

July 1, 1984



# The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

Investing in a  
Secure Future

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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.

### "WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

August 5: Facing This Age of Violence With Confidence. Page 8. Songs to Be Used: 43, 85 (17, 44).

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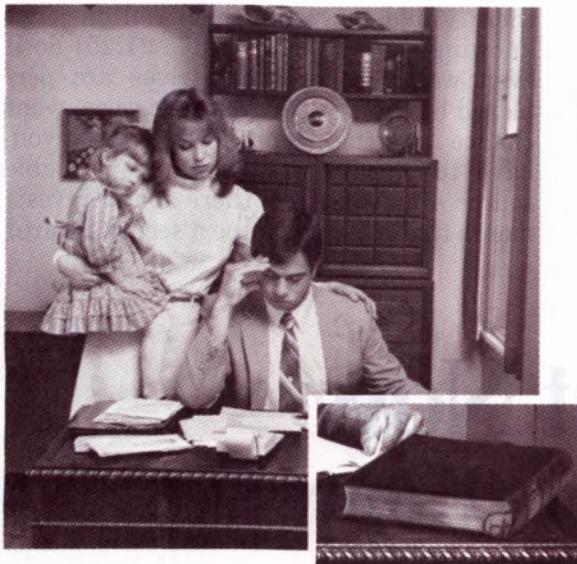
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# Security —Where Can It Be Found?

THE two youths were bitter, despondent—and unemployed. According to *Time* magazine, they "had attached a hose to the exhaust pipe, run it into the passenger compartment and filled the gaps in the windows with rags." Their suicide note was chilling: "What have we left to live for now [that] there is no work for anyone?"

Reports such as this indicate the high level of frustration that people are feeling today. All of us are, in one way or another, being hurt by inflation, unemployment and an ever-increasing tax burden. For some families it means putting the wives, and in some cases even the children, into the job market. For others it has meant making drastic changes in eating habits, recreation and housing. Even money in the bank is no guarantee of security because of the eroding effects of inflation. Well did the Bible prophesy that these would be "critical times hard to deal with."—2 Timothy 3:1-5.

Even the wealthy are affected by inflationary shortages. (Revelation 6:6) In order to form a "hedge" against inflation,

some invest in stocks, real estate, foreign currencies or precious metals. But even the sharpest investors have been trapped by sudden and unexpected changes. Recall, for example, how the price of gold in just a few days plummeted from a high of \$875/oz. to less than \$650, and later to below \$300 (U.S.). Investors are therefore forced to keep a watchful and nervous eye on their investments. We are reminded of the Bible's words at Ecclesiastes 5:12: "The plenty belonging to the rich one is not permitting him to sleep."

## "Not Knowing the Way Out"

Can economists, however, lead the way out of this chaos? How can they when there is so much disagreement among them? Neighbor nations Britain and France, for example, have both followed the advice of their respective top economic advisers. Yet these two nations pursue entirely different economic policies. Britain tries to lower inflation by clamping down on government spending and allowing high interest rates. But France risks

raising inflation by ‘throwing open the national coffers’ and spending much money so as to create jobs. Commenting on this anomaly, *Time* magazine stated, “The two philosophies could not be farther apart or, in many eyes, their chances of success more evenly matched.”

The Bible accurately prophesied that

there would be “anguish of nations, not knowing the way out.” (Luke 21:25) So if even world leaders themselves are perplexed by the world’s economic woes, what chance does the average person, like you, have to survive? Is there *any* reliable source of advice? Are there sound investments that can guarantee a secure future?

## Invest Now in a Secure Future

QUIETLY frankly, there is very little you can do to protect your material assets. True, spending your money more prudently and using credit sparingly may ease some of the pressure. But most of the factors affecting the economy are entirely out of your control. There is something you can do, however, to protect your peace of mind and well-being. The Bible says: “Wisdom is for a protection the same as money is for a protection; but the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom itself preserves alive its owners.”—Ecclesiastes 7:12.

This wisdom goes beyond mere secular learning. “For Jehovah himself gives wisdom; out of his mouth there are knowledge and discernment.” (Proverbs 2:6) You can gain this wisdom by investing in a study of the Bible. How does it act as a “protection”? For one thing, a knowledge of the Bible gives you a fresh perspective on today’s economic crisis. You come to appreciate that we are living in what the Bible calls “the last days.” (2 Timothy 3:1-4) Eventually, this bewildering and chaotic system of things will be swept

away in the day of God’s judgment. (2 Peter 3:12, 13) And as Proverbs 11:4 warns, “Valuable things will be of no benefit on the day of fury.”

When you come to know and appreciate these things, you are spared many of the anxieties that come from vain materialistic pursuits. You are not frantic about preserving what material things you now own, knowing that riches are fleeting. And you are not discouraged if you cannot afford the latest luxuries. “For we have brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out. So, having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things.”—1 Timothy 6:7, 8.

Even those who are “secure” financially can benefit from godly wisdom. The apostle Paul further said at 1 Timothy 6:17, 18: “Give orders to those who are rich in the present system of things not to be high-minded, and to rest their hope, not on uncertain riches, but on God, who furnishes us all things richly for our enjoyment; to work at good, to be rich in fine works.” Even in Bible times material

wealth was at best "uncertain." Wealthy Christians therefore had to realize that any security supposedly produced by money was a mere illusion. They had to "rest their hope" in God.

This did not mean, however, that life was to be a passive vigil, an idle wait for the "end" to come. They were "to work at good, to be rich in fine works." Obviously this meant a large commitment of time and energy. And today many flee at the mention of "work." But what about you? Are you willing to follow the Bible's course? 'I'm not sure,' would be the answer of many. Likely, you would first want to know how doing so would benefit you. What is involved? Is it really worth all the time and effort required? Let us apply some basic principles of investment so as to help you get some clear answers.

### Sizing Up Your Investment

Risk factors, credit ratings, future prospects, estimated profits, as well as fringe benefits, are things a shrewd businessman will investigate before committing his resources to a project. How might this apply to your weighing whether you wish to 'rest your hope in God'?

First, consider what a good credit rating means. Basically it indicates that one is considered trustworthy, based on previous performance. By this logic, the present economic system would have an abysmally low rating. Further, how much confidence can you really have in religious and political leaders?

On the other hand, how would God rate when it comes to trustworthiness? Judge Joshua had spent a lifetime serving God. Years of trudging through a barren wilderness, fighting battles and judging an obstinate nation did not weaken his confidence in God. He confidently declared: "Now, look! I am going today in the way of all the earth, and you well know with all your hearts and with all your souls that *not one word* out of all the good words that Jehovah your God has spoken to you has failed. They have all come true for you. *Not one word* of them has failed." (Joshua 23:14) Jehovah has established a record of trustworthiness for himself that far exceeds that of any human institution. Investments in a promise backed by him have a rock-solid basis.

What about risk factors? The general rule is, 'The greater the promised returns



After a life of trustworthy service, Joshua could say of Jehovah's promises: "Not one word of them has failed"



Pursuing material goods is like 'hiring oneself out for a bag having holes'

of investment, the higher the risk.' One reason you risk so much when you trust in a human institution is that man himself has such limited power, foresight and life. Appropriately the Bible admonishes: "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man, to whom no salvation belongs. His spirit goes out, he goes back to his ground; in that day his thoughts do perish." (Psalm 146:3, 4) Those trusting in God's promises, however, have no such risks. As Sovereign of the universe, Jehovah has unlimited resources! No one can frustrate his purpose. Not even death itself can hinder a person from receiving "returns" from his "investment" of faithful service, for Jehovah promises to resurrect faithful servants if necessary.—John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15.

What about future prospects and "returns," and fringe benefits, from choosing to trust in God? The Maker of this planet foresees something far better for the earth than runaway inflation, widespread pollution, unrestrained violence and an escalating arms race. He has promised, instead, to "bring to ruin those ruining the earth."

(Revelation 11:18) Wars and weapons will be made "to cease." (Psalm 46:9) No one will make earth's righteous inhabitants "tremble," for threats of violence and death will be things of the past. (Micah 4:4) Could one have a better prospect for the future?

### "Invest" Now!

Remember, though, that you must work hard to receive these blessings. It will cost you time and effort. But is not a secure future worth it? To illustrate, in one of his parables Jesus spoke of a "traveling merchant" seeking to invest in fine pearls. "Upon finding one pearl of high value, away he went and promptly sold all the things he had and bought it." (Matthew 13:45, 46) One who appreciates God's promise of a righteous Kingdom will act like the man in this parable. He will give it priority in his life. To him it is worth the sacrifice.—Matthew 6:33.

So in what will you invest? Will you be like the ancient Israelites who vainly pursued material goods rather than the interests of God's worship? Such ones worked very hard to get their luxuriously paneled homes. Yet, the prophet Haggai compared them to a man who is "hiring himself out for a bag having holes." (Haggai 1:4-6) Imagine the disappointment of discovering that your hard-earned money has disappeared through a leaking money purse! Material goods today are just as uncertain and fleeting.

We therefore urge one and all to lay hold on God's promises and to trust him fully. By continued diligent study of the Bible and by application of its wise counsel you may attain to the grandest of blessings, including everlasting life in a paradise on earth! Such are the dividends paid on investing now in the secure future that God promises in his Word.—Ephesians 3:20, 21.

# Kingdom Proclaimers Report

## Kingdom Unity Manifest

KINGDOM UNITY certainly was manifest at recent conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses in New Zealand and the Philippines. In New Zealand, 13,408 attended the "Kingdom Unity" conventions and 167 were baptized. The three conventions in New Zealand were tied in by telephone lines with the six Australian conventions. "Many folks with relatives at other conventions in the link-up said that they could picture them listening at the same time to the same talk and it gave a wonderful feeling of unity," stated the report. One deaf sister who had attended conventions for 30 years remarked that 'this was the first time she had got something out of the program,' because they had sign-language translators for the deaf for the first time.

