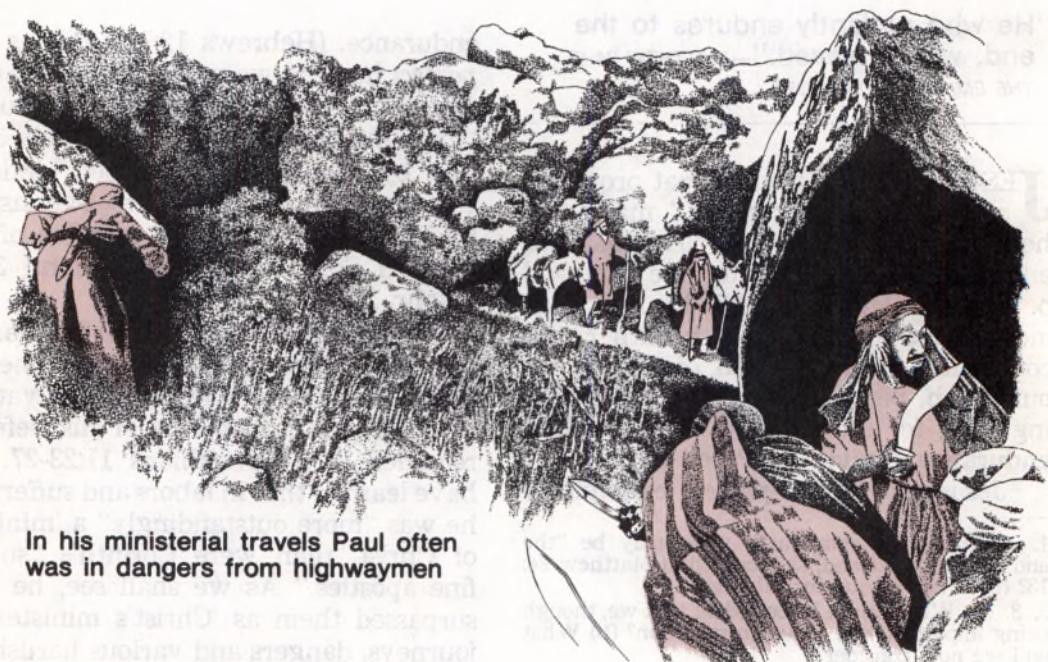
Faithfully Enduring Many Dangers

⁶ *In dangers from rivers:* Since there were comparatively few bridges, Paul's life must often have been endangered while he forded flood-swollen rivers. For example, during his first missionary tour and the return trip, he journeyed through Pisidia, where rushing mountain rivers posed great dangers. (Acts 13:13, 14; 14:21, 24) From Paul's endurance under such circumstances Jehovah's Witnesses—especially missionaries and other ministers in remote areas—can draw encouragement.

⁷ *In dangers from highwaymen:* Jesus'

6. To what "dangers from rivers" could the apostle have been referring?

7. (a) What "dangers from highwaymen" confronted Paul? (b) How can Witnesses today endure similar dangers?

