

The WATCHTOWER

THE SURE
PROMISE

*of a New
Order*

APRIL 1, 1977

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The **WATCHTOWER**

April 1, 1977
Vol. 98, Number 7

A watchtower enables a person to see far into the distance and announce to others what is coming. Can a magazine serve similarly in our day? Yes, from its first issue (July 1879) onward, *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, has done just that.

How can it benefit you? Consider: Do you long for a better world, one of true justice and free from sorrow, hatred and war? Do you want to live at a time when genuine peace and love prevail among people of all races? Then this magazine can aid you. Using God's Word, the Bible, as its authority, it points out the clear evidence that the present wicked system of things will soon end, destroyed by God. But it also announces the coming in of a righteous new order. There, under the rule of God's kingdom, his heavenly government, people will enjoy life forever in true peace, health and happiness on a paradise earth.

Faithfulness to the Word of God lifts *The Watchtower* above the contradicting religious teachings and philosophies of men. It stays strictly neutral as regards political affairs. It wholeheartedly upholds the highest moral standard—that of man's Maker, Jehovah God. From this source, it shows solutions to the problems of daily life.

We know that many sincere persons would appreciate a discussion of these things in their own home with a qualified person. One of Jehovah's Witnesses will be glad to call on you free of charge. To arrange for this, simply write the publishers of this magazine or contact Jehovah's Witnesses locally.

PUBLISHED BY
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
OF PENNSYLVANIA
117 Adams Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.
N. H. KNORR, President GRANT SUITER, Secretary

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Average Printing Each Issue: 10,400,000

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Five cents a copy

Yearly subscription rates for semi-monthly editions in local currency	
America, U.S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201	\$1.50
Australia, 11 Barendorf Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W. 2135	\$2.50
Canada, 150 Bridgeland Ave., Toronto, Ontario M6A 1Z5	\$1.50
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN	\$1.50
Hawaii, 1228 Pensacola St., Honolulu 96814	\$1.50
New Zealand, 6-A Western Springs Rd., Auckland 3	\$1.50
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Philippines, P.O. Box 2044, Manila 2800	P8
South Africa, Private Bag 2, P.O. Elandsfontein, 1406	R1.30
(Monthly editions cost half the above rates.)	

Remittances for subscriptions should be sent to the office in your country. Otherwise send your remittance to 117 Adams Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. Notice of expiration is sent at least two issues before subscription expires. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS should reach us thirty days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). Write Watchtower, R.D. 1, Box 300, Wallkill, New York 12589, U.S.A. POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589.

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

When God created man and woman, he purposed for them to live in a paradise home. He prepared "a garden in Eden" for them, in which, the Bible says, "Jehovah God made to grow out of the ground every tree desirable to one's sight and good for food." (Gen. 2:8, 9) In addition, "God blessed them and God said to them: 'Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving upon the earth.'" (Gen. 1:28) The living conditions of our first parents were included in these words: "It was very good."—Gen. 1:31.

Without a doubt, then, when God created man and woman he gave them a wonderfully secure way of life. They had a beautiful home to live in, perfect health, delicious food, pleasant work to do, and the privilege of caring for other forms of life. They would also have the privilege of bearing children who would be trained to assist them in spreading the boundaries of that Edenic paradise, so that eventually paradise would be earth wide. Thus, it is obvious that when Jehovah created humans, he purposed for the entire human family to enjoy abundant material blessings. And they were to enjoy these things in true security—security in the fullest sense. In return, God rightly required obedience to his laws, which would result in the greatest good to the



THE SURE PROMISE
of a New Order

"But the meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace."—Ps. 37:11.

entire human family.—Gen. 2:17; Ps. 19:7-11.

However, due to their rebellion, our first parents, Adam and Eve, lost those benefits. They broke God's law, wanting to decide for themselves what was good and bad. (Gen. 3:1-6) They chose the course of independence as regards God. But by so doing, they left the guidance and blessing that can come only from the Creator. And since humans were not cre-

ated to be successful independent of God, such a course inevitably led to trouble. (Jer. 10:23) The centuries of grief that the human family has experienced since that time is ample evidence of this fact. Included in the sad consequences was the loss of genuine security. Thus, in the thousands of years since man's rebellion, billions of people have come into conditions of poverty, hunger, inadequate housing and fear. Hundreds of millions have had their lives cut short by wars or other acts of violence. Added to all of this has been the exploitation of the common people by unscrupulous political, commercial and religious leaders. (Eccl. 8:9) And the human family is also plagued by the unpleasant prospect of death from old age or sickness.—Rom. 5:12.

WHERE TRUE SECURITY WILL BE FOUND

However, has this changed God's purpose for the earth and the human family? No, his declared purpose still is to have the entire earth transformed into a paradise in his appointed time. This globe will yet become a beautiful, gardenlike home for the eternal enjoyment of those inhabiting it. Under the rule of God's heavenly kingdom in the hands of Christ, that grand future is a certainty. (Matt. 6:10) Even dead persons will be brought back to life. (Acts 24:15) That is why Jesus could promise the sympathetic evildoer who was executed with him: "You will be with me in Paradise."—Luke 23:43.

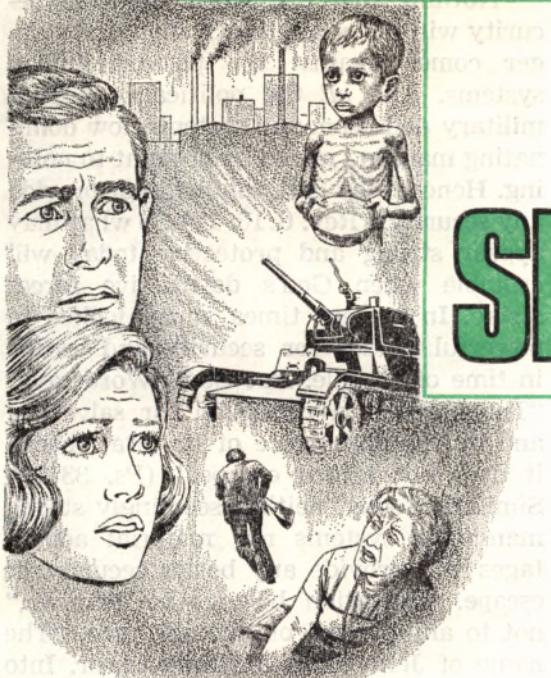
In that new order, under the rule of God's kingdom, people will once again experience true security. They will feel safe in the knowledge that they have the very best government of all time at work in their behalf. (Isa. 9:6, 7) And, as demonstrated by the miracles that Jesus performed while on earth, grand material benefits will flow to mankind. For in-

stance, poor health, disease epidemics, old age and death will be removed, making way for vibrant health and eternal life. (Matt. 15:30, 31; John 11:43, 44; 1 Cor. 15:25, 26) Thus, in that new order God "will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore."—Rev. 21:4.

Not even wild beasts will disrupt the security of people in Jehovah's new order. For we can expect that the spiritual paradise conditions foretold in the following prophecies, and even now apparent among God's people, will be reflected in the literal paradise of the new order: "I will conclude with them a covenant of peace, and I shall certainly cause the injurious wild beast to cease out of the land, and they will actually dwell in the wilderness in security and sleep in the forests." (Ezek. 34:25) "The wolf will actually reside for a while with the male lamb, and with the kid the leopard itself will lie down, and the calf and the maned young lion and the well-fed animal all together; and a mere little boy will be leader over them. And the cow and the bear themselves will feed; together their young ones will lie down. And even the lion will eat straw just like the bull."—Isa. 11:6, 7.

While the Bible does not give details of just how these conditions will be worked out, we can have faith that they will come to pass without fail, since it is Jehovah's purpose to "reside" with mankind and bless them. He "cannot lie" as to his purposes. (Rev. 21:3; Titus 1:2) In addition, many of his prophecies already have had fulfillments, either on ancient Israel, or in a literal or spiritual way on Jehovah's modern-day people. This gives assurance that fulfillment of prophecies concerning God's new order is just as certain. (Isa. 55:11) That secure new order is at hand!

How Can You Find



REAL SECURITY?

"Take exquisite delight in Jehovah, and he will give you the requests of your heart."—Ps. 37:4.

GOD'S new order will be a place of total security. Earth wide the prophecy of Micah 4:4 will see major fulfillment, for peace-loving persons will "sit, each one under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be no one making them tremble." Yes, "the meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace." (Ps. 37:11) While even today a measure of security, especially in a spiritual way, can be found among those who worship Jehovah, total security in all areas of life will be realized only in that new order of God's making. What a wonderful time that will be when Jehovah, by means of his heavenly kingdom, provides such abundant material blessings and such lasting security that daily life will be an "exquisite delight"!

1. Where will true security in every sense be found?

² No more will there be problems of displaced persons, due to their fleeing from the territories controlled by cruel dictatorial governments. Nor will there be any fear of young or old being torn apart in hideous wars, for "they will not lift up sword, nation against nation, neither will they learn war anymore." (Mic. 4:3) Peace will be the rule because all mankind will be blessed by the great Deliverer, of whom it is written: "Let him judge the afflicted ones of the people, let him save the sons of the poor one, and let him crush the defrauder. . . . In his days the righteous one will sprout, and the abundance of peace until the moon is no more. And he will have subjects . . . to the ends of the earth."—Ps. 72:4-8.

³ Poverty, hunger or want will not mar that security either. God's Word promises that "there will come to be plenty of grain on the earth; on the top of the mountains there will be an overflow." (Ps. 72:16) Yes, "the tree of the field must give its fruitage, and the land itself will give its

2, 3. What are some of the benefits Kingdom rule will provide? (Isa. 32:1, 2)

yield." (Ezek. 34:27) We can have confidence that this will be the case since when on earth Jesus Christ, the appointed King of God's kingdom, demonstrated his ability to arrange for an adequate food supply for multitudes.—Mark 8:19, 20.

ARE YOU LOOKING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION?

⁴ In view of what the future holds in God's new order, how shall we regard the things that the world today looks to for security, such as one's home, bank account, job or material comforts? Since Jehovah created humans to enjoy material blessings, would it be wrong to have these things now? No, it could not be said that such things are wrong in themselves. Jehovah created us with the mental, emotional and physical capacity to enjoy good things. And he promises the best of material things in his new order. But at this point in human history, the question is not whether we were made to enjoy material blessings. What is at stake today is our very lives.

