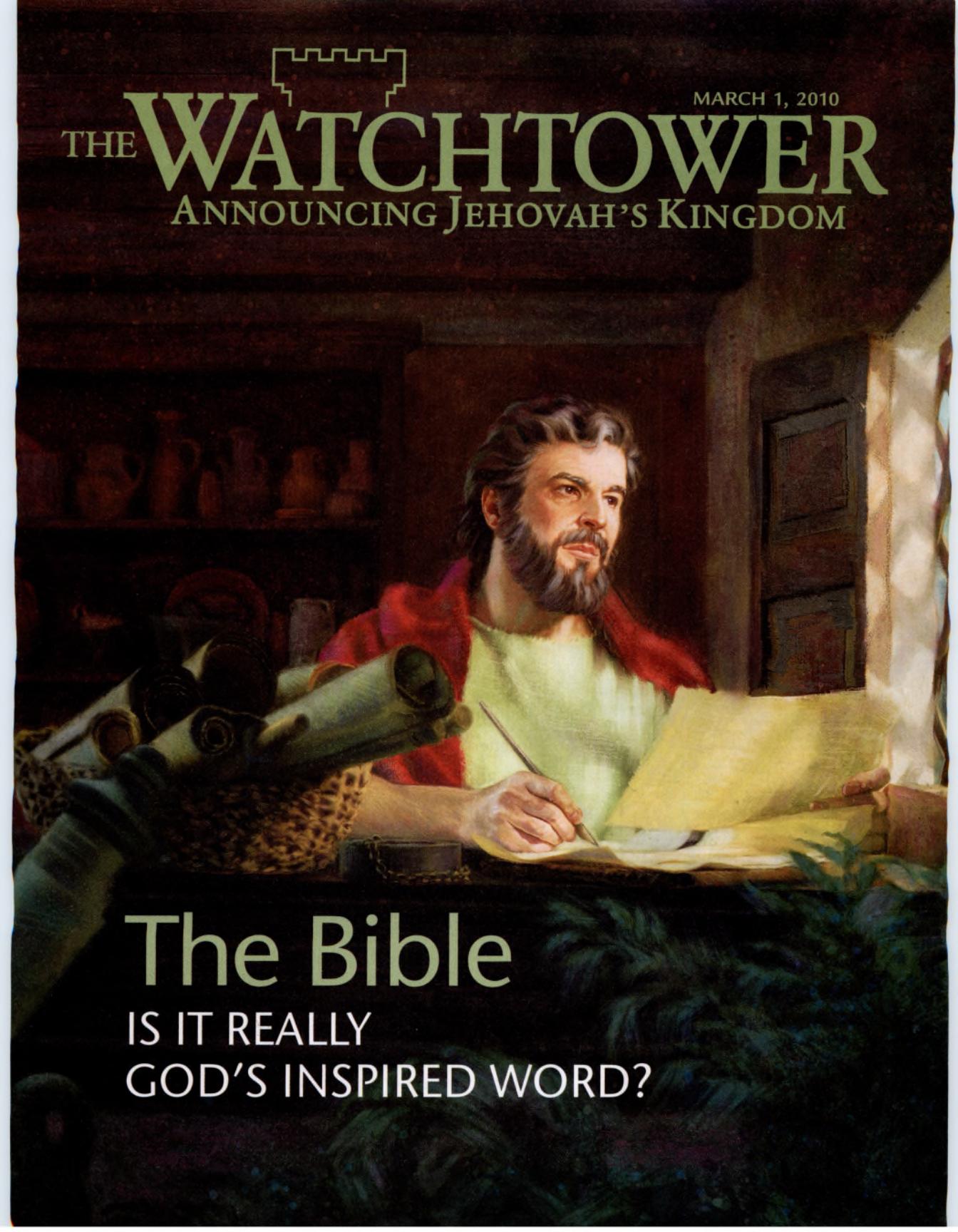


THE WATCHTOWER

MARCH 1, 2010

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



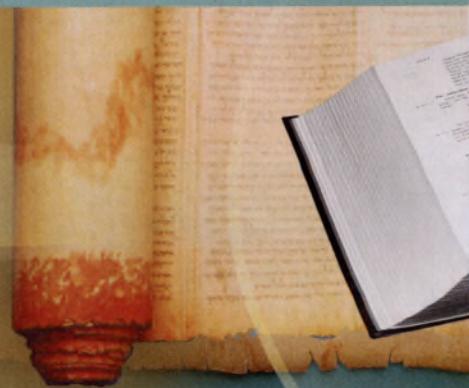
The Bible
IS IT REALLY
GOD'S INSPIRED WORD?

THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE, *The Watchtower*, is to honor Jehovah God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe. Just as watchtowers in ancient times enabled a person to observe developments from afar, so this magazine shows us the significance of world events in the light of Bible prophecies. It comforts people with the good news that God's Kingdom, which is a real government in heaven, will soon bring an end to all wickedness and transform the earth into a paradise. It promotes faith in Jesus Christ, who died so that we might gain everlasting life and who is now ruling as King of God's Kingdom. This magazine has been published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879 and is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*.

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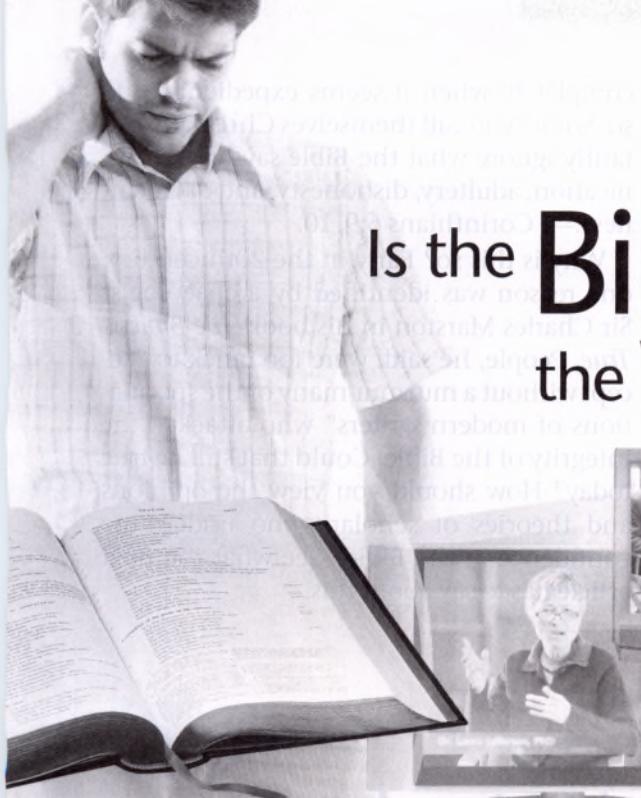
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Is the Bible the Word of God?

"All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproofing, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work."—2 TIMOTHY 3:16, 17.

WHAT a powerful expression by the apostle Paul on the excelling value of the Bible! He was, of course, referring specifically to that part of the Bible available to him at the time—the writings that people sometimes refer to as the Old Testament. But in principle his words apply with equal force to all of the Bible's 66 books, including those written by Jesus' faithful disciples in the first century C.E.

Do you esteem the Bible as highly as Paul did? Do you think that the writers of the Bible really were *inspired* by God? First-century Christians did. That belief never wavered during the ensuing centuries. Fourteenth-

and even fifteenth century scholars believed that way. Many were deeply moved by what Rudolf Scheffelin* said when on an audience held before the Pope in Rome:

"What words more fitting to our motto than these which we find in the New Testament?"

That was the attitude of most people in those days. It was not until the Reformation that the Protestant Church began to move away from that view.

But the situation changed when the English King James I appointed a committee of scholars to translate the Bible into English. They did their work with great care and accuracy, and the resulting translation became known as the King James Version.

That translation was widely accepted and used for centuries. Then came the Industrial Revolution, followed by the Second World War, and finally the Information Age.

With the advent of television, computers, and the Internet, the world has become a much smaller place. And with that change has come a change in attitudes toward the Bible.

Today, many people believe that the Bible is just another book, like any other. They may even consider it to be a collection of legends and superstitions.

But that is not true. The Bible is a very special book. It is the Word of God, and it contains the truth about God, about Jesus Christ, and about the Kingdom of God.

The Bible is also a very practical book. It provides guidance for living a righteous life, for dealing with difficult situations, and for finding hope and comfort in times of trouble.

So if you are looking for a book that will help you live a better life, then the Bible is the book for you. It is the Word of God, and it is the truth.

century English cleric John Wycliffe, for example, viewed the Bible as "the infallible rule of truth." *The New Bible Dictionary*, commenting on Paul's words quoted above, states that divine "inspiration, therefore, guarantees the truth of all that the Bible asserts."

Changing Attitudes Toward the Bible

In recent times, however, confidence in the authority of the Bible has waned. "In theory," says the handbook *The World's Religions*, "all Christians [still] accept the Bible as authoritative, both in guiding their actions and in forming their beliefs." In

practice, however, that is simply no longer true. Many people now view the Bible as no more than “unreliable human tradition.” Though acknowledging that the Bible writers were men of great spirituality, they see those writers as no more than fallible men who struggled to explain deep spiritual truths but who lacked the knowledge and enlightenment we have today.

In truth, very few people nowadays really let the Bible guide their thoughts and actions. How often, for example, do you hear people say that the Bible’s standards of morality are simply old-fashioned and impractical? Many feel free to water down the Bible’s laws and principles—or even to ignore them

completely when it seems expedient to do so. Some who call themselves Christians blatantly ignore what the Bible says about fornication, adultery, dishonesty, and drunkenness.—1 Corinthians 6:9, 10.

Why is this so? Early in the 20th century, one reason was identified by archaeologist Sir Charles Marston in his book *The Bible Is True*. People, he said, were too quick to “accept without a murmur many of the speculations of modern writers” who attacked the integrity of the Bible. Could that still be true today? How should you view the opinions and theories of scholars who undermine confidence in the Bible? See what the next article has to say about this.

The Bible Really Is God’s Inspired Word



WHAT exactly did the apostle Paul mean when he said that the Bible is “inspired of God”? (2 Timothy 3:16) Paul, writing in the Greek language, used a word that literally means “God-breathed.” By that, Paul meant that God by means of his holy spirit guided the Bible writers to write only what He wanted them to write.

These Bible writers “spoke from God as they were borne along by holy spirit,” said the apostle Peter.