□ Appreciating the need to assemble together, 120 traveled to the Auckland convention from

Rarotonga, in the Cook Islands, some 1,800 miles (2,900 km) away. (Hebrews 10:24, 25) To provide money for their air fare, the sisters made and sold dresses, curtains, cushions, frangipani necklaces and shell necklaces. The brothers grew vegetables to sell and did fishing and harvesting to get money for the trip. Congregations in New Zealand heard about the need of their brothers in the Cook Islands and contributed enough money to make up the deficit so that nearly all of the Cook Island brothers were able to attend the Auckland convention. Some parts of the program were presented in the Rarotongan language for their benefit. The 17 missionaries that were in attendance at the three conventions in New Zealand rejoice with all these brothers as they unitedly serve Jehovah as King.

□ The 149,219 who attended the 20 conventions held in the Philippines also rejoiced to be unitedly assembled with their brothers and to see 1,858 baptized. Many showed great determination to attend. For example, those living in Davao del Sur, including some brothers of the Manobo tribe, walked 62 miles (100 km) to catch a bus for the convention in General Santos City in Mindanao. Another group walked across the mountains 124 miles (200 km), which took them three days. Then they took a boat that required another day of travel to reach the convention. They all agreed that it "was well worth it."



NEW ZEALAND



PHILIPPINES

The commander of the Integrated National Police came to the convention in Tuguegarao, Cagayan, and commented on the fine organizational aspect of the convention. He said: "Jehovah's Witnesses do not need to have the police at their conventions since their gatherings are always peaceful and orderly." An observer at the Binalonan, Pangasinan, convention remarked: "If all people in the community were Jehovah's Witnesses, we would not have to worry about peace and order in the place . . . children were with their parents listening . . . no one was smoking. So when I felt like smoking I went outside."

These experiences help us appreciate the unity and joy of these Kingdom proclaimers. It will certainly be a wonderful time when all people recognize Jehovah as King and submit to his rule. Then disunity will be a thing of the past.

# Facing This Age of Violence With Confidence

"The Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself has spoken! Who will not prophesy?"—AMOS 3:8.

**T**HIS "Sovereign Lord Jehovah"—how beautifully do those words describe the Supreme Ruler of the universe! Sectarian objections to the contrary, it is a grand privilege to call upon Jehovah by name, to have an intimate relationship with Jehovah and to proclaim Jehovah's name and purposes to others. His Son, Jesus, while on earth declared: "Jehovah's spirit is upon me, . . . to declare good news to the poor." In prayer to Jehovah, he said of his disciples: "I have made your name known to them and will make it known." And the apostle Paul, in quoting the ancient Hebrew prophets, said: "Everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved."—Luke 4:18; John 17:26; Romans 10:13; Joel 2:32.

<sup>2</sup> Amos was one of those ancient prophets. He extolled the name of Jehovah, the expression "the Sovereign Lord Jehovah" appearing 21 times in his Bible book. The name Amos means "Carrying a Load." Truly, he carried a heavy load of responsibility, as do loyal witnesses of Jehovah today. Amos was a sheep raiser and an orchardist, and it appears that he had no formal schooling for his prophetic work.

1. (a) With respect to Jehovah's name, what grand privilege do we have? (b) How did Jesus and Paul magnify Jehovah and his name?
2. (a) In what way did Amos extol Jehovah? (b) In harmony with the meaning of Amos' name, what assignment did he receive?

Yet he was evidently well acquainted with God's Word, and Jehovah's spirit was upon him to accomplish his difficult assignment. What was that? It was to leave his homeland in Judah and to go as a foreign missionary to the renegade ten-tribe kingdom of Israel to the north. There, in Israel, with its capital at Samaria, he was to proclaim a most unpopular message of doom.

<sup>3</sup> Did Amos balk at this assignment? Not at all! Those were times of violence, but the people needed to be mindful of the approach of an even more "calamitous day." Their lives were centered on eating and drinking. Sprawled on their ivory couches and divans of luxury, they gave no thought to Jehovah and his true worship. (Amos 6:3-6) Jehovah determined to punish them, but first they must receive a prophetic warning. In line with this, Jehovah himself declared: "The Sovereign Lord Jehovah will not do a thing unless he has revealed his confidential matter to his servants the prophets."—Amos 3:7.

## Modern-Day Application

- 4 Does this ancient prophecy have meaning for us today? Yes, it has a powerful
3. What timely "confidential matter" was revealed through Amos?
4. (a) Why has ancient prophecy been preserved? (b) Through what channel is its meaning now made known?

message for us! The inspired Word of God was compiled under divine direction, and it has been preserved down to "the time of the end" for the benefit of God's people "upon whom the ends of the systems of things have arrived." Its prophetic meaning is made known to us through "the faithful and discreet slave," that group of anointed Christians whom the Master, Jesus Christ, is using now to provide spiritual "food at the proper time" for all of God's people."—Daniel 12:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11; Matthew 24:45-47.

<sup>5</sup> Do we regard this "confidential matter" of Amos' prophecy as something of secondary importance that can be attended to in our spare time, as it were? Well, if we were alone in the open veld, and suddenly the stillness was shattered by the roar of a lion, how would we react? In that life-or-death situation, would we not spring into action? We would not delay! So should we not make a like response to Jehovah's prophetic utterances? Jehovah himself declares: "There is a lion that has roared! Who will not be afraid? The Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself has spoken! Who will not prophesy?" (Amos 3:8) It is vital, then, that we make known the prophecy and its meaning to others. But how?

### "Go, Prophesy"

<sup>6</sup> Jehovah's command to Amos was: "Go, prophesy to my people Israel." (Amos

5. How should we respond to Jehovah's utterance at Amos 3:8?
6. In what ways does Christendom resemble ancient Samaria?



The Sovereign Lord Jehovah sent sheepherder Amos to publish an unpopular message

7:15) That apostate kingdom of Israel has its parallel today in Christendom, which is materialistic in its outlook, dependent on violence or the threat of violence for its survival, and antagonistic to the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, hating his name. As for the title "Christian," Christendom wears this only as a label, for she stands in opposition to Christ's incoming Kingdom of righteousness. Jesus himself describes those of Christendom's religions as "workers of lawlessness."—Matthew 7: 21-23.

<sup>7</sup> Since the Kingdom's establishment in the heavens in 1914, the modern-day Amos class, Jehovah's Witnesses, have proclaimed Jehovah's day of vengeance

- 7, 8. (a) How has Christendom's doom been 'published' progressively over the years?
- (b) What "liberty" has been proclaimed for 'captives,' and with what result?

throughout Christendom. A thorough warning was sounded in the lands of Christendom from 1919 to 1939 in particular, and this continues down to the present day. For Jehovah's Witnesses, the years of World War II, 1939-45, were a time of persecution, but also a time for reorganization. In 1943 the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead began to train missionaries for foreign fields, and by the end of World War II these were being sent out into country after country to expand the Kingdom witness. The work in the realm of Christendom was thus enlarged, notably in Italy, Portugal, Spain and the vast territory of Latin America.

<sup>8</sup> "Go, prophesy," was the call! Devoted families moved out from Canada, the United States, the British Isles, Europe and Australasia to join the missionaries in new territories where the need was great. With confidence they published what 'the Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself had spoken.' Jehovah's spirit has been upon his witnesses to proclaim, on a global scale, God's "day of vengeance" on Christendom, and also "liberty to those taken captive" by false religion. (Isaiah 61:1, 2; Zechariah 4:6) Thus, in the space of 40 years, there resulted an astounding increase in the monthly average of Witnesses publishing the Kingdom: from 109,794 in 1943 to 2,501,722 in 1983.

### A Global Pattern

<sup>9</sup> This follows the pattern of Amos' day, when the proclamation of doom was to be sounded also in Ashdod—pagan center of worship in nearby Philistia—and as far distant as Egypt. For the Sovereign Lord Jehovah had spoken, saying: "Publish it

9, 10. (a) What was the extent of the proclamation in Amos' day, and what parallels this today? (b) As foreshadowed by Amos' prophecy, how have so-called pagans come to regard Christendom?

on the dwelling towers in Ashdod and on the dwelling towers in the land of Egypt, and say: 'Be gathered together against the mountains of Samaria, and see the many disorders in the midst of her and cases of defrauding inside her. And they have not known how to do what is straightforward,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'those who are storing up violence and despoiling in their dwelling towers.' "—Amos 3:9, 10.

<sup>10</sup> Likewise, the modern-day declaration of Jehovah's vengeance to be executed on Christendom has spread far beyond its realm—through Africa, the islands of the sea and many parts of the Orient. As Egypt is used in the Bible as a symbol of the entire wicked world alienated from God, so the message of Christendom's doom has been proclaimed on a global scale. (Compare Isaiah 19:19, 20.) Many of the so-called pagan nations have been well aware of the 'disorders, defrauding, crookedness, violence and despoiling' in Christendom. Over the centuries they have observed Christendom's missionaries sharing in ideological wars and revolutions and acting as a front for international commerce in guns and narcotics. When a Watch Tower missionary starts to talk to a Buddhist, he is often met with the objection: 'But look at the moral state of Christians; we Buddhists have far better morals, so why should *we* change?' The missionary has to make it plain that the religion of Christendom is far different from the Christianity of the Bible. Only then does he start to find a hearing ear.

<sup>11</sup> As in ancient Samaria, so in Christendom, politicians and officials, great and small, "have not known how to do what is straightforward." Further, in most so-called Christian lands, violence and lawlessness stalk the streets. (Matthew 24:

11. The corruption in Samaria corresponds with what today?

3, 12) This is in striking contrast to more peaceful conditions in many "non-Christian" lands.