⁵ The evidence from fulfilled Bible prophecy shows that we are very, very late in the "last days" of this present wicked system of things. (2 Tim. 3:1-5) Soon, God will execute his adverse judgment against it, resulting in a time of unparalleled distress for this world. (Dan. 12:1) Yet, God's Word shows that there will be "a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues" who will "come out of the great tribulation." (Rev. 7:9, 14) They will survive because of having God's approval and protection, not because of any material advantage that they may have. Jesus said: "Even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses." (Luke 12:

4, 5. (a) What is at stake today? (Compare Deuteronomy 30:15, 16.) (b) How, only, can we gain life?

15) Eternal life in God's new order can come only by knowing Jehovah and having his approval.—John 17:3.

⁶ Nothing that this world offers as security will mean anything when God's anger comes against the present human systems. And *all* the political, religious, military and economic systems now dominating mankind are to be brought to nothing. Hence, they certainly will not provide any security. (Rev. 6:16, 17) So what may appear strong and protective today will crumble when God's destructive forces strike. In ancient times, many looked to powerful horses for security and escape in time of trouble. But God's Word says: "The horse is a deception for salvation, and by the abundance of its vital energy it does not afford escape." (Ps. 33:17) Similarly today, neither seemingly strong man-made systems nor material advantages will provide any better security or escape. "Salvation belongs to Jehovah," not to any system or work of men. "The name of Jehovah is a strong tower. Into it the righteous runs and is given protection."—Ps. 3:8; Prov. 18:10.

⁷ The situation of people today can be likened to the situation of passengers on a ship. There is nothing wrong with the material benefits that a ship normally affords: the food it carries can be tasty and nourishing; the cabins, warm and comfortable; other services and benefits, enjoyable. But what happens if the ship strikes an object and begins to sink? Consider what happened, for example, to the famous ship "Titanic" in 1912. "Experts had considered the ship unsinkable," says an encyclopedia. But how much true security was there on the "Titanic," with all its material benefits, when it struck an iceberg and sank? No security at all. The

6. Will any part of this present wicked system afford security? (Ps. 146:3)

7. 8. How would passengers on a sinking ship regard its material benefits?

ship went down with the loss of about 1,500 lives.

⁸ If you had been on the "Titanic," what would you have concerned yourself with after it started to sink? While you would not have condemned the previous material benefits of the ship, you certainly would consider them now absolutely unimportant, would you not? The main thing in this new situation would be the preserving of your life. You would consider someone very foolish, even mentally unbalanced, who then spent all his energies trying to get better accommodations, meals, or other material benefits on the ship when, in a few hours, it would plunge beneath the waves!

⁹ Soon this present system of things will plunge into destruction. Hence, there is now no true security in it, for no part of it will survive. God's heavenly kingdom "will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms" existing today, and

only God's heavenly government "will stand to times indefinite." (Dan. 2:44) And since Jesus foretold that at this coming time of judgment from God "there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again," it is obvious that there will be great loss of life as well as of material possessions.—Matt. 24:21.

¹⁰ In the year 1977 we are now in the sixty-third year of the "time of the end," counting from autumn of the crucial year of 1914. In fulfillment of Bible prophecy,

it is obvious from the events of our times that the present wicked system will soon receive its deathblow. What, then, will our attitude be? It all depends. Upon what? It depends upon what we make our goal. If we make our goal eternal life in God's new order, then we will do everything in our power to search for Jehovah, learn his will, and do it to the best of our circumstances. The material things of the world will not be our main concern. Instead, "having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things."

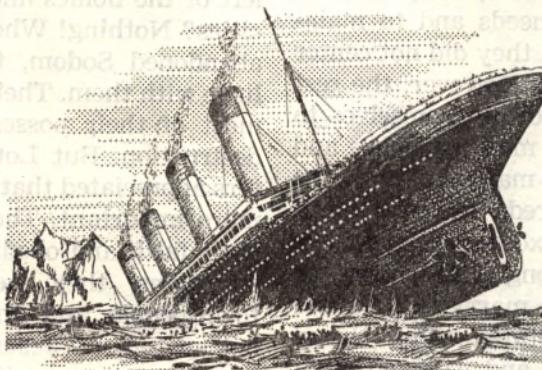
—1 Tim. 6:8.

¹¹ When Jesus warned, "Stop storing up for yourselves treasures upon the earth," he fully appreciated how temporary and insecure any treasures would be in this present system of things. (Matt. 6:19) Nor was this advice for rich persons only; poor people can be just as intent upon gaining and storing material wealth. People

expose their true motives by what they make their objective in life, regardless of their financial standing. "For where your treasure is there your heart will be also," said Jesus. (Matt. 6:21) If a person constantly reaches out to collect more and more material things, such as a bigger and better home, more money in the bank, a better job, regardless of the consequences, then he betrays himself as really wanting the things of the world. He proves by his works that his mind is primarily on the present system's benefits. But how

9, 10. In view of where we stand on the stream of time, what should our attitude be toward material things? (Phil. 3:7, 8)

11. (a) Are rich people the only ones who can be materialistic? (b) Why is it shortsighted to make material pursuits our main concern now?



Would you be concerned with getting more material comforts if the ship you were on was sinking?

shortsighted this is, since "everything in the world—the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one's means of life—does not originate with the Father, but originates with the world. Furthermore, the world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:16, 17.

LEARNING FROM THE PAST

¹² We can imagine the ridicule that wicked people heaped upon Noah and his family, in the days before the flood, because they spent so much of their time doing Jehovah's will. Of course, they had to work for their daily needs and to maintain a place to live, but they did not center their activities on that. However, the rest of that world did, devoting themselves to "eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark." (Matt. 24:38) But if excesses are avoided, is there anything wrong with eating, or with drinking, or with marrying? No, for Jehovah himself instituted those things when he created man and woman. What was wrong was that at a time of judgment, when life or death was at issue, those people foolishly *centered their lives* on such pursuits and did not pay attention to God's will.

¹³ Of those people, Jesus said: "They took no note until the flood came and swept them all away." (Matt. 24:39) Yes, they may have thought Noah "odd" for giving up material benefits in order to concentrate on building the ark and preaching. But what good did the people's pursuit of material things and their "good times" do them? No lasting good whatsoever. They lost not only their possessions but their lives, as that world was

12. What was wrong with the people in Noah's day?
13. Did the material possessions of the people at that time afford them security? Did Noah's possessions afford him security?

destroyed by water. (2 Pet. 2:5) Also, note this carefully: What good did the homes and possessions of Noah, of his sons and their wives do them? They provided no security either. The ark was where security was to be found. And when the time came for them to abandon the homes that they had, they did not hesitate. They had not been trusting in those things for security, and so they were able to leave them behind with no difficulty.—Gen. 6:22.

¹⁴ Centuries later, when Jehovah brought destruction upon Sodom and Gomorrah for their gross wickedness, how much was left of the homes and possessions in those cities? Nothing! When Lot and his family abandoned Sodom, they could take very little with them. Their home, furniture and most of their possessions also went into destruction. But Lot and his two daughters appreciated that their lives were much more important. They saw the issue. For their faith and obedience to Jehovah's instructions, they were spared. But the townspeople and their possessions were not spared. As Jesus said, in the days of Lot "they were eating, they were drinking, they were buying, they were selling, they were planting, they were building. But on the day that Lot came out of Sodom it rained fire and sulphur from heaven and destroyed them all." Including whom? Sadly, including Lot's wife. When in flight, she disobeyed and looked back toward the things left behind, and lost her life.—Gen. 19:26; Luke 17:28, 29.

¹⁵ Jesus said that as it was in the days of Noah and also of Lot, so it would be at the coming "great tribulation." The vast majority of earth's population would be unconcerned about God and his will. As a result, they would lose their lives.

14. What loss was suffered by all in Sodom and Gomorrah, but what difference was there in the case of Lot and his daughters? (Luke 9:62)

15. Why did Jesus compare our day with that of Noah and Lot?

And when a person is dead, how many of his material possessions can he enjoy? None of them. But with those who want to keep living, and who turn to God for security, that will not be the case. They will not have let themselves become trapped by material concerns. Indeed, they are ready to abandon any material possession "on that day when the Son of man is to be revealed." For Jesus said: "On that day let the person that is on the housetop but whose movable things are in the house not come down to pick these up, and the person out in the field, let him likewise not return to the things behind. Remember the wife of Lot."—Luke 17:30-32.

¹⁸ How extensive will the destruction of material things be at the coming "great tribulation"? Only time will tell. But in the examples of Bible history noted above there was huge material loss, which included much material loss to God's people. That was also the experience in 70 C.E. when Roman armies devastated Jerusalem. The Christians had to abandon their homes earlier, perhaps taking with them only a few things that they could easily carry. (Luke 21:20, 21) What happened to those who would not leave? They lost, not only their homes and possessions to the Romans, but possibly their lives too. The Christians who fled the city, while also suffering the loss of homes and most possessions, escaped with their lives and kept their freedom. So, too, at the coming tribulation, there could be great loss materially. How would you view such personal loss?

¹⁷ So think now, in what do you really trust for security? In "gold" or in God? Where is your mind, and heart, centered —on the things of this system or on God's new order? Do your actions, your way

of life, show where you look for security? What a grievous error it would be to look for security in the wrong direction at this late date! As Job 31:24-28 says: "If I have put gold as my confidence, or to gold I have said, 'You are my trust!' If I used to rejoice because my property was much, and because my hand had found a lot of things; . . . that too would be an error for attention by the justices, for I should have denied the true God above."

¹⁸ In view of the imminent collapse of human systems, and the subsequent vast material loss that could take place, it would be shortsighted indeed not to prepare ourselves for it mentally. If you love life, and want to keep living, do not become attached to any material thing. "Valuable things will be of no benefit on the day of fury, but righteousness itself will deliver from death." "The one trusting in his riches—he himself will fall; but just like foliage the righteous ones will flourish." (Prov. 11:4, 28) Such "righteous ones" will be ushered into God's new order, there to share in the thrilling work of making the entire earth a Paradise, a lovely home where they will enjoy living forever. Having looked in the right direction, these ones "will actually dwell in security, with no one to make them tremble."—Ezek. 34:28.

18. What thrilling prospect is there in store for those who look in the right direction for security?

IN COMING ISSUES

- The Faith That Means Survival.
- How Can You Deal with Depression?
- Singleness Can Be Rewarding.