THE WATCHTOWER ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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ENGLISH

How do you decide whether to trust people you meet?

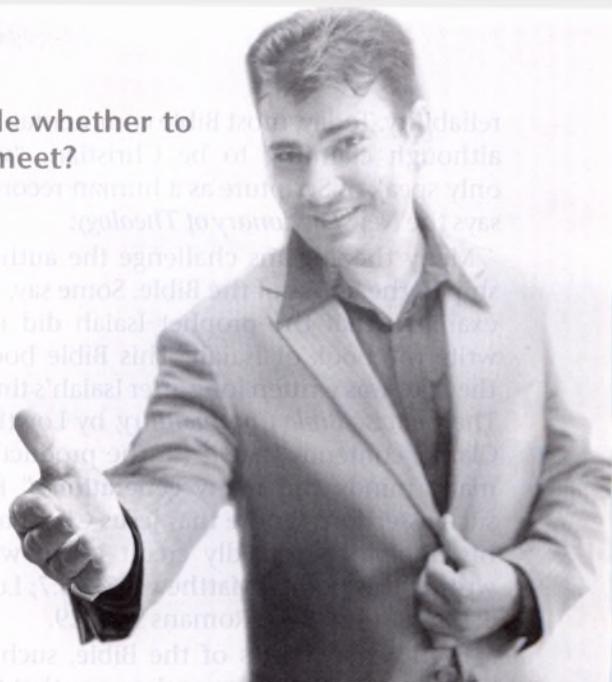
(2 Peter 1:21) Hence, the apostle Paul could also describe the books of the Bible as “holy writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through the faith in connection with Christ Jesus.”—2 Timothy 3:15.

Many people strongly dispute that God is the author of the Bible. Critics—often with what archaeologist Sir Charles Marston described as a “contemptuous disregard of the Bible narrative”—have made virulent attacks on the Bible’s integrity. Some dismiss it as being no more than “an old collection of myths and fairy-tales.”

Consider the Evidence

So can the Bible be trusted? It is important that you decide correctly on this matter. Why? Because if the Bible does contain communication from God himself, it would be foolish—if not fatal—to ignore it. The extent to which you let it be a real influence in guiding your actions and forming your beliefs will be greatly diminished if you view it simply as the words of men rather than the Word of God.—1 Thessalonians 2:13.

How can you decide? Well, how do you decide whether to trust people you meet? One thing is sure. It is very difficult to have



real trust in anyone about whom you know very little. Only as you get to know people well do you learn over time if they are truly honest and trustworthy. You can get to know the Bible in the same way. Do not accept without question speculative or even prejudiced theories that undermine confidence in the Bible. Take the time to consider the evidence that supports the Bible’s claim to be “inspired of God.”

Attacks From “Friends”

Do not be put off by the fact that even some who describe themselves as “friends” of the Bible attack its authenticity and

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⁺ CD also available.

⁺⁺ MP3 CD-ROM also available.

Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.

reliability. Today, most Bible commentators, although claiming to be Christian, "will only speak of Scripture as a human record," says the *New Dictionary of Theology*.

Many theologians challenge the authorship of the books of the Bible. Some say, for example, that the prophet Isaiah did not write the book of Isaiah. This Bible book, they say, was written long after Isaiah's time. The *Concise Bible Commentary*, by Lowther Clarke, contends that it is "the product of many minds and many generations." But such assertions ignore that Jesus Christ and his disciples repeatedly credit Isaiah with writing this book.—Matthew 3:3; 15:7; Luke 4:17; John 12:38-41; Romans 9:27, 29.

Even worse, critics of the Bible, such as commentator J. R. Dummelow, say that the prophecies found in the book of Daniel "are really past history thrown by the author into the guise of ancient prediction." Once again, in saying so, they ignore the testimony of Jesus Christ himself. Jesus warned of what he called "the disgusting thing that causes desolation, *as spoken of through Daniel the prophet*, standing in a holy place." (Matthew 24:15) Is it reasonable for a Christian to believe that Jesus Christ himself

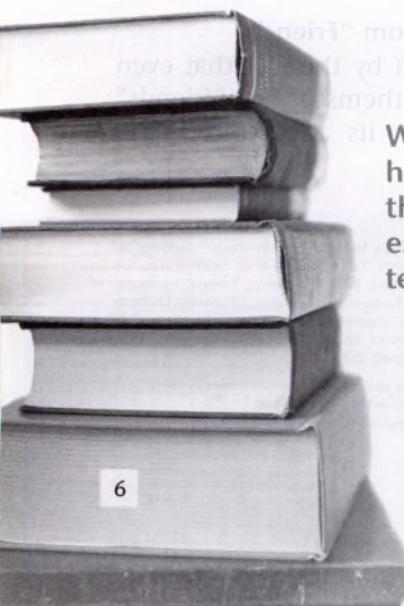
would have been party to deception—that he would have supported history disguised as prophecy? Surely not.

Does It Make Any Difference?

"But does it really make any difference who wrote the books of the Bible?" you might ask. Yes, it makes a huge difference. What weight would you give to a document that purported to be the last will and testament of a friend if it turned out that he had not, in fact, written it? Suppose experts told you that it was a forgery—that well-meaning associates had written down *what they believed* were the wishes of your friend. Would that not devalue the document? Could you have real confidence that it truly conveyed the wishes of your friend?

It is the same with the Bible. No wonder so many people—even those who profess to be Christian—feel free to ignore what it says on subjects like honesty, sexual morality, and so forth. How often have you heard people disparagingly say things like, "Oh, but that is in the Old Testament!"—as if that means it is of little real value. And this despite the fact that the apostle Paul described the so-called Old Testament as "the holy writings" that were "inspired of God."

"Surely you cannot simply disregard the evidence of all experts and scholars," you may protest. Of course not! We are indebted, for example, to honest scholarship that has helped us to identify the original text of the Bible. Clearly, minor mistakes did creep into the text of the Bible as it was copied and recopied over the centuries. Remember, though: There is a big difference between recognizing that minor mistakes crept into copies of



We are indebted to honest scholarship that has helped to establish the original text of the Bible

the Bible text and dismissing the whole Bible as a human fabrication.

Maintain Faith in “the Holy Writings”

Just prior to saying that the Bible was inspired by God, Paul told Timothy why such an inspired record was essential. “In the last days,” he said, “wicked men and impostors will advance from bad to worse, misleading and being misled.” (2 Timothy 3:1, 13) Already in Paul’s day, seemingly ‘wise and intellectual men’ were using “persuasive arguments” to delude people and weaken their faith in Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 1:18, 19; Colossians 2:4, 8) As a protection from their influence, the apostle Paul urged Timothy to ‘continue in the things that he had learned from infancy through the holy writings’ provided by God.—2 Timothy 3:14, 15.

It is equally important for you to do that during these “last days.” Do not underestimate the danger of being misled by what are often very “persuasive arguments” presented by very clever people. Rather, like the first-century Christians, protect yourself by completely relying on what you learn from the pages of the Bible—truly the *inspired* Word of God.

Jehovah’s Witnesses will be happy to help you to build faith in the Bible. They can show you, for example, how Bible principles have proved to be absolutely dependable throughout history; how the Bible is in agreement with science when it touches on scientific matters; how it is entirely harmonious from beginning to end; how its prophecies have unerringly come true—and much, much more. If you wish, feel free to write to the publishers of this magazine for information that has helped millions of honesthearted people to see that the Bible really is the Word of God.



Why You Can Trust the Biblical Gospels

"They have become a tremendous success. They have inspired films that cost millions . . . and best sellers . . . Christian sects have adopted them. They have given rise to religions and conspiratorial theories."—*SUPER INTERESSANTE*, A BRAZILIAN NEWS MAGAZINE.

WHAT was all the excitement about? The magazine was commenting on the recent popular interest and activities centered on a collection of pseudo gospels, epistles, and apocalypses discovered in the mid-20th century in Nag Hammadi and elsewhere in Egypt. These and other documents of this type have generally been referred to as Gnostic or Apocryphal writings.*

Was There a Conspiracy?

In an age when people generally are cynical about the Bible and orthodox religions, the Gnostic or Apocryphal writings seem to

* "Gnostic" and "Apocryphal" come from Greek words that can refer to "secret knowledge" and "carefully concealed" respectively. These terms are used to refer to spurious or uncanonical writings that attempt to imitate the Gospels, Acts, letters, and the revelations in the canonical books of the Christian Greek Scriptures.

have struck a responsive chord. These writings have had a great influence on the way many view the teachings of Jesus Christ and Christianity itself. As one magazine stated: "The Gospel of Thomas and other apocryphal [works] speak to the heart of a group of people that continues to grow in modern times: those who are eager for spirituality but distrust religion." It has been calculated that in Brazil alone "there are at least 30 groups whose beliefs are based on the Apocrypha."

The discovery of these documents has popularized the theory that in the fourth century C.E., the Catholic Church conspired to cover up the truth about Jesus, that some accounts of his life presented in the Apocryphal writings were suppressed, and that the four Gospels found in modern Bibles were

"c." stands for "circa," or "about."

c. 41 Matthew
written

c. 65 Mark written

125 Rylands 457 (P52)

c. 140 Apocryphal
writings begin

33 C.E.
Jesus dies

c. 58 Luke written

c. 98 John written

c. 175 Bodmer 14, 15 (P75)

altered. Elaine Pagels, professor of religion, put it this way: "We now begin to see that what we call Christianity—and what we identify as Christian tradition—actually represents only a small selection of specific sources, chosen from among dozens of others."

In the opinion of scholars like Pagels, the Bible is not the only source of Christian faith; there are other sources, such as the Apocryphal writings. For example, a BBC program entitled *Bible Mysteries*, "The Real Mary Magdalene" observed that the Apocryphal writings present Mary Magdalene as "a teacher and spiritual guide to the other disciples. She's not just a disciple; she's the apostle to the apostles." Commenting on the supposed role of Mary Magdalene, Juan Arias writes in the Brazilian newspaper *O Estado de S. Paulo*: "Today everything leads us to believe that the early Christian movement, founded by Jesus, was profoundly 'feminist,' since the first domestic churches were women's houses, where they officiated as priests and bishops."