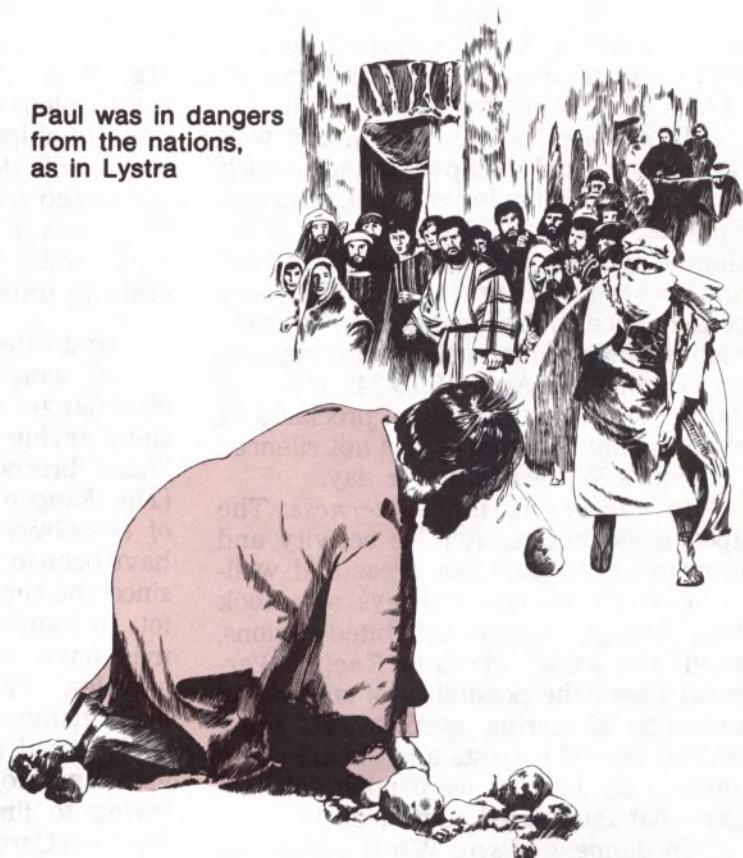


In his ministerial travels Paul often was in dangers from highwaymen

illustration of the neighborly Samaritan shows that a first-century traveler could 'fall among robbers, who might strip him, inflict blows and leave him half-dead.' (Luke 10:25-37) Bandits were common in many areas through which Paul traveled. For instance, when he and Barnabas journeyed northward from Perga to Antioch in Pisidia, they passed through bandit-infested mountainous terrain. (Acts 13:13, 14) Such dangerous criminals would ambush victims in desolate areas and would not hesitate to use violence. Possibly, Paul himself was attacked by highwaymen. Modern-day witnesses of Jehovah may face similar dangers and need to exercise caution. Like the apostle, however, they can endure faithfully, not succumbing to fear but being confident of Jehovah's protection.—Compare Psalm 56:4.

⁸ *In dangers from my own race:* Paul was preaching about an impaled and resurrected Messiah, who was rejected by his own countrymen in general. (1 Corinthians 1:22-24; 2:2) Moreover, he taught that a person would be declared righteous, not by works of the Mosaic Law, but through faith in Jesus Christ. (Romans 3:20; 5:18-21; 6:14) Hence, fellow Jews considered Paul an apostate, hated him, beat him and even wanted to kill

Paul was in dangers from the nations, as in Lystra



him. (Acts 9:23-25) Those of his own race also seemed upset because he was winning over to Christianity some Gentiles that the Jews had sought to make proselytes to their own religion.—Matthew 23:15; Acts 17:1-10.

⁹ *In dangers from the nations:* Gentiles, or people of the nations, also persecuted Paul. (Acts 19:11-41) In fact, his Jewish foes sometimes incited Gentiles to violent action against the apostle. (Acts 14:1-7, 19, 20) However, such dangers from Jews and Gentiles never silenced that fearless Kingdom proclaimer. Sim-

8. Why did fellow Jews hate Paul and even want to kill him?

9. What "dangers from the nations" did the apostle face, but did such perils silence him?

ilarly, persecuted Christian witnesses of Jehovah today fearlessly preach among people of their own race and others.—Acts 17:30; compare Psalm 59:1-4.

¹⁰ *In dangers in the city:* In one way or another, Paul was persecuted in such cities as Damascus, Jerusalem, Lystra and Ephesus. (Acts 9:23-30; 14:19; 19:29-31) Gentile opposers at Philippi said that Paul and Silas were ‘disturbing their city.’ As a consequence, those evangelizers became victims there of mob action, beatings and imprisonment. (Acts 16:16-24) But this did not stop those Kingdom proclaimers, even as similar violence has not silenced Jehovah’s Witnesses in our day.

¹¹ *In dangers in the wilderness:* The apostle did not restrict his activity and movements to populous areas and well-traveled roads. His journeys also took him through sparsely inhabited regions, even “the wilds.” (*Today’s English Version*) There the possibility of starvation, exposure to storms, getting lost, being stalked by wild beasts and experiencing ambush by bandits were potential dangers that Paul faced courageously.

¹² *In dangers at sea:* When activity in

10. How was Paul endangered “in the city”?
11. What were the possible “dangers in the wilderness”?
12. What “dangers at sea” did Paul face, and did these deter him from carrying on his ministry?