16. Did the Christians suffer loss when Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 C.E.?

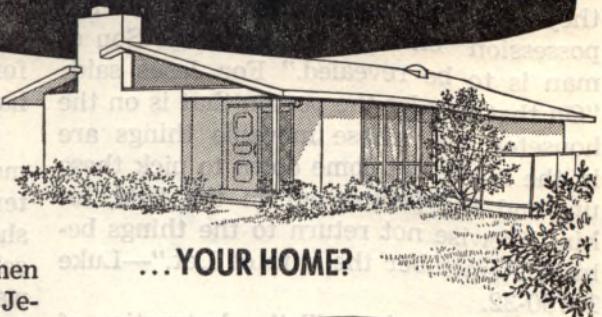
17. Why is it a grievous mistake to look in the wrong direction for security? (Zeph. 1:18)

What is YOUR SECURITY?

ALL normal persons desire security. They want economic security, a nice place to live, satisfying work, freedom from fear, and peace of mind. Jehovah implanted the desire for such proper things when he created man and woman. And in Jehovah's new order, under the rule of his heavenly kingdom, such security will be the happy lot of mankind. Regarding Jehovah, the inspired psalmist said: "You are opening your hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing." (Ps. 145:16) In God's new order the proper desires of humans will be fully satisfied, even beyond their expectations.

But we are not yet in Jehovah's new order. We still live in this present wicked system of things. And it is fast approaching its end. Its finish will come shortly when it collides head on with God at the coming "great tribulation." (Matt. 24:21) Hence, before God's new order becomes a reality, the old system of political, commercial and religious rule under Satan must be put out of the way. (2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 19:11-21) At that time there will be enormous loss of life as Jehovah puts to death those refusing to do his will. Also, there will undoubtedly be much material loss, as happened when the wicked perished in the flood of Noah's day, and when Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed, and also when Jerusalem was devastated in

1. What proper desires will Jehovah satisfy, and how?
2. What loss will take place at the coming "great tribulation"?



70 C.E.—Luke 17:26-29;
2 Chron. 36:19.

That is why there is now compelling reason to keep in its proper place the normal desire we may have for material security. Paying too much attention to material things can get us sidetracked from the most important thing—doing Jehovah's will and gaining his approval. As the apostle Paul wrote: "Let us also put off every weight and the sin that easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance

3. Because of what the immediate future holds, what should be our attitude?



the race that is set before us." (Heb. 12:1) Lack of faith can easily overcome us if we are too involved in the pursuits common to this system of things. Just as a runner strips himself of unnecessary weight to run his race, so we need to do in running for the prize of eternal life. Paul also likens the Christian to a soldier who does not divert his attention by engaging in other pursuits, saying: "As a fine soldier of Christ Jesus take your part in suffering evil. No man serving as a soldier involves himself in the commercial businesses of life, in order that he may gain the approval of the one who enrolled him as a soldier."—2 Tim. 2:3, 4.

HAVING A BALANCED VIEW

⁴ From this, should we conclude that, since we are so close to this system's end, God requires Christians to abandon homes, jobs and money? Do they no longer need to be concerned about making a living, especially in difficult economic times when many people are thrown out of work? No, we should not conclude that, for God's Word also says: "Certainly if anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he has disowned the faith and is worse than a person without faith." (1 Tim. 5:8) In order to 'provide for their own,' those with family responsibilities usually have to work to make enough money for food, clothing and shelter.

⁵ The point that the Scriptures make is that while it is important and necessary to make a living, that should not become the center of one's life. If a person is consumed by the cares of the day, he may feel that he has no time or energy left to search for God, learn his requirements, and do his will. So he must decide who

will be his God: Jehovah or material things. "No one can slave for two masters," said Jesus. "You cannot slave for God and for Riches." (Matt. 6:24) The person who is too concerned about material things is usually too involved working and caring for them. That is why persons with wealth often have great difficulty in doing God's will. They are too busy making and keeping their wealth. So Jesus observed: "How difficult a thing it will be for those with money to enter into the kingdom of God!"—Mark 10:23.

⁶ Sooner or later, whether it is in the time you spend, the attitude you develop, or your heart appreciation, one or the other—God or material things—will win out and become the center of your life. What becomes the center will determine your future, as it did for Lot and his wife. "Do not be misled: God is not one to be mocked. For whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap." (Gal. 6:7) A farmer cannot sow seeds from plants that are weeds and hope to reap a crop of wheat. Similarly, if he sows wheat, he will not reap a crop of weeds. Thus, if we sow trust in the material benefits that this system now offers, we will reap disappointment when it goes off into destruction. If we sow trust in God, we will reap the rewards he gives, both now and in his new order.

⁷ The course of practical wisdom today, in view of where we are on the stream of time, is to have the attitude that the apostle Paul had when he said: "I do indeed also consider all things to be loss on account of the excelling value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. On account of him I have taken the loss of all things and I consider them as a lot of refuse, that I may gain Christ." Even if doing the will of God meant the loss of everything, including his life, Paul would not have drawn back. He had the sure

4. Does God require his people to give up homes, jobs and money?

5, 6. What is the real issue regarding material things today?

7. How did the apostle Paul display the right attitude?

hope of the resurrection. In fact, he looked forward "to the earlier resurrection from the dead." Paul appreciated that what really mattered in life was not the property, wealth, position or standing that he formerly had in the community. He was willing to let go of those things for what really counted—doing God's will and gaining his favor and blessing.—Phil. 3:8, 10, 11.

HOW IMPORTANT IS YOUR HOME?

⁸ The wisdom of that attitude can be seen by the sadness, disappointment and aggravation that come to those who become too attached to material things, and who lose them. For instance, you may have a beautiful home today, but what assurance is there that you will have it tomorrow? You may not even live that long. (Luke 12:16-21) Even now, many who have gone heavily in debt for a home find that in economic "hard times" they cannot meet the payments and are forced to give up the house.

⁹ Also, each year thousands of homes are destroyed or damaged by fire, and others by floods or storms. With increasing frequency thieves are breaking into homes and stealing. In some cases insurance has covered the cost of losses, but in many other cases it has not. And what about the emotional cost to those who center their lives on these possessions? As one housewife noted: "It is true. The more you have, the more you have to worry about." Too, in many parts of the world there have been wars, riots and other acts of violence that have destroyed homes without hope of compensation.

¹⁰ A person who keeps his wants to a reasonable minimum, and who is willing to settle for less materially, does not have so much to lose. In addition, it usually

8, 9. Why is it unwise to become too attached to homes or possessions?

10. By having the right viewpoint, how does the Christian benefit? (Luke 14:33)

enables him to spend more of his time and energy in study and the service of his Creator. He can concentrate on building confidence in Jehovah and his promises. Fire, riots or violence might destroy his home, but they cannot destroy the real security that comes from Jehovah. That is why "the one listening to me," says Jehovah, "will reside in security and be undisturbed from dread of calamity." (Prov. 1:33) Such a person can rightly say: "In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you yourself alone, O Jehovah, make me dwell in security."—Ps. 4:8.

¹¹ Finally, where one's home and possessions are concerned, will they be left standing during the "great tribulation"? In that time of chaotic conditions, are we to think that one's possessions will not be affected? (Zech. 14:13) Also, during the "great tribulation" Satan and his hordes will launch an attack on Jehovah's servants "to get a big spoil and to do much plundering." (Ezek. 38:12) How far Jehovah will let his enemies go we do not know at this time, but the likelihood of material loss is there.

¹² For all these reasons, we can see that it is unwise to become too attached emotionally to things such as homes and furnishings, however enjoyable they may be at present. It is not that Jehovah condemns such, but he knows that attachment to them could prove dangerous, as happened with Lot's wife. (Luke 17:31, 32) Instead, we should look forward to the time in God's new order when, in total security, his servants can build suitable homes for habitation.

IS MONEY, OR A JOB, YOUR SECURITY?

¹³ It takes money to live in this system of things and to buy the necessities of life. But many people want a substantial bank

11. What material loss could occur during the "great tribulation"?

12. To what can we look forward?

13. How secure is money? (Eccl. 7:12)

account, feeling that this will give them security. Yet, recent history shows this not to be so. In the Great Depression thousands of banks closed all over the world, with severe loss to depositors. And an economist recently stated: "The banking system . . . has shown a continued deterioration since the end of World War II." Also, the value of money has been eaten away by inflation, just as a block of ice melts away in the sun. Truly, the history of money is summed up in one word: insecurity.

¹⁴ Thus, while money is needed and is useful now, it is folly to stake one's trust in it. For no matter what actions authorities may take to patch up today's economic systems, the fact is that soon they will all totally collapse, and this time forever. The day is fast approaching when, as has happened before, "into the streets they will throw their very silver, and an abhorrent thing their own gold will become. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's fury." (Ezek. 7:19) In view of this, God's Word wisely counsels: "Let your manner of life be free of the love of money, while you are content with the present things." Because of not heeding such counsel, and, instead, developing a love for money, "some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains." (Heb. 13:5; 1 Tim. 6:10) So, not only does the love of money divert one from the interests of God's kingdom, but it leads to "many pains" because of all that a person must go through to get it and keep it.

¹⁵ The wealthy may wish that they could "live forever and not see the pit," and that "their houses may be to time indefinite," even having "called their landed estates by their names." (Ps. 49:9, 11) But God

is the one who will determine the future. Not money, but Jehovah will decide who and what will be preserved through the coming time of trouble. And in his new order, the earth will not be divided up according to the whim of any wealthy and powerful humans living today. Jehovah, by means of his Kingdom government, will regulate economic affairs so that all of his people will benefit from the bounties of the earth. (Rom. 2:11) Hence, how practical and lifesaving is the Bible's counsel: "Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes, and where thieves do not break in and steal." (Matt. 6:20) A good account with God in heaven is what matters, not a big account in some bank.

AVOIDING ANXIETY

¹⁶ However, today most people are not getting rich. They are more concerned about just making enough money to meet expenses. There is much anxiety, because worldwide economic difficulties in recent years have caused many people to lose jobs and incomes. The servant of God in this circumstance also has cause for concern. But he keeps his balance. He remembers that God's Word tells him not to be "forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, as some have the custom, but encouraging one another, and all the more so as you behold the day drawing near." (Heb. 10:24, 25) The balanced Christian appreciates that "man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth." (Matt. 4:4) So while he conscientiously does what he can to find employment to supply his needs, he does not let it interfere with his meeting together with other Christians for the study of God's Word. Nor does he let such concern affect his service performed on behalf of others in the com-

14. Why does it make sense to be free from the love of money? (Matt. 19:21)

15. Is wealth any advantage in working for eternal life? (Ps. 49:16, 17)

16. Even in times of economic difficulties, what balance does the Christian keep? (Matt. 6:34)

munity who do not yet know Jehovah and his purposes. He keeps in first place the more important things related to God and his will.—Phil. 1:10.