For many, the Apocryphal sources seem to carry far more weight than the Biblical source. This preference, however, raises some important questions: Are the Apocryphal writings a legitimate source of Christian faith? When they contradict clear Bible teachings, which source should we believe—the Bible or the Apocryphal books? Was there really a conspiracy in the fourth century to suppress these books and alter the four Gospels to exclude important information about Jesus, Mary Magdalene, and others? For answers to these questions, let us consider one of the four Biblical Gospels, the Gospel of John.

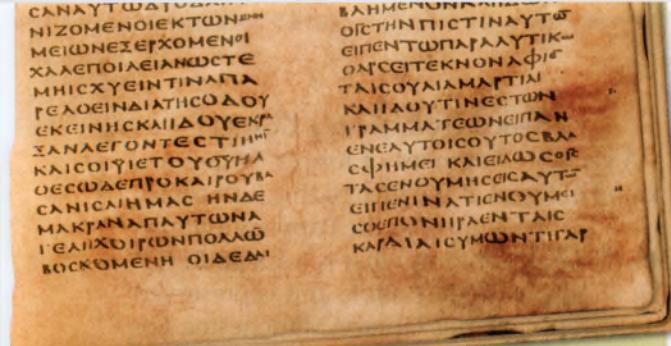
Evidence From John's Gospel

A valuable fragment of John's Gospel was found in Egypt at the turn of the 20th century and is now known as the **Papyrus Rylands 457 (P52)**. It contains what is John 18:31-33, 37, 38 in the modern Bible and is preserved at the John Rylands Library, Manchester, England. This is the oldest manuscript fragment of the Christian Greek Scriptures in existence. Many scholars believe that it

The Papyrus Rylands 457 (P52), a fragment of the Gospel of John dated to the second century C.E., was written only a few decades after the original

was written about 125 C.E., a mere quarter of a century or so after John's death. The amazing thing is that the text of the fragment agrees nearly exactly with that in later manuscripts. The fact that a copy of John's Gospel of such antiquity had already circulated to Egypt, where the fragment was discovered, supports the conclusion that the good news according to John was really recorded in the first century C.E. and by John himself, as the Bible indicates. The book of John is therefore the work of an eyewitness.

On the other hand, the Apocryphal writings all date from the second century on, a hundred years or more after the events they describe had taken place. Some experts try to argue that the Apocryphal writings are based on earlier writings or traditions, but there is no proof of this. Thus, the question is appropriate, Which would you put more faith in—the testimony of eyewitnesses or that of



Vatican 1209

The fourth-century manuscript Vatican 1209, above, shows that there was little textual change in the Gospels

From the book *Bibliotheum Sacrorum Graecorum Codex Vaticanus 1868*.

people who lived a hundred years after the fact? The answer is obvious.*

What about the assertion that the Biblical Gospels were altered in order to suppress certain accounts of Jesus' life? Is there any evidence that the Gospel of John, for example, was altered in the fourth century to distort the facts? To answer this question, we need to bear in mind that one of the key sources of the modern Bible is the fourth-century manuscript known as **Vatican 1209**. If our Bible contains changes made in the fourth century, then these changes would be reflected in this manuscript. Happily, another manuscript that contains most of Luke and John, known as **Bodmer 14, 15 (P75)**, dates from 175 C.E. to 225 C.E. According to experts, it is textually very close to Vatican 1209. In other words, no significant changes were made to the Biblical Gospels, and we have the Vatican 1209 to prove it.

There is no evidence, documental or otherwise, that proves that the text of John—or

* Another difficulty as far as the Apocryphal writings are concerned is that very few copies remain. The *Gospel of Mary Magdalene*, alluded to above, survives only in two small fragments and a longer one with probably half of the original text missing. Moreover, there are significant variations between the available manuscripts.

of the other Gospels—was altered during the fourth century. After examining a collection of manuscript fragments discovered at Oxyrhynchus, Egypt, Dr. Peter M. Head, of Cambridge University, writes: “In general terms these manuscripts confirm the text of the great uncials [manuscripts written in large capitals that date from the fourth century on] which forms the basis of the modern critical editions. There is nothing here which requires a radically new understanding of the early transmission of the NT [New Testament] text.”

What Can We Conclude?

The four canonical Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—were universally accepted among Christians at least as early as the mid-second century. Tatian's widely used *Diatessaron* (a Greek term meaning “through [the] four”), compiled between 160 and 175 C.E., was based on only the four canonical Gospels and none of the Gnostic “gospels.” (See the box “An Early Defense of the Gospels.”) Also noteworthy is an observation by Irenaeus of the late second century C.E. He asserted that there must be four Gospels, as there are four quarters of the globe and four cardinal winds. Though his comparisons may be questioned, his point supports the idea that there were only four canonical Gospels at the time.

What do all these facts show? That the Christian Greek Scriptures—including the four Gospels—as we have them today have remained largely unchanged from the second century onward. There is no strong reason to believe that there was a conspiracy in the fourth century to change or suppress any part of the divinely inspired Scriptures. On the contrary, Bible scholar Bruce Metzger wrote: “By the close of the second century, . . . a high degree of unanimity



TATIAN



DIATESSARON
IN ARABIC

An Early Defense of the Gospels

Early in the history of Christianity, critics argued that the Gospels contradicted one another and thus their accounts could not be trusted. The Syrian writer Tatian (about 110–180 C.E.) came to the defense of the Gospels. He felt that any apparent contradictions would disappear if the Gospels were skillfully harmonized and blended into one account instead of four.

Tatian set about preparing such a harmony. It is not known whether his original was in Greek or in Syriac. Whatever the case, about 170 C.E., Tatian completed his work, known as the *Diatessaron*, a Greek word meaning “through [the] four.” Why should you be interested in this noninspired composition?

In the 19th century, critics began to promote the view that none of

the Gospels were written before the middle of the second century C.E.; hence, they could have little historical value. Ancient manuscripts of the *Diatessaron* discovered since then, however, provide definitive evidence that the four Gospels—and only the four—were already well-known and accepted as a collection by the middle of the second century C.E.

Discovery of the *Diatessaron* and commentaries on it in Arabic, Armenian, Greek, and Latin led Bible scholar Sir Frederic Kenyon to write: “These discoveries finally disposed of any doubt as to what the *Diates-saron* was, and proved that by about A.D. 170 the four canonical Gospels held an undisputed pre-eminence over all other narratives of our Saviour’s life.”

concerning the greater part of the New Testament was attained among the very diverse and scattered congregations of believers not only throughout the Mediterranean world but also over an area extending from Britain to Mesopotamia.”

The apostles Paul and Peter were champions of the truth of God’s Word. Both of them strongly warned fellow Christians against accepting or believing anything other than what they had been taught. For example, to Timothy, Paul wrote: “O Timothy, guard what is laid up in trust with you, turning away from the empty speeches that violate what is holy and from the contradictions of the falsely called ‘knowledge.’ For making a show of such knowledge some

have deviated from the faith.” Peter testified: “No, it was not by following artfully contrived false stories that we acquainted you with the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but it was by having become eyewitnesses of his magnificence.” —1 Timothy 6:20, 21; 2 Peter 1:16.

Centuries ago, the prophet Isaiah was inspired to say: “The green grass has dried up, the blossom has withered; but as for the word of our God, it will last to time indefinite.” (Isaiah 40:8) We can have the same confidence that the One who inspired the Holy Scriptures also preserved them through the ages so that “all sorts of men should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth.”—1 Timothy 2:4.

SHOULD YOU BE Honest at All Times?

EVERYONE is honest some of the time; many perhaps most of the time. But how many people do you know who are striving to be honest all the time?

Today, a lack of honesty prevails in numerous facets of life. Nevertheless, God's view of honesty is well-known. For example, most people are familiar with the words of the eighth of the Ten Commandments: "You must not steal." (Exodus 20:15) Many, however, feel that circumstances sometimes justify stealing or other forms of dishonesty. Let us consider three examples of theft that are commonly excused.

Does Poverty Justify Stealing?

A Roman statesman once said: "Poverty is the mother of crime." A poor individual might feel justified in stealing. Onlookers might agree. What position did Jesus take on this issue? He was very compassionate in his dealings with the needy. "He felt pity for them." (Matthew 9:36) Yet, he never—under any circumstances—condoned stealing. What, then, should a poor person do?

"Having honest children is more rewarding than having many material things."—VICTORINE

God has compassion for those who sincerely try to obey him, and he will bless their efforts to obtain what is needed. (Psalm 37:25) The Bible promises: "Jehovah will not cause the soul of the righteous one to go hungry, but the craving of the wicked ones he will push away." (Proverbs 10:3) Can a poor individual count on this? Victorine is convinced of it.

As a widow with five school-age children, Victorine does not have it easy. She lives in a developing country with limited social benefits. Daily life is spent mostly outdoors, where opportunities to steal abound. However, Victorine is not tempted to steal. Instead, she tries to make ends meet as an honest street vendor. Why does she remain honest?

"First, I believe that God is honest and that he will be honest in dealing with me if I imitate him. Second, my children can learn honesty only if they see it in me."

How has she fared? "We have food, clothing, and shelter. Still, there have been times when I have had to ask friends for help—to



pay unexpected medical expenses, for instance. I have always received what I needed. Why? Because my friends know that I have described my circumstances honestly, and I am not trying to get more than I need.

"The children are growing up to be honest. A neighbor recently saw some coins on our table and asked me if I wasn't afraid that the children would take them. She found it hard to believe when I said that my children would never do that. Without my knowledge, she decided to test them. She secretly left two 100-franc coins in our house where the children could easily have found them. When she came by the next day, she was astonished to see that the coins were still there. Having honest children is more rewarding than having many material things."

"Everybody Does It"

Stealing on the job is widespread. As a result, many feel, "Everybody does it, so why shouldn't I?" In contrast, the Bible states: "You must not follow after the crowd for evil ends." (Exodus 23:2) Victoire has heeded this admonition. Has it paid off?

When she was 19, Victoire got a job in a palm-oil processing plant. She soon noted that the 40 women employed there were using their baskets to smuggle palm kernels out of the plant. Each weekend, they sold the kernels for the equivalent of three to four days' salary. Victoire relates: "Literally everyone was doing it. They expected me to join in, but I refused, stating that honesty is my way of life. They ridiculed me, claiming that I would be the loser.

"One day as we were filing out of the plant, the manager suddenly appeared. He searched everyone's basket and found palm kernels in every basket except mine. All those caught were to be fired immediately or

to work two weeks without salary. During those two weeks, the women became convinced that I was not the loser."

