

The

THE WATCHTOWER

**WILL
"GETTING AHEAD"
Bring You
HAPPINESS?**



JUNE 1, 1977

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

June 1, 1977
Vol. 98, Number 11

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

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

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

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

IN THIS ISSUE

Will "Getting Ahead"	323
Bring You Happiness?	
Combating Bible Illiteracy in France	325
What Did the Wise Man Mean?	329
Appreciating Those Who Practice	
Their Faith	331
'A Door Leading to Activity Opens'	332
Can You Enter the Open Door?	337
Insight on the News	342
Making Melody to Jehovah	
with Instrumental Music	343
Mourning and Funerals—For Whom?	344
Astonishing Judgments from God	348
Examinations Yet Ahead	
for a Graduating Class	351

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WILL "GETTING AHEAD" Bring You HAPPINESS?

TO DAY'S business and social world is very competitive. As some say, 'It's a rat race.' Generally there is a struggle for promotion, either for more money or for more power. Status is eagerly sought. Does it bring happiness?

Dr. Laurence J. Peter and Raymond Hull, in their book *The Peter Principle*, make the observation that, in every organization having a pyramidal structure (with the top job or jobs at the apex), there is generally a desire on the part of everyone to get a higher position. The more important the title the higher the status. But, the book's authors say, the result is that everyone tends eventually to reach his level of incompetence. A person may be very competent in a lesser job, but the organization tends to promote such persons until they reach a job they cannot handle.

The book gives several half-humorous but realistic illustrations, one of which is:



E. Tinker was exceptionally zealous and intelligent as an apprentice at G. Reece Auto Repair, Inc., and soon rose to journeyman mechanic. In this job he showed outstanding ability in diagnosing obscure faults, and endless patience in correcting them. He was promoted to foreman of the repair shop.

"But here his love of things mechanical and his perfectionism become liabilities. He will undertake any job that he thinks looks interesting, no matter how busy the shop may be. 'We'll work it in somehow,' he says. . . .

"He meddles constantly. He is seldom to be found at his desk. He is usually up to his elbows in a dismantled motor and while the man who should be doing the work stands watching, other workmen sit around waiting to be assigned new tasks. As a result the shop is always overcrowded with work, always in a muddle, and delivery times are often missed. Tinker . . . was a competent mechanic, but is now an incompetent foreman."

The condition of executives or employees who have reached their level of incompetence is classified by Mr. Peter as "the Final Placement Syndrome." Frustrated by their incompetence, whether they real-

ize the cause or not, they often develop ulcers, high blood pressure and numerous other physical problems, and even strange mental aberrations. Their superiors are often unwilling to "lose face" by demoting them, so they remain in their uncomfortable position for an indefinite time. Such persons have status among those who are not aware of their incompetence, but are they happy?

This situation is not new. King Solomon, the wisest king of ancient times, observed the occupations and aspirations of mankind. He concluded: "I myself have seen all the hard work and all the proficiency in work, that it means the rivalry [or, envy] of one toward another; this also is vanity and a striving after the wind."—Eccl. 4:4.

About rivalry, Solomon had more to say in the book of Proverbs. He said: "A calm heart is the life of the fleshly organism, but jealousy [or, rivalry] is rottenness to the bones." (Prov. 14:30) This explains the ulcers and other forms of actual physical sickness that come to those who join in the envious, rival spirit of constantly seeking higher status.

Of course, it is not wrong to seek to do one's best, and to do everything in a whole-hearted way—to "reach out," as it were, to do better work and achieve greater accomplishment, within one's ability. But the Bible gives us the goal to aim at, rather than riches or status. It counsels: "Whatever you are doing, work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah [God], and not to men, for you know that it is from Jehovah you will receive the due reward." (Col. 3:23, 24) The true reward, which includes peace of mind and contentment, is better than status with worry.