<sup>12</sup> "Violence and despoiling" is also planned on a shocking scale in the international field. It is not enough that nations of Christendom were the instigators of the two world wars, because of which they carry bloodguilt with regard to the slaughter of some 69,000,000 humans. Now Christendom is very much a party to the struggle between the two superpowers, "the king of the south" and "the king of the north," with the result that its nations go along with the deployment of murderous nuclear weapons throughout their territories.

<sup>13</sup> On a visit to Japan, the chief spokesman for "the king of the south" declared: "The only value in possessing nuclear weapons is to make sure they can't be used—ever." Then why do they have them at all? It is because Satan, the god of this world, has the nations trapped in a dilemma from which they cannot escape. In response to "pushing" by "the king of the south," the chief spokesman of "the king of the north" announced the targeting of medium-range nuclear missiles on the U.S. mainland by "stationing them in the ocean and the seas." All of this fulfills Jesus' prophecy concerning "anguish of nations, not knowing the way out because of the roaring of the sea and its agitation."—Daniel 11:40; Luke 21:25; Revelation 12:9, 12.

<sup>14</sup> Not since the days of Noah has mankind faced such despoiling, together with the threat of greater violence. The historical record of Noah's time reads: "Jehovah

12. How has Christendom been "storing up violence and despoiling"?
13. How have political advocates of violence shared in fulfilling Daniel 11:40 and Luke 21:25?
14. In what ways does this situation and its outcome remind us of happenings in Noah's day?

saw that the badness of man was abundant in the earth and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only bad all the time. . . . And the earth came to be ruined in the sight of the true God and the earth became filled with violence." Because of that badness and violence, Jehovah brought the wicked to ruin by means of the Deluge. Again, today, he purposes "to bring to ruin those ruining the earth."—Genesis 6:5-13; Revelation 11:18; Luke 17:26, 27.

### Plundering of Christendom

<sup>15</sup> What will be the finale of the confrontation between the world's superpowers? Jehovah has something to say about it, as we read at Amos 3:11: "Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said, 'There is an adversary even round about the land, and he will certainly bring your strength down from you, and your dwelling towers will actually be plundered.'" Who is this "adversary"? Back in Amos' day the "adversary" was the Assyrian World Power. Assyria's mighty army was maneuvered by Jehovah and used by him as a symbolic "rod" to execute judgment on apostate Samaria, as described at Isaiah 10:5, 6: "Aha, the Assyrian, the rod for my anger, and the stick that is in their hand for my denunciation! Against an apostate nation I shall send him, and against the people of my fury I shall issue a command to him, to take much spoil and to take much plunder and to make it a trampling place like the clay of the streets."

<sup>16</sup> In like fashion, Jehovah will bring a heavily armed modern-day Assyrian as his

15. How did Jehovah cause "an adversary" to execute judgment on Samaria?
16. (a) How does Revelation 17 describe a corresponding confrontation today? (b) What developments indicate that Christendom's doom is near?

# Italy pact whittles church's privileges

Rome (AP)—The Vatican and increasingly secular Italy yesterday signed a revised concordat that ends Catholicism's status as the state religion and reduces many of the Catholic Church's privileges in the Italian state.

Under the new provisions, Rome will no longer be a "sacred city."

In addition, the agreement will ease the choice of Italian parents who oppose religious education for their

Under the new concordat, Rome will no longer be called a sacred city but a city of "particular significance" to Catholics, and Catholicism will not be called the state religion.

Religious education will still be offered in public schools, but parents would have to specifically request it. Currently, Italians who do not want the instruction have to ask for an exemption.

## For Babylon the Great, 'Writing on the Wall'

"rod" and "ax" to execute apostate Christendom. Indeed, the entire world empire of false religion, Babylon the Great, will at that one time be devastated by vicious "horns"—militarized political powers that are even now member nations of the UN. (Isaiah 10:15; Revelation 17:5, 16, 17) The rumblings of that approaching confrontation are to be heard often in the news of the day. For example, *U.S. News & World Report* recently had this to say: "It is not only in Poland that Catholicism and Communism seem to be heading toward confrontation. Across Eastern Europe, relations between the church and Communist regimes have grown increasingly abrasive since Polish-born John Paul II became Pope in 1978. A new militancy is evident among Roman Catholic bishops in the Soviet bloc. . . . The Pope's staunch championing of the Catholic cause has added to the atmosphere of confrontation. . . . Communist governments make no secret of their suspicions of the Pope."

<sup>17</sup> Thus it will happen just as Jehovah states at Amos 3:15: "'And the houses of ivory will have to perish, and many houses

17. What does the book of Amos, as well as other prophecies, say about the plundering of false religion?

will have to come to their finish,' is the utterance of Jehovah." The wealth and materialism of Christendom will be devastated, along with that of the entire realm of false religion.—Ezekiel 7:19; Revelation 18:15-17.

<sup>18</sup> However, will this mean immediate release for Jehovah's loyal servants—from the reproaches, the persecutions, the oppressions that Satan's world heaps upon them? Not yet! For the politically minded "Assyrian"—"the rod" and "the ax" that Jehovah uses in executing judgment on apostate Christendom—will proudly magnify himself against Jehovah by turning upon his faithful witnesses here on earth. But in vain! (Isaiah 10:15-19) As John the apostle saw it in vision, "the kings of the earth," the political powers of the UN 'wild beast,' will gather to wage war against God's enthroned "King of kings and Lord of lords." That will be the signal for Har-Magedon, "the war of the great day of God the Almighty." It will bring annihilation to all of Satan's forces on earth and salvation to "everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah."—Revelation 16:14, 16; 19:11, 16, 19-21; Romans 10:13.

18. (a) What proud action will the "Assyrian" next take? (b) What will this precipitate, and with what result to Jehovah's people?

### Questions in Review:

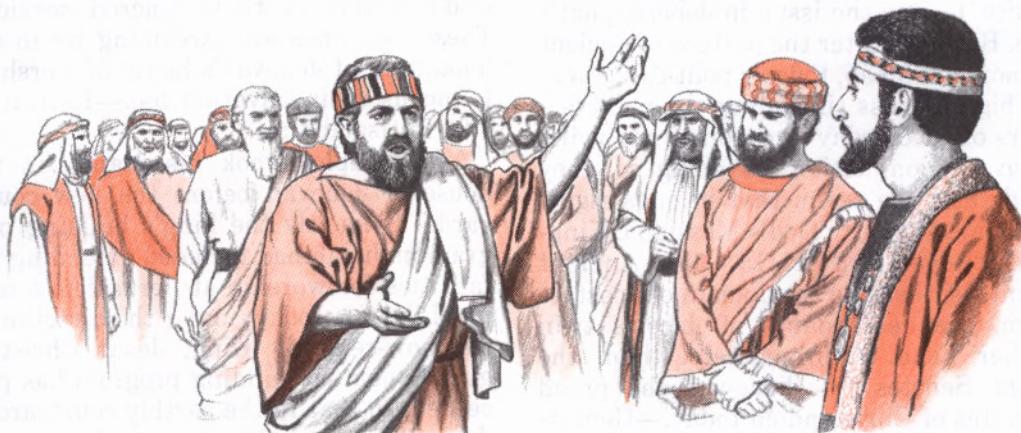
- How was Amos a fine example to us in facing violent times?
- What "confidential matter" are we now privileged to "publish"?
- In what ways does ancient Samaria foreshadow Christendom?
- How will this age of violence end, and what indicates that this is near?

<sup>19</sup> How, then, do you face this age of violence? Surely with firm confidence that Jehovah will vindicate his prophetic Word! And with resoluteness like that of Amos,

19. Amos' example and the fulfillment of his prophecy against Samaria should instill what confidence in us?

who preached an unpopular message of doom to an apostate people! But how can you yourself survive into and enjoy the grand New Order that the Sovereign Lord Jehovah is preparing for those who love him? The next article will answer that question.

# “The Battle Is Not Yours, but God’s”



“Put faith in Jehovah . . . and so prove successful.”

—2 CHRONICLES 20:20.

**J**EHOASHAPHAT of Judah was a good king. “He did not turn aside from . . . doing what was right in Jehovah’s eyes.” (2 Chronicles 20:32) His name means “Jehovah Is Judge.” He magnified Jehovah’s name, looking to him for guidance in the way of righteousness and for help in judg-

1. In what ways does Jehoshaphat picture the enthroned Jesus?

ing His people. He saw to it that these were instructed in the law of Jehovah. He personally went out among the Judeans to encourage them to return to the true worship of Jehovah. He organized the kingdom for theocratic worship. In all of this, he aptly pictures the King, Jesus Christ, newly installed on his heavenly throne in 1914 and now gathering Jehovah’s people for

survival, while demonic forces gather the nations to the final war of Armageddon.—Matthew 25:31-34; Revelation 16:13, 14, 16.

<sup>2</sup> After Jehoshaphat had given attention to restoring theocratic order in Judah, a major crisis arose. A powerful adversary, “a large crowd,” came from the regions of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir, threatening God’s people with annihilation. (2 Chronicles 20:1, 2, 22) The situation today is similar. Jehovah’s Witnesses, being “no part of the world,” are hated by Satan’s world and are often cruelly persecuted by God’s enemies. (John 15:19; 1 John 5:19) Domination of the land of Jehovah’s people—Judah (meaning, “Praise”—was the issue in Jehoshaphat’s time. But now, after the pattern of ancient Ammon and Moab, today’s political powers and big business (including the manufacturers of “doomsday” weaponry) are vying for *world* domination. In doing so, they invade also the realm that belongs rightfully, since 1914, to God’s Messianic Kingdom. (Revelation 11:15, 18) Ancient Mount Seir became the domain of apostate Edom, the descendants of Jacob’s twin brother Esau. Appropriately, then, the Mount Seirites foreshadowed the proud apostates of Christendom today.—Genesis 32:3.

