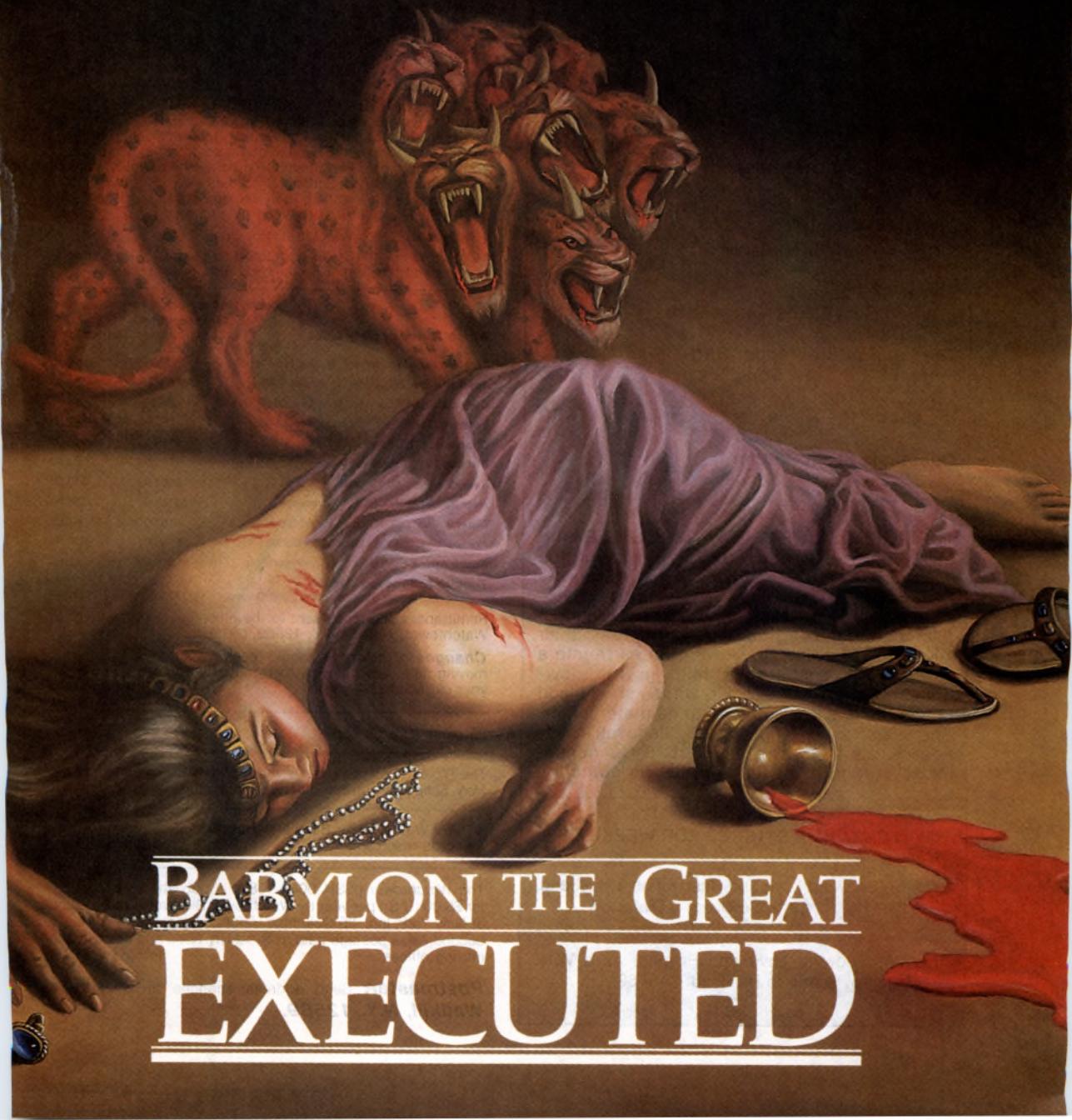


# The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

May 15, 1989



**BABYLON THE GREAT  
EXECUTED**

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THE PURPOSE OF *THE WATCHTOWER* is to exalt Jehovah God as the Sovereign of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as they fulfill Bible prophecy. It comforts all peoples with the good news that God's Kingdom will soon destroy those who oppress their fellowmen and that it will turn the earth into a paradise. It encourages faith in the now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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# BABYLON THE GREAT HER EXECUTION

*"Upon her forehead was written a name, a mystery:*

*'Babylon the Great, the mother of the harlots and of the disgusting things of the earth.'*"

*"In one day her plagues will come, death and mourning and famine, and she will be completely burned with fire, because Jehovah God, who judged her, is strong."*

—Revelation 17:5; 18:8.

**W**E HAVE a right to wonder about those words penned by the apostle John in the first century of our Common Era. Who is this 'mother of harlots'? How has she offended God so much that he should judge her so severely? There is no doubt that God's judgments against the mysterious harlot Babylon the Great are devastating. And this surely gives us reason to determine who this harlot is and how her destiny will affect us.

—Revelation 18:21.

Whom or what does Babylon the Great symbolize? The Bible says that world rulers have committed fornication with her and that merchants have traded with her. (Revelation 18:3) Hence, she cannot represent politics or big business. But this leaves the third powerful element in the world as the only candidate for the title 'mother of harlots.' She is none other than Satan's world empire of false religion!\*

Now there remain these questions: Why, how, and when will Babylon the Great be executed? Or to put matters literally: Why, how, and when will false religion disappear from this earth?

## Christendom's Non-Christian Record

When we consider the record of false religion, we may well be reminded of the

\* For more detailed proof identifying Babylon the Great, see *The Watchtower* of April 1, 1989.

ancient prophetic utterance: "It is wind that they keep sowing, and a storm wind is what they will reap." (Hosea 8:7) This agrees with the principle expressed by the Christian apostle Paul: "Do not be misled: God is not one to be mocked. For whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap." (Galatians 6:7) So, what has false religion sown on a world scale? And what will it reap?

Jesus Christ taught that his followers should love not only their neighbors but also their enemies. (Matthew 5:43, 44) Quoting from the Hebrew Scriptures, Paul spelled out how Christians should treat their foes. He said: "'If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by doing this you will heap fiery coals upon his head.' Do not let yourself be conquered by the evil, but keep conquering the evil with the good."

—Romans 12:20, 21.

Yet, the history of Christendom's religions is one of hatred and bloodshed. Ancient and modern-day crusades involving pillage, rape, and death have been blessed and condoned. For instance, Fascist Italy's rape of Abyssinia (1935) and Franco's "crusade" in the Spanish Civil War (1936-39) were blessed by dignitaries of the Catholic Church.

Theological differences have been settled by burning people at the stake. Bible translator William Tyndale was strangled at the

stake and his body burned in 1536, after he published his translation of the "New Testament" in English. Earlier, at the behest of Pope Martin V, religious authorities, driven by a spirit of vengeance, dug up the bones of Bible translator Wycliffe 44 years after his death so as to have the pleasure of burning them. During the Catholic Inquisition, thousands of Jews and "heretics" were stripped of their possessions, tortured, and burned at the stake—all supposedly in the name of Christ! Spanish theologian Michael Servetus, who was persecuted by Roman Catholics and Protestants alike, was burned at the stake on the orders of Protestant John Calvin. In the two world wars of this century, armies have been blessed by "Christian" clergymen, and soldiers have been urged to kill by their nationalistic chaplains.

What a contrast to true Christianity! The apostle Paul wrote: "As God's chosen ones, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering. Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also. But, besides all these things, clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union."—Colossians 3:12-14.

To Christians in Rome, Paul wrote: "Return evil for evil to no one. Provide fine things in the sight of all men. If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men. Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but yield place to the wrath; for it is written: 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says Jehovah.'" (Romans 12:17-19) In the light of Christian principles, then, Christendom has failed. She has sown hatred and hypocrisy and will reap destruction.



*Wycliffe  
and Tyndale  
were persecuted  
for translating  
the Bible*



From an old engraving in the Bibliothèque Nationale

### **Non-Christian Religions —Their Record**

But Babylon the Great consists of more than the religions of Christendom. All the major religions of this world share in that infamous harlot's bloodguilt. For example, the Shinto religion of Japan must bear part of the blame for the fanatical and sadistic mentality evidenced by the Japanese military in World War II. Historian Paul Johnson holds that "to fortify themselves in a stern, competitive world" dominated by European standards of behavior, they found it necessary to invent "a state religion and a ruling morality, known as Shinto and bushido [the "way of the warrior"].... Regular emperor-worship was established, especially in the armed forces, and from the 1920s onwards a national code of

**"By a peculiarly odious irony, religion, which should have served to resist the secular horrors of the age, was used to sanctify them"**

ethics, *kokumin dotoku*, was taught in all the schools." What was the result? By 1941, when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and thus entered World War II, "Shinto . . . was transformed from a primitive, obsolescent and minority cult into an endorsement of a modern, totalitarian state, and so by a peculiarly odious irony, religion, which should have served to resist the secular horrors of the age, was used to sanctify them."