Jesus Christ warned against status seeking when he said:

"When you are invited by someone to a marriage feast, do not lie down [recline at the meal table] in the most prominent

place. Perhaps someone more distinguished than you may at the time have been invited by him, and he that invited you and him will come and say to you, 'Let this man have the place.' And then you will start off with shame to occupy the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and recline in the lowest place, that when the man that has invited you comes he will say to you, 'Friend, go on up higher.' Then you will have honor in front of all your fellow guests."—Luke 14:8-10.

Just as it is with status, so also with riches. The outcome to the one who makes riches his goal is described by the apostle Paul. He wrote to his co-worker Timothy: "Those who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many senseless and hurtful desires, which plunge men into destruction and ruin. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things, and by reaching out for this love some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains." (1 Tim. 6:9, 10) These pains may be physical, mental or spiritual, and can cause great unhappiness and loss of the really important things in living.

On the other hand, Jesus did not say that people should not have money or enjoy some of the fine material things of life. He was no ascetic or recluse. He ate at the homes of people, some of them rich people, who invited him to meals and to marriage feasts. He had a mantle that the soldiers who nailed him to the stake thought valuable enough to divide among four of them, and a one-piece garment that they did not want to ruin by dividing, but for which they cast lots. (Luke 5:27-29; 19:1-6; John 2:1-10; 19:23, 24) Of course, Jesus found critics because he enjoyed these good things. He answered them:

"John [the Baptizer] came neither eating nor drinking, yet people say, 'He has a demon'; the Son of man did come eating and drinking, still people say, 'Look! A

man glutinous and given to drinking wine, a friend of tax collectors and sinners.' All the same, wisdom is proved righteous by its works." (Matt. 11:18, 19) Jesus' balance in the matter and his works demonstrated that he was not seeking riches or status. The fact was that his opponents were seekers of these things and judged him according to their corrupt viewpoint.

So no one should find fault with another who has or makes money. It is his own affair. Neither should his position or wealth be envied by others. And if the person is not dishonest and if he controls his wealth instead of letting his wealth control him, he can be content. Such a person will help others with what he has. In

fact, the apostle Paul recommends for people that they should not be unconcerned or aimless, but should have self-respect and a purpose in life. He said that Christians "by working with quietness should eat food that they themselves earn," and that a person should "do hard work, doing with his hands what is good work, *that he may have something to distribute to someone in need.*"—2 Thess. 3:12; Eph. 4:28.

By learning and applying the wise principles of the Bible, which are the words of the Creator, who knows human nature thoroughly, one can find great gain in the form of contentment and can avoid the many 'stab wounds' received by the seeker of riches and status.—1 Tim. 6:6, 10.

literature is among the richest in the world. The standard of education being quite high in France, illiteracy in the general sense of the term is well-nigh nonexistent.

Yet there is a field where the education of the French is sadly lacking, namely, knowledge of the Bible. However, they are not to blame for this dearth of Bible knowledge. Whose fault, then, is it?

The popes of Rome called France "the eldest daughter of the Church." Even today 85 percent of the French consider themselves to be Catholics. When one learns that before the French Revolution there was one priest for every 110 French men, women and children, and that as recently as 1970 there was one priest, monk or nun for every 297 inhabitants, one will readily agree that the Roman Catholic Church has had a wonderful opportunity to teach the French people the Bible. But, instead, she has kept them in ignorance of the Word of God.

Combating Bible Illiteracy in France

"**Illiteracy**" and "**France**" may strike many readers as words that are incompatible. The French have a reputation of being very proud of their culture. This is understandable, for French

Yes, until recent times, Bible illiteracy among the laity was the consistent policy of the Catholic Hierarchy. In 1229, the Council of Toulouse (France) decreed: "We forbid the laity to have in their possession any copy of the books of the Old and New Testaments." In 1564, Pope Pius IV forbade the reading of the Bible in the vulgar tongue. In 1897, Pope Leo XIII stated: "... if Bibles in the vulgar tongue are authorized without discernment, ... more harm than good results."