In Our Next Issue

- The Bible—Do We Need It?
- Was Jesus Born on December 25?
- Love, the “Perfect Bond of Union”

spreading the good news or aiding fellow believers called for travel “on the high seas” (*TEV*), there were dangers from violent storms, as well as the possibility of shipwreck. Yet Paul did not let such perils deter him from carrying on his ministry, even as many of Jehovah’s Witnesses in our time courageously endure similar dangers when traveling in order to promote Kingdom interests.

Imperiled by “False Brothers”

¹³ *In dangers among false brothers:* Most dangerous of all, and doubtless especially trying to Paul, were treacherous “false brothers” or “pseudo-brothers.” (*The Kingdom Interlinear Translation of the Greek Scriptures*) Such persons have been found among Christ’s followers since the time of traitorous Judas Iscariot. In Paul’s day these “false brothers” may have included Corinth’s “superfine apostles.” “False brothers” were especially dangerous because they treacherously posed as friends while they were actually disloyal traitors. Such men were trying to find some accusation against Paul.—2 Corinthians 11:5, 12-14; compare Daniel 6:4, 5.

¹⁴ Among the “pseudo-brothers” were those active in “the congregations of Galatia.” But Paul never yielded to such men, “in order that the truth of the good news might continue with” his fellow believers. (Galatians 1:1, 2; 2:4, 5; compare Jude 3, 4.) As Jehovah helped Paul, He has fortified His present-day witnesses spiritually so that “the truth of the good news” continues with them. In such writings as the divinely inspired letters to Corinthian and Galatian believers, they find spiritual aid needed for de-

- 13, 14. (a) Who were the “false brothers”? (b) Why were the “false brothers” especially dangerous? (c) How have Jehovah’s Witnesses been fortified spiritually for defense against “false brothers” who may infiltrate congregations?

fense against "false brothers" who may infiltrate congregations.

Enduring Hardships in "Sacred Service"

¹⁵ *In labor and toil:* Paul next cited hardships making him "more outstandingly" a 'minister of Christ' than his opponents. (Verses 23, 27) The "labor and toil" here mentioned could pertain partly to fatiguing manual work that Paul performed to sustain himself in the ministry. (Acts 18:1-4; 1 Corinthians 4:11, 12; 2 Thessalonians 3:7, 8) But everything the apostle did was centered around Jehovah's service. Hence, this "labor and toil" doubtless included his exertions and resulting weariness due to rigorous travels, exposure to the elements, privations and other hardships endured in "sacred service" to Jehovah.—Romans 12:1.

¹⁶ *In sleepless nights often:* Because of Paul's desire to avoid placing a financial burden upon those to whom he preached the good news, he labored manually "night and day," probably with frequent and considerable loss of sleep. (1 Thessalonians 2:9) Of course, all of this was associated with the apostle's activity as a 'minister of Christ.' His "sleepless nights" did not result from anxiety over material necessities, for Jehovah sees to it that His servants have these. (Matthew 6:25-34) But some of those wakeful nights could have been spent in prayer or in deep concern for fellow believers. (Compare Luke 6:12-16; 2 Corinthians 11:28, 29.) On one occasion he found it necessary to speak to the assembled brothers "until midnight," yes, even all night "until day-break." (Acts 20:7-12) Moreover, many of those nights without sleep must have resulted from bodily discomfort, dangers

15. To what did Paul refer when he said he was "more outstandingly" Christ's minister "in labor and toil"?

16. What accounted for Paul's frequent "sleepless nights"?

and other hardships endured while the apostle was performing his ministry.

¹⁷ *In hunger and thirst:* Paul could have experienced "hunger and thirst" while traveling through desolate regions or hot desert areas. At times he may have been hungry and thirsty because of being dependent on strangers or on whatever provisions he could obtain through his own labors in unfamiliar locales. Yet Jehovah always saw to it that Paul survived, even though provisions were meager at times. Comparably, "the God of all comfort" provides sustenance for his present-day servants.—Psalm 37:25; Luke 11:2, 3.