Concerning the partition of India in 1947, in which religious differences were a factor, historian Johnson says: "Some 5 to 6 million people ran for their lives in each direction. . . . Estimates of the dead at the time ranged from 1 to 2 million. More modern calculations are in the 200,000 to 600,000 range." To this day, religiously motivated killing and humiliation take place in Hindu society. Often *Harijans*, or outcasts formerly called untouchables, are the victims of gang murder organized by rich landowners.

Hinduism is tied in with spiritistic practices. (Revelation 18:23) Indian writer Sudhir Kakar speaks of the "average Hindu's fascination and respect for the occult and its practitioners" and adds: "Astrologers, soothsayers, clairvoyants as also sadhus [ascetic "holy" men], fakirs [Mendicants who perform feats of magic] and other godmen are profoundly esteemed for they are thought to be in intimate contact with the higher reality."—*India Today*, April 30, 1988.

Additionally, there are constant conflicts among Hindus, Sikhs, and other Eastern religions. To these conflicts, each religion adds its share of hatred, strife, and mur-

der. This is just another aspect of the fruitage of Babylon the Great.

Furthermore, the modern history of war, killings, and repression says little to recommend Judaism. The violence sometimes manifested by members of the Hasidic sect of Judaism toward adherents of other Jewish sects and of non-Jewish religions is hardly a recommendation in God's sight.

When we study the history of the worldwide empire of religion, we can easily see why the Supreme Judge has a basis for the execution of Babylon the Great. "Yes, in her was found the blood of prophets and of holy ones and of all those who have been slaughtered on the earth." (Revelation 18:24) False religion's complicity in regional and world wars has made her guilty in God's sight for the blood of "all those who have been slaughtered on the earth."

According to the Biblical indictment, Babylon the Great has been judged worthy of destruction by reason of her historical record of spiritual fornication with world rulers, her bloodguilt in wars, and her spiritistic practices. Therefore, Jehovah God has judicially determined that Satan's world empire of false religion must be terminated.—Revelation 18:3, 23, 24.

### **How False Religion Will Perish**

In highly symbolic language, the book of Revelation describes the destruction of Babylon the Great. At Revelation 17:16 we read: "The ten horns that you saw, and the wild beast, these will hate the harlot and will make her devastated and naked, and will eat up her fleshly parts and will completely burn her with fire." "The ten horns" symbolize all the political powers now on the world scene and that support the

United Nations, the "scarlet-colored wild beast," itself the image of the Devil's blood-stained political system.—Revelation 16:2; 17:3.\*

According to Bible prophecy, the political powers associated with the United Nations will turn against the world empire of false religion and devastate her. All false religions will be affected. Some political systems have already shown their impatience with false religion's interference in political and social spheres. Some socialistic countries have taken a stand for atheism and have reduced religion to a virtual nonentity, as in Albania, or to a compliant handmaiden, as in Russia and China. Elsewhere, political rulers show strong resentment for the liberation theology of some Catholic priests in poorer countries. Yet others repress religions that get involved in racial matters. Even in so-called liberal countries, some politicians resent clerical meddling in politics and social issues.

It remains to be seen just what further issues will provoke the political elements worldwide to act against false religion. But one thing is certain—the execution of Babylon the Great by these elements will be not only their will but also the will of God. Revelation 17:17 states: "God put it into their hearts to carry out his thought, even to carry out their one thought by giving their kingdom to the wild beast, until the words of God will have been accomplished."—Compare Jeremiah 51:12, 13.

Make no mistake. The execution of Babylon the Great will not simply be the expression of political enmity toward religious arrogance and interference. The political rulers will be God's involuntary tools for the destruction of false worship

worldwide. Yes, "her sins have massed together clear up to heaven, and God has called her acts of injustice to mind."—Revelation 18:5.

Jehovah has decreed that proud false religion must be humbled. The prophecy states: "To the extent that she glorified herself and lived in shameless luxury, to that extent give her torment and mourning. For in her heart she keeps saying, 'I sit a queen, and I am no widow, and I shall never see mourning.' That is why in one day her plagues will come, death and mourning and famine, and she will be completely burned with fire, because Jehovah God, who judged her, is strong."—Revelation 18:7, 8.

### Execution When?

That "one day," or short time of swift execution, is now near. In fact, the destruction of Babylon the Great ushers in "the day of vengeance on the part of our God." (Isaiah 61:2) Thereafter, God's just war of Armageddon will be upon us. All the evidence of world events since 1914 indicates that time is running out for Satan's system of things. Therefore, the rule of God's Kingdom is at hand.—Luke 21:32-36; Revelation 16:14-16.

How will true worshipers react to the destruction of Babylon the Great? Says Revelation: "Be glad over her, O heaven, also you holy ones and you apostles and you prophets, because God has judicially exacted punishment for you from her!" (Revelation 18:20) There will be universal rejoicing as Jehovah's purpose is carried out and his name is sanctified. The prophecy states: "After these things I heard what was as a loud voice of a great crowd in heaven. They said: 'Praise Jah, you people! The salvation and the glory and the power belong to our God, because his judgments are true and righteous. For he has executed judgment upon the great harlot who cor-

\* For explanations of these and other symbols in Revelation, see the book *Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.



rupted the earth with her fornication, and he has avenged the blood of his slaves at her hand.’”—Revelation 19:1, 2.

The devastating of Babylon the Great, followed by God’s execution of the remaining elements of Satan’s system, will mean endless blessings for true worshipers of God, including many who will be resurrected here on earth. As Jesus promised all such: “If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”—John 8:31, 32; Revelation 19:11-21.

True worshipers are already free of false religious teachings that have blasphemed God through the ages. In the promised new world of righteousness, they will be free to live without fear of death, for “God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.” (Revelation 21:3, 4) The former things that will have passed away will include Babylon the Great, Satan’s world empire of false religion.

## When Lazarus Is Resurrected

JESUS, along with those accompanying him, now arrives at the memorial tomb of Lazarus. Actually, it is a cave with a stone placed at the entrance. "Take the stone away," Jesus says.

Martha objects, not yet understanding what Jesus intends to do. "Lord," she says, "by now he must smell, for it is four days."

But Jesus asks: "Did I not tell you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?"

So the stone is removed.  
Then Jesus raises  
his eyes and

prays: "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. True, I knew that you always hear me; but on account of the crowd standing around I spoke, in order that they might believe that you sent me forth." Jesus prays publicly so that the people will know that what he is about to do will be accomplished through power received from God. Then he cries out with a loud voice: "Lazarus, come on out!"

At that, Lazarus comes out. His hands and feet are still bound with burial wrappings, and his face



is covered with a cloth. "Loose him and let him go," Jesus says.

On seeing the miracle, many of the Jews that had come to comfort Mary and Martha put faith in Jesus. Others, however, go off to tell the Pharisees what has occurred. They and the chief priests immediately arrange for a meeting of the Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin.

The Sanhedrin includes Pharisees and Sadducees, chief priests, the present high priest, Caiaphas, and former high priests. These lament: "What are we to do, because this man performs many signs? If we let him alone this way, they will all put faith in him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation."

Although the religious leaders admit that Jesus "performs many signs," the only thing they are concerned about is their own position and authority. The raising of Lazarus is an especially powerful blow to the Sadducees, since they do not believe in the resurrection.

Caiaphas, who is perhaps a Sadducee, now speaks up, saying: "You do not know anything at all, and you do not reason out that it is to your benefit for

one man to die in behalf of the people and not for the whole nation to be destroyed."

God influenced Caiaphas to say this, for the apostle John later wrote: "This, though, [Caiaphas] did not say of his own originality." What Caiaphas actually meant was that Jesus should be killed to prevent Him from further undermining their positions of authority and influence. Yet, according to John, 'Caiaphas prophesied that Jesus was destined to die not for the nation only, but in order that God's children might be gathered together.' And, indeed, it is God's purpose that his Son die as a ransom for all.

Caiaphas now succeeds in influencing the Sanhedrin to make plans to kill Jesus. But Jesus, possibly learning of these plans from Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin who is friendly to him, departs from there. **John 11:38-54.**

- ♦ Why does Jesus pray publicly before resurrecting Lazarus?
- ♦ How do those who saw this resurrection respond to it?
- ♦ What reveals the wickedness of members of the Sanhedrin?
- ♦ What was the intention of Caiaphas, but what did God use him to prophesy?





## *Showing love and respect as a*

# H U S B A N D

*"Let each one of you individually so love his wife as he does himself."—EPHESIANS 5:33.*

**I**N THE mid-1980's, *Psychology Today* reported: "More than a million couples a year [in the U.S.A.] now end their expectations of bliss in divorce; the average duration of a marriage in the United States is 9.4 years. . . . Indeed, it seems at times that no one out there is happily married." (June 1985) Considering the adults as well as the children, that

1, 2. (a) To what extent is divorce a problem in the world today? (b) In contrast, what other situation exists?

amounts to at least 3,000,000 people a year affected by a broken marriage in just one country. But divorce is a worldwide problem, which indicates that love and respect are lacking in millions of marriages.