"Finders Keepers"

How do you feel when you find something valuable that someone has lost?

To many, this arouses immediate feelings of possession, causing them to wave aside any thought of returning it. They have a "finders keepers" philosophy. Some may feel that there is no harm done. After all, they reason, the owner has undoubtedly written it off as a loss. Others say that it is not their responsibility to seek out the owner—a chore that might entail a lot of effort.

How does God view the matter? Deuteronomy 22:1-3 shows that a finder was not simply to keep the item he finds but rather to keep it "until he [the owner] claims it, and then give it back to him." (*The New English Bible*) If the finder did not make known his find, he could have been accused of stealing. (Exodus 22:9) Is this practical today? Christine is convinced that it is.

Christine is the director of a private school. One Wednesday she picked up her month's salary in cash. In typical West African fashion, she bundled the bills and stuffed them into her bag. She then flagged down a motorcycle taxi and sped off to a meeting. On arriving, she fumbled in her bag for coins to pay the driver. In the darkness, the bundle of bills fell to the ground unnoticed.

Minutes later, 19-year-old Blaise, a stranger to the area, came down the street. He had arranged to meet a friend at the same meeting that Christine attended. He spotted the bundle of bills and put them into his pocket. At the end of the meeting, he informed his



friend that he had found something outside and that anyone who had lost something could phone him and identify it.

When Christine got home that evening, she was shocked to discover that her month's pay was missing. A week later, when she revealed the loss to her friend Josephine, she was told that a visitor at that meeting had found something. Christine phoned Blaise and identified the denominations of the bills. She was overjoyed when Blaise returned the money. What about Blaise? He had kept the money for a week, but he said, "The joy I experienced from returning the money was greater than that from keeping it."

Why They Strive to Be Honest at All Times

Victorine, Victoire, and Blaise live in different areas and do not know one another. They do, however, have something in common. They are Jehovah's Witnesses, who uphold what the Bible says about honesty. They await the fulfillment of God's promise of a new world. "There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell." All people living then will be righteous—and honest.—2 Peter 3:13.

Victorine has little hope that her financial situation will improve to any great degree

until God changes things. Nevertheless, she is spiritually rich, something that money cannot buy. Her children are honest and well-mannered. Every Sunday they "bubble over" when they speak to their neighbors about God's goodness and explain how he will satisfy "all those who call upon him in trueness" and will guard "all those loving him."—Psalm 145:7, 18, 20.

In time, Victoire left the palm-oil processing plant. She struck out on her own and sold *garri* (a kind of grits made from cassava) at the market. Her honesty attracted many customers. In fact, she was soon able to reduce her time at the market and spend more time speaking to others about the prospect of living in a world free of dishonesty. She later married, and she and her husband now serve as full-time ministers.

Christine lost her money in front of a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. Blaise knew few in attendance at the meeting, but he did know that they were his Christian brothers and sisters, who try to be honest at all times.

How many people do you know who sincerely strive to be honest all the time? Just imagine being with 50, 100, or 200 persons who are. That is the happy experience of Jehovah's Witnesses at their Kingdom Halls. Why not go there and get acquainted with them?

Does Proverbs 6:30 Excuse Stealing?

Proverbs 6:30 states: "People do not despise a thief just because he commits thievery to fill his soul when he is hungry." Does this statement excuse stealing? Not at all. The context shows that God still holds the thief responsible for his error. The following verse says: "But, when found, he will make it good with seven times as much; all the valuables of his

house he will give." (Proverbs 6:31) Though the thief who steals because of hunger may not be as reprehensible as the one who steals out of greed or with an intent to cause harm to his victim, he is, nonetheless, still responsible to 'make good,' or to repay. Those desiring God's approval should not be guilty of thievery under any circumstances.

DID YOU KNOW?



Why did Jesus say that “no one puts new wine into old wineskins”?



AN OLD WINESKIN

■ It was common in Bible times to store wine in animal skins. (Joshua 9:13) Skin bottles were made of the complete hides of such domestic animals as kids or goats. To make a skin bottle, the dead animal's head and feet were cut off and the carcass was carefully skinned to avoid opening its belly. The hide was then tanned and all the openings were sewed up except the neck or a leg of the animal, which would be left unsewed to serve as the bottle's neck. This opening could be closed with a stopper or tied with a string.

In time, the skin would become hard and lose its elasticity. Old wineskins,

therefore, were inappropriate for storing new wine, which continues to ferment. Such fermentation would likely burst the hardened leather of old wineskins. New skins, on the other hand, were more supple and could withstand the pressure caused by continued fermentation of new wine. For this reason, Jesus stated a fact that was common knowledge in his day. He spoke of what would happen if anyone does put new wine in old bottles: “Then the new wine will burst the wineskins, and it will be spilled out and the wineskins will be ruined. But new wine must be put into new wineskins.”—Luke 5:37, 38.

Who were the “dagger men” mentioned in connection with Paul’s arrest by the Romans?

■ According to the Acts account, during a tumult at the temple in Jerusalem, a Roman military commander took the apostle Paul into custody, believing that he was the leader of a seditious band of “four thousand dagger men.” (Acts 21:30-38) What is known about these dagger men?

The Greek word for “dagger men” is derived from the Latin *sicarii*, which means “users of the *sica*,” or dagger. First-century historian Flavius Josephus describes the Sicarii as a band of fanatic Jewish patriots, unrelenting enemies of Rome, who engaged in organized political killings.

Josephus recounts that the Sicarii “slew men in the daytime, and in the midst of the city; this they did chiefly at the festivals, when they mingled themselves among the multitude, and concealed daggers under their garments, with which they stabbed those that were their enemies.” When their victims fell down dead, the Sicarii feigned indignation at the killings and escaped detection. Josephus adds that the Sicarii later played a leading role in the Jewish revolt against Rome in 66-70 C.E. Thus, the Roman commander would be anxious to detain the supposed leader of such a group.



AN ARTIST'S RENDITION OF A DAGGER MAN



A LETTER FROM PAPUA NEW GUINEA

A Coral Reef in the Clouds

IT'S five o'clock on a sultry Tuesday morning in Lae, Papua New Guinea (PNG). My wife and I are preparing to travel to Lengbati, up in Mount Rawlinson in Morobe Province, to visit a group of Jehovah's Witnesses there.

Our flight takes only about 30 minutes in the four-seater single engine airplane. I often sit beside the pilot on these flights, and over the roar of the engine, we chat via the headset intercom. Pointing at gauges and instruments on the panel in front of us, he explains their purpose and jokes that if anything should happen to him, I will have to fly the plane. Instantly, I recall the story of another traveling minister of Jehovah's Witnesses here in PNG. When the pilot lost consciousness mid-flight, they were left circling in the air on autopilot until the pilot regained consciousness and was able to land the plane. Happily, our flight is smooth and uneventful.

We are now flying parallel with the mountain range when, suddenly, we turn through a break in the clouds and cross the brow of a mountain peak, clearing it by only 300 feet or so. Lying in front of us is the village of Lengbati, a cluster of houses with thick grass roofs and built from bush materials. The pilot looks down at the airstrip as we fly over it,

visually checking its condition and ensuring that village children are not playing soccer on it. He also looks for holes that pigs might have dug in it since the last time he was here. As he turns back into the valley, he says, "It looks OK; we'll try for a landing." We circle around and descend to land on the short air-strip, which the local villagers have cut into the side of the mountain and recently resurfaced with crushed coral limestone cut out of a mountain nearby.

On previous trips here, I have looked at the broken coral limestone and wondered just how old this mountain range really is. Just imagine the powerful forces involved in pushing this former coral reef hundreds of miles in length up out of the ocean and two and a half miles into the air! Stepping from the plane, we stand on what I call a coral reef in the clouds.

As always, villagers come running from every direction when they hear the sound of the plane coming in to land. As the pilot shuts off the engine, I see a man step out of the crowd and walk toward the plane. It is Zung. He is one of the men who have been assigned locally to care for the weekly teaching programs held by Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide. He is known among his people

as a clean-living man, honest and reliable. He admits that he learned to be that way by applying Bible principles in his life. After greetings and handshakes, we walk with Zung and other Witnesses a little way down the mountain. Youngsters trail behind us, eagerly disputing with one another over who is going to carry our backpacks.

We arrive at a small wooden house that the local Witnesses built for the traveling minister when he comes every six months or so. Though PNG is a tropical country, it gets quite cool up here because of the elevation. At night when we light our kerosene lamp, I often see the clouds—which have been floating slowly up the mountain from the valley below during the afternoon—sneak into the house through the loosely fitted floor boards. It feels a bit strange to be putting on a ski jacket and jeans for warmth, when just a few hours ago, we were sweltering in tropical heat down on the coast.

In the mid-1980's, a man from here studied the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses in Lae. Returning here to his village, he and a few others built a small meeting place, which they were very proud of. Then the pastor of the local Lutheran church along with his supporters burned the meeting place to the ground. The arsonists proudly declared that this was exclusively a Lutheran area. Since then, and despite continuing op-



position, the Witnesses have built another meeting place, and their numbers have steadily grown to about 50 active proclaimers of the good news. Some of those who formerly opposed the work of the Witnesses are now zealously involved in it themselves.

These days, the local villagers often welcome visits of Jehovah's Witnesses, who teach them from the Bible. Though few in the village can read, most of the local Witnesses have learned to do so in order to share the Bible's message with others. As many as 200 come to the meetings held in their Kingdom Hall each week.

There is no electricity. In the evenings, we all huddle around the fire in the cookhouse. Together we eat, talk, and laugh. The joy of serving Jehovah is plainly evident in the beaming faces of our friends, illuminated in the soft light of the fire. Then gradually, as it gets late, some take out of the fire a *bom-bom*, or piece of burning palm leaf, which they hope will burn slowly enough for them to have some light as they run along the bush tracks back to their own houses.

While walking back to the house, we sense how quiet it is here. We are enveloped by the sounds of nature. Before retiring for the night, we take a last look up at the clear night sky and marvel at how many stars are visible from this elevation.

A week goes by quickly, and we anticipate the return of the plane tomorrow. One more cool night in the clouds of Lengbati, and then for us, it's back to the heat and humidity of the coast.



"Until Death Do Us Part"

HOW many couples have joyfully repeated those words on their wedding day—perhaps without reflecting on the eventual implication? Old age, sickness, or accidents are common occurrences that can tragically end the life of a loved one, leaving the surviving mate to face loneliness and grief.
—Ecclesiastes 9:11; Romans 5:12.