¹⁸ *In abstinence from food many times:* Here (verse 27) Paul may have intended to contrast *involuntary* "hunger and thirst" with *deliberate* "abstinence from food [literally, "fastings"] many times." On certain occasions he may have fasted voluntarily, as when devoting himself to prayer or to caring for very weighty spiritual matters. (Compare Acts 13:3; 14:23.) But if he was citing only hardships here, he meant going without food involuntarily, perhaps due to an illness, such as dysentery, or privations experienced in the ministry. (Compare 2 Corinthians 6:5.) Of course, when Paul set out on certain ministerial trips he may have realized that food and water would be scarce or unavailable. But he did not let this deter him from furthering Christian interests.—Philippians 4:12.

¹⁹ *In cold and nakedness:* The hardships of cold and comparative "nakedness," or "exposure," were also endured by the apostle. (*The New English Bible*) But he was not "scantly clothed"

17. When may the apostle have experienced "hunger and thirst"?

18. "Abstinence from food many times" could relate to what?

19. Under what circumstances may Paul have endured "cold and nakedness"?

Can you now answer these questions?

- What is meant by 'enduring to the end'?
- To travels of what kind did the apostle Paul refer when he spoke of "journeys often"?
- How was the apostle imperiled by "false brothers," and how have Jehovah's present-day witnesses
- been spiritually fortified against such persons?
- Under what circumstances did Paul experience "hunger and thirst," as well as "cold and nakedness"?
- Though we are imperfect, as Paul was, how is it possible to 'endure to the end'?

because of laziness. Paul worked to provide for his needs. (1 Corinthians 4:11, 12; compare Acts 20:33, 34.) "Cold and nakedness" were hardships the apostle endured while inadequately clothed during persecution, when traveling in inclement weather or while engaging in the ministry under difficult circumstances.

'Endure to the End'

²⁰ Having considered some of the apostle Paul's labors, sufferings, travels, perils and hardships, one might view him as a human tower of strength. Like each one of us, however, he was an imperfect human. (Romans 7:21-25) In fact, his Corinthian opponents looked down on him, saying: "His letters are weighty and forceful, but his presence in person is weak and his speech contemptible." (2 Corinthians 10:10) Moreover, Paul had a "thorn in the flesh"—possibly an affliction of the eyes.—2 Corinthians 12:7; Acts 23:1-5; Galatians 4:15; 6:11.

²¹ Similarly, as Jehovah's modern-day witnesses, we are imperfect, although we, like Paul, earnestly strive to please God. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27) The world looks down on us, as some did on the apostle, even though we show deep concern for

the spiritual welfare of fellow humans. (Matthew 22:39) Like Paul, many of us have some affliction. But this makes us more dependent on God's strength, and in our weakness his power is made especially manifest among those to whom we preach.—2 Corinthians 12:7-10.

²² There is no doubt that power from above sustained Paul right down to his death as an imperfect but faithful servant of Jehovah. (2 Corinthians 4:7; 2 Timothy 4:6-8) Comparably, it is only in God's strength that we can 'endure to the end' of this wicked system of things or to our death in faithfulness. (Psalm 29:11; Matthew 10:28; 24:3, 13; Mark 13:13) If called upon to suffer "for righteousness' sake," we are greatly comforted by Jehovah's holy spirit, his precious promises and his answers to our prayers. Such things make us confident that "the God of all comfort" is with us. Like the apostle Paul we may be "perplexed, but not absolutely with no way out . . . persecuted, but not left in the lurch . . . thrown down, but not destroyed." (2 Corinthians 4:8, 9) Our God empowers us to proclaim the good news fearlessly in the face of persecution and hardship. And, surely, in Jehovah's strength we can 'endure to the end.'

20, 21. (a) Why would you say that Paul was not a human tower of strength? (b) How may Jehovah's Witnesses today be compared with the apostle Paul?

22. (a) If called upon to suffer "for righteousness' sake," how are we comforted by Jehovah? (b) How only can we 'endure to the end'?

Jehovah's Organization Moves Ahead Are You Moving With It?

YOU cannot read the Christian Greek Scriptures without being impressed by the fact that Christians were organized for worship. In particular, they were organized to preach, to spread the good news of God's kingdom.

The modern historian H. G. Wells noted regarding early Christianity: "Its only organization was an organization of preachers, and its chief function was the sermon." Yes, as the apostle Peter said: "He [Jesus Christ] ordered us to preach to the people and to give a thorough witness."—Acts 10:42; Matthew 28:18, 19.