<sup>2</sup> On the other hand, there is "another group [that] tends to be overlooked: those couples who somehow manage to stay together, who allow nothing less than death itself to break them up." (*Psychology Today*) Thus, there are also millions of couples who work hard at keeping their marriage together.

<sup>3</sup> How is your marriage? Is there a warm feeling of love and respect between husband and wife? Does such love exist between parents and children in your family? Or do you sometimes find yourselves walking a tightrope of resentment and distrust? Since none of us are perfect, difficult situations might arise in any household, even where all are trying to be Christian, for "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."—Romans 3:23.

<sup>4</sup> In view of the fact that difficulties can arise in any household, who has the key role in keeping the family on a peaceful and harmonious track? The apostles Paul and Peter supply the answer in the direct counsel found in their letters. Paul wrote: "I want you to know that the head of every man is the Christ; in turn the head of a woman is the man; in turn the head of the Christ is God." He also stated: "Be in subjection to one another in fear of Christ. Let wives be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord, because a husband is head of his wife as the Christ also is head of the congregation." (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:21-23) In a similar vein, Peter wrote: "In like manner [following the model of Christ], you wives, be in subjection to your own husbands."—1 Peter 2:21-3:1.

### Christ—The Refreshing Example

<sup>5</sup> In accordance with the aforementioned

3. What questions might we ask ourselves?
4. How do Paul and Peter indicate who has the key role in a happy family?
- 5, 6. How is Jesus Christ an example in the exercising of headship?



*A balanced elder knows that shepherding begins at home*

counsel, the husband is the Scriptural head of the family. But in what sense is he the head? How should headship be exercised? Some husbands might find it easy to demand respect by insisting that they are 'the head of the house, and the Bible says so.' But how does that match Christ's example? Did Christ proudly demand respect from his followers? Can we find any occasion when he haughtily said: "Who's the Son of God around here? You have to respect me!" On the contrary, Jesus earned respect. How? By his good example in conduct, speech, and compassionate treatment of others.—Mark 6:30-34.

<sup>6</sup> So the key to exercising headship properly as a husband and father is to follow the example of Jesus Christ. Even though Jesus was never married, the way he treated his disciples is the model for husbands. That certainly presents a challenge to any husband, for Jesus is a perfect model. (Hebrews 4:15; 12:1-3) Nevertheless, the closer a husband comes to Christ's example, the deeper will be the love and respect he is shown. Therefore, let us look more closely at the kind of person Jesus was.—Ephesians 5:25-29; 1 Peter 2:21, 22.

<sup>7</sup> On one occasion, Jesus said to a crowd: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light." Now, what did Jesus offer his listeners? Spiritual refreshment! But from what source would the refreshment come? He had just said: "Neither does anyone fully know the Father but the Son and anyone to whom the Son is willing to reveal him." This indicated that Jesus would offer spiritual refreshment by revealing his Father to his true followers. But Jesus' remarks also implied that refreshment would come from association with him, since he was "mild-tempered and lowly in heart."—Matthew 11:25-30.

### How to Be Refreshing Husbands and Fathers

<sup>8</sup> Jesus' words help us to see that a Christian husband should be refreshing to his family in both spiritual and personal ways. By his mild-tempered example and teaching, he should be helping his family to come to know the heavenly Father better. His conduct should reflect the mind and actions of God's Son. (John 15:8-10; 1 Corinthians 2:16) It is refreshing for all in the family to associate with such a man because he is a loving husband, father, and friend. He must be approachable and never too busy for consultation. Indeed, he must know how to listen, not just hear.—James 1:19.

<sup>9</sup> This brings to mind a problem that sometimes affects congregation elders and

7. What did Jesus offer to his followers, and from what source?
8. In what ways should a husband and father be refreshing?
9. What problem sometimes affects elders in the congregation?

their families. An elder is usually kept busy attending to the spiritual needs of the congregation. He has to set a good example with regard to Christian meetings, the ministry, and shepherding work. (Hebrews 13:7, 17) However, some elders have, in effect, burned themselves out for the congregation. In the process they have neglected their families, at times with painful results. In one case an elder was too busy to study with his own son. He arranged for someone else to do it!

<sup>10</sup> What does this example emphasize? The need for a man to maintain a balance between congregation duties and those toward his wife and family. For example, after meetings the elders are often busy with problems and discussions. If it is possible and practical, would it not be refreshing for such an elder to make arrangements for someone to take his wife and children home, rather than having them wait for hours in the Kingdom Hall? In accordance with Biblical requirements, it can be said that 'shepherding begins at home.' If an elder neglects his family, he could jeopardize his appointment. Therefore, elders, be considerate and take into account the emotional, spiritual, and other needs of your family.—1 Timothy 3:4, 5; Titus 1:5, 6.

<sup>11</sup> A refreshing Christian husband also will not be despotic or tyrannical, making decisions without consulting his family. Perhaps a decision has to be made regarding a change of job or home location or even such a simple matter as family recreation. Since all members of the family will be affected, would it not be wise and kind to consult all of them? Their opinions may help him to arrive at a wiser, more consid-

10. How can elders be balanced in their exercise of headship in the congregation and the home?
- 11, 12. How can a Christian husband obtain the support of his family, and what questions might each husband ask himself?

erate, decision. Then it will be easier for all in the family to support him.—Compare Proverbs 15:22.

<sup>12</sup> From the foregoing, it is evident that a Christian husband and father is not just a disciplinary figure in the home. He must also be refreshing. Husbands and fathers, are you Christlike? Are you refreshing to your family?—Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21.

### Dwelling According to Knowledge

<sup>13</sup> As already noted, both Peter and Paul offer fine counsel to married couples. Being a married man, Peter had a double advantage in his counsel—experience and the direction of the holy spirit. (Matthew 8:14) He directed pointed counsel to all husbands, saying: “You husbands, continue dwelling in like manner with them according to knowledge, assigning them honor as to a weaker vessel, the feminine one.” The paraphrased translation by J. W. C. Wand reads: “Husbands in the same way must apply Christian principles with intelligence to their relationship with their wives.”—1 Peter 3:7.

<sup>14</sup> Now, what does it mean to dwell with a wife “according to knowledge” or to “apply Christian principles with intelligence”? How can a husband assign honor to his wife? Indeed, how should a Christian husband understand Peter’s counsel?

<sup>15</sup> Many marriages are based simply on physical factors and sexual attraction. Yet, a lasting marriage cannot be guaranteed on the basis of good looks alone, for these are not durable. Gray hair and wrinkles eventually catch up with those who have been married for many years. But remember that marriage is the uniting of two minds, two personalities, two backgrounds

13. Peter offers what fine counsel to husbands?

14. What questions now arise?

15. (a) Why do some marriages fail? (b) What is the real challenge in a marriage?

and sets of spiritual values, and two tongues. This presents quite a challenge! Yet, understanding this is essential to a happy marriage.—Proverbs 17:1; 21:9.

<sup>16</sup> Among other things, for a Christian husband to dwell with his wife “according to knowledge” means that he really has to understand her needs. These are not just her physical needs but, more importantly, her emotional, psychological, and spiritual needs. If he ‘dwells with her according to knowledge,’ he will understand his God-assigned role. It will also mean that he respects her feminine dignity. This is quite opposite to the view held by some Gnostics in Peter’s day, among whom “women were despised as lower, carnal, and unclean beings.” (*The Anchor Bible*) A modern Spanish translation renders Peter’s words: “Regarding husbands: have tact in your shared life, showing consideration for the woman, because of her being of a more delicate constitution.” (*Nueva Biblia Española*) This makes a fine point that husbands sometimes forget.

<sup>17</sup> Why is the wife “of a more delicate constitution”? Among other things, because of her gift of procreation. Her procreative life is subject to monthly cycles that include a period of several days when she might be feeling somewhat limited or under strain. If the husband fails to take this into account and makes the same demands on his wife every day of the month, he will fail to respect her dignity. In that case he will be showing that he lives with her in accordance with selfish ignorance, rather than with knowledge.—Leviticus 18:19; 1 Corinthians 7:5.

16. ‘Dwelling with her according to knowledge’ involves what?

17. (a) Among other factors, what is involved in the “delicate constitution” of the ‘weaker feminine vessel’? (b) What is one way that a husband can show respect for his wife’s dignity?

## Assigning Honor to the Feminine Vessel

<sup>18</sup> Another way in which a husband can show love and respect for his wife is by showing and expressing appreciation for her and her qualities. A husband may fall into the habit of making derogatory remarks about his wife or may make her the butt of his jokes. Maybe such a husband thinks that this helps to cast him in a more favorable light. In fact, however, the effect is to the contrary, for if he constantly makes his wife look foolish, the obvious question is: Why did he marry such a foolish woman? Really, it would seem that only an insecure husband would resort to such tactics. A loving husband respects his wife.—Proverbs 12:18; 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.