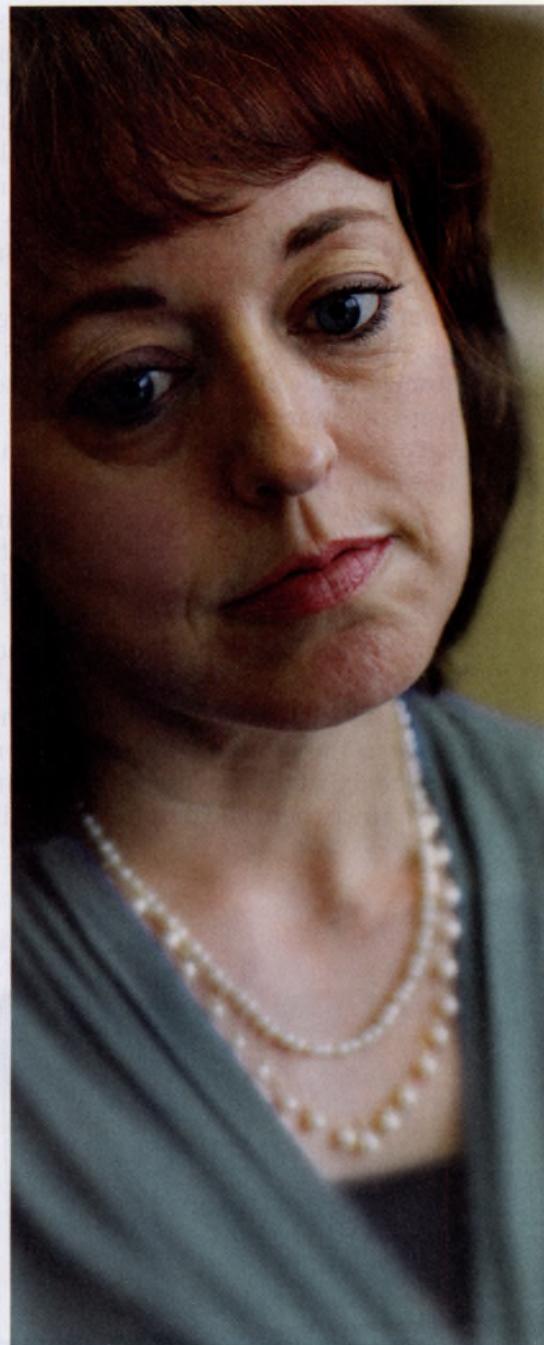
Statistics show that nearly half of women who are 65 or older are widows. Indeed, because women are three times more likely to be widowed than are men, bereavement of one's spouse has been called a "female phenomenon." This is not to say that men do not suffer too. The fact is that millions of people have experienced this stressful circumstance. Are you perhaps one of them?

Male or female, if you are in this situation, what can you do? Is the Bible of any help in dealing with such grief? How have some widows and widowers coped? Although there is no one formula that is applicable in every case, there are principles and suggestions that can help.

Facing Up to the Loss

Although some think that crying is a sign of weakness or is even harmful, psychologist Dr. Joyce Brothers, herself a widow, likens tears to emotional first aid. Actually, *crying is a normal part of the grieving process* and helps to relieve the pain. Do not be ashamed of your tears. A good example of this is found in the Bible. Abraham was a man of outstanding faith, and he enjoyed the privilege of being called God's friend. Yet, when his beloved wife died, he "came in to bewail Sarah and to weep over her."—Genesis 23:2.

While it is normal to want to have some time alone, do not go into isolation. Proverbs 18:1 warns



Millions have experienced grief and loneliness
because of losing their mate. Are you one of them?

us: "One isolating himself will seek his own selfish longing." Rather, ***seek the support of relatives and friends*** who are empathetic. In this regard, a marvelous provision is the Christian congregation, where spiritually mature men can offer support and advice when needed.—Isaiah 32:1, 2.

Some have found it helpful to answer letters and cards of condolence. This opportunity can be used to ***put into writing the good things that you remember about your mate and the moments you shared. Making an album*** of memories with photographs, letters, and notes may also help you to heal.

It is normal for a recently bereaved person to feel disoriented and lost, but ***adhering to your customary schedule and activities*** will help. For example, if you have a specific time to sleep, get up, eat, or do certain chores, try to keep this up. Plan ahead for what you will do on weekends and special days, such as your wedding anniversary, when the loss tends to be overwhelming. It is especially important to keep up your spiritual routine.
—1 Corinthians 15:58.

Judgment may be clouded when one is under great emotional stress. Perhaps people with bad motives may even try to take advantage of your situation. Therefore, ***avoid making hasty decisions*** regarding such matters as selling your home, making a major investment, moving, or remarrying. A wise proverb says: "The plans of the diligent one surely make for advantage, but everyone that is hasty surely heads for want." (Proverbs 21:5) Any such major life changes

should be postponed until your emotions are more settled.

Dealing with the personal effects of your spouse can be very difficult emotionally, especially if you have spent many years together, but it is part of the grieving process. Putting it off can unduly prolong the anguish. (Psalm 6:6) Some prefer to do this alone; others find that a close companion with whom to share the memories evoked by the task is helpful. You might also want to ***seek the help of a friend or relative in taking care of any paperwork***, such as obtaining death certificates; notifying government agencies, banks, and credit card companies; changing titles to property; obtaining death benefits; and paying medical bills.

Remember that we live in an immoral world. Now that you are alone, your efforts to remain chaste may be put to the test. The words of the apostle Paul are certainly as timely today as ever: "Each one of you should know how to get possession of his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in covetous sexual appetite such as also those nations have which do not know God." (1 Thessalonians 4:4, 5) It is wise, therefore, to ***avoid romantic or sex-oriented movies, books, and music.***

Above all, understand that recovery takes time. *USA Today* reports that studies done by the University of Michigan Institute for Social Research show that a bereaved spouse needs at least 18 months to begin to recover physically and psychologically. ***Pray to God for endurance***, which is enhanced by the



fruitage of his spirit. (Galatians 5:22, 23) Although you may not think so at present, each day will get better as time goes on.

How Some Have Coped

For Anna, who was happily married for 40 years, the recent loss of her husband has been devastating. "I lost my mother when I was 13 years old, then my father and two brothers, as well as my sister. But I can truthfully say that none of these losses affected me as deeply as the loss of my husband. It was as if I were cut in two. The pain was overwhelming." What has helped her to deal with this pain? "I have made a huge book of e-mails and cards filled with wonderful expressions of love and appreciation for all of Darryl's fine qualities. Each one mentions some particular thing about him. I am sure that Jehovah too remembers him and will bring him back in the resurrection."

Eighty-eight-year-old Esther comments on what has sustained her: "After 46 years of companionship, the most difficult trial has been loneliness. But I have noticed that stay-

Keeping busy and praying to God for endurance help the process of recovery

ing busy in spiritual matters has been of much help. I have not stopped my routine of attending Christian meetings, sharing the Bible's message with others, and reading it myself. Not isolating myself has also helped. I seek the companionship of friends who listen to me. They do not always have something comforting to say, but I appreciate very much that they give me their time and listen to me."

Robert, who lost his wife to cancer after 48 years of marriage, relates: "It is very hard to endure the loss of a mate with whom one could talk, make decisions, enjoy travel and vacations, and share the day's experiences. It has been a struggle, but I am determined not



to give up but to get on with my life. Staying active physically and mentally has helped me. Prayer has also been a source of much comfort.”

A Meaningful Life After the Loss

Even though the loss of a beloved spouse is one of the most traumatic experiences a person could have, it is not the end. Looking on the positive side, you may now see the opportunity to participate in activities for which you formerly had little time, such as hobbies or trips. These activities can help fill the void. For some, there may now be the opportunity to share more fully in the Christian ministry. The joy and satisfaction that come from helping others in this way is guaranteed, for Jesus said: “There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.”—Acts 20:35.

Do not think that you can never be happy again. Be assured that Jehovah God cares for

you if you turn to him. The psalmist David said: “The widow [Jehovah] relieves.” (Psalm 146:9) It is heartwarming to know that the Bible not only describes Jehovah as “the Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort” but also says of Jehovah: “You are opening your hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing.” (2 Corinthians 1:3; Psalm 145:16) Indeed, the loving God, Jehovah, is able, willing, and ready to come to the aid of those who earnestly look to him for help. May your feelings be like those of the ancient Israelites, who sang: “I shall raise my eyes to the mountains. From where will my help come? My help is from Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth.”—Psalm 121:1, 2.

What About Remarriage?

The Bible indicates that death brings an end to the marriage bond, thus presenting the surviving spouse the opportunity to remarry. (1 Corinthians 7:39) Still, such a decision is entirely personal. It is important, however, that children be aware of their parent’s decision and be supportive of him or her where possible. (Philippians 2:4) Andrés, for example, was at first against his father’s remarrying. He had loved his mother very much and felt that no one should take her place. “But I soon realized that my father had made a good decision,” he says. “Marriage cheered him up again. He began to do things that he had not done for some time, such as travel. And of course, I am grateful to his new wife for taking such good care of him physically and emotionally.”

Will the earth always produce enough to sustain life?

■ Our beautiful planet Earth has tremendous capacity for sustaining life. Yet, with the growing population and the alarming rate at which earth's abundant resources are being gobbled up, you might wonder: 'Could the unthinkable really happen? Will there always be enough food and resources?'

Reflecting on this question, we can be reassured by a promise God made to the human family more than 4,000 years ago: "For all the days the earth continues, seed sowing and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer

"Making sure everyone has enough to eat is more about politics than science"

and winter, and day and night, will never cease." (Genesis 8:22) Thus, just as surely as we know that the sun will shine each day, we can be confident that the earth will never cease to produce what is needed to sustain life.

In a 2004 report entitled "Can the Planet Feed Us?" Alex Kirby, an environment correspondent, stated: "The world does produce enough to feed everyone. But the food is often in the wrong place, or unaffordable, or can't be stored long enough. So making sure everyone has enough to eat is more about politics than science." With proper oversight of the earth and efficient management of its resources, there should be no reason to fear a shortage. For example, in the days of ancient Israel, God gave clear direction regarding proper use of the land. As recorded at Leviti-

cus 25:4, God told the Israelites: "In the seventh year there should occur a sabbath of complete rest for the land . . . Your field you must not sow with seed." Although they were not to work the land every seventh year, God promised he would see to it that the people would rejoice over a bounty of good things and not be plagued with worry over a potential shortage.—Leviticus 26:3-5.