But what about the preaching in our day—these "last days" of this system of things? (2 Timothy 3:1-5) Jesus Christ foretold: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14) So, then, before the end of this system of things comes, a tremendous worldwide preaching work must be done. What organization is doing it?

Really, there is only one people organized worldwide for the purpose of doing this kingdom preaching. They are Jehovah's Witnesses. Their preaching activity is expanding in all the earth, in 206 lands. In 1981 there were 2,361,896 Witnesses sharing in the work. That is over three quarters of a million more kingdom proclaimers than there were just ten years before!

To keep pace with the expanding preaching activity, Jehovah's Witnesses, in just the past two years, have either

completed or begun construction of some twenty new factories for printing Bible literature. Also, rapid growth is taking place at the international headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses. In the first century, Jerusalem was the place from which direction was given the Christian organization. (Acts 15:1, 2) But today such direction is provided from Brooklyn, New York.

On the evening of March 15 of this year the latest addition to the complex of headquarters buildings in Brooklyn was dedicated. This is the 25 Columbia Heights Office Building, seen on the following page. It consists of a remodeled structure and a newly built one that are tied together to make one building.

Over two thousand members of the Brooklyn headquarters family were present for the dedication program, which was presented in the home's assembly hall at 6:45 p.m. But the program was also transmitted by closed-circuit television to the Kingdom Hall and various dining rooms for the benefit of family members assembled there. In addition, over six hundred more family members at Watchtower Farms, located some ninety miles away in upstate New York, were able to listen in by means of a wire hookup.

Dedication Highlights Expansion

After prayer by Carey W. Barber, the dedication program began with a summary by John E. Barr of the *Watchtower* study for the week, appropriately on the subject of dedication. Milton G.

Henschel, the chairman for the evening, then invited Grant Suiter to review "historic developments" of God's organization from 1919 to 1935.

"We don't consider these things arrogantly, without taking Jehovah into consideration," Brother Suiter began, "but, to the contrary, we do take him into consideration and recognize what he has been pleased to use through these decades, that is, this family." When Jehovah's Witnesses first moved to Brooklyn back in 1909, the headquarters family was only about thirty in number.

Suiter explained that in October 1919 the organization began publishing the new magazine *The Golden Age*, now called *Awake!* And the following year, in a little place on Myrtle Avenue, the headquarters family began printing Bible literature on their own presses. Thus, Suiter noted, by the year 1921 the family had increased to 107 in number. In 1923, he said, five thousand books a day were being produced by them.

The forward movement of God's organization required larger facilities. So, as Suiter described, in 1927 an enlarged new home was built for the headquarters family on Columbia Heights, and

an eight-story factory was put up a few blocks away at 117 Adams Street.

Continuing the record of "historic developments," next Lyman A. Swingle told of the forward movement of Jehovah's organization from 1936 to 1950. "In 1936 persecution was increasing all around the world," he noted. "Hitler's concentration camps had been built." Then, nodding toward where an elderly couple was sitting, he said: "Brother Poetzinger and his wife were arrested that year, were thrown into those camps, and didn't get out for nine years." Despite such persecution, they and thousands of others have continued to move ahead with God's organization.

"These were crucial years," Swingle continued. "On September 1, 1939, Hitler moved his troops into Poland, and World War II began." Troubles also increased in the United States. "Mob action developed across the country," he related. "A few of our Kingdom Halls were burned to the ground. Many of our automobiles were destroyed. . . . Yet, despite all the problems, in 1940 we had a 40-percent increase in publishers!" During the war itself, he pointed out, the organization doubled in size—from 71,500 kingdom publishers to over 141,000.



The former Squibb complex now owned by Jehovah's Witnesses.
The 25 Columbia Heights Office Building is at the right

"In 1946," Swingle went on, "the first postwar convention was held in Cleveland, Ohio—eighty thousand being present." There it was announced that further building was to be done on Columbia Heights and that the brothers could support the building program by their contributions. "Then we put up a ten-story building [an addition to the existing home], and it was so big," Swingle said, "that we thought we would never have to build again in Brooklyn. At the same time we built a nine-story addition to the 117 Adams Street factory. These buildings were dedicated early in 1950."