<sup>19</sup> In some countries, men even have the custom of demeaning their wives as a form of seeming modesty. For example, a Japanese husband will introduce his wife with the word “Gusai,” which means ‘stupid or foolish wife.’ The intent of this is that the other person should balance the situation with a complimentary remark about the woman. If a Christian husband makes this type of presentation, is he really ‘assigning honor’ to his wife as Peter counseled? Looking at matters from another angle, is he really speaking truth to his neighbor? Does he truly believe that his wife is foolish?—Ephesians 4:15, 25; 5:28, 29.

<sup>20</sup> Sometimes a husband will show a lack of love and respect simply by forgetting that his wife is also his Christian sister, not just in the Kingdom Hall but at home

18. (a) Into what negative habit do some spouses fall? (b) How should a Christian husband act?

19. Why would it not be proper for a husband to demean his wife?

20. (a) What contradictory situation may develop between a husband and wife? (b) How can it be avoided?

and on every occasion. How easy it is to be kind and polite at the hall and rude and brusque at home! So how appropriate Paul’s counsel is! He wrote: “Let us pursue the things making for peace and the things that are upbuilding to one another.” “Let each of us please his neighbor in what is good for his upbuilding.” (Romans 14:19; 15:2) There is no closer neighbor than a husband or a wife.

<sup>21</sup> Therefore, a loving Christian husband will manifest appreciation for his wife by words and deeds. As an anonymous poet expressed it:

“Amid the cares of married strife  
In spite of toil and business life  
If you value your dear wife—  
Tell her so! . . .  
You are hers and hers alone;  
Well you know she’s all your own;  
Don’t wait to carve it on a stone—  
Tell her so!”

These sentiments are clearly supported by ancient King Lemuel’s mother. In part, she described the ideal wife in these words: “Her sons with one accord call her

21. What can husbands do to encourage their wives?

### Do You Recall?

- Who has the key role in a happy marriage, and why?
- How can husbands imitate Christ’s refreshing example?
- What balance is needed between congregation and family responsibilities?
- How can a husband ‘dwell with his wife according to knowledge’?
- What does it mean to ‘assign one’s wife honor as the weaker vessel’?

happy; her husband too, and he sings her praises: 'Many a woman shows how capable she is; but you excel them all.' (Proverbs 31:1, 28, 29, *The New English Bible*) Husbands, do you regularly praise your wives, or was that only for courtship?

<sup>22</sup> From this brief consideration, it is evident that for a husband to show love and respect in his marriage, it is not enough just to bring home the wages. A successful marriage is based on a loving,

22, 23. On what is a successful marriage based?

loyal, and considerate relationship. (1 Peter 3:8, 9) As the years pass by, this relationship should deepen as husband and wife appreciate each other's virtues and strengths and learn to overlook and forgive each other's weaknesses.—Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:12-14.

<sup>23</sup> If the husband takes the lead in showing love and respect, the whole family will be blessed. But what role should the Christian wife play in a happy family? The following article will discuss that and related questions.

## *Showing love and respect as a*

### W I F E

*"The wife should have deep respect for her husband."—EPHESIANS 5:33.*

**I**N THIS modern era of independence and "liberation," the traditional view of marriage has suffered some severe knocks. Millions of families have to function while lacking either a father or a mother. Living together without the benefit of a legal marriage has become the custom of many. But has this led to greater security for the woman and mother? Has it provided stability for the children? And has this breakdown of values led to greater respect within the family

1. What questions arise regarding the modern state of marriage?

arrangement? In contrast, what does God's Word recommend?

<sup>2</sup> When God expressed his intention to create the first woman, he stated: "It is not good for the man to continue by himself." And after observing animal families—males and females with their young ones—Adam's feeling must have harmonized with that statement.

Although perfect and in a satisfying paradise, Adam lacked companionship with someone of his kind. He was gifted with intelligence

2. Why was it not good for Adam to continue alone?



...of I require no other atmosphere than that of a quiet and  
eager and yet reverent attitude of mind, and that  
brings him into the spirit of the blues.

***The family should not be like  
a ship with two competing  
captains***

and speech, but there was no other creature of his kind with whom to share those gifts. Yet, the situation would soon be different, for God said: "I am going to make a helper for him, as a complement of him."—Genesis 2:18-20.

<sup>3</sup> Jehovah created the woman Eve by using one of Adam's ribs as a base. Therefore, Eve was of the same "kind" as Adam. She was not a lower animal but was "bone of [his] bones and flesh of [his] flesh." Accordingly, the inspired account says: "That is why a man will leave his father and his mother and he must stick to his wife and they must become one flesh." (Genesis 2:23, 24) The Hebrew word translated "stick" literally means "to cleave, to adhere, specially firmly, as if with glue." (Gesenius' *Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon to*

*the Old Testament Scriptures*) This really communicates the idea of a husband and wife being inseparable companions. Another scholar says that "it refers to more than the sexual union of man and wife and extends to the whole relationship." Thus, marriage is not a passing fancy. It is a lasting relationship. And where there is mutual respect and dignity, that unity, although perhaps strained at times, should be unbreakable.—Matthew 19:3-9.

<sup>4</sup> God said that the woman would be man's helper and complement. Since they were made in God's image, he would expect them to manifest his qualities—justice, love, wisdom, and power—in their relationship with each other. Therefore, Eve would be "a complement," not a competitor. The family would not be like a ship

3. (a) How was Eve of Adam's "kind"? (b) What does it mean for a man to "stick" to his wife?

4. In what sense was the woman man's helper and complement?

with two competing captains, but headship would be exercised by Adam.—1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:22-24; 1 Timothy 2:12, 13.

<sup>5</sup> However, the rebellion and sin of the first human pair against God's loving headship precipitated a different setting for the forming of their family and all future families. With foreknowledge of the results of their sin and its effect upon mankind, Jehovah said to Eve: "Your craving will be for your husband, and he will dominate you." (Genesis 3:16) Unfortunately, over the centuries many men have dominated women in a tyrannical manner. Women have been and still are humiliated and degraded in many ways all over the world. Yet, as we have seen in the previous article, the application of Bible principles provides no basis for male despotism. On the other hand, it does emphasize the value of deep respect.

### Deep Respect—A Challenge

<sup>6</sup> The apostle Peter detailed Christ's example in conduct and explained that Jesus left us 'a model to follow his steps closely.' Then Peter stated: "In like manner, you wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, in order that, if any are not obedient to the word, they may be won without a word through the conduct of their wives, because of having been eyewitnesses of your chaste conduct together with deep respect." (1 Peter 2:21-3:2) How can Christian wives manifest this "deep respect"?

<sup>7</sup> Many of our Christian sisters have unbelieving and sometimes opposing hus-

5. How have many men treated women, and does this have God's approval?

6, 7. (a) How may unbelieving husbands be won over to the truth? (b) How could a wife possibly be failing to show "deep respect" for her unbelieving husband?

bands. Do these circumstances mean that Peter's counsel is then null and void? No, subjection and respect are required even if "any are not obedient to the word." Therefore, would it be a sign of deep respect if a Christian wife with an opposing husband were to come to the Kingdom Hall and gossip about him, recounting to many sisters in the congregation all the ill-treatment she had received from him? If she did that with regard to a brother or a sister in the congregation, what would it be called? Gossip, or perhaps even slander. Therefore, it is not evidence of deep respect for a wife to malign her unbelieving husband. (1 Timothy 3:11; 5:13) Yet, it has to be recognized that some opposed sisters have a serious problem. What is the Christian solution? They can go to the elders and seek their help and advice.—Hebrews 13:17.

<sup>8</sup> How can the elders deal tactfully with an opposing husband? First of all, they can try to see the situation from his viewpoint. His verbal or physical violence could be motivated by a triple-link chain reaction of ignorance leading to fear and then to a violent reaction. And why does this occur? Sometimes the husband knows little or nothing about Jehovah's Witnesses except for what he hears from prejudiced workmates. He does know that before his wife started to study the Bible she may have been totally absorbed in him and their children. Although she may now be a better wife and mother, his attitude is: 'She abandons me three times a week to go to those meetings. I don't know what goes on in those meetings, but there are some good-looking men down at that hall, and . . .' Yes, his ignorance might lead to jealousy and fear. Then comes the

8. What might be an opposing husband's line of thought?

defensive reaction. Where these attitudes are discerned, how might the elders help?—Proverbs 14:30; 27:4.