<sup>3</sup> Threatened now by those invading hordes, what could King Jehoshaphat do? Well, what do loyal servants of Jehovah always do when faced with emergencies, persecutions or endangerment of lives? Jehoshaphat “set his face to search for Jehovah.” And from all the cities of Judah the

2. (a) What major crisis arose for the Judeans? (b) What similar situation do Jehovah’s Witnesses face today? (c) What elements of Satan’s world correspond to Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir?

3. How does the action of Jehoshaphat and the Judeans resemble that of loyal Witnesses today?

people “came to consult Jehovah” at his house of true worship.—2 Chronicles 20:3-5.

<sup>4</sup> What a fine example for God’s people today! This age of violence is moving down toward its climax at Har-Magedon. Conditions in Satan’s world will not become less violent. (2 Timothy 3:1, 13) Often, the very lives of Jehovah’s people may be threatened. Where shall we find protection? It is to be found in our unity of worship. At our Kingdom Halls and other Bible study centers, we meet to partake of sustaining spiritual food and to organize our public service of praise to Jehovah. Happily, “a great crowd” continues to come forward, out of all nations, to join God’s people in their “sacred service.” These new ones are streaming up to the ‘mountain of Jehovah’s house of worship.’ It means their salvation too.—Revelation 7:9, 15; Isaiah 2:3.

<sup>5</sup> Jehoshaphat took his stand “in the house of Jehovah before the new courtyard.” Evidently the king’s building program in Judah had included extending the facilities for worship at Jerusalem’s temple. Likewise today, under the direction of the now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, a grand spiritual building program has proceeded, so that in the earthly courtyard of Jehovah’s temple there is ample room for millions of the nonpriestly “great crowd.” How pleasant to be there!—Psalm 27:1-5.

### Turning to Jehovah

<sup>6</sup> At Jehovah’s house, Jehoshaphat laid the whole matter before his God in prayer.

4. (a) What situations may Jehovah’s people expect? (b) Where does an increasing “great crowd” look for salvation?

5. What does Jehoshaphat’s “new courtyard” suggest with regard to Jehovah’s organization today?

6. (a) What matters were covered in Jehoshaphat’s prayer? (b) How may we find strength during times of trial?

He acknowledged Jehovah's Kingship, power and mightiness, and reviewed Jehovah's works in behalf of his people. He referred to Solomon's fervent prayer at the time of the temple dedication and humbly concluded by saying: "We ourselves do not know what we ought to do, but our eyes are toward you." (2 Chronicles 20:5-12; 6:12-14, 34, 35) Have you ever been in a situation like that—when there seemed to be no way to turn? In apostolic times Paul was often in such straits. He had to rely heavily on Jehovah. But always he could say, "When I am weak, then I am powerful." For when he felt altogether incapable in himself, his complete reliance on Jehovah became a source of unconquerable strength. You, too, can be strong!—2 Corinthians 12:10; Proverbs 18:10.

<sup>7</sup> Imagine, if you can, the scene there in Jerusalem's expansive temple area: "All the while all those of Judah were standing before Jehovah, even their little ones, their wives and their sons." (2 Chronicles 20:13) No doubt they recalled Moses' pointed instruction on the purpose of such gatherings, as recorded at Deuteronomy 31:12. There was only standing room in that vast assembly as those families waited respectfully on Jehovah, alert and ready to do his bidding.

### Jehovah's Channel

<sup>8</sup> How would the Sovereign Lord Jehovah answer Jehoshaphat's prayer? Jehovah provided a channel of communication. This was in the person of Jahaziel, of the tribe of Levi. Though Jahaziel was not a priest, Jehovah chose him to proclaim one of the most stirring messages of encouragement in all Scripture. The important thing was that "the spirit of Jehovah came

7. What instruction of Moses were those Judeans obeying?

8. Identify Jehovah's channel of communication  
(a) in Jehoshaphat's day (b) in our day.

to be upon him in the middle of the congregation." (2 Chronicles 20:14) Has Jehovah provided a corresponding channel in the midst of his people today? To be sure, he has! Jesus made mention of this in his prophecy on "the conclusion of the system of things" in referring to the anointed "faithful and discreet slave" class, to whom the Master entrusts all his "belongings" here on earth.—Matthew 24:3, 45-47.

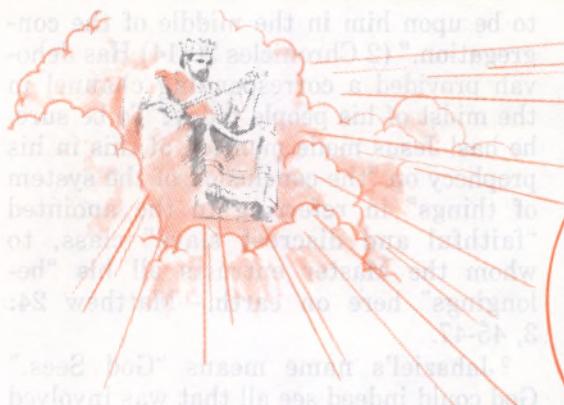
<sup>9</sup> Jahaziel's name means "God Sees." God could indeed see all that was involved in that crisis. He could foresee the course God's people should take. He could see the final outcome. So, what message did Jehovah convey through Jahaziel? Listen! It was this: "Pay attention, all Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat! Here is what Jehovah has said to you, 'Do not you be afraid or be terrified because of this large crowd; for the battle is not yours, but God's.'" (2 Chronicles 20:15) How that united throng must have rejoiced! And how we rejoice today to know that, no matter how Satan and his cohorts may assault us—no matter how our faith and integrity may be tested—we, as a united people, can place our full reliance on Jehovah, confident that he will fight the battle for us!—Exodus 15:2, 3; Psalm 24:8; 37:3-7; Zechariah 14:3.

### United Action Required!

<sup>10</sup> However, those Judeans were not to stand idly by, waiting for whatever deliverance Jehovah might bring. They were to be a people of action! They must demonstrate obedience to Jehovah and do things his way if they were to survive. No doubt

9. (a) How was Jahaziel's name appropriate?  
(b) What was Jehovah's message, and how does this encourage us now?

10. (a) Those Judeans had to face what test of integrity?  
(b) What work leads up to Jehovah's 'strange deed'?



Like Jehoshaphat, the enthroned Jesus now helps God's people to "prove successful" in praising Jehovah

many of them felt that the instructions that came from Jehovah were rather unusual. These tested their integrity. In the same way, before Jehovah performs his 'strange deed, his unusual work,' in destroying Christendom at the beginning of the "great tribulation," he requires his witnesses to share unitedly in a work that may seem unusual to many. It is their sacred service of going to the homes of the people, time and again, to warn them of the impending destruction.—Isaiah 28:21; Matthew 24:14, 21.

<sup>11</sup> This is foreshadowed by the orders given by Jahaziel to the people of Judah. Referring to the enemy hordes, he said: "Tomorrow go down against them.... You will not need to fight in this instance. Take your position, stand still and see the salvation of Jehovah in your behalf. O Judah and Jerusalem, do not be afraid or be terrified. Tomorrow go out against them, and Jehovah will be with you." (2 Chronicles 20:16, 17) That unarmed throng of

11, 12. (a) What unusual command was given by Jahaziel, but how did the Judeans react? (b) How can we, too, show reliance on Jehovah?

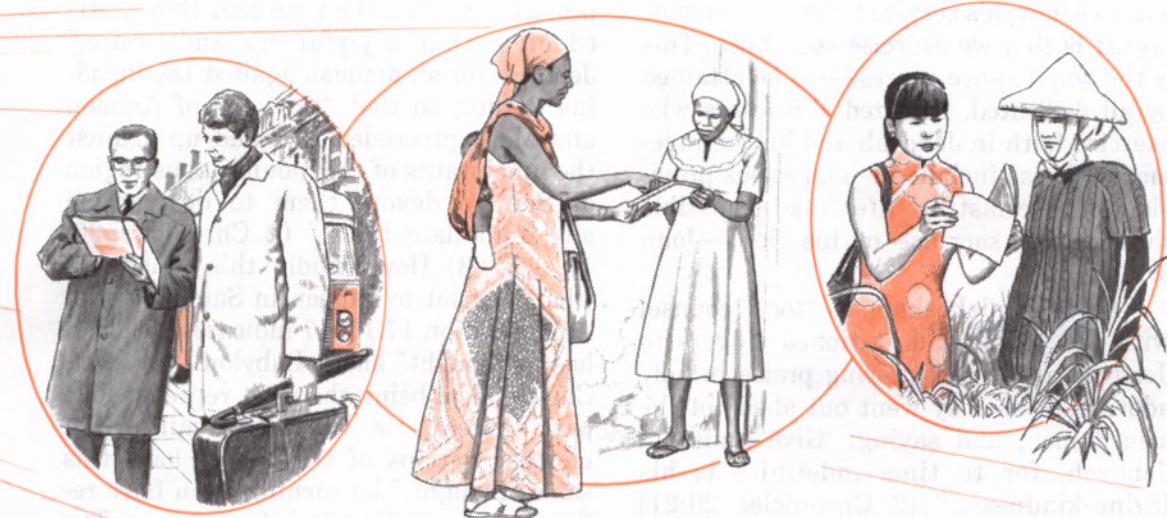


men, women and children was commanded to move out against the combined armies of the adversary!—Compare Psalm 148: 12, 13.

<sup>12</sup> Jehoshaphat and the Judeans were deeply appreciative of the direction that Jehovah provided through Jahaziel. "At once Jehovah bowed low with his face to the earth, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem themselves fell down before Jehovah to do obeisance to Jehovah." (2 Chronicles 20:18) The Greater Jehoshaphat, Jesus Christ, displayed such submissive reliance on Jehovah while he was on earth, and we can be sure he will be looking to Jehovah for battle orders when 'Jehovah at his right hand breaks kings to pieces on the day of his anger.' (Psalm 110:5, 6) In like fashion, Jehovah's Witnesses today are happy to "do obeisance" to the God in whom they trust, while serving in his courts.—Psalm 84: 10-12; 122:1-4.