Reaching his conclusion, Brother Swingle recounted: "1950—first Yankee Stadium Assembly—eight days. Brothers from sixty-seven countries came. The attendance: 123,707." Truly a period of expansion! "From 1936 to 1950 we went from about 50,000 publishers to 373,430—growing seven and a half times in those fifteen years!" But who properly receives the credit? In conclusion Swingle quoted the words of Nehemiah: "They got to know that it was from our God that this work had been done."—Nehemiah 6:15, 16.

Next, Brother Henschel himself covered the "historic developments—1951 to 1981." Introducing his remarks, he said: "Jehovah makes things happen. Jehovah makes it grow." And quoting the apostle Paul's words, "We are God's fellow workers," he asked: "Isn't that a very encouraging thought, to be able to work together with God in his work and to see the results that Jehovah causes to take place?"—1 Corinthians 3:6-9.

"The evidence is there," Henschel continued, "the historic developments demonstrate Jehovah to be in charge of the work. . . . We had to have publishers to let this good news become known all over the world. That's our assignment—to preach the good news of the



124 Columbia Heights home in 1950

kingdom.'" He then cited the tremendous growth: "798,000 publishers in 1958. Then, by 1968, 1,221,000 workers. By 1978, 2,182,000, and by 1981, 2,361,000."

"In order for the preaching work to be done by these more than 2,000,000 workers," Henschel observed, "there had to be equipment." Who would provide it? Members of the headquarters family! "Back in 1950," Henschel noted, "there were 355 family members." But, he pointed out, as the demand for Bible literature grew so did the headquarters family—to 512 in 1960, to 678 by 1965, to 1,228 by 1970, and to about 2,600 today.



The 117 Adams Street factory in 1950



107 Columbia Heights



The "Towers" Building



119 Columbia Heights

To house all these workers, more accommodations were needed. Henschel described the expansion: A new twelve-story home at 107 Columbia Heights was dedicated in October 1960. Another new home was built at 119 Columbia Heights and dedicated May 2, 1969. Then came the purchase of the large Towers Hotel in 1975, which was remodeled as living quarters for about nine hundred family members. And up at Watchtower Farms new residence buildings were completed in 1968, 1971 and 1973.

Henschel told of the building and the purchasing of factories to meet the increasing demand for Bible literature. In 1956 a thirteen-story building was constructed at 77 Sands Street. Then just across the street another (ten-story building) was purchased in 1958. In 1968 an adjoining eleven-story new printing factory was completed. Along with the factory at 117 Adams Street, these fill out four city blocks of factories that are all tied together by overhead bridges. Then, in November 1969, the Squibb complex, located a few blocks away, was purchased. And, as Henschel noted, these buildings are of particular interest during this dedication program, since the 25 Columbia Heights Office Building is part of this complex.

Meanwhile, further expansion was going on at Watchtower Farms, purchased in 1963. Henschel related how, in 1973, the first factory was completed there. And then in 1975 a second much larger one went into operation.

After telling about other historic developments of the past thirty years, including the 1958 Yankee Stadium-Polo Grounds assembly attended by 253,922 people, Brother Henschel introduced Max H. Larson and his program part "Features of Construction." Brother Larson presented forty slides, which showed the demolition of portions of the former Squibb complex and the construction of the new office building. The viewers saw how this new building was tied together with an already existing factory that had been remodeled into a modern office building.

Larson explained: "In mid-1978 work began

on the 25 Columbia Heights building to convert it from a storage building to a modern office building. To accomplish this work required a crew of from 180 to 200 brothers and sisters." Meanwhile, in September 1979 the aforementioned demolition began, and then in December of 1979 construction started on the new east wing of 25 Columbia Heights.

Franz Gives Dedication Discourse

To conclude this inspiring evening program, Brother Henschel introduced the president of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Fred W. Franz. Brother Franz began in the full-time preaching work away back in 1914, and has served as a member of the headquarters family since 1920. So he was able to relate from firsthand experience many interesting details regarding the forward movement of Jehovah's organization.

Although the newly completed facilities at 25 Columbia Heights are the finest, Brother Franz emphasized that they were not made for any selfish purpose. He called attention to the Bible account at Mark 7:11-13, where it mentions a man that had property, but instead of using it to honor his parents, as he should have done, he wanted it for his own selfish



The four-city-block factory complex in Brooklyn

use. So he declared it to be "corban, that is, a gift dedicated to God."