<sup>9</sup> Perhaps one of the elders could get to know the husband on a personal level. (1 Corinthians 9:19-23) The husband may have skill as an electrician, a carpenter, or a painter. He might be willing to use that skill to help out with a problem at the Kingdom Hall. In that way he would get to see the inside of the Kingdom Hall without feeling any obligation to attend a meeting. As he gets to know the brothers, his attitude toward his wife and the truth might soften. Upon seeing the love and spirit of cooperation in the congregation, he might even begin to bring his wife to the meetings. Then, as one thing leads to another, he might step inside the hall during a meeting to listen for a while. Before long, he could be asking for a Bible study. All of this can be achieved and at times it has been. There are thousands of believing husbands today, thanks to such love and tact and a wife's "deep respect."—Ephesians 5:33.

### Watches Over Her Household

<sup>10</sup> King Lemuel got good counsel from his mother about the qualities of an ideal wife. (Proverbs 31:1) Her description of the hard-working wife and mother at Proverbs 31:10-31 is well worth reading

9. What tactful approach may be used with some unbelieving husbands, and what effect may this have?

10, 11. What different facets of a capable wife does King Lemuel describe? (Consider separately.)



*An unbelieving husband may become jealous, even somewhat fearful, about his wife's meeting attendance or other Christian activities. How might he be helped?*

carefully. She obviously had experience in applying God's righteous principles and in showing deep respect.

<sup>11</sup> Lemuel writes that the "capable wife" is trustworthy, reliable, and loyal. (Verses 10-12) She works hard to feed and care for her husband and children. (Verses 13-19, 21, 24) She is kind and charitable to those in genuine need. (Verse 20) By her respect and fine conduct, she adds to her husband's good reputation. (Verse 23) She is not an idle gossip or a destructive critic. On the contrary, with her tongue she builds up and heals. (Verse 26) Because she is not lazy, she has a clean, orderly house. (Verse 27) (In fact, a Christian home should be one of the cleanest in the neighborhood.) Her husband and children show gratitude and praise her. Those outside the family also appreciate her qualities. (Verses 28, 29, 31) Her beauty is not skin-deep; it is the beauty of a God-fearing woman with a godly personality.—Verse 30.

## A Quiet and Mild Spirit

<sup>12</sup> This last point is echoed by Peter when he counsels the Christian woman not to pay excessive attention to her outward appearance. He urges: "Let [your adornment] be the secret person of the heart in the incorruptible apparel of the quiet and mild spirit, which is of great value in the eyes of God." (1 Peter 3:3, 4) Notice the point that 'the quiet and mild spirit is of great value in the eyes of God.' Thus, the Christian wife and mother who has such a spirit is not only pleasing her husband but, more importantly, she is pleasing God, as did faithful women of ancient times. This inner beauty is also reflected in the Spanish saying: "A beautiful woman pleases the eyes; a good woman pleases the heart. If the former is a jewel, the latter is a treasure."

<sup>13</sup> A Christian wife can be refreshing to all in her household. (Compare Matthew 11:28-30.) As the children observe her respect for her husband, they will reflect that respect in their dealings with their parents and those outside the family. As a consequence, Christian children will be kind and considerate. And how refreshing when children volunteer to do chores rather than having to be prodded to get them done! Their unselfishness contributes to the happiness of the home, and a mother's smile of approval is ample payment.

<sup>14</sup> But what about times when discipline is needed? Like their parents, children make mistakes. Sometimes they are disobedient. How will a Christian mother react if the father is absent? Will she continue to respect the dignity of their

12. What is of "great value in the eyes of God," and how does a Spanish proverb highlight this point?

13. What refreshing effect can a wife have on her children?

14. The need for discipline may lead to what challenge?

children? Or will she scream and rant in an attempt to get their obedience? Well, does a child learn from the volume of the voice? Or would a quiet, reasoning voice have greater effect?—Ephesians 4:31, 32.

<sup>15</sup> Commenting on the obedience of children, the magazine *Psychology Today* stated: "According to a recent study, the louder you tell kids not to do something, the more likely it is that they'll turn around and do exactly what you don't want them to do." On the other hand, researchers have found that when adults speak softly, children tend to obey without much hesitation. Of course, it is especially important to reason with a child rather than exasperate him with endless dogmatic commands.—Ephesians 6:4; 1 Peter 4:8.

## Respect in the Physical Relationship

<sup>16</sup> Just as a husband should show consideration for his wife because she is of a more delicate constitution, so a wife should recognize her husband's emotional and sexual needs. The Bible indicates that a man and his wife should take delight in each other and satisfy each other. That requires sensitivity to each other's needs and moods. This mutual satisfaction will also help to ensure that neither partner has a wandering eye that could lead to a wandering body.—Proverbs 5:15-20.

<sup>17</sup> Certainly, where there is mutual respect, neither partner would use sexual needs as a psychological weapon. Each should render the marriage due to the other, and if there is temporary abstinence, it should be by mutual consent. (1 Corinthians 7:1-5) For example,

15. What have researchers found regarding the obedience of children?

16. How can a wife show consideration for her husband's emotional needs, and with what benefit?

17. How should a husband and wife view the rendering of the marital due?

sometimes a husband might be away on temporary construction work at the local branch office of the Watch Tower Society or some other theocratic project. In that case he should be sure that he has his wife's wholehearted consent. Such a separation can also bring spiritual blessings to the family, that is, in the form of encouraging experiences related by the husband after returning home.

### Important Role of the Sisters

<sup>18</sup> Where a Christian woman's husband is an elder, she has a greater responsibility. First, the demands are greater on him. He is answerable to Jehovah for the spiritual state of the congregation. (Hebrews 13:17) But as the wife of an elder and perhaps an older woman herself, her respectful example is also vital. (Compare 1 Timothy 5:9, 10; Titus 2:3-5.) And what a fine example most elders' wives set in support of their husbands! Often, the husband has to be away attending to congregational matters, and maybe her curiosity is aroused. Loyally, however, a godly wife does not pry into congregation affairs like a busybody.—1 Peter 4:15.

<sup>19</sup> However, an elder might have to counsel his wife if she displays attitudes that are not upbuilding or if she does not set a good example for other sisters. 'Presiding over a household in a fine manner' involves not just the children but also the wife. Applying this Scriptural standard might test the humility of some wives.—1 Timothy 3:4, 5, 11; Hebrews 12:11.

<sup>20</sup> Unmarried sisters can also reflect on the respectful role of wives in the congre-

18. Why does an elder's wife bear a greater responsibility?
19. What might 'presiding over a household' involve for an elder?
20. Mention some fine examples of married and unmarried sisters in ancient and modern times. (See "Life Stories of Jehovah's Witnesses" in the Watch Tower Publications Index 1930-1985.)

gation. There are so many good examples of fine, faithful sisters, both in the Scriptures and in the congregations today! Dorcas, probably a single sister, was highly commended for her "good deeds." (Acts 9: 36-42) Prisca and Phoebe were also zealous for the truth. (Romans 16:1-4) Likewise today, many of our sisters, married or single, are outstanding missionaries, pioneers, and publishers. At the same time, such godly women keep clean, orderly homes and never neglect their families. Because of their numbers and circumstances, they often do the greater part of the preaching work.—Psalm 68:11.

<sup>21</sup> Faithful sisters in the congregation play a vital upbuilding role. Their zeal and example are an encouragement to the brothers and to the Christian congregation in general. They are truly complements and helpers. (Compare Genesis 2:18.) What genuine love and respect they deserve! And for Christian marriage mates, appropriate, indeed, is Paul's counsel: "Let each one of you individually so love his wife as he does himself; on the other hand, the wife should have deep respect for her husband."—Ephesians 5:33.

21. How are faithful sisters an encouragement to their Christian brothers?

### Do You Recall?

- What were God's original roles for perfect man and woman?
- How might unbelieving husbands be won over to the truth?
- What are the outstanding qualities of a capable wife?
- How can a Christian wife manifest 'a quiet and mild spirit'?
- What balance is required in the physical relationship between spouses?

# HOW TO SUCCEED IN THE PIONEER MINISTRY

IS THE pioneer ministry your career? If you are a pioneer, or full-time Kingdom proclaimer, no doubt you are interested in being successful. But success calls for more than just being able to spend time in a given profession. A successful person must accept training and persistently develop his abilities.

How, then, can you not only continue as a pioneer but also make progress in your career? There are several key questions that you might consider.

## How Strong Is My Relationship With God?

One of the most important factors in succeeding as a pioneer is having a close, strong relationship with Jehovah God. In this regard, we can learn a lesson from the psalmist David. He pleaded: "Make me know your own ways, O Jehovah; teach me your own paths. Make me walk in your truth and teach me, for you are my God of salvation. In you I have hoped all day long."—Psalm 25:4, 5.

David relied completely on the 'God of his salvation.' He desired that Jehovah teach him and 'make him know His own ways.' Can you not sense David's consuming desire to please God? This was more than a casual wish, for David said: "In you I have hoped all day long."