<sup>13</sup> According to 2 Chronicles 20:19, temple singers "rose up to praise Jehovah the

13. Who, today, are praising Jehovah "with an extraordinarily loud voice," resulting in what?



God of Israel with an extraordinarily loud voice.” And who, today, under the direction of the anointed remnant, are using “an extraordinarily loud voice” in praising Jehovah before his enemies? Certainly in the forefront of Jehovah’s people is the constantly expanding group of pioneer ministers. Auxiliary and regular pioneers, special pioneers and missionaries—those who take the lead in praising Jehovah out in the field—enjoyed a 19-percent increase during 1983. Their ‘singing’ made an extraordinary contribution to the astounding total of 436,720,991 hours—a 13.5-percent increase—devoted to the Christian ministry last year.

<sup>14</sup> Back in Jerusalem it was no time to be a sleepyhead. Obediently, the people “proceeded to rise early in the morning and go out to the wilderness of Tekoa.” (2 Chronicles 20:20) They were keen to show their faith by works. (Compare James 2:14.) Likewise, God’s ministers today often need to be early on the job. Housewife pioneers and others have to arise early to take care

14. Following the example of the Judeans, how are many now showing faith by works?

of household chores so that they can devote a full morning to Jehovah’s service. There are people out there in Satan’s world who are ‘sighing and crying,’ and who must be marked for salvation through the “great tribulation.” Jehovah’s Witnesses are determined to find them.—Compare Ezekiel 9:4.

### Forward to the Battle!

<sup>15</sup> The record in 2 Chronicles 20:20 continues: “As they went out, Jehoshaphat stood up and then said: ‘Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem! Put faith in Jehovah your God that you may prove yourselves of long duration. Put faith in his prophets and so prove successful.’” Similarly, the head of the Christian congregation, our now-reigning King, has given his people much encouragement to faithfulness. We find it in passages such as the following: Matthew 10:27, 28; 24:9-13; John 16:33. Faith in Jehovah, faith in those whom he is using as spokesmen, yes, faith in his organization! As we ‘go

15. (a) In whom were the Judeans to put faith?  
(b) How may we “prove successful” today?

out' to Jehovah's service today, how important it is that we exercise such faith! This is the way to sure success—to be attained by all dedicated, baptized Witnesses who exercise faith in Jehovah and his arrangements. These include his marvelous provision of everlasting life, made possible through the sacrifice of his Son.—John 3:16; 17:3.

<sup>16</sup> Further, Jehoshaphat "took counsel with the people and stationed singers to Jehovah and those offering praise in holy adornment as they went out ahead of the armed men, and saying: 'Give praise to Jehovah, for to time indefinite is his loving-kindness.'" (2 Chronicles 20:21) Here the temple singers took the lead in going out to battle. Likewise, under the direction of the anointed remnant there are the pioneers and missionaries, traveling overseers and their wives, also those serving in Bethel homes, as well as congregation elders and ministerial servants, who often are to the forefront in doing sacred service, stimulating all those associated in the congregations to activity. All of these offer praise to Jehovah "in holy adornment," marching out in theocratic order. Their spiritual adornment includes also 'the new Christian personality, showing forth true righteousness and loyalty.' (Ephesians 4:24; Galatians 5:22, 23) What a privilege it is today to be a part of this global movement, magnifying Jehovah's name and loving-kindness!—Psalm 144:1, 2; 136:1-26.

<sup>17</sup> Jehovah had told his people: "You will not need to fight in this instance." So it

16. (a) Which "singers" often lead out in service? (b) How do all praise Jehovah "in holy adornment"?

17. (a) Why did God's people "not need to fight"? (b) What "thought" of Jehovah spells doom for false religion?

proved to be. "At the time that they started off with the joyful cry and praise," Jehovah set an ambush against the invading hordes, so that "the sons of Ammon and Moab proceeded to stand up against the inhabitants of the mountainous region of Seir to devote them to destruction and annihilate them." (2 Chronicles 20:17, 22, 23) How vividly this illustrates what is about to happen in Satan's world! As Revelation 17:16, 17 indicates, Jehovah has a "thought" about Babylon the Great, Christendom being the most reprehensible part thereof. He will cause militarized member nations of the UN to have this same "thought," by turning upon false religion, to devastate and destroy her. The great apostate system of Christendom, like those Edomites from Mount Seir, will be crushed!

<sup>18</sup> However, that is not all! The modern-day Ammon and Moab remain! (Compare Revelation 18:9, 10, 15-17.) They are still intent on destroying the praisers of Jehovah, the Judeans of today. But it is Jehovah's time for execution of judgment. As Revelation 19:11-16 describes it, the King, Jesus Christ, will go forth to 'tread the winepress of the anger of the wrath of God the Almighty,' destroying the remaining parts of Satan's world system. At the height of that great battle, the crazed remnants of the political nations and their militarized cohorts will no doubt strike at one another with their weapons of annihilation. It was so with Ammon and Moab, when "they helped each one to bring his own fellow to ruin." But never will Jehovah permit them to use their nuclear devices to the extent of ruining God's people or his handiwork, our earth. —Revelation 11:18; Isaiah 45:12, 18; Psalm 115:16.

18. How will the modern Ammon and Moab be disposed of at Har-Magedon?

<sup>19</sup> "As for Judah, it came to the watchtower of the wilderness. When they turned their faces toward the crowd, why, there they were, their carcasses fallen to the earth without anyone escaping." When the modern-day "Judeans," together with their companion worshipers, survey the results of Har-Magedon's war, they will praise Jehovah for that grand victory. They will not need to take literal plunder, but they will rejoice to congregate in the symbolic "Low Plain of Beracah"—Beracah meaning "Blessing." Joyfully, the nonpriestly "great crowd" will enter into a cleansed earth, under Kingdom rule, with keen anticipation of their coming privilege—to make earth into a garden paradise. For a thou-

19. (a) How will modern Judeans then react as they survey the battlefield? (b) What is foreshadowed by 'congregating in the Low Plain of Beracah'?

### Reviewing 2 Chronicles 20

- Who today correspond to the hordes of Ammon, Moab and Mount Seir?
- Who are pictured by Jehoshaphat, Jahaziel and the Judeans?
- How have modern-day Judeans made a fine response?
- What gives us confidence in the outcome of the "great tribulation"?

sand years the royal realm of the Greater Jehoshaphat, Jesus Christ, will have no disturbance, and his God, Jehovah, will continually give rest all around.—2 Chronicles 20:24-30.

## CENTENNIAL ANNUAL MEETING, OCTOBER 6, 1984

It gives us great pleasure to announce that this year the annual meeting of members of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania will be held October 6, 1984, in the Jehovah's Witnesses Assembly Hall of Pittsburgh, R. D. 2, Coraopolis, Pennsylvania 15108. This location is near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where the Society was first organized. The time of the meeting will be at ten o'clock in the forenoon of Saturday, October 6, 1984.

The Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania was formed in 1881 and was first incorporated in 1884 under the name Zion's Watch Tower Tract Society. Thus, 1984 marks the one hundredth anniversary of this Bible Society. How mightily Jehovah God has used this Society over the past hundred years!

A special program, including the business meeting, will be arranged from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. In order that as many as possible may have the opportunity to enjoy this rich spiritual feast, arrangements are being made to tie in the Pittsburgh Assembly Hall with other available assembly halls in the United States as well as those in Canada. However, even with these expanded seating facilities, it will not be possible to accommodate all of Jehovah's Witnesses who would like to attend. Hence, only those who have been baptized Witnesses for more than 40 years will be invited, and admission will be by ticket only. In due time, congregations will receive more details concerning this matter.

The regular letters of notice of the annual meeting, together with proxies, will be sent to the members of the corporation so that we can receive a reply not later than August 1, 1984. Each member should complete and return his proxy promptly whether he personally will be attending the business meeting at Pittsburgh or will be attending at another assembly hall. The information given on the proxy should be definite on this point, as it will be relied upon to determine in advance where members will actually be present. If a traveling companion will accompany the member, this should also be stated so that a seat may be reserved also for the companion.



# Looking for a Reason to Live

As told by  
Gerhard Pluntke

I WAS coming back to our army camp on the Russian front when an intense bombardment began. Two grenades exploded in the trees directly above me. The first threw me between two trees, driving several large splinters into my body. The second perforated my leg from one side through to the other. The pain was unbearable.

I could not move. Only after the bombing stopped could I be freed from my torturous position. After first-aid treatment, I began the trip to the hospital. Two people had to carry me on a stretcher for several hours through dangerous territory. They got lost. They continually fell. They had to take refuge from enemy attacks—a trip difficult even to describe.

Finally, I ended up in a hospital in southern Germany. There were four people in the room and it seemed that after having experienced such terrible things, we all had spiritual hunger. We read many books on religion, occultism, philosophy and things of that sort. We talked at length about these things. But no one could answer a disturbing question for me: What is the purpose of life?

That all happened many years ago, when I was a German soldier during World War II. Now, however, I have a reason for living, a powerful one. How did I find it?

## Early Life

Religion had no importance for our family, although nominally we belonged to the Lutheran Church, which is the major religion in northern Germany where I was born. Instead, my interests were centered around sports and having fun, and the city of Hamburg offered more than enough opportunities to pursue these interests.

The big change in my life came in 1939 with the beginning of World War II. Since my profession, mechanics, was highly specialized, I was exempted from military service for the first two years. But as the war intensified I was called to an infantry regiment for military instruction. Up until then there was quite a bit of enthusiasm among the youth in Germany. To me, the training was like a sport. But soon I would have my eyes opened to the real meaning of war!

That time came when our training ended and we were transported to the Russian front. I can still see my mother with tears in her eyes as our train pulled away. She knew what was involved. She had been through the first world war, in which my father had fought.