¹⁷ The servant of God who experiences problems because of economic difficulties has a big advantage over those who do not serve Jehovah. He is comforted by the fact that the God he serves knows his situation better than he does, and, as a loving Father, can be trusted to assist in time of need. Would God provide meetings for spiritual strengthening, and opportunities for preaching the good news of the incoming new order, and yet not back up his servants who put God's interests first in their lives? Also, since God himself says that 'one who does not provide for his own is worse than an unbeliever,' would he not himself abide by that same principle? (1 Tim. 5:8) "Is there injustice with God? Never may that become so!" declares the apostle Paul.—Rom. 9:14.

¹⁸ Yes, Jehovah did create humans with the natural desire for good things. But at this climax of the ages, all material considerations need to be kept in their proper

17. What comforting knowledge does the Christian have although experiencing economic problems himself? (Heb. 13:5, 6)

18, 19. (a) Instead of grieving at potential material loss, why should we rejoice at the approaching end of this wicked system? (b) Hence, what course will we pursue in this time of the end?

place. They must never be allowed to get the mastery over us. So, when we think of the "great tribulation" that is fast approaching, we will not be like Lot's wife. We will not grieve at the thought of losing our possessions, because such negative thinking can unbalance us to the point where we endanger our very lives.

¹⁹ Instead, we will rejoice at the approaching end of this wicked system. We know that it will mean the vindication of Jehovah's name, and also the salvation of the people who bear that name and who uphold it in their daily lives. For their loyalty to Jehovah, they will be ushered into a new order where they will have the delightful task of making this earth a Paradise, free from the influence of Satan and his wicked system of things, free from enslavement to sin and death. (1 Cor. 15:25, 26) With such a grand future just ahead, all who want to keep living will want "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, to be liberal, ready to share, safely treasuring up for themselves a fine foundation for the future, in order that they may get a firm hold on the real life."—1 Tim. 6:17-19.

"A Cave of Robbers"

- When driving out money changers and sellers of sacrificial animals from the temple area, Jesus Christ said: "It is written, 'My house will be called a house of prayer,' but you are making it a cave of robbers." (Matt. 21:13) Thus Jesus, in effect, called the money changers and those selling sacrificial animals "robbers." This suggests that they were making excessive profits. The Jewish Mishnah shows that Jesus' words were no exaggeration. It reports about the time when a pair of doves cost a golden *denar* or twenty-five silver *denars*. This exorbitant price moved Simeon the son of Gamaliel to swear by the temple, saying: "I will not suffer the night to pass by before they cost but a [silver] *denar*." This evidently means that doves were being sold at a rate twenty-five times higher than they were actually worth. That indeed was "robbery."

Insight on the News

● Quoting the "Macaskill Letter," printed in Johannesburg, South Africa, "Barron's" of December 6, 1976, stated: "The governments, cities, businesses and individuals of the world are bankrupt. It is now a race against time before the entire system collapses. There is no way out

of this unholy mess. Inevitably economic disaster lies ahead. There are no measures that can be taken to save the situation."

Just how soon the feared "economic disaster" may occur is open to question. But the Bible points to a time near at hand when these words of God through the prophet Ezekiel will prove true: "Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's fury." (Ezek. 7:19) Wisely, then, godly persons possessing riches should not put their trust in them, nor use them for selfish purposes. Rather, they should follow the advice of Jesus Christ, who said: "Make friends for yourselves by means of the unrighteous riches, so that, when such fail, they may receive you into the everlasting dwelling places."—Luke 16:9.

The possessors of "the everlasting dwelling places" are Jehovah God and Jesus Christ. (John 6:37-40, 44) Persons who use their riches in a proper way, as in assisting individuals in need and in furthering the preaching of the "good news," will have Jehovah God and his Son Jesus Christ as their friends.—Gal. 2:10; Phil. 4:15.

● After analyzing thirty-six attempted rapes and thirty-six rapes that were completed,

Frank J. Javorek of the Denver General Hospital reported

Escaping Rape the most significant factors that differentiated between completed and attempted rapes. According to "Science News," in the order of importance, these "were whether the victim screamed or cried out for help, and whether the victim tried to escape by running away. Next most important were the victim's neighborhood of residence and whether the victim was awake and alert at the time of the attack."

In some situations, of course, screams are not heard and running away is impossible. However, 86 percent of those who both

Economic Disaster Ahead

screamed and ran avoided being raped.

Interestingly, God's law to ancient Israel specified that if an engaged girl committed fornication both parties were to be put to death. However, if the girl screamed for help, but was not rescued, this was accepted as proof of her innocence. In this case the man alone was put to death, whereas the girl was exonerated.—Deut. 22:23-27.

● By a vote of forty to six, the Eighth Provincial Synod of the Anglican Church of Central Africa has held that a man having more than one wife may be received into that religious organization along with his believing wives and children.

This is allowed "in exceptional and merited cases." According to "The Christian Century," the synod delegates "agreed that 'although polygamy . . . does clash with the full ideal of Christian marriage,' it is sometimes impossible to withdraw from situations where there is such a clash."

On the surface, it may appear to some persons that this is a considerate arrangement. However, human reasoning and standards are not of paramount concern in such matters. Monogamy (the having of only one living marriage mate) was the original standard that Jehovah God set up for the family. He later tolerated polygamy until his due time to restore that original standard. This he did in the Christian congregation. Consequently, congregational elders and ministerial servants were required to be 'husbands of just one wife.' (1 Tim. 3:2, 12) Moreover, the apostle Paul stated: "A married woman is bound by law to her husband while he is alive . . . while her husband is living, she would be styled an adulteress if she became another man's."—Rom. 7:2, 3.

In harmony with divine requirements, persons who have desired to dedicate their lives to Jehovah God but have been involved in polygamous unions have brought those arrangements to an end. Such men have made proper provision for the children born to them as a result of polygamous marriages. But only after bringing their lives into harmony with God's righteous requirements could they make a dedication to God and be baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.



Building a Stronghold of Truth in **OKINAWA**

OKINAWA—the name stirs memories of one of the fiercest battles of the Pacific War. The bitter engagement that started April 1, 1945, ended on June 22 with the suicide of the generals and surviving remnants of the Japanese imperial army. Combined losses of the United States and Japanese armies were more than 70,000 men, but the total of civilian casualties in that battle came to an appalling 132,894 persons! Survivors staggered out of refuge trenches and hideouts among the family tombs, to find their island homeland practically demolished. They appeared to be without hope in the world. But, soon, some of them were to learn of a grand prospect for the future.

Among the survivors were Yoshiko Higa, widowed during the war, along with her infant son. Their "bomb shelter" had been the huge concrete ancestral tomb, built in a turtle-back shape to symbolize the position of a woman giving birth to a child; this is related to the Oriental idea

that at death everyone 'returns to the source.' Here, long hours spent in the company of the bones and ashes of her ancestors had conveyed to Yoshiko that the dead are no more than what they look to be—nonexistent, lifeless dust. Later, she met with several of Jehovah's Witnesses, these being Filipinos who had come to work on Okinawa. To her amazement, these Witnesses showed her in the Bible exactly what she had observed in the tomb—that the dead are unconscious and out of existence. And they also showed her from the Bible that God has made a wonderful provision through his Son, Jesus Christ, to raise the dead to life under his Kingdom rule.—John 5:28, 29; 1 Cor. 15:22-24.

But Yoshiko could speak only Japanese, a language foreign to the Filipinos. How, then, could they study the Bible with her? Well, they could locate the books in the Japanese Bible, corresponding to those in their English-language Bibles, also the

chapter and verse numbers. So their method of study was to have her look up a succession of related scriptures on a topic, whether this might be the condition of the dead, God's name and qualities, Christ's presence, the Kingdom, or another subject. Yoshiko soon came to appreciate that "the word of God is alive and exerts power and is sharper than any two-edged sword." (Heb. 4:12) She started to proclaim to others the precious Bible message that she was learning.

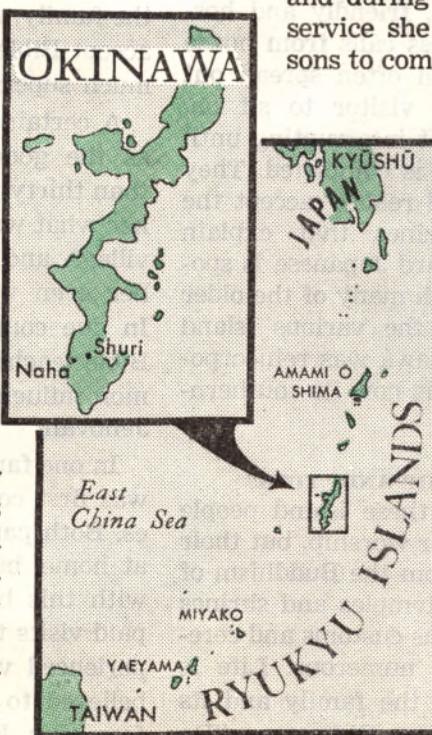
THE GOOD NEWS SPREADS

Among the first persons to heed Yoshiko's zealous witnessing were members of a Protestant Church in Shuri, the ancient capital of Okinawa. One of them, an elderly lady named Matsu Ikehara, persuaded a number of other elderly churchgoers to accept pure Bible teaching. Along with still others, these soon left the Church and became active Witnesses, proclaiming the good tidings from door to door, after the pattern established by Jesus Christ. From 1953, regular visits were made to Okinawa by the branch overseer and other representatives of the Watch Tower Society's Japan branch. In 1955, the first circuit assembly was held in the capital, Naha, with fewer than twenty persons in attendance, seated on *tatami* matting in a hotel room. The program, presented in its entirety by two visitors from Japan, was greatly appreciated by all those present, most of whom immediately entered the full-time "pioneer" service of Jehovah's Witnesses. It was a small beginning. But in 1975, just twenty years later, atten-

dance at the district assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses in Okinawa was more than 1,400 persons!

Those early full-time Witnesses included one named Matsue Tanaka, who "pioneered" with the Kingdom message faithfully in Shuri until her death some years later. Although meetings of the Shuri group were often held in the Tanaka home, her husband paid no attention to the message until the day that he attended the Bible talk at his wife's funeral. Deeply impressed by what he heard that day, he took up his wife's well-marked Bible and started to study things out for himself. Today, at seventy-three years of age, he is a "pioneer" Witness of fourteen years' standing and a trusted elder in the Christian congregation.