But how can you maintain such a close relationship with Jehovah? Note that the foregoing are David's expressions in prayer. Yes, communication through prayer is the very foundation of a good relationship with God. And we can take comfort in knowing that there is no need to make an appointment with our heaven-

ly Father. We can approach him at any time. As David said: "To you I keep calling all day long." (Psalm 86:3) Even God's own Son, who walked the earth as a perfect man, recognized that he could not succeed without his Father's help. Jesus spoke to him in prayer throughout the day—early in the morning, during the day, and into the night.—Mark 1:35; Luke 11:1; 6:12.

As Christians, we need to follow Jesus' example if we are going to succeed in our ministry. (Hebrews 5:7) Concerning prayer, a Christian woman who has been a successful pioneer for 30 years expressed herself this way: "I find that prayer is necessary for me if I'm going to succeed as a pioneer. It has helped me to rely completely on Jehovah, realizing that I could not do it on my own. I constantly ask Jehovah to help me to continue."

Yes, to succeed in the pioneer service, you need to maintain a strong relationship with Jehovah, fully relying on him through prayer. However, the following is another important question to ask yourself.

## How Much Do I Love People?

Pioneering is an expression of love. Why? Because the full-time ministry involves a self-sacrificing spirit. As a pioneer, you are constantly giving of your time and energy to help others. But if you are to continue doing this, you must have a genuine interest in the needs of others. When on earth, Jesus demonstrated such love for people. For example, there was the occasion when he and his disciples were going by boat to a lonely place to "rest up

a bit." However, the crowds got there ahead of them. "Well, on getting out, he saw a great crowd, but he was moved with pity for them, because they were as sheep without a shepherd. And he started to teach them many things."—Mark 6: 30-34.

Like Jesus, as pioneers we must have a deep-rooted love for people. Such love motivates us to expend ourselves in their behalf. As a scribe once said to Jesus: "This loving [God] with one's whole heart and with one's whole understanding and with one's whole strength and this loving one's neighbor as oneself is worth far more than all the whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." (Mark 12:33) These words help us to appreciate that it is not only what we do in our ministry that is important but also why we do it.

As a pioneer, you spend more time in the preaching and disciple-making work than most others do. But you also come in contact with more people. How do you feel toward them? One pioneer said: "I know that love is a fruit of God's spirit. So without it I wouldn't be in the truth at all, not to mention succeeding as a pioneer. Love makes me people conscious, aware of their needs, and I appreciate that people respond to love. Of course, there are times when your love for people will be tested because of their attitudes or dispositions. Especially then do I try to listen and be patient."

Is that how you feel about the people in your territory? To be a successful pioneer, you must love people. (1 Thessalonians 2: 6-8) To be effective in your career of pioneering, however, you also need a good schedule. So, ask yourself:

### Do I Have a Balanced Schedule?

To continue in the full-time ministry successfully, a pioneer must be well organized. Without a good personal schedule,

pioneering may become frustrating. Of course, having a schedule that allows for spending a specific amount of time in the field ministry is not all that is involved.

A pioneer needs a balanced schedule. Do you have one? You might well ask yourself: Am I spending an appropriate amount of time in various features of the ministry? Can I say that I am putting forth every effort to reach the people in the territory? Am I making needed adjustments in my schedule so as to call when they are at home? Do I make effective return visits? Jesus said: "Go therefore and make disciples of people . . . teaching them." (Matthew 28:19, 20) Both preaching and teaching are integral parts of our ministry. Are you content with placing literature, or do you call back on all who show interest, whether they accept Bible literature or not? In short, are you making your time count?

### Am I a Progressive Teacher?

That is another important question. At 2 Timothy 4:2, Paul wrote: "Preach the word, be at it urgently in favorable season, in troublesome season, . . . with all long-suffering and art of teaching." In order to preach the word, whether inside or outside the congregation, successful pioneers strive to acquire and refine the art of teaching. Why does Paul call teaching an art? Because teaching requires skill and practice.

How are you going to improve your skill as a teacher? The apostle Paul answers: "Ponder over these things; be absorbed in them, that your advancement may be manifest to all persons." (1 Timothy 4:15) Yes, pioneers must devote time to personal Bible study, reflection, and meditation. This includes the practical application of suggestions found in such publications as *Reasoning From the Scriptures*, *Our King*,



*dom Ministry, and the *Theocratic Ministry School Guidebook*.\**

To succeed in the pioneer ministry, therefore, maintain your strong personal relationship with Jehovah God. This, in turn, will motivate you to acquire and display a deep-rooted love for people. Of course, to express this love, not only must you be conscious of how much time you spend in the ministry, but you must also want to make your time count. How? By putting forth the needed effort to reach as many people as possible with the Kingdom message. Finally, continue to be progressive as a teacher by learning different methods of approaching people in the ministry and diligently studying the Bible with a view to refining your art of teaching.

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# Salvation Possible When God Takes Vengeance

Lessons From the Scriptures: Nahum 1:1–3:19

**J**UST a little while longer, and the wicked one will be no more." (Psalm 37:10) That these words will be fulfilled is forcefully shown in the Bible books penned by Nahum and Habakkuk. These courageous men completed the recording of their prophecies in the kingdom of Judah during the latter part of the seventh century B.C.E.

First, consider God's prophecy declared by Nahum. What lessons does it contain?

## God's Vengeance Sure

**Jehovah requires exclusive devotion.** (Exodus 20:5) In a pronouncement against Assyria's capital, Nineveh, Nahum shows that God's vengeance will be executed upon foes who do not give Him such devotion. Why, before him mountains rock, hills melt, and the earth is upheaved! Who can withstand the heat of his anger?—1:1-6.

**We can rely on Jehovah as a refuge.** Yes, God safeguards those seeking refuge in him. With his enemies exterminated, dis-

tress will not rise up a second time. There is good news of peace for Judah, for true worship will be unhindered.—1:7-2:2.

## *Unrighteous persons will not succeed.*

This is evident from what happened to Nineveh. Her cruel treatment of captives made her "the city of bloodshed." Like a lair of lions, this heavily fortified city seemed secure behind its thick walls. But by God's

Courtesy of the Trustees of the British Museum, London



*Painting by archaeologist A. H. Layard depicting an Assyrian palace*

## BIBLE TEXTS EXAMINED

o 1:4—Bashan, Carmel, and Lebanon were regions of beauty, fertility, and fruitfulness. For them to wither would spell tragedy for those dependent on them. This emphasizes the severity of the outpouring of Jehovah's wrath.

o 1:10—Nineveh considered herself to be as impenetrable as interwoven thorns, and she was drunk with ambition. But she would be devoured as easily as fire eats dry stubble. Likewise, the enemies of God's modern-day people will not withstand Jehovah's fiery judgments.

o 2:6—Because of heavy rains at the time of the assault upon Nineveh, the Tigris River overflowed. This inundated

a portion of the city and broke down a section of the wall. Thus, it was easy for the conquerors to take the Assyrian capital.

o 2:11-13—Like wild beasts, the Assyrians terrorized and preyed upon the nations. It also seems that the lion was a national emblem. Many statues of lions were found in Nineveh's ruins.

o 3:3, 4—Like a prostitute, Nineveh deceived nations with soothing offers of friendship and promises of help. But those thus ensnared soon experienced pain under her oppressive yoke, as shown in the case of Judean king Ahaz.—2 Chronicles 28:16, 20, 21.

decree, Nineveh would suffer the same fate she had meted out to ancient No-amon, or Thebes, on the Nile River. For her sins, Assyria's capital would be laid waste. This

prophecy was fulfilled when the combined forces of Babylonian king Nabopolassar and Cyaxares the Mede captured Nineveh in 632 B.C.E.—2:3-3:19.

## Lessons From the Scriptures: Habakkuk 1:1-3:19

HABAKKUK learned that Jehovah would in His own due time take action against cruel oppressors. But 'by his faithfulness the righteous one would keep living.' (2:4) Yet, what further lessons can we learn from this prophecy?

### Salvation for Those Having Faith

**Jehovah listens to the pleas of his servants.** Habakkuk asks: "How long, O Jehovah, must I cry for help, and you do not hear?" Yes, there is no justice, and the wicked surround the righteous. But God does hear, and as his punishing agency, he is "raising up the Chaldeans." Yet, how can he use a warlike power? The prophet awaits God's answer, anticipating a reproof.—1:1-2:1.

**Only the righteous and faithful will keep living.** Jehovah assures Habakkuk of this. Though there may seem to be a delay, at God's appointed time the prophetic vision "will without fail come true." The self-assuming foe that is plundering nations will

not reach his goal. Indeed, the Chaldeans will not go unpunished.—2:2-5.

### Woe to Wicked Ones!

**Avoid unrighteous gain, violence, and idolatry.** Why? Because woe is certain for the one multiplying what is not his own, making evil gain, building a city by bloodshed, violently causing others to drink the cup of shameful defeat, and trusting in lifeless idols. God will bring the work of such ones to nothing. All the earth will be made to know the glory of Jehovah, before whom all should stand in reverential silence.—2:6-20.