Even though some sincere efforts are being made today to reverse the damage to earth and its resources, many are concerned that such efforts are too little too late. The only permanent solution is found at Revelation 11:18. There the Bible states that Jehovah will "bring to ruin those ruining the earth." Jehovah will not only eliminate the mismanagement of the earth and its resources but also ensure that the earth will produce abundantly for all its inhabitants. All obstinate disregard for God's purpose and all exploitation of the earth for selfish personal advantage will be put to a stop. On the other hand, those who willingly support Jehovah's rulership will experience the reality of the words found at Psalm 72:16: "There will come to be plenty of grain on the earth; on the top of the mountains there will be an overflow."

In his infinite love and wisdom, Jehovah has purposed that mankind will live in and care for their home—a paradise earth. (Genesis 1:28) Under his rulership, obedient mankind will learn to utilize natural resources wisely, without depleting earth's abundant storehouse. How grateful we are for such a loving Provider, who will satisfy the desire of every living thing!—Psalm 145:16.



DRAW CLOSE TO GOD

"He Sees What the Heart Is"

1 SAMUEL 16:1-12

APPPEARANCES can be deceptive. What a person is on the outside does not necessarily reveal what he is on the inside, deep in his heart. Humans tend to judge from outward appearance. Thankfully, Jehovah God looks beyond outward appearance. This is clearly revealed in the words recorded at 1 Samuel 16:1-12.

Picture the scene. Jehovah is about to anoint a new king over the nation of Israel. God says to the prophet Samuel: "I shall send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, because I have provided among his sons a king for myself." (Verse 1) Jehovah does not give the name but says only that the chosen one will be among the sons of Jesse. As Samuel heads for Bethlehem, he may be wondering, 'How will I know which one of Jesse's sons has been chosen by Jehovah?'

Arriving in Bethlehem, Samuel arranges for Jesse and his sons to share a sacrificial meal. When Eliab, the oldest son, enters, Samuel is immediately struck by his appearance. Samuel thinks that Eliab's stature is by all means kingly and says to himself: "Surely his anointed one is before Jehovah."—Verse 6.

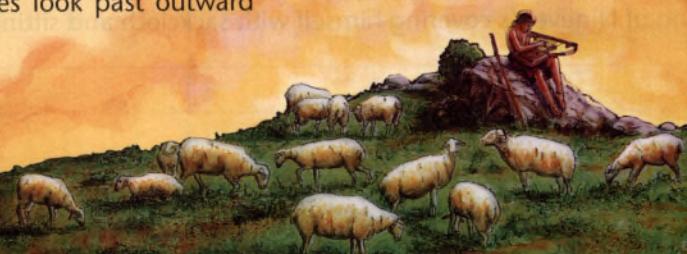
Jehovah, however, sees things differently. He says to Samuel: "Do not look at his appearance and at the height of his stature, for I have rejected him." (Verse 7) Jehovah is not impressed by how tall and handsome Eliab is. Jehovah's all-seeing eyes look past outward

appearances to where true beauty can be found.

Jehovah explains to Samuel: "For not the way man sees is the way God sees, because mere man sees what appears to the eyes; but as for Jehovah, he sees what the heart is." (Verse 7) Yes, it is the heart—the inner person, the source of one's thoughts, attitudes, and feelings—that matters to Jehovah. "The examiner of hearts" rejects Eliab—as well as the next six of Jesse's sons who come before Samuel.—Proverbs 17:3.

Jesse has one more son, David, the youngest, who "is pasturing the sheep." (Verse 11) So David is summoned from the fields and comes before Samuel. Then Jehovah tells Samuel: "Get up, anoint him, for this is he!" (Verse 12) Granted, David is "a young man with beautiful eyes and handsome in appearance." But it is his heart that makes him truly agreeable in God's eyes.—1 Samuel 13:14.

In a world that puts so much emphasis on external beauty, we can find comfort in knowing that Jehovah God is not swayed by outward appearance. It does not matter to him how tall you are or whether others see you as handsome or pretty. It is what you are inside, in your heart, that matters to Jehovah. Does knowing that move you to want to cultivate the kind of qualities that will make you beautiful in God's eyes?



A Lesson in God's Mercy

JONAH—PART 2

Instructions: Do this exercise in quiet surroundings. As you read the scriptures, imagine that you are part of the event. Visualize the scene. Hear the voices. Feel the emotions of the characters. Let the account come to life.

① ANALYZE THE SCENE.—READ JONAH 3:1–4:11.

How do you imagine that Jonah felt as he entered the city of Nineveh? _____

What emotion do you sense in Jonah's voice as he proclaimed Jehovah's judgment? _____

What discomfort must Jonah have felt as he sat outside the city? (See Jonah 4: 5-8.) _____

② DIG DEEPER.

Why might Jonah have wanted Jehovah to follow through with the foretold destruction of Nineveh? _____

Using research materials at your disposal, find out something about (1) the appearance and characteristics of a bottle-gourd plant, and (2) the significance of the king of Nineveh's covering himself with sackcloth and sitting down in ashes. _____

Despite his initial reluctance to prophesy in Nineveh, why can Jonah be called a faithful and courageous prophet? (Matthew 21:28-31)

3) APPLY WHAT YOU LEARNED. WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU LEARNED ABOUT . . .

The potential of humans to turn back from a wicked lifestyle.

Jehovah's mercy.

Our need to be merciful.

4) WHAT ASPECT OF THIS ACCOUNT IS MOST MEANINGFUL TO YOU, AND WHY?

For further research, see *The Watchtower*, April 1, 2009, pages 14-18.



IF YOU
DON'T HAVE
A BIBLE,
READ IT ONLINE AT
www.watchtower.org

Ancient Voyages Beyond the Mediterranean

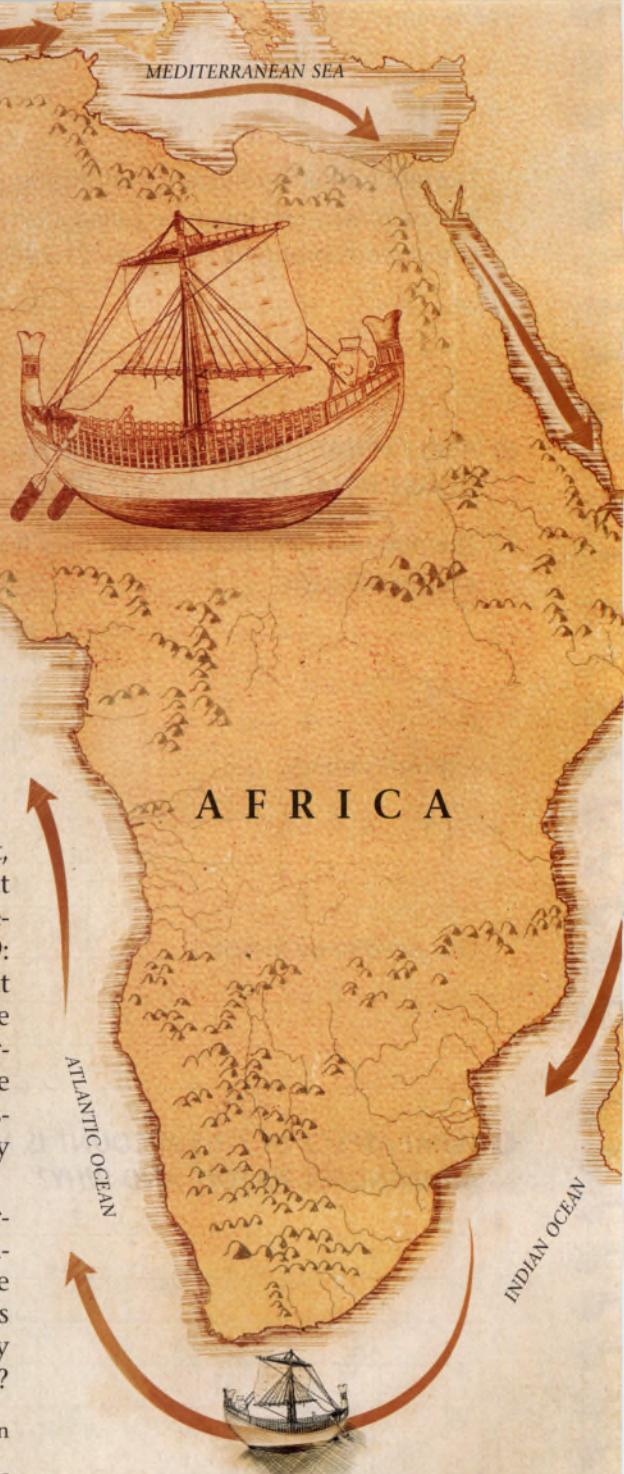
Today, people think nothing of boarding an airplane and flying from one continent to another. Would it surprise you that even in Bible times, people traveled long distances?

ABOUT one thousand years before Christ, King Solomon built a fleet of ships that sailed with those of the king of Tyre to bring desirable goods from afar to Israel. (1 Kings 9:26-28; 10:22) In the ninth century B.C.E., at the Mediterranean port of Joppa in Israel, the prophet Jonah boarded a ship bound for Tarshish.* (Jonah 1:3) In the first century C.E., the apostle Paul made a voyage from Caesarea in Israel to Puteoli, modern-day Pozzuoli, on the Bay of Naples, Italy.—Acts 27:1; 28:13.

Historians know that by Paul's day, merchants from the Mediterranean area were regularly sailing via the Red Sea to India, and by the mid-second century, some had pushed as far as China.[#] What, though, do we know about early voyages beyond the Mediterranean to the west?

* This name is often identified with a region in southern Spain that Greek and Roman writers called Tartessus.

[#] For more information on voyages eastward, see "How Far East Could Missionaries Go?" in the January 1, 2009, issue of *The Watchtower*.



Herodotus reported that in sailing around the tip of Africa, sailors saw the sun on their right

How far did ancient sailors go in that direction?