Another of those early "pioneer" Witnesses in Shuri was Mitsuko Tomoyori, also a widow. While bringing up her daughter, Masako, she became a "special pioneer," and during nineteen years in this service she has aided twenty persons to come to dedication and baptism. Her daughter now accompanies her in this work. Yoshiko Higa's boy also "pioneered" when he grew up, and today he is one of the two traveling overseers who visit the twenty-one congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses that are scattered over six of the islands of the Ryukyuus, some sixteen congregations being located on the main island of Okinawa.



AMONG A HOSPITABLE PEOPLE

What is it like to live and serve in these islands? Located between latitudes 24 and 29 degrees north, these subtropical islands offer winters that are pleasantly mild. The summers, though, are long, hot and sultry, and many of the female Witnesses wear a hat and carry an umbrella as protection from the sun. However, the reflection of the sun from the coral-dusted ground can still cause a sun-burned face.

Between the months of May and November, typhoons hit or skirt the area, so that the wooden houses are battened down to meet the onslaught of wind and salty rain. In 1964, a typhoon washed out preparation work for a circuit assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses. No food was available in the markets—except pumpkins. Due to this constant fare in the assembly cafeteria, some of the Witnesses humorously labeled this the "pumpkin assembly."

The people of Okinawa and the sister islands are easy-going, friendly and hospitable. When a Witness calls from house to house, the host will often spread out a straw mat for the visitor to sit on, and then listen without interrupting until the Bible presentation is completed. They are a quiet people and readily accept the literature and magazines that explain God's kingdom. Standard Japanese is spoken everywhere, though many of the older people prefer to use the various island dialects. In 1972, Okinawa was reincorporated into Japan, and is now its southernmost province.

ANCESTOR WORSHIP AND "YUTA"

Over the centuries these island people have practiced ancestor worship, but their religion is different from the Buddhism of Japan. Few religious temples and shrines are to be seen. Religious customs and ceremonies, however, are numerous. Life is tightly woven around the family and its ancestors. If you ask an Okinawan, "Do

you believe in God?" he will likely reply, "I believe only in my ancestors and trust in them." In practically every home, the Buddhist household altar, or *butsudan*, can be found. Within the altar is a frame holding the memorial tablets, or *ihai*, for the dead. At prescribed times prayers are chanted, and incense and food offerings are made before the *butsudan*.

If a problem arises in the family, or if there is sickness, it is the custom to call on a spirit medium, or *yuta*, to find out the cause. The womenfolk, who play the major role in the religious activities of the islands, usually make this visit, and then afterward they follow through on whatever ritual has been prescribed by the *yuta*. This is done faithfully, and often at great expense to the family. If any do not go along with the instructions from these diviners, they are warned that dire consequences will befall some member of the family. As you can imagine, those who accept Bible truth must break away from much superstition and religious ritual.

A certain woman had been looked upon as the goddess of her village for more than thirty years. The demons would show her what was going on in the neighboring village, and their influence continued with her even when she was on her sickbed. In due course she came in contact with Bible teachings, was liberated from all demon influence and is now joyfully serving Jehovah.

In one family, it was the young son that was first contacted by Jehovah's Witnesses. Both parents worked and were seldom at home, but a regular study was started with this boy. He knew that his mother paid visits to a *yuta*, and that she had experienced visions and dreams, which she believed to be inspiration from God. But from his Bible studies the son learned

that the *yuta* was not of God, but of the Devil. He respectfully told his mother that the spirit medium was a servant of Satan. The mother was deeply disturbed about this, and the immediate result was that both parents asked for a Bible study. Now the entire family, freed from all demonistic influence, are joyful worshipers of Jehovah. The mother says that she has really come to feel and experience the meaning of Jesus' words at John 8:32: "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

Many other school-age youngsters are rejoicing to know the good news in the Bible, and they are backing up their faith with works. They frequently encounter strong pressure at school to participate in judo or kendo (swordsmanship), but in harmony with principles stated in the Bible, such as at Isaiah 2:4, they refuse to share in activities that run contrary to their Bible-trained consciences.

A BOUNTEOUS HARVEST GATHERED

In 1965, a branch office of the Watch Tower Society was opened in Naha, Okinawa. A long-time Hawaiian missionary, Shinichi Tohara, with his wife and daughter, transferred from the snows of Hokkaido, Japan, to subtropical Okinawa, there to take care of the new branch. Since that time, the number of Kingdom proclaimers in Okinawa has increased from 217 to nearly 900 in number, with two out of every five of these gaining a knowledge of the Bible only in the past three years.

During the war in Indochina, Okinawa again became a major backup area for American fighting forces. Thousands of Americans and their families were living on the island. In 1968, hearing that the need was great there among the English-speaking population, Karl and Evalyn Emerson, formerly missionaries in Korea,

moved with their young son to Okinawa. In that same year, an English congregation was started, with a Sunday attendance of about thirty persons. Quickly, the number associating grew to more than a hundred. But suddenly, within a month or two, half of these would move out to other places in the world. When this first happened, it seemed that the congregation could never recover, but very quickly the numbers attending would build up again. It is now estimated that, since this congregation was organized, more than 1,000 persons have associated at their Kingdom Hall. Of these, over 250 persons have accepted the Bible's teachings and have been prompted thereby to serve Jehovah in the door-to-door witness work in Okinawa. The majority have continued this service on returning to the United States, where many of them are now elders and ministerial servants in their local congregations. Since 1972, two missionaries have added to the fine service done in the English congregation, but a field ripe for harvest awaits other "pioneer-minded" Witnesses who may wish to move to this subtropical "paradise."

In 1974, a beautiful three-story branch building was dedicated during a visit by N. H. Knorr, president of the Watch Tower Society. This is set among sugarcane fields on a picturesque rocky coast, and is centrally located to care well for the congregations on the island of Okinawa, and in all the Ryukyus.

Jesus' command to 'preach this good news of the kingdom' is truly being carried out in these island territories. Honest-hearted persons are responding. Though still a stronghold in a military sense, Okinawa has become also a stronghold for Bible truth and for making known Jehovah's kingdom. It is even true, as the psalmist wrote at Psalm 97:1: "Jehovah himself has become king! Let the earth be joyful. Let the many islands rejoice."

"Shining as Illuminators

IN THE WORLD"

THE world of mankind desperately needs enlightenment from God. Dishonesty, crime, violence, oppression and injustice abound. Many people are disheartened and discouraged. For them, life has little purpose. Others are trying to find an escape by means of alcoholic beverages, drugs, entertainment, sexual experiences of all kinds, yes, by means of anything that helps them to forget the realities of the present. Still others, through total involvement with their work, families and community, are able to dismiss from their minds how things really are. But when trouble touches their lives, they are forced to take a sober view of what this world actually is like.

Surely people need guidance, enlightenment, so as to be able to make the best of life now and to have a solid hope for the future. But who today can provide such enlightenment? Obviously it cannot be persons who are themselves caught up in the spirit of this world—its selfishness, greed, lack of concern for others, unbridled desire for sensual pleasure or lawlessness. The only ones who are in a position to illuminate the minds of others are true Christians, who have been enlightened by God's Word and the operation of his spirit. Hence, all servants of the Most High should be "shining as illuminators in the world."—Phil. 2:15.

Since all true Christians are to serve as illuminators, congregations of God's peo-

ple are appropriately represented in the book of Revelation as "lampstands." Furthermore, bodies of elders, who should be examples to the rest of the congregation, are likened to "stars." (Rev. 1:20) Describing what he saw, the apostle John, the writer of the book of Revelation, tells us: "I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the lampstands someone like a son of man. . . . And he had in his right hand seven stars."—Rev. 1:12-16.

"STARS" IN CHRIST'S RIGHT HAND

For the members of a particular congregation to serve as a lampstand in a dark world, they must act in harmony with what is revealed in these words. The head of the entire Christian congregation is Jesus Christ, for he is the One who is "in the midst of the lampstands." Accordingly, the members of the congregation, by holding fast to their Head and imitating him in word and deed, serve as illuminators. And the elders, by loyal submission to Christ's headship, remain as "stars" in his "right hand," that is, in his favor. Being in his hand, bodies of elders are under his control, guidance and direction. This gives rise to the question, Just what does Jesus Christ want elders to do in helping their respective congregations to serve as lampstands?

Here are three basic commands that the Son of God gave to his disciples: (1) "Keep on the watch, for you do not know when

the master of the house is coming, whether late in the day or at midnight or at cockcrowing or early in the morning; in order that when he arrives suddenly, he does not find you sleeping. But what I say to you I say to all, Keep on the watch." (Mark 13:35-37) (2) "I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another." (John 13:34) (3) "Go . . . and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." —Matt. 28:19, 20.

Hence, should we not expect elders to be setting the example for the whole congregation in loyally conforming to these commands? They need to remain spiritually awake, adhering closely to the lofty requirements of God's Word in matters of personal conduct. In their relationship with members of the congregation, they should be displaying self-sacrificing love, putting the interests of others ahead of their own. And their words and actions should demonstrate that they recognize the importance of making disciples. Yes, elders should want to be the kind of real brothers that fit the symbolic description of "stars." This requires their being an encouraging example, not just to the weaker members of the congregation, but to all. This is in harmony with the inspired admonition that the apostle Paul gave to Timothy, a fellow elder: "Become an example to the faithful ones in speaking, in conduct, in love, in faith, in chasteness."—1 Tim. 4:12.

Just how important a good example can be is forcefully illustrated in the case of Nehemiah. Opposition to his rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem was intense. Nevertheless, trusting in Jehovah and continually making the work a subject of prayer, Nehemiah courageously directed the job

and also had an active personal share in the actual rebuilding. What was the result? Just fifty-two days after construction work began it came to a successful completion.—Neh. chapters 4, 6.

Similarly, when stirred to action by the word of Jehovah through the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, Governor Zerubbabel and High Priest Joshua took a zealous lead in rebuilding the temple of Jehovah. By means of his prophets, the Most High imparted his spirit to them. Then, through the governor and the high priest, Jehovah's spirit was imparted to the whole restored nation of Israel. How? In that Joshua and Zerubbabel stuck to the work to the finish and encouraged the temple workers by word and example.—Zech. 4: 2-14.