### Wait patiently on Jehovah for salvation.

In prayer, Habakkuk recalls past manifestations of God's power. Among other things, Jehovah marched through the earth, threshing the nations in anger. He also went forth for the salvation of his people. Overwhelmed, Habakkuk is determined to "quietly wait for the day of distress." Regardless of the bad times that must be faced, he will exult in Jehovah and be joyful in the God of his salvation.—3:1-19.

## BIBLE TEXTS EXAMINED

o 1:2-4—Habakkuk's faith in Jehovah as a God who does not tolerate evil prompted him to ask why wickedness prevailed. He was willing to have his thinking adjusted. (2:1) When we wonder why certain things are tolerated, our confidence in Jehovah's righteousness should likewise help us to keep our balance and to wait on him.—Psalm 42:5, 11.

o 2:5—The Babylonians were a composite man who used his war machine to conquer nations. Like Sheol and death that are always ready for more victims, he desired

further military conquests. (Compare Proverbs 30:15, 16.) As if influenced by heavy drinking, he became heady with victory. But his wars of conquest ended when Babylon fell in 539 B.C.E.

o 3:13—God's saving power was often experienced by his chosen and anointed people, the nation of Israel. (Psalm 28:8, 9) In time, it produced the Messiah, the "seed" of God's heavenly "woman." (Genesis 3:15) Jehovah will also save the remaining members of that "seed," the remnant of Jesus' spirit-anointed disciples, from attack by Satan and the nations.—Revelation 12:17.



## *The land of the **PEPPER BIRD** hears the "new song"*

**A**T THE crack of dawn, the melodious warble of the pepper bird is heard all over Liberia. For generations, its trill has served to awaken the villagers to another day of work under the tropical sun. This common bulbul has given Liberia its nickname "land of the pepper bird."

The name Liberia, however, brings to mind another story. In 1822 liberated slaves returning from America to the continent of their forefathers arrived at the mouth of the Mesurado River and formed the settlement that became Monrovia. Other settlements cropped up at Buchanan, Greenville, and Harper, and the set-

tlers concluded treaties with the kings of the indigenous tribal people. Those early returnees brought with them the Negro spirituals—songs that combined African rhythms with Biblical themes and reflected their longing for freedom. In keeping with that longing, in 1824 their colony was named Liberia. In 1847 it became the first black African republic.

In recent years, however, a new song has been heard in this land. This is a song sung, not by the pepper bird or by returned slaves, but by a growing chorus of people who are responding to the urging of the Biblical psalmist: "Sing to Jehovah a new song. Sing to Jehovah, all you people of the earth. Say among the nations: 'Jehovah himself has become king.'" (Psalm 96:1, 10) Yes, this is the song of God's established Kingdom, with Jesus Christ as King. It is being sung by prospective heirs of Jehovah's heavenly government. They and their companions are joyously proclaiming the "good news" about that Kingdom in all the nations—including Liberia—during "the conclusion of the system of things," in which we now live. (Matthew 24:3, 14) When and how did this song first come to be heard in the land of the pepper bird? And what effect has its heart-searching melody had on appreciative hearers? Let's listen.

### The "New Song" Reaches Liberia

In 1946 Harry C. Behannan, a gifted black pianist who had performed throughout Europe, gave up his musical career in order to serve as a missionary. For six months he served alone as a pioneer Witness of Jehovah, going from house to house to spread Kingdom truth. He placed over 500 books and made many friends. Then, tragically, Brother Behannan died of tropical fever. But the "new song" did not die out, for other missionaries followed him.

In 1947 George Watkins (a former amateur boxer) and his wife Willa Mae came to serve in Monrovia, the capital of Liberia. They were patient and diligent in teaching humble Liberians "to observe all the things [Jesus] commanded." (Matthew 28:19, 20) By September 1948 a group of 15 was sharing in Kingdom service with them. Thus, the first congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses was formed in Liberia.

The preaching work spread rapidly down the coast to the port of Harper, in Kakata and surrounding villages, and among the Kisi-speaking rubber tappers at the Firestone plantation. By 1952 a branch office of the Watch Tower Society was established in Liberia. During the next year, the first Kingdom Hall together with a missionary home was built on McDonald Street in Monrovia. Those were exciting times. Today, there are 1,724 praisers of Jehovah in this land, and they are having fine results among the friendly, hospitable, and humble people.

### Response to the "New Song" Today

Jehovah's Witnesses from the 16 major tribes of Liberia, along with the missionaries and individuals who have come to serve where the need is greater, have now blended their voices in sounding forth the Kingdom message. Lately, they have added a note of urgency in appealing to those searching for the truth. On an average, each Witness is spending over 27 hours per month in the preaching work, and the number of those in the full-time ministry has more than tripled in the last five years. Such efforts have brought blessings both to them and to others. Let us hear about some of them.

Emmanuel adjusted his affairs so that he could care for his large family and share in the full-time pioneer work in Gardnersville. He met Varney and Lucinda and started a home Bible study with

them. However, they believed it was a sin for a person to change his religion. Emmanuel showed them what the book *Reasoning From the Scriptures* says on the subject. They borrowed the book, read other material in it, and started attending Christian meetings. Shortly thereafter, they took up the Christian ministry. Meanwhile, their landlord—a clergyman—noted the change in their conduct and invited them to use his sitting room for their Bible study. After attending a district convention, the landlord was convinced that he had found the truth and requested a Bible study of his own.

Responding to the "new song" liberated Tamba, a former spirit medium from Lofa County. Worried about his son's illness, he had consulted the spirits. They had assured him that his son would live but claimed that his wife was plotting his son's death. With offerings and sacrifices, Tamba implored the spirits to kill his wife so as to prevent her from harming his son. What was the result? The son died but the wife was unharmed. Angry and frustrated, Tamba threw out all his spiritistic paraphernalia. In his grief-stricken condition, he was deeply touched by the message about the hope of a resurrection and the coming paradise earth. He accepted a Bible study, cleaned up his life, and dedicated himself to Jehovah. Since then he has helped his family and nine other people in his community to dedication.

The lives of many honesthearted ones were touched by the "new song." Herbert won a scholarship to the university in Monrovia and a government job because of his outstanding ability as a soccer player. When he learned what the Bible says about a competitive spirit, however, he was moved to give up his sports career. (Galatians 5:26) Now he rejoices in his new career as a full-time minister.

James asked the Witness studying with

him how he could overcome his addiction to marijuana. Encouraged to pray about the matter, James asked Jehovah to help him to quit. A couple of weeks later, he could not resist the urge and he smoked again. On his way home, he walked right into an iron bar and bled profusely around the eye. Remembering his prayer, he never again went back to his habit. Today, he serves as a regular pioneer and a ministerial servant in the congregation.

The appeal of the "new song" has also reached an older man, Samuel of the Krahn tribe, who formerly was the superintendent of Montserrado County. What moved him to give up a career with high wages and pursue the full-time ministry? "What impressed me was the fact that in my Bible I could find support for everything that Jehovah's Witnesses said, taught, and did," said Samuel. He added that among Jehovah's Witnesses he has found the love Jesus described at John 13:34, 35. Samuel noted that the members of his former church, in contrast, "were al-

### From House to House in Liberia

As we approach a stick-and-mud house, instead of knocking, we announce our presence by calling out: "Kpaw, kpaw, kpaw!"

Getting no answer, we walk to the back of the house and find a family sitting in the "kitchen"—a small booth in the backyard. A pot of thick red palm butter is simmering over a wood fire. The mother, who is dishing out the rice, sends her children scurrying to the house to fetch chairs for us.

The family members now settle down. Sitting on a bench, they listen attentively as we present the Kingdom message. They happily accept a copy of the brochure *Enjoy Life on Earth Forever!* and we make arrangements to return. As we get up to leave, they say: "Let's eat!"

ways wrangling and fighting about money matters right in church." Samuel is now serving as a regular pioneer.

### The "New Song" Reaches a Crescendo

When it comes to singing praises to God, there are no happier times for Jehovah's people than at their annual district conventions. In recent years, however, here in Liberia the challenge has been in finding facilities large enough to accommodate all the Witnesses and interested persons who would attend. In 1986 two conventions were held at the only suitable auditorium, but the total attendance of more than 4,000 overtaxed the facility. What was to be done for 1987? Well, the Samuel K. Doe Sports Complex was completed just in time with the assistance of the Chinese government. But could we afford to rent this facility?

Because of the educational nature of our program, the management agreed to let us use the stadium at a very reasonable rate. But just a couple of weeks before convention time, the management wanted to increase the charge. Why? Because a prominent TV evangelist from the United States had just completed a crusade in the stadium, and the crowd had left it in deplorable condition, with litter strewed everywhere. The management was assured that Jehovah's Witnesses were different. The day before the convention, over 500 brothers and sisters gave the stadium a thorough cleaning. After the convention, a member of the Chinese management team was overheard saying that our effort in keeping the stadium clean was worth more than what we paid for the use of it.