However, Brother Franz said: "Our brothers and sisters in these new offices that we are dedicating to Jehovah are not like that. Rather, they are using these new facilities to give their best to Jehovah God. They are working hard, not to get selfish pleasure out of the matter by being in such excellent quarters, but to get more of the work done and in a better style."

Despite the excellent, durable construction of these new facilities, Brother Franz noted that we need Jehovah's protection, just as the Bible says in Psalm 127:1: "Unless Jehovah himself builds the house,



Watchtower Farms with printing factories and resident buildings

it is to no avail that its builders have worked hard on it." And so it is with these properties here, Franz explained, unless Jehovah is protecting them and blessing our operations in them we are expending our efforts in vain. But the history of God's people down through the years, he said, proves that Jehovah is blessing and protecting his people.

In bringing his discourse to a close, Brother Franz quoted King David's words: "Who am I and who are my people, that we should retain power to make voluntary offerings like this? For everything is from you, and out of your own hand we have given to you." (1 Chronicles 29:14) So, since Jehovah is the Owner of everything and we have got these properties from him, Franz said, all that we are doing is giving them back to Jehovah by dedication to him. Thus, in concluding the most delightful, spiritually uplifting day and evening, he announced: "I should like now to declare that these new offices stand fully, unequivocally dedicated to Jehovah God."

A Full Day of Spiritual Blessings

The evening dedication program had only been the conclusion, the dessert as it were, of a very special day of activities. The morning started like every other

workday at the Brooklyn headquarters, with discussion of a Bible text beginning at 7 a.m., followed by breakfast. But then, at 8 a.m., most of the family—those working in the home and factory complexes—began a tour of the 25 Columbia Heights Office Building. Those, however, who work in the office complex went to their regular work assignments. A twenty-page brochure had been printed that outlined the day's program and tour route. What did those on tour see?

Following directions, they entered the beautiful new 25 Columbia Heights lobby and proceeded to the Service Department on this same third floor. Here about 325 circuit overseers' reports are received weekly at the ten service desks. On the second floor, the tours saw the Territory Department and Pioneer Desk. From this desk, they learned, 5,578 new pioneers were appointed in 1981.

Proceeding by elevator to the twelfth floor, the tours visited the offices of those who handle financial matters for the Society. On the eleventh floor they saw the Cost Accounting Department, where costs are ascertained for the Society's operations, such as for the manufacturing and shipping of literature. Down on the tenth floor they visited the Executive



Fred Franz delivering dedication talk



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Offices, as well as the Governing Body meeting room. The Art Department was seen on the ninth floor, including displays of the various art styles that are used by the artists who prepare illustrations for the Society's publications.

The next stop was the Writing Department on the eighth floor, where the magazines, books and other literature of the Society are written. Instead of using typewriters, most writers now enter copy directly on computer terminals. These are hooked up to a printer that, on command, will type at some 700 words a minute what has been entered. Soon, throughout the complex, there will be 149 terminals for various office functions and 20 printers.

Next the tours proceeded to the seventh floor and the Photocomposition Department. Here they were shown how text that originates in the Writing Department is composed at a graphics work station to the desired final-page format. Then, in the nearby Graphics Department, they saw how the written text, as well as the illustrations, is converted by means of various photographic processes to film. Film thus produced is assembled for platemaking and sent to the factory to make offset printing plates. Also on this seventh floor the family visited the Spanish Department and the Proofreading Department. Then, down on the sixth floor in Data Processing, they saw the large computer systems that store and process all the information coming to them from terminals all over the office complex.

Although so much had been seen, there was still a long way to go before stopping at home for a cafeteria-style lunch at 11:45 a.m. So next the tours moved on to the Correspondence Department and the Invoicing/Bookkeeping Department on the fifth floor. Then they crossed over the bridge (it can

be seen in the photograph on page 24) connecting the 25 Columbia Heights Office Building with the buildings across the street. In this section they visited the Building Office, the Gilead School, the Carton-making Department, as well as the Paint and Scaffold Department, Upholstery Shop, Handbindery and Mechanical Maintenance.