## The Horrors of War

It took us four days to get to Russia, and then began the most difficult time of

my life as well as the time of the greatest changes in my personality.

We arrived in northern Russia in an area of swampy wilderness. The train took us only part of the way, then we were taken closer to the fighting front by truck. Finally, we had to go on foot. One night we walked 32 miles (51 km) carrying heavy equipment.

We newcomers were distributed among several army units that had had great losses. I was assigned to a telecommunications company at the very battlefield. How different it was to face the reality of war!

We had to cross one stretch that was very visible to the Russians, and that is where I had my "baptism by fire." The Russian artillery gave us such a "warm" welcome that our initial enthusiasm cooled down fast! This was nothing like our regiment training. Now it was a matter of life or death!

I will never forget those first corpses. They were obviously Russian soldiers whose bodies had not been buried. Although from then on death was like an intimate acquaintance, still I could not get used to the scenes of horror, the mutilated remains of those who had fallen. It seemed such a shame to me that these young men were dead. It pained me to think of the parents who would never see them again and of the families that had lost husbands and fathers.

I could not help but wonder: Why are we alive? And why are such atrocities committed in time of war? It seemed so absurd to me that I had to kill people whom I had never seen in my life, who had never done me any harm, who had families that loved them and were anxiously awaiting their return home. Why, it was just the opposite of the moral code that had been inculcated in us previously!

In times of peace, if one should kill

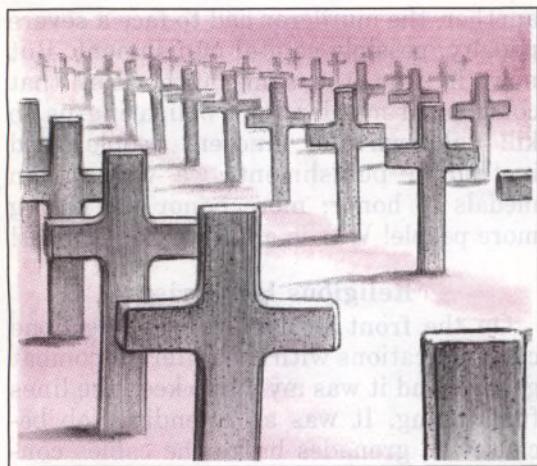
another, the murderer had to face a severe penalty, possibly capital punishment. But now, in war, the same authorities that condemned murder were obligating us to kill unknown and innocent people. And instead of punishment, we were given medals of honor; more honor for killing more people! War is absolutely irrational!

### Religious Hypocrisy

On the front we maintained telephone communications with the different combat groups, and it was my job to keep the lines functioning. It was an unending job because the grenades broke the cables constantly. On my rounds to repair the cables, I came upon many graves of German soldiers. They were recognized by a rustic cross made of branches upon which hung the steel helmet of the dead soldier—or at least its shot-up remains. I had never prayed to God in my life. I did not even know to whom I should pray. But many times I stood beside those graves and silently prayed to an unknown God, asking about the reason for life.

Something else clashed with my way of thinking. According to the preaching of the Lutheran pastors and the Catholic priests, God favored the *German* troops in the war; he would give us the final victory over our enemies. In fact, on the belt buckle that each German soldier wore, there were engraved the words *Gott mit uns*, which means "God is with us."

But we knew that our "enemies" were of the same religion as we were. And the pastors and priests on their side preached the same words, except that to them, *we* were the enemy that merited God's punishment. The deception of these clergymen was so obvious. 'What hypocrites!' I thought. Nevertheless, I kept asking myself over and over, "Why does all of this happen? What is the purpose of life?" No one could give me a satisfactory answer.



It pained me to think of the parents who would never see their sons again and of the families that had lost husbands and fathers

### Still Searching

The human losses were very great. Of the approximately 180 persons that originally made up our company, only 5 remained. The rest? Either dead or wounded. For several months we lived in forests. Whatever hole we dug immediately filled up with water. In order to sleep we had to cut branches from the trees and put down a layer thick enough to protect us from the water. I do not know how we were able to keep physically sound. There was also tremendous mental strain. We knew that each minute could be the last.

Finally, my time came also—the grenade attack that landed me in the hospital in southern Germany. When, after many months in the hospital, I could go back to Hamburg, I was incapable of further participation in the war.

The war ended, and I resolved that I would never again in my life have a weapon in my hands. I kept on searching for life's purpose, more energetically than ever. I became a member of a cosmology

society. We studied occultism, astrology and many other themes. But nothing answered my basic question: Why are we alive?

In 1947 I married Dolly, the girl I had been courting. But our happiness was interrupted because I decided to look for better horizons overseas. My goal was South America—Chile, to be exact.

So in February 1949, I arrived in Valparaíso and began to build a new life. My wife arrived a year later when I had established myself economically. But we still lacked something, something important—a reason for living. Many nights, before going to bed, I would look out our bedroom window, raise my eyes to the starry heavens and pray to a God who was still unknown to me. Little did I realize how close I was to finding a reason for living.

### Finding a Reason for Living

In 1953 I accepted a Bible study with one of Jehovah's Witnesses. There was a small congregation in Valparaíso, and it was a German Witness who studied with me in my own language. How overjoyed I was when he first told me that Jehovah's Witnesses are *neutral* when it comes to worldly affairs! That coincided very much with my way of thinking.—John 15:19; 17:14, 16.

But I had a long way to go. I had never read the Bible. It was very hard for me to accept it as God's Word and to make changes in my life. At each study I argued until two or three in the morning. I acquired a Bible in German and over a period of several months read it from cover to cover. I confronted the Witness with the "contradictions" I found. But, little by little, I was forced to admit that the "contradictions" I saw were really due to a lack of knowledge and understanding on my part.

I surely made things very difficult for

the Witness. But he had a lot of patience, and gradually Bible truth began to penetrate my mind.

What really convinced me that the Bible is the Word of God was the fulfillment of its many prophecies. I reasoned: What man is capable of predicting some event hundreds, even thousands, of years in advance? For example, one prophecy that impressed me was Daniel 9:24-27, where the time of the Messiah's appearance was foretold over 500 years in advance. In fulfillment, Jesus appeared in 29 C.E., exactly on time! (Luke 3:1, 2) Another convincing prophecy was Micah 5:2, where, over 700 years beforehand, the birthplace of the Messiah was foretold, namely, Bethlehem. Sure enough, Jesus was born in Bethlehem! (Luke 2:1-7) It became obvious to me that a superhuman Author guided the Bible writers.

My study of mechanics was a big help to me. I found so many irrefutable proofs of the existence of an all-knowing Creator. For example, once I found a crab's claw on the beach and examined it. It was amazingly constructed. The tendons that make movement possible were fixed at the best point possible, mechanically speaking, to ensure optimum force and movement. Who made the calculations? The crab? And so, the more I investigated nature and opened my eyes to the marvels that surrounded me the more I realized that a Superintelligence exists, one who is over all.

And a reason for living? Does one exist? It certainly does! And how simple and logical it is! What is it? This: Our loving Creator purposed for man to live eternally, with perfect health, in peace and happiness in an earthly paradise under a perfect, heavenly government. And God purposed that our way of life should reflect enduring love for him and for our neighbors. I was thrilled to learn that the time is near at hand for this purpose to be

realized! What a wonderful reason for living!—Psalm 37:10, 11, 29; Luke 23:43; Revelation 21:1-4; Mark 12:29-31.

When I came to appreciate this, there was no longer anything holding me back. So in 1957 I began sharing this "good news" with others. Then, in February 1959, I dedicated my life to doing Jehovah's will and was baptized. My wife continued to study, and it was a happy occasion when, in 1961, we could travel to Hamburg to attend an international assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses, and there she was baptized.

I am happy to say that our two daughters have been active Witnesses for many years now, one having served as a regular pioneer (a full-time preacher) for six years. Bible knowledge has been such a help in our family life. We have a united and harmonious family with each one of us sharing the same hope and goal.

Over the years I have had the privilege of helping others to know Jehovah. What a pleasure it has been to share with them the purpose of life! In particular I have enjoyed showing others how to identify true Christianity. I have a favorite text for that, one that is really close to my heart due to my past experiences. Said Jesus at John 13:34, 35: "I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." It is one thing to apply this commandment in times of peace, but which religion lives by it at all times, *even in times of war?*

What a joy it is to serve together with true Christians, looking forward to a new order of things, where there will not be any more sickness, tears and death, and where the lovelessness of war will no longer mar man's happiness! Yes, we have a powerful reason for living.

# Greed Can Be Deadly

**T**HE motive was greed," charged the assistant district attorney. The crime was murder. A 29-year-old man stood before the judge accused of the execution-style shooting and killing of his wife's father, mother and 16-year-old brother. For what reason? To inherit an estate worth \$200,000!

While the vast majority will not allow greed to impel them to commit murder, greed often becomes the catalyst that turns a good relationship sour. When greed seeps into the Christian congregation, spiritual damage and even death can result by setting brother against brother and causing hatred to heat up to the point of boiling over into spiritual 'manslaughter.'—1 John 3:15; Mark 7:21, 22.

## Who Are Susceptible?

Greed's potential lurks inside all of us. Because of inherited imperfection, greed is a wild outgrowth of the normal desire for material possessions and financial security. (Romans 5:12) It springs forth from an excessive or insatiable desire for possessions, fame or power. It can change a considerate person into a ruthless one. Lately, there is one group that has become more susceptible to the shrewd schemes of greedy operators than most others.

People who are religiously inclined are a main target for swindlers. Why? Usually religious people are more trusting and have more of a wanting-to-be-helpful attitude than others. The eyes of the greedy see this as a sign of weakness—gullibility. U.S. attorney Brent Ward, after investi-

gating fraud in Utah that bilked members of one religious group out of \$200 million over a period of two years or so, said: "It seems anytime religion enters into a sales pitch, the promoter is able to bridge the gap from unbeliefability to believability." Those victims were fooled into believing that they could make a quick, easy fortune by doing nothing more than investing

## Unscrupulous business promoters want you to become envious of their luxuries



their own money. Could the motive have been greed that lured some of them into parting with their hard-earned savings?