The convention itself was a success. A new peak of 5,852 attended the public address "In These Fearful Times, Whom Can You Trust?" What a joy to see 101 new ones symbolize their dedication to

God by undergoing water immersion! The baptisms took place in two portable pools right at the convention site—a first for Liberia!

With increasing numbers of people responding to the "new song," the original branch office on McDonald Street in Monrovia had proved to be too small. Even the subsequent building in Sinkor was not large enough for storing all the Bible literature needed to care for the spiritual needs of the Liberian people. Therefore, a large residence building was bought and renovated near the Paynesville Kingdom Hall, and a new branch office was dedicated on March 28, 1987. With this spacious and ideally located building, Jehovah's servants in Liberia are well equipped to care for the growing interest.

How much work remains to be done in Liberia? The 1988 Memorial attendance of 8,600—five times the number of Kingdom publishers—indicates that there is a great potential for more disciples. And the hard-working Liberian Witnesses are responding to the challenge. They are conducting more than 3,000 home Bible studies each month. It is our prayer that many more here will join the ever-growing "great crowd" who are praising Jehovah in response to the "new song."—Revelation 7:9, 10.

## In Our Next Issue

■ Why Fear a God of Love?

■ Be Clean in Mind and Body

■ Enjoying Music  
—What Is the Key?

# Insight on the News

## "A Second Look"

Genesis 1:1 states: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." For more than a century, scientists who favor the evolution theory have criticized this Bible verse. However, "many of them now are taking a second look at this earliest, most powerful case for the existence of a Creator," reports *The Orange County Register*, a California newspaper.

For example, the article notes what is said by Australian biologist Michael Denton in his book *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis*. He maintains that from the time Darwin published his book *On the Origin of Species* until now, there has not been a single shred of evidence to support Darwin's theory.

Similarly, the *Register* cites the book *The Mystery of Life's Origins: Reassessing Current Theories*, written by three scientists. According to the paper, they explain that life could not have started by chance and "argue that a 'Creator beyond the cosmos' is the most plausible explanation for life's origin." Supporting this view, the article mentions that British astronomer Fred Hoyle "is widely quoted for his statement that believing the first cell originated by chance is like believing a tornado ripping through a junkyard full of airplane parts could produce a Boeing 747."

For a number of scientists, the evidence to support a Supreme Cause is unmistakable. But what of those who persist in denying the existence of a Creator? Such persons do well to consider these words penned by the prophet Isaiah: "The perversity of you men! Should the potter himself be ac-

counted just like the clay? For should the thing made say respecting its maker: 'He did not make me?'—Isaiah 29:16.

## A Deadly Obsession

In January of this year, serial killer Theodore Robert Bundy, was placed in the Florida State Prison electric chair and executed. He had been linked to the brutal deaths of as many as 36 women, though authorities suspect the figure could be as high as 100.

In an interview before his execution, Bundy admitted that pornography was a major factor contributing to his criminal behavior. According to Dr. James Dobson, who conducted the interview, "at 12 or 13 he began to find pornography in drugstores, even along the road, and he became addicted, obsessed," reports the *Daily News*.

Bundy's confession echoes the words of Arthur Gary Bishop, another convicted murderer, who was executed last year for the sex murders of five boys. According to *The Tribune*, a San Diego, California, newspaper, Bishop contended that pornography "was 'devastating' to him as a boy and led to his downfall." Bishop quoted a psychologist who testified at his trial that "as people become addicted [to pornography] their desires escalate, their normal feelings become desensitized and they tend to act out what they have seen." Bishop confessed: "So it was with me. I am a homosexual pedophile convicted of murder, and pornography was a determining factor in my downfall."

Even though confessed murderers have admitted that pornography is destructive, there are many people who still view it

as harmless entertainment. To such ones the warning given at Isaiah 5:20 well applies: "Woe to those who are saying that good is bad and bad is good, those who are putting darkness for light and light for darkness."

## No Mystery

United Church minister Phyllis Smith claims that the faith of some of the clergy is apparently being threatened by the questions of terminally ill patients, reports *The Toronto Star*, a Canadian newspaper. According to Smith, "dying people ask questions about the mysteries of life and death that nobody understands." She says: "We don't need to feel threatened just because we feel we should have all the answers." When difficult spiritual questions are raised, Smith maintains that clergymen "don't need to defend God."

While it is true that individuals may not always have all the answers to questions about life and death, the Bible does. Should not those claiming to be ministers of God know what his Word says? The apostle Peter said that fellow believers should always be "ready to make a defense before everyone that demands of you a reason for the hope in you." (1 Peter 3:15) Early Christians had no problem understanding the condition of the dead or what future prospects are held out for dying mankind. They knew that Ecclesiastes 9:5 says: "The living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all." And Jesus told his followers: "The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out." (John 5:28, 29) For true ministers of God, life and death hold no mystery.

# Questions From Readers

- Was the apostle Paul showing ethnic prejudice in agreeing with a blanket criticism of the Cretan people?

No, Paul did not give in to the practice of making all-inclusive slurs about people of another ethnic or national background.

This question springs from comments in Paul's letter to the disciple Titus. Paul had left him on the large Mediterranean island of Crete to "correct the things that were defective and [to] make appointments of older men in city after city." Paul outlined some qualifications for congregation elders but advised Titus: "There are many unruly men, profitless talkers, and deceivers of the mind, especially those men who adhere to the circumcision. It is necessary to shut the mouths of these, as these very men keep on subverting entire households." —Titus 1:5, 10, 11.

Paul continued in verse 12: "A certain one of them, their own prophet, said: 'Cretans are always liars, injurious wild beasts, unemployed gluttons.'" In verse 13, he added: "This witness is true. For this very cause keep on reproofing them with severity, that they may be healthy in the faith."

Many Bible translators let Paul's comment "this witness is true" continue right after what he quoted from a Cretan prophet. Others begin a new paragraph with verse 13.\* In either case, to what was Paul expressing some agreement?

He certainly was not agreeing with any all-encompassing racial or ethnic slur against the Cretans. We can be sure of that, for Paul knew that on Crete there



were fine Christians whom God had approved and anointed with His holy spirit. (Acts 2:5, 11, 33) There were enough devoted Christians to make up congregations in "city after city." While such Christians were not perfect humans, we can be sure that they were not liars and lazy gluttons; otherwise they would not have continued to have Jehovah's approval. (Philippians 3:18, 19; Revelation 21:8) And as we today find in all nations, likely there were on Crete honesthearted people who were saddened by the low moral standards around them and were ready to respond to the Christian message.—Ezekiel 9:4; compare Acts 13:48.

On the other hand, there were also people on Crete who did not have high moral standards. Paul found it appropriate to quote the words that apparently originated with Epimenides, a Cretan poet (prophet or spokesman) in the sixth century B.C.E. But Paul was agreeing with that description as applied to a particular segment of the Cretan population.

These were the 'profitless talkers and deceivers of the mind' who were in contact with faithful Christians and were trying to 'subvert entire households.' Such subversive deceivers truly fit the description "liars, injurious wild

beasts," which was equally true of people like that elsewhere. (2 Timothy 3:6, 13) Moreover, anyone already in the congregations who was deceived into taking up those ways needed to be 'reproved with severity.' Those benefiting from reproof might thus be helped to become exemplary as to fine works and "wholesome speech which cannot be condemned."—Titus 2:6-8.

We should find in this a caution for all of us. Ethnic or national prejudice may abound around us. (Compare John 7:47-52.) We likely hear neighbors, schoolmates, or fellow workers make categorical remarks about another people, such as, 'Oh, those northerners are all cold and unfeeling'; 'Well, you know how proud those southerners are'; or, 'It's risky to trust those people from across the border.'

We must strive to avoid giving in to broad characterizations that are probably unfounded or greatly exaggerated. Some may be more outgoing and expressive, others more reserved or slow to warm up to strangers. Yet, we should remember that some of our Christian brothers are no doubt to be found among the people of that ethnic group or nationality, as well as many others who have not yet become true Christians but who have admirable traits and who hunger for righteousness.

The apostle Peter stressed the fact that "God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 10: 34, 35) We can be absolutely sure that Paul agreed with that, reflecting the same outlook in his writings and speech. So should we.

\* See *The New Berkeley Version* as well as the translations by R. F. Weymouth, F. A. Spencer, K. S. Wuest, and Abner Kneeland.

# Not just for children

A woman from Fort Worth, Texas, writes: "I have had the book ***Listening to the Great Teacher*** for a number of years. I decided to begin to read it to my ten-month-old son. Each day I read two or three chapters. I know that he is still a little too young to understand it. However, I have greatly benefited from it personally. The book touched my heart in a very special way, and deepened my love and appreciation for Jehovah God and his Son, Jesus Christ. I am 27 years old. I thought the ***Great Teacher*** book was just for children, and now I regret not looking into it earlier."



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**Listening  
TO THE  
Great Teacher**