ORDERLY ARRANGEMENTS AND TEACHING

In connection with the rebuilding of the temple and of the walls of Jerusalem, good organizational arrangements were needed to get the work done. Nehemiah, for example, had to take the initiative to adjust these arrangements to fit the circumstances. As the rebuilding work made good progress, Sanballat, Tobiah and neighboring peoples intensified their opposition and conspired to fight against Jerusalem. Nehemiah made this a matter of prayer, encouraged the people to trust in Jehovah, armed the workmen, arranged for others to stand guard and outlined an alarm system. The work then continued, totally frustrating the schemes of the enemy. —Neh. 4:7-20.

Likewise, elders today can make arrangements that will serve well locally in carrying out the vital work of making disciples. An excellent opportunity for this presents itself at the weekly congregation book or Bible study. Convenient times can be set for the group to meet to participate in spreading Bible truth. Since the group is small, the elder conducting the study

can give personalized attention. He may wish to concentrate on working with certain ones for a time until they are at ease in making known the Bible's message from house to house. He may also arrange to have experienced proclaimers of the "good news" work alongside youths or others who would benefit from their knowledge and experience.

Basic to getting the work done is equipping everyone with Scriptural knowledge that can be shared with others. During the course of the study, the conductor might periodically invite comments as to how a particular point under consideration could be used when sharing Bible truth with unbelievers. He could inquire as to when, in a person's daily contacts, such information might be used to help someone spiritually and how this could be done. In reviewing with the group the material that has been studied, he could ask if someone would like to demonstrate how a Scriptural thought discussed that day could be used when visiting people at their homes.

There is also value in preparing the group beforehand for the people on whom they will be calling. With reference to himself, the apostle Paul said: "To the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain Jews . . . I have become all things to people of all sorts, that I might by all means save some." (1 Cor. 9:20-22) What appeals to one person or segment of a community does not necessarily appeal to another. So, if we know something about the people whom we are trying to reach with the Bible's message, we can give advance thought to what we might say to them. It may be advisable in the book study group to exchange thoughts about what various ones have found effective, and why.

Another aspect that might be discussed advantageously at times is the attitude we should have toward other people. All persons have been bought with the pre-

ious blood of God's Son and, therefore, need to be informed about how they personally might benefit further. Regardless of what their attitude may be toward the proclaimers of the "good news," Jehovah God desires that they come to repentance. (2 Pet. 3:9) How fine it would be to review from time to time whether our public preaching reflects a recognition of this fact! Would we, for example, be willing to give up our lives if that could result in helping persons in our community to come to an accurate knowledge of God's truth? The apostle Paul was willing to do so. In his letter to the Romans, he wrote: "I am telling the truth in Christ; I am not lying, since my conscience bears witness with me in holy spirit, that I have great grief and unceasing pain in my heart. For I could wish that I myself were separated as the cursed one from the Christ in behalf of my brothers, my relatives according to the flesh."—Rom. 9:1-3.

Our discussing such expressions can help us to examine our own attitude toward others and to see whether we are really thinking Scripturally. When we care about other people at heart, this will reveal itself in the appealing way in which we approach them. As a result, it will be easier for honest-hearted ones to respond to the "good news."

Besides setting a fine example and making good use of opportunities to teach those in his group, an elder can also encourage fellow believers. Back in the time of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah, the Jews, in their own strength, would *not* have succeeded in completing the temple-rebuilding work. Mountainous obstacles stood in the way. Therefore, it must have been most upbuilding for them to hear these words: "Be strong, all you people of the land." "I [Jehovah] am with you people." "Do not be afraid." (Hag. 2:4, 5) Similarly, when an elder expresses conviction in Jehovah's backing of his people

based on actual experiences, and himself acts in harmony with that conviction, this is most strengthening to others. Also, his joy in serving Jehovah can be very stimulating and encouraging.

However, it is not strong personalities nor organizational efficiency, but God's spirit that is the real force enabling true Christians to shine as illuminators in a hostile world. It was this same force that made it possible for Governor Zerubbabel and the Jewish laborers to complete temple-rebuilding work despite opposition from surrounding peoples. Through his prophet Zechariah, Jehovah declared that it was "not by a military force, nor by power, but by [his] spirit."—Zech. 4:6.

Good teaching on the part of elders, coupled with encouragement and a fine example, is definitely needed for God's spirit to energize the members of the congregation. How so? Because today God's spirit does not grant individual Christians miraculous knowledge. It acts as a remembrancer and as a teacher. As a remembrancer, the spirit brings back to a Christian's mind what he has learned from the Scriptures and, as a teacher, it enables him to discern just how the information brought back to mind should be used or applied. (John 14:26) Accordingly, the extent to which a Christian knows what is contained in the Bible, to that extent can he, with the aid of God's spirit, make known the truth to others and help them

to live the truth. And where the elders are few in number, they can call on ministerial servants and other mature Christians to share in building up the congregation with Scriptural knowledge.

All the meetings of the congregation should serve to impart instruction designed to help all to 'shine as illuminators,' both in word and in deed. Therefore, careful thought needs to be given to preparation, so that meetings will be truly educational and hold the attention of those in attendance. Elders can also teach when visiting members of the congregation in their homes, speaking to them before and after meetings and while sharing with them in the public proclamation of the "good news."

So if a congregation is to serve as a "lampstand" in a particular community, the members thereof need to know and understand the Scriptures so that God's spirit can be of the greatest help as a remembrancer and as a teacher. Since God's spirit is holy, it will, of course, only operate upon those who maintain a clean standing before the Most High, upon persons who remain spiritually awake and have genuine love for mankind, especially for fellow believers. Are you doing your part in making the "lampstand" in your community shine brightly, to the praise of Jehovah God and in loyal obedience to Jesus Christ, the head of the Christian congregation?

'When the Earth Was Divided'

◆ The Bible reports: "To Eber there were two sons born. The name of the one was Peleg, because in his days the earth was divided." (Gen. 10:25) This division, as far as we can Scripturally determine, referred to Jehovah God's confusing the language of Babel's builders and scattering them. (Gen. 11:1, 7) The name Peleg means "division." It should be noted, however, that the division occurred, not at his birth, but "in his days." So if he was named Peleg at birth, his name was prophetic of the great division that took place during his lifetime.

the TEXT OF the CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURES

-HOW ACCURATE?

SINCE you are able to read this magazine, likely you possess a copy of the Christian Scriptures, commonly called the "New Testament." The twenty-seven books that comprise this part of the Holy Bible were completed about 1,879 years ago. Can you be confident that your copy accurately represents what the original Bible writers said?

That might seem doubtful to some. They may reason that transmitting these writings down through nearly two millenniums of time has resulted in losing the original Bible text.

The facts, however, are quite to the contrary. A noted authority on the Bible's text, Frederic G. Kenyon, states: "It cannot be too strongly asserted that in substance the text of the Bible is certain: Especially is this the case with the New Testament."

How can scholars be so sure that we today have the Christian Scriptures substantially as they were written? Because of examining many thousands of handwritten copies of these Bible books. Known as "manuscripts" (from Latin, *manuscriptus*, "written by hand"), these handwritten copies give evidence that the text of the Christian Scriptures is amazingly accurate.

A REMARKABLE CONTRAST

It is uncommon for an ancient document to be supported by a large number of manuscripts. For example, of the *History* by the Roman writer Pliny the Younger (61-113 C.E.) only seven copies survive. The earliest of these is from 850 C.E., more than seven centuries after the time of composition. Similarly the history by Greek writer Herodotus survives in only eight copies, the earliest of which is 1,300 years later than the time of writing.

But what about the Christian Scriptures? In remarkable contrast, recently published figures for manuscripts of this part of the Bible in the original Greek now total 5,269. Moreover, manuscript finds of early translations of these writings into Syriac, Latin, Coptic, Gothic and other languages increase the testimony by another 10,000 or more. Such extensive copying and translating is true of no other document in all human history. But it is to be expected only of writings that are truly "inspired of God."—2 Tim. 3:16.

A noteworthy feature of these original-language manuscripts is their closeness to the time of Bible writing. Papyrus fragments of parts of the Christian Scriptures in Greek have been dated back to the beginning of the second century (the 100's)

C.E., and possibly to the end of the first century.

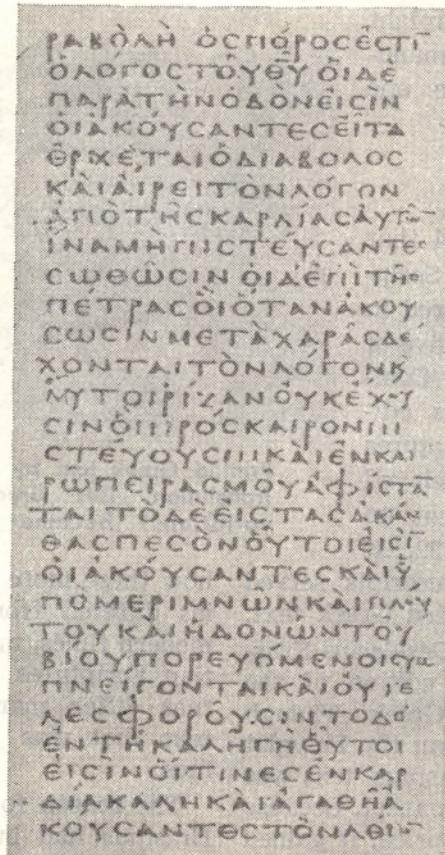
DIFFERENT READINGS—WHY?

It is to be expected that many thousands of copies made over centuries of time would result in their differing from one another in certain respects. There are many reasons for this.

For example, the older Greek Bible manuscripts were produced in a style of handwriting known as "uncials." This term comes from a Latin word meaning "a twelfth part," perhaps referring to large letters that originally occupied a twelfth part of a line. Uncial manuscripts have all-capital letters, with practically no division between words.

Bible scholars have illustrated a problem that may arise from this type of writing by the use of the expression "GOD IS NOWHERE." This could mean "GOD IS NOWHERE," or "GOD IS NOW HERE." When this type of problem turns up in manuscripts of the Christian Scriptures, however, never is the difference in meaning so serious.

To illustrate: According to the book *Encountering New Testament Manuscripts* different viewpoints of word division and punctuation of the original Greek text give the following two major possibilities of translation at John 1:3, 4:



Part of Vatican Manuscript No. 1209 (fourth century C.E.). It has all-capital letters, and hardly any spacing between words

a. "All things came into being through Him; and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life; and the life was the light of men."

b. "All things came into being through Him; and apart from Him nothing came into being. What has come into being was life in Him; and the life was the light of men."

It is evident that the general sense of this Bible passage is the same either way.