### An Illusion of Safety

How does greed grow—with its cravings for possessions and wealth? How is it that greed can turn the cautious investor into

### When greed seeps into the congregation, spiritual damage may result

a gullible one? Ecclesiastes 4:4 points to one answer: "I have also learned why people work so hard to succeed; it is because they envy the things their neighbors have. But it is useless. It is like chasing the wind."—*Today's English Version*.

Unscrupulous business promoters often link their business scheme to an aura of wealth—a luxury car, expensive jewels—and use this as a lure to wrap around greed's hook to catch the unwary. They want you to become envious of their luxuries. So much so that you will believe that by investing in their business you, too, can own a similar plethora of goods and become wealthy without doing much work. In reality, if you do not lose your investment outright, you will end up working longer hours and harder than ever.

Greed creates the illusion that all that people need is money. True, money can be a protection, but it cannot buy happiness or eternal life. It has limits. "For wisdom is for a protection the same as money is for a protection; but the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom itself preserves alive its owners," states Ecclesiastes 7:12. Action based on the accurate knowledge of Jehovah God and his Son Jesus Christ is what brings real happiness and leads to

everlasting life. Therefore, is it not wise to invest in becoming spiritually rich with God, rather than striving for material wealth with man?—Matthew 5:3; Luke 12:20, 21; John 17:3.

However, money itself is not the issue. The real issue is, How do we get the money, and what do we do with it?—Matthew 6:24.

### Christian Contacts

A number of sales organizations encourage their representatives to view everyone they know as a prospective customer—including those in their church. Fellow believers become a natural market for whatever is being sold. This is one trick the selling business uses to expand its base of customers. But would a true Christian want to take commercial advantage of his Christian contacts, his brothers and sisters in the faith?—1 Corinthians 10:23, 24, 31-33.

The apostle Paul, after spending three years with the congregation in Ephesus,

### Greed creates the illusion that all that people need is money

could state with a clear conscience: "I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel." (Acts 20:33) Not only did Paul refuse to lust after another person's material possessions but he was also unwilling to use the truth for personal financial gain.

Some businesses use the divine name in their advertisements and direct their sales campaign to Jehovah's Witnesses by means of the Kingdom Hall. Can it be said that this practice is in harmony with the principle of Acts 20:33? Hardly! Kingdom Halls or Bible study groups or assemblies

of Jehovah's Witnesses are not the places to introduce personal commercial matters or to do job recruiting, but, rather, they act as centers for *spiritual* discussion and association before, during and after the meeting. (Hebrews 10:23-25) Therefore, to

### The Kingdom Hall is not the place for job recruiting or for promoting commercial matters

smudge the spiritual beauty of Christian association with commercialism would show an utter lack of appreciation for spiritual values.

There is also the matter of taking advantage of Christian contacts outside the Kingdom Hall. Does this mean that fellow Christians cannot do business with one another or start up a business together? No, that is a personal decision. However, some Christians initiate business ventures that encourage greed and try to entice fellow believers to become their partners or sales representatives. Many of these businesses fail, costing the duped investors large sums of money.

True, in some cases the investors themselves were motivated by a strong desire to make quick money. But should not each organizer feel a sense of responsibility for the financial outcome to others in business ventures? Should he not thoroughly consider in advance what may be the result, spiritually, to others if the business venture should fail? If so, does not an increase in responsibility usually bring with it an increase in accountability?

There are a few Christian overseers that have promoted questionable ventures harmful to their fellow believers. Such

should be aware that this may affect their privileges in the congregation. No one can be told how to handle his secular affairs. Yet, no one should exploit his Christian contacts for business purposes either. —2 Corinthians 6:3, 4; 7:2; Titus 1:7.

### Beware of Get-Rich-Quick Schemes

A Christian who quickly sees the danger of getting involved in a worldly get-rich-quick scheme could drop his guard when the scheme involves fellow believers and be hoodwinked by this reasoning: 'Of course, *this* business deal is different; it comes from fellow Christians, and I could use the extra money. I'm *sure* they would not get involved in some risky business and endanger the investment of their fellow believers. Besides, this will give me more time for spiritual matters. I might even be able to pioneer.' Be careful! "The

**'I've grieved that I got fellow believers involved. They lost money they couldn't afford to lose'**

heart is more treacherous than *anything* else and is desperate," warns the Bible. That includes your heart too. Greed may blind us, so that we follow a risky course or take advantage of our brothers to accomplish selfish ends. We should sincerely examine our motives in the light of God's Word.—Jeremiah 17:9, 10.

It is not wise to enter a business venture blindly with *anyone*, even with fellow believers. It is wise first to 'count the cost.' (Luke 14:28, 29) Know the facts—your limits, the limits of the business.

Consider this illustration: A safe driver *knows* the limits of his car and the road. He *knows* that other cars may be handled

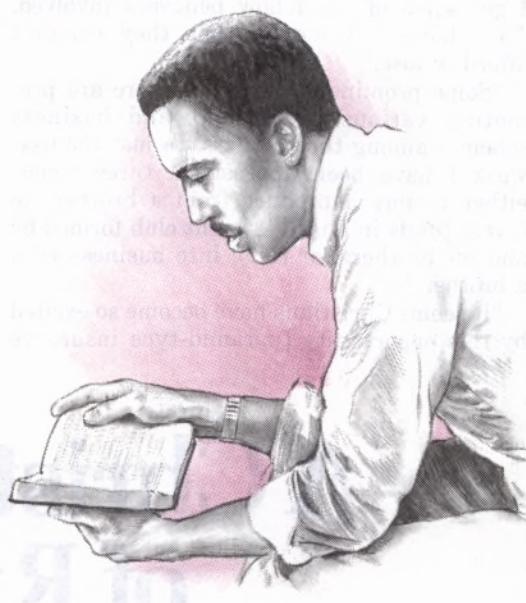
more easily on curves and in swerving to avoid obstacles at a greater speed than his. He also *knows* that the faster a car travels the less tolerance there is for error and the greater the risk of a crash. Therefore, he refuses to try to match what other drivers and their cars can do—he knows the limits. Likewise, now is not the time to see how far and how fast we can go in this system. The fact that one Christian may be successful in business does not necessarily mean that another one will be. Greed, like alcohol in a driver, may cause a Christian to overestimate his limits, leading to a spiritual crack-up and injury or, worse, spiritual death.—Galatians 5:26.

Before getting involved in a business venture ask yourself: Is it *really* necessary? Does the sales pitch appeal to greed, or will it satisfy a real need? Can I afford to lose all the money I am investing? If the business fails, will I deprive myself or my family of needed financial security? How risky is my investment? If I will be the owner of or partner in the business, how much business experience and acumen do I have? Am I familiar with tax laws? Have I researched the credentials and principles of the owners and the business? Is there a growing market for the business? Will I be so indebted to the business that I will find it difficult to quit? If I become seriously ill, how will the business deal with it?

And, more importantly, ask: Will I *really* have more time to devote to spiritual matters, or will it be less? How many of those *already* in the business have actually increased their time spent on spiritual matters?

The answers to those questions are directly tied to your spirituality. Bad business practices, ideas or plans do not turn into good ones just because fellow Christians are involved, any more than a house built with good materials is safe during a

## A godly view of riches alerts Christians to the snares of greed



tempest if its foundation is built on sand. The danger for the Christian lies not only in financial loss but in spiritual collapse as well.—Matthew 7:24-27.

Daniel, a father with six children, found that his \$200,000-a-year business demanded too many hours away from his family and was eroding his spirituality. So what did he do? “I decided to get out of the business,” he said. That was 12 years ago and, he adds, “I have never regretted it; I have received many blessings from Jehovah, and our entire family is unitedly serving our Grand Creator, Jehovah.”

### An Insidious Trend

The insidious trend toward materialism disturbs many, prompting concerned Christians to comment:

“The world is full of schemes to make big, fast money—full or part time, especially in

the field of direct multilevel selling. Many of my fellow Christians have been enticed—only to lose precious time and money. I, myself, have been a three-time loser. I've grieved that I got some of my fellow believers involved. They have lost money that they couldn't afford to lose."

"Some prominent Christians here are promoting various investment and business schemes among the brothers. In just the past week I have been approached three times, either to buy a product from a brother, to invest funds in an investment club formed by and for brothers, or to go into business with a brother."

"It seems Christians have become so excited by this opportunity [pyramid-type insurance

scheme] that anyone, the newly interested, believers having spiritual difficulty, just anyone, is viewed as a prospective recruit for their business organization."

"At times those promoting 'quick-and-easy riches' have made a mockery of spiritual values, such as when those promoting their scheme imply, or state flatly, that their newfound affluence or success was a direct result of God's blessing on their venture."

A godly view of riches will alert the Christian to the snares of greed and will help him to resist succumbing to the worldly trend of materialism. Therefore, how should riches be viewed so as not to arouse greed?