Early Phoenician Voyages

Centuries before the time of Paul, seafaring peoples had established trading colonies in the West. It is believed that the Phoenicians, whose homeland lay in modern-day Lebanon, reached the Atlantic by 1200 B.C.E. About 1100 B.C.E., they founded Gadir, now the Spanish port city of Cádiz, just beyond the straits of Gibraltar. Among the commodities available there were locally mined silver and tin, imported by Atlantic traders.

Greek historian Herodotus recorded that in the seventh century B.C.E.,

Pharaoh Necho of Egypt assembled a flotilla of Phoenician ships, manned by Phoenician crews, at the head of the Red Sea. The objective was to circumnavigate Africa from east to west.

By that time, the Phoenicians had been exploring the coasts of Africa for centuries. Still, because of adverse winds and currents, sailors who set out southward along the continent's Atlantic Coast would have struggled to get very far. For the new expedition, according to Herodotus, the Phoenicians started out from the Red Sea and followed the eastern African coast southward into the Indian Ocean. By about midyear, they went ashore, sowed seed, stayed long enough to reap a harvest, and then sailed on. In the third year, said Herodotus, they rounded the whole continent, entered the Mediterranean, and returned to Egypt.

Herodotus concluded his account by saying that the Phoenicians reported things he could not believe, including their remark that in sailing around the tip of Africa, they saw the sun on their right. It would be dif-

ficult indeed for an ancient Greek to believe this. Anyone who has lived all his life north of the equator is used to seeing the sun in the south. Thus, when he is heading west, the sun is on his left. But at the Cape of Good Hope, which lies south of the equator, the midday sun is in the north—on the right of anyone heading west.

For centuries, Herodotus' account has been the subject of debate among historians. It might seem incredible to many that mariners so long ago could have circumnavigated Africa. However, scholars believe that Pharaoh Necho did commission such an expedition and that such a journey was possible, given the skills and knowledge of the time. "Such a voyage is perfectly feasible," states historian Lionel Casson. "There is no reason why a crew of Phoenicians could not have carried it out in the span of time and in the fashion Herodotus describes." To what extent Herodotus' account is factual cannot be established with certainty. Nonetheless, it provides a glimpse of the tireless effort to expand sea travel to regions unknown at such an early time.

Pytheas Sails North

The Phoenicians were not the only early Mediterranean people to push westward toward the Atlantic. Among the colonies that Greek mariners established around the Mediterranean was Massalia, now the French city of Marseilles. The city prospered, thanks to seaborne and overland commerce. From Massalia, traders sent Mediterranean wine, oil, and bronzerware to the north, and from the north, they acquired raw metals and amber. Doubtless, the Massiliotes were interested in the sources of these goods. Thus it was that about 320 B.C.E., Pytheas the Massiliote set out to see those distant northern lands for himself.

On his return, Pytheas wrote an account of his travels entitled *On the Ocean*. Though the original Greek text of his book no longer exists, it was quoted by at least 18 ancient writers. These quoted parts indicate that Pytheas carefully described the seas, tides, geography, and populations of the areas he visited. He also used the length of the shadow cast by a gnomon, or surveying staff, to calculate the angle of elevation of the midday sun on a known date, and from that he estimated how far north he had traveled.

Pytheas' personal interests were scientific. However, scientific exploration could hardly have been the chief aim of his voyage. Scholars have suggested, rather, that it was commissioned and financed by commercial interests in Massalia, which sent him to find a sea route to those distant coasts where they knew amber and tin could be obtained. Where, then, did Pytheas go?

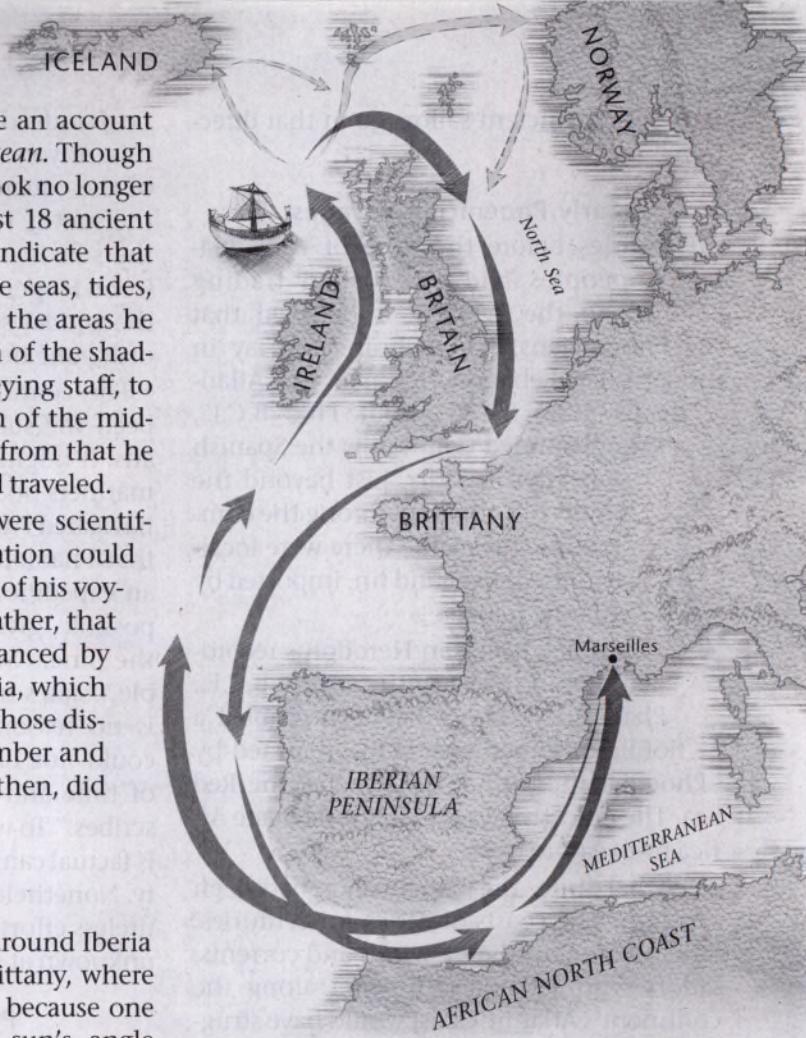
To Brittany, Britain, and Beyond

It seems that Pytheas sailed around Iberia and up the coast of Gaul to Brittany, where he went ashore. We know this because one of his measurements of the sun's angle above the horizon—which he likely took on land—fits a position in northern Brittany.*

The people in Brittany were experienced shipbuilders and mariners, who traded with Britain. Cornwall, the southwest tip of Britain, was rich in tin, an essential component of bronze, and it was there that Pytheas next headed. His report described the size and roughly triangular shape of Britain, suggesting that he must have sailed around the island.

While Pytheas' exact route is a matter of conjecture, he may well have sailed between

* In modern terms, at a latitude of 48° 42' N.



The extensive sea voyage of the Greek mariner Pytheas

Britain and Ireland, landing on the Isle of Man, the latitude of which corresponds to his second measurement of the sun's angle. The third measurement may have been taken on Lewis in the Outer Hebrides, off the west coast of Scotland. From there, he likely continued north to the Orkney Islands, north of the Scottish mainland, for his account, quoted by Pliny the Elder, reports that they were composed of 40 islands.

The Good News "Preached in All Creation"

About 60-61 C.E., the apostle Paul wrote that the good news was "preached in all creation that is under heaven." (Colossians 1:23) Did he mean that Christians had already preached in India, the Far East, Africa, Spain, Gaul, Britain, the Baltics, and Pytheas' Thule? That seems unlikely, but we cannot be specific.

It is beyond doubt, however, that the good news had spread extensively. Jews and proselytes who embraced Christianity at Pentecost 33 C.E., for example, carried their newfound faith at least as far as Parthia, Elam, Media, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Asia Minor, the parts of Libya toward Cyrene, and Rome—encompassing the world known to Paul's readers.—Acts 2:5-11.

Six days' sail north of Britain, Pytheas wrote, lay a land called Thule. Several ancient authors refer to Pytheas' description of Thule as the land of the midnight sun. Another day's sail from there, he wrote, brought one to where the sea was "frozen." Just where Pytheas' Thule lay has occasioned much debate—some say in the Faeroe Islands, others Norway, still others Iceland. Wherever Thule was, ancient writers believed it to be "the very farthest north of named locations."

Presumably, Pytheas returned to Britain following much the same route by which he had left and then completed his circumnavigation of that island. Whether he further explored the northern European coast before returning to the Mediterranean, we do not know. In any case, Pliny the Elder quotes Pytheas as an authority on the amber-producing regions. Ancient sources of this precious material lay in Jutland, part of modern Denmark, and on the southern shore of the Baltic Sea. Of course, Pytheas could have learned of these areas when visiting any port in eastern Britain, and as far as we know, he made no claim to have visited them himself.