Another reason why ancient Greek Bible manuscripts differ in occasional details is that certain Greek capital letters resemble one another. Thus, two manuscripts or two groups of manuscripts may have similar-looking, but different, words at certain places. Too, at times copying was done from dictation. Certain manuscripts indicate that in isolated instances scribes confused words that sounded alike (as the English words "bare" and "bear").

As further causes for variant reading in Bible manuscripts, *The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible* notes: "A scribe's eye might skip from the first to the second occurrence of the same word, causing omission of the intervening material; he might read the same word or phrase twice; or he might confuse a word for a word of similar appearance. . . ."

Thus, quite early in

the Common Era manuscripts copied in different areas began to exhibit variations from one another. As these documents were copied and recopied, families of manuscripts having the same basic peculiarities came into existence. And so, scholars today speak of the Alexandrian text, the Western text, the Caesarean text, and the Byzantine text.

Interestingly, most manuscripts have "mixed" or "fluid" texts. Why? One reason is that scribes would often copy one section (for example, the gospels) from one manuscript, and another section (for instance, the letters of the apostle Paul) from a different one. Too, after completing a new copy, scribes might make corrections from a manuscript different from the one they had copied.

PRINTED EDITIONS OF THE GREEK TEXT

It was in the year 1514 that the whole of the Christian Scriptures in Greek first appeared in print. This was in volume five of the work known as the "Complutensian Polyglot." This edition of the Christian Scriptures in Greek, however, was delayed in publication and did not go on the market until 1522. It

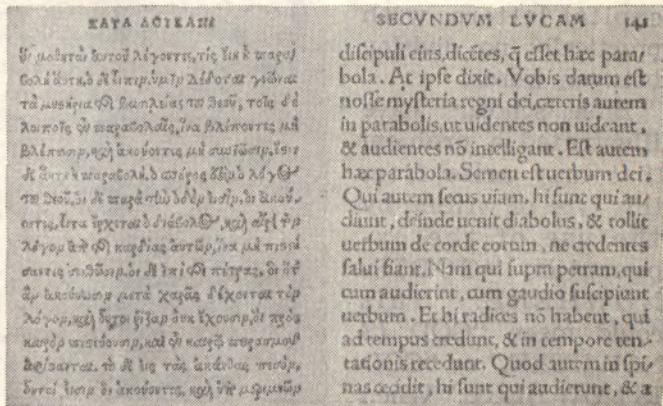
is not known what manuscripts served as the basis for this printed Greek text.

In 1516, Dutch scholar Desiderius Erasmus produced a printed edition of the Christian Scriptures in Greek. Though printed two years later than the Polyglot text mentioned above, Erasmus' text was the first to be put on the market. Because of its small size and low price, it gained great popularity. During the eighteenth century Erasmus' text became known as the "received text." All principal Protestant translations of the Christian Scrip-

tures in Europe prior to 1881, including the celebrated *Authorized*, or King James, Version, were based on this Greek text.

However, Erasmus compiled his Greek text from, at most, only six manuscripts, none earlier than the tenth century C.E. For the most part, he had his printer copy from two manuscripts of about the twelfth century. Thus, the manuscript authority for the received text is scanty and many centuries removed from the time of writing of these inspired Bible books.

With the discovery of numerous manuscripts of greater antiquity, scholars began printing the received text with a system of footnotes for showing where and



Printed Greek text by Erasmus with his Latin translation. This Greek text (with minor variations) became the "received text"

how these more ancient handwritten copies differed from the received text. In modern times, many editions of the Christian Scriptures in Greek have appeared that differ markedly from the printed text that was first published by Erasmus.

The reason for this is simple. Whereas Erasmus had but a few manuscripts to work with, scholars today have many thousands of them. Experts can often trace the history of different readings and pinpoint what the inspired author of a

Bible book most probably wrote. The result of painstaking work by textual scholars has been editions of the printed Greek text that represent more accurately than the received text what the Christian Bible writers actually penned.

'HARDLY MORE THAN A THOUSANDTH PART'

To what extent do manuscripts of the Christian Scriptures differ from one another? Estimates of the number of differences, called "variant readings," in Greek manuscripts and ancient translations exceed 200,000. Does this suggest that the text of the Christian Scriptures has become hopelessly obscured? Actually the figure is quite misleading. How so?

In *A General Introduction to the Bible*, Norman L. Geisler and William E. Nix point out: "There is an ambiguity in saying there are some 200,000 variants in the existing manuscripts of the New Testament, since these represent only 10,000 places in the New Testament. If one single word is misspelled in 3,000 different manuscripts, this is counted as 3,000 variants or readings."

Moreover, most of the variant readings are merely mechanical, having to do with matters such as spelling (comparable to the difference between "honor" and "honour") and word order. One scholar declared that out of 150,000 variant readings those that could raise doubt as to meaning amounted to only 400. Of these, only 50 were truly significant. Similarly, Fenton John Anthony Hort, a world-renowned scholar of the Greek text of the Christian Scriptures, writes:

"The proportion of words [in the entire Greek text of the Christian Scriptures] virtually accepted on all hands as raised above doubt is very great, not less, on a rough computation, than seven-eighths of the whole. The remaining eighth, therefore, formed in great part by changes of order and other comparative trivialities constitutes the whole area of criticism."

ιστορίαι. το δὲ εἰς τὸς σπάντας πεδού, οὗτοι οἱ
στοι αἱ σκοτωσατίς, καὶ ὅποι μεριμνῶν καὶ πλο-
τον καὶ ἡδονῶν τοῦ θεοῦ παρεόμανοι⁷ συμπλήγουσται
καὶ οἱ τελεστραφοῦσι, το δέ τοῦ κατὰ γῆ, οὗτοι 16
εἰσαν αὐτινες τὸν παρθένον⁸ καὶ λαγκάνας
τὸν λίγον⁹ κατέχουσται καὶ Γαρπιοφοροῦσι τὸ ιπ-
πονόν. Οὐδέποτε δὲ λίγους ἀναστησεις αὐτοῖς 18
ακοστεῖ οἱ θεοκτίσιοι πλήν τινησι, ἀλλ' οὐλι λυχνιας
τιθησι. Ινα οἱ επανορθώμανοι βλέπωσιν τὸ φῶς.
οἱ γάρ οὐτοι¹⁰ ποιοῦσι δὲ οὐαρέδον γενήσεται, 17
οὐδὲ πλούτουρον¹¹ δὲ οὐ μηγγωσθει καὶ εἰς φανερόν
εἴθε. Πλέοντες οὖν πλοιούσταις δέ τοι γάρ έχει, 18
οὐδημάται αὐτῷ· καὶ οὐδὲ οὐλι ξενι, καὶ δεοκι
κειν αρθροτάται δέ¹² πιστοῖς.

Παρεγένεται δέ πολὺς αὐτοῖς ή μήποτε καὶ οἱ 19
δόξαιροι αὐτοῖς, καὶ τοῦ θύμωντο συντικείν αὐτοῖς
διὰ τοῦ ὄχλου. ἀπρεπέλη δὲ αὐτῷ¹³ η μήποτε σον οἱ
καὶ οἱ σπειρόποι οὐν τοταριανέστιν¹⁴ θύμωντες αἱ.
δέ δὲ πλοηρεῖσι εἰσιν πολὺς πύρεος¹⁵ μήποτε μην 21
καὶ σπειρόποι οὐν οὐτοι πλοιοι τοῦ λόγου τοῦ
τοῦ εκτοντας καὶ ποιοῦσις.

Εγένετο δέ εἰ μηδὲ τῶν θυμεράν¹⁶ καὶ αὐτοῖς¹⁷
τοῦέδην τὸ πλοιον καὶ οἱ μαθηταί αὐτοῖς, καὶ εἰτε
πρές αὐτοῖς¹⁸ διδένομεν εἰς τὸ πέρα τοῦ Λίμνου·
καὶ πλοηρεσι, πλεύσαντο δέ αὐτοῖς σηματισμοῖς¹⁹
καὶ πατέρων ταῖς τοις²⁰ αὐτοῖς²¹ λύματα; καὶ
απεκτινούσται καὶ εκπόνησαν. προσπλινθότες δέ τοι
δημητρας αὐτούς λέγεσσας²² τεινοτάτα επιμάρτα,
πλοιάρεσσα. δέ δὲ πιεζούσις εἰστρέψον τῷ στέμμα-
τοι τῷ πλόδων²³ τοῦ θεατος²⁴ καὶ έπανορθοσι, καὶ
τύπτονται γαληνη, εἰσει δὲ αὐτοῖς²⁵ ποσοὶ η πλοιος²⁶

A recent edition of the Christian Scriptures in Greek, edited by Eberhard Nestle. A system of footnotes gives variant readings

... the amount of what can in any sense be called substantial variation ... can hardly form more than a thousandth part of the entire text."

Whatever version of the Christian Scriptures you possess, there is no reason to doubt that the Greek text upon which it is based represents with considerable fidelity what the inspired authors of these Bible books originally wrote. Though now nearly 2,000 years removed from the time of their original composition, the Greek text of the Christian Scriptures is a marvel of accurate transmission.



What did the **WISE MAN** mean?

The Value of a Friend

The "loner" who works hard in piling up riches certainly has an empty life. Wise King Solomon wrote: "There exists one, but not a second one [that is, a lone man without a friend or companion]; also no son or brother does he have, but there is no end to all his hard work. Also, his eyes themselves are not satisfied with riches: 'And for whom am I working hard and causing my soul to lack in good things?' This too is vanity, and it is a calamitous occupation." (Eccl. 4:8) How meaningless is the life of a miser who has no friend, son or brother and does not even reap the benefits from his hard work! He just keeps piling up riches, not wanting to spend any money on things that could make his life more comfortable and enjoyable. At death, however, he is forced to leave everything behind. What futility!

Far better off is the person who labors with a good friend. The wise man continues: "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their hard work." (Eccl. 4:9) Their working together brings benefits, "a good reward," in the form of assistance, comfort and protection.

King Solomon states: "If one of them should fall, the other one can raise his partner up. [This is because it is not likely that both will fall at the same time.] But how will it be with just the one who falls when there is not another to raise him up? Moreover, if two lie down together [as when having to stay overnight in the cold during a trip], they also will certainly get warm; but how can just one keep warm? And if somebody could overpower one alone [who might be traveling over a dangerous road], two together could make a stand against him. And a threefold cord [which is stronger than one consisting of one or two strands] cannot quickly be torn in two."—Eccl. 4:10-12.

Are you living in harmony with the spirit of these words? There definitely is much value in having dependable friends.