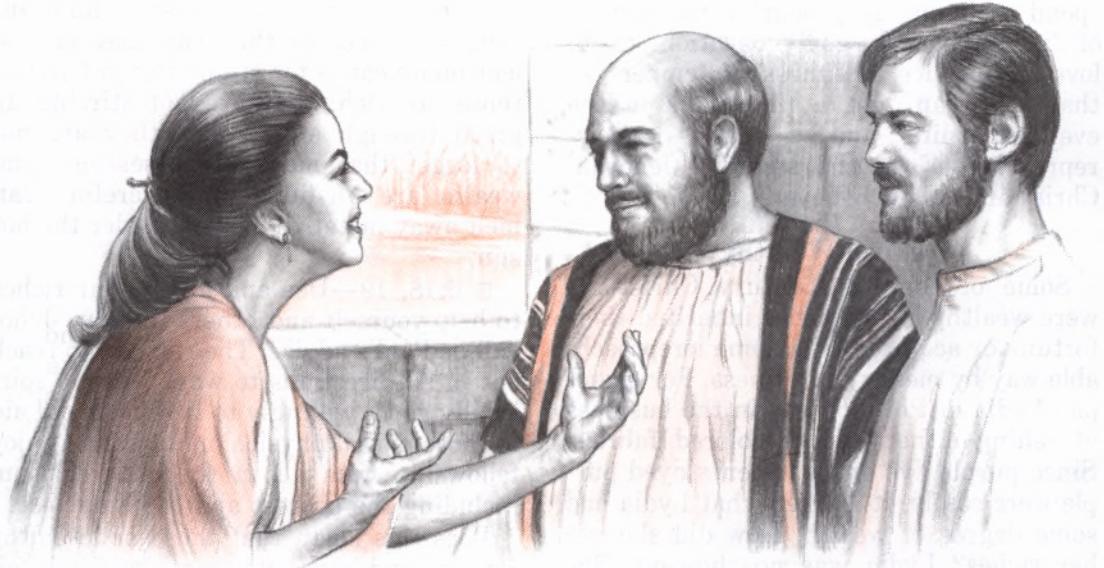
## A Christian View of Riches

HAVE you read the apostle Paul's first letter to Timothy recently, especially chapter 6:6-19? It strikes a balance in the role riches should play in the lives of Christians. The letter finds Timothy living in the fabulously wealthy city of Ephesus. Christians living in that large commercial center had to fight the tendency to view worldly riches as the big thing. In brief, those verses counsel: Be content with what you have, and do not seek to be rich; those already rich, do not rest your hope on material things. Instead, all are to be rich in fine works and all are to manifest generosity.

A lopsided view of riches tilts people to greed. Greed becomes the wedge that can slowly but surely pry away a Christian's grip on the sound teachings of Christ.

Separated from the clear thinking of the truth, he now plunges into one stormy conflict after another with those inside and those outside the congregation. This path can lead "to nothing but jealousy, quarrelling, insults and malicious innuendoes—continual wrangling, in fact, among men of warped minds who have lost their real hold on the truth but hope to make some profit out of the Christian religion."—1 Timothy 6:3-5, Phillips.

So it goes with those who exploit their Christian contacts for personal financial "profit." They miss the real riches that only godly devotion can bring, the "promise of the life now and that which is to come." Therefore, Paul's advice to all is to "be content" with "sustenance and covering."—1 Timothy 4:8; 6:8.



Lydia used her means to display generosity and to spread the good news

### Do You Desire to Be Rich?

When the rich put themselves on a pedestal, others may often feel inferior, which may spark in them, first, envy and then a strong, grasping desire for wealth or at least the things wealth can buy. Or their jealousy may cause them to conclude wrongly that they are justified in taking advantage of the rich and their wealth by badgering them for money but dodging repayment. Thankfully, 1 Timothy 6:6-16 gives sound advice as to how and why Christians should avoid the destructive desire to be rich.

□ 6:6-8—Seldom does contentment follow riches, but it always goes together with godly devotion. Why crave things others have? They are only temporary, for we carried nothing into the world, and we will take nothing out.

□ 6:9—It is not necessarily the wealthy but those “who are *determined* to be rich” that, like a witless animal, clutch at the tempting bait, get entangled in a snare,

and become captive to “hurtful desires” that “plunge” people into ruin (literally, dragging them to the bottom).

□ 6:10—All sorts of things that are bad spring from “the *love* of money.” For money, people have perverted justice, stolen, prostituted themselves, committed murder, betrayed others and falsified the truth. Nothing good ever grows out of this type of love. Why? Because it is rooted in evil. Since most roots are hidden, unwary Christians underestimate the enormous power for bad centered in “*love of money*.” It is just “by *reaching out* for this love”—not the possessing of money—that “some have been led astray from the faith.” The result is a person ‘stabbed with emotional, physical and spiritual pains’ because of trying to get and hold on to riches. Riches alone never bring happiness.

□ 6:11-16—Instead of pursuing riches, wise Christians flee from greed. The distance for safety cannot be too great. They

spend their energy procuring the virtues of "righteousness, godly devotion, faith, love, endurance, mildness of temper" so that they can "get a firm hold on the everlasting life," and be "spotless and irreprehensible" in the sight of Jehovah, Christ and fellow believers.

### Are You Wealthy?

Some of the first-century Christians were wealthy. They either inherited their fortune or acquired it in some irreproachable way by means of business. For example, Lydia of Philippi was in the business of selling either dye or colored fabrics. Since purple dye and garments dyed purple were costly, it is likely that Lydia had some degree of wealth. How did she use her riches? Lydia was no show-off. She humbly used her possessions to display genuine Christian generosity and to advance the spreading of the good news. Happily today, too, there are those who have that same fine spirit.—Acts 16:14, 15, 40.

First Timothy 6:17-19 has good advice for those who would like to imitate Lydia's example.

□ 6:17—Instead of strutting wealth, the rich are admonished to exhibit humility—not to think themselves superior to poorer people. Their way of life should prove to all observers that their real trust

is, not in riches, but, rather, solidly anchored to God. In this way they put no legitimate cause for stumbling in front of those not rich; they are not stirring up greed through envy. Also, they are not to forget that material possessions and wealth are unstable and therefore can melt away faster than snow under the hot sun.

□ 6:18, 19—Use and enjoy your riches to help yourself and others to serve Jehovah, is Paul's advice. The rich are to reach out in all directions to work what is spiritually good, willingly to give material aid to those in *real* physical need, and to enjoy fellowship with all in the congregation, including the poorest and the humblest.

Does this mean that those not wealthy can demand handouts from their rich fellow believers? No. As pointed out in 2 Thessalonians 3:10-12 and 1 Timothy 5:8, each capable Christian has the obligation to work to provide for his own household. So if a person refuses to work, giving him money will not really help. The same is true with those who foolishly squander their money. More money will not really help. But what a blessing it is to the congregation when faithful believers with a *true* need are kindly given physical or spiritual aid. In this way, all hearts are fixed on laying up in heaven treasures that will yield rich dividends in the form of spiritual rewards from Jehovah.

Therefore, all of us now should be thinking about our standing before God and Christ. Proverbs 11:4 reminds us: "Valuable things will be of no benefit on the day of fury, but righteousness itself will deliver from death." So why make full use of this changing, dying world? (1 Corinthians 7:29-31) Flee from greed and its deadly effects! We do not have endless time to build up a record of fine works. May we be found as people with an abundant treasure in heaven.—Matthew 6:20.

## In Our Next Issue

- Has God Decided Your Fate?
- Build Your Future  
With Jehovah's Organization
- Macao—A Record of  
Endurance

# Questions From Readers

## ■ Once a person becomes one of Jehovah's Witnesses, is he always counted as such?

No, Jehovah's Witnesses are not like religions who hold, 'Once a member, always a member.' A small percentage of individuals choose to disassociate themselves from the Christian congregation or are expelled because they are unrepentant wrongdoers.

On one occasion many disciples turned away from Jesus and "would no longer walk with him." (John 6:66) The Bible also explains that if a Christian unrepentantly practices gross sin, the congregation is to 'remove the wicked man from among themselves' and 'quit mixing in company with him.'—1 Corinthians 5:9-13.

Thus, today, if a Christian falls into a course of sin, a committee of spiritually qualified elders meets with him. They want to see if he is repentant and can be readjusted. (Galatians 6:1) If not, the elders obey the Bible's direction to disfellowship the sinner so that the congregation will be "free from ferment."—1 Corinthians 5:7.

Or, as mentioned in John 6:66, occasionally a Witness on his own initiative will decide to leave the way of truth. He may even make known his decision after the committee begins to look into his wrongdoing. He may inform them in writing, or state be-

fore witnesses, that he wants to disassociate himself from the congregation and not be known as a Witness. Then it will no longer be necessary for the elders to continue their investigation. However, the elders would then make a brief announcement of his disassociation so that the congregation will know that he "went out from us." (1 John 2:19) They then will adhere to the in-

spired injunction 'not to receive such a one into their homes or say a greeting to him, so as not to become sharers in his wicked works.'—2 John 10, 11.

Hence, people are not compelled to remain a part of the congregation. But the vast majority of Jehovah's Witnesses have the attitude of the apostles who voluntarily stuck by Jesus, receiving his spiritual help and enjoying the warm fellowship of God's congregation.—Luke 22:28.

## ■ If Moses truly was meek and modest, how could he write in Numbers 12:3 that 'Moses was by far the meekest of all men'?

While it may not have been easy to do so, Moses could write that accurate description under inspiration from God.

A mark of the Bible's being inspired of God is the candor of its writers. Moses and other men whom God used to pen portions of the Scriptures wrote things that were unusually candid.

For example, Moses recorded cases of failings and sins by his people, including those of his own brother and sister. (Exodus 16:2, 3; 17:2, 3; 32:1-6; Leviticus 10:1, 2) Nor did Moses spare himself; he frankly related his own errors, even such as resulted in his being reproved by God. (Numbers 20:9-12; Deuteronomy 1:37) So it was consistent for Moses to record

objectively a fact that Jehovah evidently wanted included—that Moses himself was unusually meek. The setting where this is found provides a case in point. Rather than becoming indignant when Miriam and Aaron challenged his authority, Moses allowed Jehovah to correct the situation.

Moses prefigured the Messiah. (Deuteronomy 18:15-19) So when Jehovah God called attention to Moses' meekness, He was giving assurance that this desirable quality would be found in the Messiah. As we read the Gospels is not Jesus' meekness appealing, drawing us to him and giving us reason to rely on him?—2 Corinthians 10:1; Hebrews 4:15, 16.