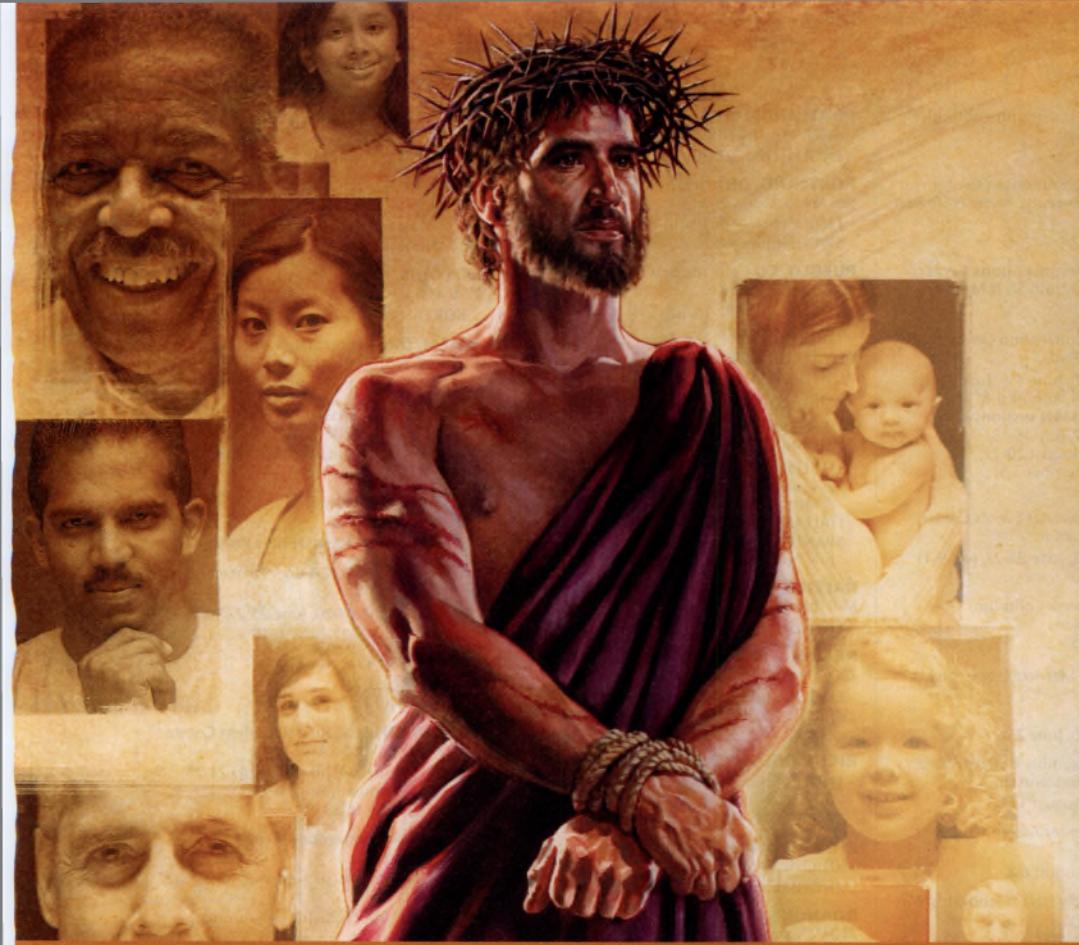
The next known Mediterranean traveler to have written of his visit to Britain is Julius Caesar, who landed in the south of this island in 55 B.C.E. By 6 C.E., other Roman campaigns had reached as far as northern Jutland.

Expanding Horizons

The Phoenicians and Greeks pushed the learned world's knowledge of geography out of the Mediterranean and into the Atlantic, to the southern reaches of Africa, and as far north as the Arctic. The world of that time was one of exploration, trade, expanding horizons, travel over enormous distances, and the consequent flow of ideas and knowledge.

Surviving records of ancient exploration must account for only a fraction of the voyages that intrepid seamen successfully completed. How many ancient mariners returned to their point of departure without ever writing about where they had been? And how many sailed from their homelands to distant shores, never to return? These questions remain unanswered. But we can discern something about the early spread of Christianity.—See the box above.

LAREDO, TX Laredo Entertainment Center Arena, 6700 Arena Blvd. SPANISH June 11-13	PORTLAND, ME Cumberland County Civic Center, 1 Civic Center Sq. ENGLISH May 28-30, June 4-6	ST. CHARLES, MO The Family Arena, 2002 Arena Pkwy. ENGLISH July 2-4, July 9-11
LAS CRUCES, NM Pan American Center, New Mexico State University, Payne & Stewart Sts. SPANISH June 25-27, July 2-4	PORTLAND, OR Veterans Memorial Coliseum Arena, One Center Ct. ENGLISH May 28-30, July 2-4 SPANISH June 18-20, June 25-27	ST. GEORGE, UT Burns Arena, Dixie State College, 400 S. & 700 E. ENGLISH July 9-11, July 16-18 SPANISH July 23-25, July 30-August 1
LINCOLN, NE Bob Devaney Sports Center, University of Nebraska, 16th St. & Military Rd. ENGLISH July 2-4	PUEBLO, CO Colorado State Fair Events Center, 1001 Beulah Ave. ENGLISH June 11-13, July 2-4 SPANISH June 18-20	ST. LOUIS, MO Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 953 Laredo Ave. KOREAN July 16-18
LONG BEACH, CA Convention Center Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd. ENGLISH May 28-30, June 4-6, June 11-13, June 18-20, July 2-4, August 6-8, August 13-15 (PERSIAN sessions also) SPANISH June 25-27, July 16-18, July 30-August 1, August 20-22, August 27-29, September 3-5, September 10-12	PUYALLUP, WA Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 11515 62 Ave. E. KOREAN August 6-8	SALEM, OR Oregon State Fair & Expo Center Pavilion, 2330 17th St. NE ENGLISH June 18-20, June 25-27, July 2-4
LOVELAND, CO Budweiser Events Center, The Ranch, 5290 Arena Cir. ENGLISH June 11-13, June 25-27, July 9-11 SPANISH June 18-20	QUEENS, NY Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 44-17 Greenpoint Ave. ENGLISH May 21-23, May 28-30, June 18-20, June 25-27, August 6-8, August 13-15, August 20-22, August 27-29 ITALIAN July 16-18 SPANISH June 4-6, June 11-13, July 2-4, July 9-11, July 23-25, July 30-August 1	SALISBURY, NC Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 3401 Old Concord Rd. AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE June 25-27 FRENCH July 2-4
LUBBOCK, TX City Bank Coliseum, 2732 Drive of Champions SPANISH June 25-27	RALEIGH, NC RBC Center, 1400 Edwards Mill Rd. ENGLISH July 30-August 1, August 6-8	SAN DIEGO, CA Qualcomm Stadium, 9449 Friars Rd. ENGLISH and SPANISH May 28-30
MACON, GA Macon Marriott City Center, 240 Coliseum Dr. ENGLISH July 9-11 SPANISH June 18-20, June 25-27	READING, PA Sovereign Center Arena, 700 Penn St. ENGLISH June 18-20, June 25-27, July 2-4, July 23-25, July 30-August 1, August 6-8, August 13-15, August 20-22 RICHMOND, VA	SAN FRANCISCO, CA Cow Palace, 2600 Geneva Ave. ENGLISH June 18-20, June 25-27, July 2-4 SPANISH July 9-11, July 16-18
MIRA LOMA, CA Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 3300 Cornerstone Dr. TAGALOG July 30-August 1	COLISEUM, 601 E. Leigh St. ENGLISH June 25-27, July 2-4, July 16-18, July 23-25 SPANISH July 9-11	TACOMA, WA Tacoma Dome, 2727 East D St. ENGLISH July 2-4, July 9-11
MOBILE, AL Civic Center Arena, 401 Civic Center Dr. ENGLISH July 2-4, August 6-8	RIO RANCHO, NM Santa Ana Star Center, 3001 Civic Center Dr. ENGLISH July 2-4, July 16-18	TOLEDO, OH Seagate Convention Centre Arena, 401 Jefferson Ave. ENGLISH July 2-4, July 9-11, July 16-18 SPANISH July 16-18
NATICK, MA Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 85 Bacon St. PORTUGUESE July 16-18	ROANOKE, VA Civic Center Coliseum, 710 Williamson Rd. NE ENGLISH July 2-4	TUCSON, AZ Convention Center, 260 S. Church St. ENGLISH May 28-30, June 4-6, June 25-27, July 9-11 SPANISH July 23-25, July 30-August 1
NEWBURGH, NY Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 23 Unity Pl. ENGLISH June 11-13, June 18-20, July 9-11, July 16-18, July 23-25, July 30-August 1, August 6-8, August 13-15, August 20-22, August 27-29 SPANISH June 25-27, July 2-4	ROCHESTER, MN Taylor Arena, Mayo Civic Center, 30 Civic Center Dr. SE ENGLISH July 9-11, July 23-25, July 30-August 1, August 6-8 SPANISH July 16-18	TULSA, OK Donald W. Reynolds Center, University of Tulsa, 3208 E. 8th St. ENGLISH June 25-27, July 2-4
NORCO, CA Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1001 Parkridge Ave. AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE July 9-11 ARABIC July 2-4 ARMENIAN July 30-August 1 FRENCH August 20-22 JAPANESE August 6-8 KOREAN July 23-25	ROCHESTER, NY Blue Cross Arena, Broad & Exchange Sts. ENGLISH July 2-4, July 16-18, August 13-15	TURNERSVILLE, NJ Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 300 Sovereign Way ENGLISH May 21-23, May 28-30, June 4-6, June 16-18, July 30-August 1, August 6-8 SPANISH June 18-20, June 25-27, July 2-4, July 9-11 TAGALOG July 23-25
OGDEN, UT Dee Events Center, 4450 S. Harrison Blvd. ENGLISH July 2-4 SPANISH June 25-27	ROME, GA The Forum Civic Center, 301 Tribune St. ENGLISH July 23-25, August 6-8, August 20-22	WEST PALM BEACH, FL Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd. ENGLISH May 21-23, May 28-30, June 4-6, July 9-11, July 16-18, July 23-25 FRENCH July 30-August 1 SPANISH June 11-13, June 18-20, June 25-27, July 2-4, August 6-8, August 13-15, August 20-22, August 27-29
PINE BLUFF, AR Convention Center Arena, 500 E. 8th Ave. ENGLISH June 18-20, June 25-27, July 2-4	ROMEOVILLE, IL Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 800 N. Schmidt Rd. POLISH August 20-22 SPANISH July 2-4, July 9-11, July 16-18, July 23-25, July 30-August 1, August 6-8, August 13-15	WILKES-BARRE, PA Wachovia Arena at Casey Plaza, 255 Highland Park Blvd. ENGLISH June 25-27, July 2-4 SPANISH July 16-18
PLANT CITY, FL Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1904 N. Frontage Rd. AMERICAN SIGN LANGUAGE July 30-August 1 FRENCH July 23-25 PORTUGUESE August 6-8	SACRAMENTO, CA Sacramento Convention Center, 1400 J. St. ENGLISH May 28-30, June 4-6, July 9-11, July 23-25, August 13-15, August 20-22 SPANISH June 25-27, July 2-4	WINSTON-SALEM, NC Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 2825 University Pkwy. ENGLISH June 18-20, July 9-11 SPANISH June 25-27, July 2-4



JESUS GAVE HIS LIFE FOR MANY

Jesus Christ told his followers that he came to earth, "not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many." (Matthew 20:28) He willingly gave up his life for the benefit of others.

How did Jesus, by his death, provide a ransom? Why was this necessary? For whom did Jesus lay down his life? And what can his death mean for you?

Jehovah's Witnesses warmly invite you to meet with them to examine the Bible's answers to these questions. This year, the anniversary of Jesus' death falls on **Tuesday, March 30**, after sundown. On that occasion, Scriptural answers to the above questions will be presented.

You may attend at the Kingdom Hall nearest to your home. Please check with Jehovah's Witnesses locally for the exact time and place.