Many found of particular interest the Recording Studios, where convention dramas, Bible readings and music are put on tape. Then it was fascinating to see the Tape Duplicating Department in operation. Some fifteen thousand cassette tapes are produced each day—over nine million since the department was set up in 1978! But there were still the Electronics Shop, Braille Department, Construction Office, Drafting Office, Convention Office, Photography Department, Personnel Office, Garage and Shipping Departments to see before lunch.

What a full, exhilarating three-and-a-half-hour tour! That Jehovah's organization is surely moving ahead was felt by all. After a bite to eat, the family was off to tour the factory complex. Factory workers were at their work assignments by 12:30 p.m. to demonstrate to the rest of the family the use of the equipment that is involved in printing and binding Bible literature. Of particular interest were the huge new offset presses—five of them at the time of the tour, with three more being delivered this year. The largest, the Bible press, is 109 feet (33 m) long!

After a three-hour factory tour, the family headed home, tired but thrilled by the obvious blessing of Jehovah on the expansion. At 4 p.m. they all assembled at their respective places in the six dining rooms to enjoy a special meal. Then, after a short rest, all enjoyed the most encouraging dedication program.

Supporting Jehovah's Advancing Organization

In many other countries, Jehovah's people are experiencing this same spirit of joy and enthusiasm as they see the evidence of Jehovah's blessing on their efforts to expand their facilities for spreading the good news of his kingdom. In country after country new branch buildings either have recently been completed or are still in the course of construction.

Of course, all this construction and expansion worldwide requires money. Although Jehovah's Witnesses have never solicited contributions, those who are interested in sharing financially in expanding the interests of Jehovah's kingdom

can do so by forwarding contributions to the branch office of the Watch Tower Society in their country. In the United States such contributions may be sent to the Watch Tower Society, 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York 11201. Such donations are gratefully acknowledged.

Jehovah's people have the clear-cut commission to preach the good news of God's kingdom in all the inhabited earth before the end comes. (Matthew 24:14) To what further extent God purposes to have this work accomplished, we do not know. But you can be confident that, regardless of what the future brings, Jehovah's organization will move ahead doing what He commands.

Questions From Readers

■ Revelation 20:5 says that "the rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended." Will this be before the final test or after it?

This expression evidently applies to the time when humans reach perfection at the end of the Millennium, but before Satan is released from the abyss and brings the decisive test on mankind.

The context of Revelation 20:5 is about anointed Christians whom God resurrects to be joint heirs with Christ. (Romans 8:17) These will 'come to life and rule as kings with the Christ for a thousand years.' (Revelation 20:4) After making that point, but before speaking further of these rulers, Revelation 20:5 injects a comment about those who will live on earth, saying: "The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended."

Those who physically have died

and will be resurrected on earth during the Millennium will still be imperfect humans. Also, those surviving the war of God will not be made perfect and sinless immediately. As they continue faithful to God during the Millennium those who will have survived on earth evidently will gradually progress toward perfection. Hence, as long as persons in both categories are not free of inherited sin, they will in a sense be "dead" (and could not yet be fully alive) in God's sight.—Luke 9:60; Ephesians 2:1.

Whether persons had been resurrected, had survived the "great tribulation" or had been born during the Millennium, their prospects can be bright. (Revelation 7:14) If they are faithful to God and accept

the benefits of Christ's ransom, by the end of the thousand years they will no longer suffer under sin and imperfection; inherited 'death will no longer rule as king' over them. (Romans 5:14) To the contrary, they will have reached human perfection, being in the condition that Adam and Eve were in before they sinned.

Hence, by the end of the Millennium persons serving God on earth, "the rest of the dead," will 'have come to perfect human life.' Jesus successfully will be able to turn over to his Father a race of perfect humans. (1 Corinthians 15:28; Revelation 20:14) As Revelation 20:7-10 goes on to show, Satan will then be let loose for a decisive test of mankind. Those proving loyal to Jehovah under that test will qualify for everlasting human life in Paradise.

Would You Like Another Bible Translation?

Some time back the following letter was received at the headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Brooklyn, New York:

"Gentlemen:

"About a year ago I found a green-cover Bible, 'New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures,' although I have 'The New English Bible,' also the 'King James' and the 'American Standard Version.'

"Just recently I decided to examine your Bible and I found that it is an excellent Bible to read and for studying. Please send me the price list of your Bibles and sizes."