Even the Topmost Position Is Vanity

Among humans popularity is often fleeting. The famous person is quickly forgotten when someone else captures the heart of the people. Even those who attain the topmost position are no exception.

Wise King Solomon realistically described what can happen to rulers. We read: "Better is a needy but wise child than an old but stupid king, who has not come to know enough to be warned any longer. For he [evidently the child] has gone forth from the prison house itself to become king, although in the kingship of this one he had been born as one of little means."—Eccl. 4:13, 14.

A man might feel that his having the topmost position, kingship, backed up by his age and experience, should assure him public respect or support. But, despite his position and age, a king will not be granted heartfelt honor if he acts unwisely, refusing to heed the sound counsel of others. Position and age, in themselves, do not guarantee respect. That is why a needy but wise child is better off than a king.

who once ruled wisely but who in old age becomes set in his ways and pays no attention to good counsel. Through mismanagement the old king may plunge the whole kingdom into hopeless debt, alienate his subjects and may even be deposed and die in disgrace. The youth who continues to act wisely, on the other hand, may earn the very respect that is not accorded an old but stupid king.

As Solomon noted, such a wise youth might even be elevated from the prison house to the kingship. This is what happened to Joseph. So impressed was Egypt's Pharaoh that he said to him: "There is no one as discreet and wise as you are. You will personally be over my house, and all my people will obey you implicitly. Only as to the throne shall I be greater than you." (Gen. 41:39, 40) Thus Joseph was exalted to second ruler of Egypt.

Next, focusing attention on the people's capricious reaction to a change of rulers, Solomon writes: "I have seen all those alive who are walking about under the sun, how it goes with the child, who is second, that stands up in the other one's place. There is no end to all the people, to all those before whom he happened to be; neither will people afterward rejoice in

him, for this too is vanity and a striving after the wind."—Eccl. 4:15, 16.

What did Solomon mean by the expression "the child, who is second"? Evidently he was referring to the king's successor. "Those alive" are all excited about having a new ruler. "There is no end to all the people" before whom he stands as king. This means that they are all behind him, supporting his rulership. But his popularity does not continue indefinitely. The time soon comes when the one whom the people highly acclaimed no longer suits their fancy. Disenchanted now, they cease to rejoice in him.

Similarly, in modern times, one set of politicians is replaced by another. There may be initial enthusiasm for a certain governor, prime minister or president. But it does not take long for people to become displeased with the individual and his policies. Soon they begin looking for someone else to take hold of the reins of government.

Truly, then, even the topmost position proves to be but a bauble, "vanity." How forcefully this emphasizes that in this world the most satisfying possession is, not position, but a good relationship with the eternal God, Jehovah!

A GODLY VIEW of

DEBTS

THE God of justice, Jehovah, does not look with favor upon persons who do not pay their debts. The inspired psalmist declared: "The wicked one is borrowing and does not pay back." (Ps. 37:21)

Setting forth the Christian position, the apostle Paul urged: "Do not you people be owing anybody a single thing, except to love one another."—Rom. 13:8.

The person who desires God's approval

must, therefore, be conscientious about paying back borrowed money and making prompt payment for goods and services received. To this end, he should exercise care in taking on greater financial burdens than he already has. Otherwise he might come into a situation where he cannot meet his obligations. Furthermore, the payment of debts should not be delayed. It would be most unreasonable and thankless for a person to postpone payment and to use a sizable part of his earnings for lavish entertainment, luxuries or expensive vacations.

Some people may reason that the responsibility is not so great when one is in debt to a relative or a friend. But is not such a lack of conscientiousness, a taking of selfish advantage on the basis of family relationship or friendship?

Really, the person who is negligent about paying others what he owes is failing to show love. He is depriving them of the opportunity to use the money to which they are entitled. This may even work to their injury. Consider, for example, the situation of self-employed persons—doctors, lawyers, electricians, carpenters and the like. In doing their work, they incur expenses. Payments for their services must cover these expenses, as well as be large enough for them to make a living. Now, if many people fail to pay them, these professional men may be unable to meet their bills, and things may come to the point where they have to give up their business. Obviously persons who deprive others of their livelihood are not showing love.

This is a very serious matter. The apostle John made this clear when he wrote to Christians: "Everyone who hates his brother is a manslayer, and you know that no manslayer has everlasting life remaining in him. By this we have come to know love, because that one surrendered his soul for us; and we are under obligation to

surrender our souls for our brothers. But whoever has this world's means for supporting life and beholds his brother having need and yet shuts the door of his tender compassions upon him, in what way does the love of God remain in him?" —1 John 3:15-17.

If that needy brother could not get help from any other source, he would die if deprived of necessities for too long a period. Hence, the one claiming to be a Christian who refuses to come to his aid would be guilty of a form of criminal negligence. Similarly, if Christians were to take advantage of a fellow believer by unduly postponing payments of their debts, they could become guilty of forcing him out of business. This could create serious financial problems for him and could reduce him to a needy state. Should that happen, could we not say that those who refused to pay their debts did a very hateful thing toward their brother?

Conscientious Christians do not try to gain advantages for themselves on the basis of spiritual relationships. They recognize that this would be 'greed for dishonest gain.' (1 Tim. 3:8) From the Scriptures we learn that such greediness can jeopardize one's standing with Jehovah God. This is well illustrated in the case of Elisha's attendant Gehazi. Through Elisha, the Syrian army chief Naaman had been healed of loathsome leprosy. In appreciation for the cure, Naaman wanted to present a gift to the prophet. But Elisha refused to accept it, as he did not want to profit from his God-given prophetic office and the powers associated therewith. Gehazi, however, greedily coveted what Elisha had refused and obtained a gift from Naaman under false pretenses. As a result, in expression of Jehovah's judgment, Gehazi was stricken with leprosy. —2 Ki. 5:15, 20-23, 27.

Accordingly, if greediness is responsible for a person's failure to pay off his debts,

he can bring adverse judgment upon himself. The Bible warns us that 'greedy persons will not inherit God's kingdom.' (1 Cor. 6:10) Yes, such greediness could mean losing out on the gift of everlasting life. What a high price to pay!

As Christians, then, we want to be honest in our dealings with everyone. We should be guided by the following principles: "All things . . . that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them." (Matt. 7:12) "As long as we have time favorable for it, let us work what is good toward all, but especially toward those related to us in the faith." (Gal. 6:10) So, if we desire others to be conscientious in caring for their debts, should we not be setting the right example ourselves? Especially should we be concerned about doing good toward our Christian brothers, not imposing on their kindness when it comes to paying what we owe them.

It would be wrong for Christians to feel that, in business matters, fellow believers are obligated to give them special rates

and favors. But if any special consideration is shown it should be regarded with appreciation. Christians should want their brothers to get whatever they are entitled to receive. The apostle Paul's counsel to Christian slaves sets forth a fine guideline: "Let those having believing owners not look down on them, because they are brothers. On the contrary, let them the more readily be slaves, because those receiving the benefit of their good service are believers and beloved." (1 Tim. 6:2) A Christian's conscientiousness in paying his debts to fellow believers would certainly be in harmony with this admonition.

May our handling of debts reveal that we are conducting our affairs in harmony with Bible principles. We should never lose sight of the fact that a deliberate failure to pay what we owe others is wicked. The Most High will never look with approval upon those who, because of greediness or selfishness, do not care for their obligations. Only by making sure that 'we are not owing anybody a single thing, except love,' can we expect Jehovah's blessing.

'Keep the Festival with Unfermented Cakes'

■ The Holy Scriptures emphasize the need for preserving the purity of the Christian congregation. Corruptive influences are to be removed. In his first letter to the Corinthians, the apostle Paul counseled: "Clear away the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, according as you are free from ferment. For, indeed, Christ our passover has been sacrificed. Consequently let us keep the festival, not with old leaven, neither with leaven of badness and wickedness, but with unfermented cakes of sincerity and truth."—1 Cor. 5:7, 8.

Under the Mosaic law arrangement, the Passover victim was sacrificed annually, and this was followed by the seven-day festival of unfermented cakes. Jesus Christ, however, offered up himself once for all time. (Heb. 9:25-28) Hence, the entire life course of the Christian should be like a continual festival of unfermented cakes, free from all injuriousness and wickedness. Within the Christian congregation there should be a willingness to maintain personal and congregational purity, and to remove everything that is corrupting to faith and morals.



Questions from Readers

- How can Matthew 10:9, 10 and Mark 6:8, 9 be harmonized?

These verses contain part of Jesus' instructions when sending the twelve apostles out on a preaching tour. Matthew 10:9, 10 reads: "Do not procure . . . a food pouch for the trip, or two undergarments, or sandals or a staff; for the worker deserves his food." And Mark 6:8, 9 says: "He gave them orders to carry nothing for the trip except a staff alone, no bread, no food pouch, no copper money in their girdle purses, but to bind on sandals, and not to wear two undergarments."—Compare Luke 9:3.

Jesus obviously did not expect the apostles to set out on the trip hungry, naked or barefooted. But there was no need for them to do so because he had provided for their needs. He said: "Behold, I have given you all things necessary for your journey: a staff for your walking, bread and a pouch for your food, and do not take gold or silver or coins; for if you do this you will not have too much difficulty."—Matthew 10:9, 10.

make special preparations, such as buying or wearing "two undergarments." The garments and sandals that they were wearing were enough. Similarly, if they already had a staff, they could take it, but not purchase an extra one or get a spare for the journey.

Basically, Jesus was advising: 'Go as you are, with the garments, sandals and staffs that you have. Do not make your own provisions; those who hear and respond to your message will take you in and assist you, for a worker deserves his food.' This agreed with Jesus' counsel in the Sermon on the Mount. (Matt. 6:25-34) Rather than burdening themselves with excessive material things, the apostles could concentrate on their assignment, trusting Jesus' assurance that they would be cared for.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

- May 8: How Can You Find Real Security? Page 197. Songs to Be Used: 92, 112.
May 15: What Is Your Security? Page 202. Songs to Be Used: 38, 44.

"Keep This Lesson with You Always" Chapter

May 12: How to Improve Relationships with Others. Chapter 10: Relationships. Considerations influencing our ability to live in peace with others. Chapter 11: Relationships. The importance of the Christian attitude of love. Chapter 12: Relationships. How to improve relationships as you live the more permanent life, peacefully.

May 19: How to Improve Relationships with Yourself. Chapter 13: Relationships. The importance of self-respect. Chapter 14: Relationships. How to improve relationships with God. Chapter 15: Relationships. How to improve relationships with your family. Chapter 16: Relationships. How to improve relationships with your friends.