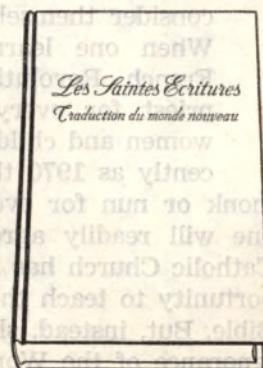
A four-volume *Manuel Biblique* published in Paris in 1905 for the use of future Catholic priests states: "The Church does not allow indiscriminate reading of the Holy Books, especially the Old Testament." As recently as 1955, Daniel-Rops, Catholic author, spoke about its being "commonplace to hear people repeat that ... a Catholic should not read the Bible."

True, since the 1950's a number of French Catholic Bibles have been published, such as the *Jerusalem Bible*, but these are quite expensive. Consequently they have not found their way into many French homes. All of which explains the amazing fact that one of the most cultured peoples on earth is, for the most part, made up of Bible illiterates.

AN UNPRECEDENTED BIBLE EDUCATIONAL CAMPAIGN

Such then was the situation in France when the small group of less than 2,000

**Available for a
voluntary contribu-
tion several times
lower than the
cheapest Protestant
or Catholic Bible
in French**



Jehovah's Witnesses resumed their Bible educational work after the war, in 1946. How could this tiny group hope to reach the then over 40 million inhabitants of this Catholic country?

They did what Christ told his followers to do, namely: "Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations . . . and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you." (Matt. 28:19, 20, *Jerusalem Bible [Je]*) They courageously "preached . . . in private houses," and went from house to house to distribute Bibles and Bible-study literature.—Acts 5:42, *Je*.

Over the years this group of zealous Christians has grown in number from a mere 1,985 in 1946 to 63,428 in 1976, these figures being the average number of Witnesses sharing each month in Bible educational work. During this thirty-one-year period, they have devoted over one hundred million hours to defeating Bible illiteracy in France. They have distributed at cost price 6,680,584 Bibles and Bible-study manuals, not to speak of well over a hundred million booklets and magazines, every one of which contains enlightening explanations of the Holy Scriptures.

While for years Jehovah's Witnesses in France used current French-language Catholic and Protestant Bibles to teach the people Scriptural truths, since 1974 their efforts have been greatly facilitated. That year, the Watch Tower Society (publishers for Jehovah's Witnesses) printed the French edition of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* and made it available to the public for a voluntary contribution several times lower than the price of the cheapest Protestant and Catholic Bibles. Thus, thanks to the untiring efforts of the voluntary workers in the Watch Tower printery, the poorest French family can now obtain an unabridged copy of God's Word. During the past two and a half years, some 700,000 copies of this excellent Bible translation

have been shipped out to the French congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses for distribution among the public.

But the efforts of Jehovah's Witnesses to spread Bible education in France have not been limited to distributing Bibles and religious literature. Since the second world war, they have made no less than 47,556,317 return visits on people who have shown interest in the Bible message, and at the time of this writing they are conducting free weekly Bible discussions in nearly forty thousand French homes.

In comparison, what are the some 44,000 Catholic priests, the 22,000 monks and the over 100,000 nuns doing to combat Bible illiteracy in France? Precious little, judging by the following testimonies given by ex-Catholics who have been helped by Jehovah's Witnesses.

HELPING CATHOLICS TO DISCOVER THE BIBLE

From Montchanin, in east-central France, comes the following report: "My parents died when I was thirteen. A Catholic sisterhood took me in. Years went by, and I decided to undertake the novitiate [with a view to becoming a nun]. I spent three years in a convent in India, where I took my temporary vows. Next I was sent to the Seychelles islands, then to Ireland, and finally to France, near Carcassonne. I was now twenty-five, and the time had come for me to take my perpetual vows. But, disliking the heavy, hypocritical atmosphere of the convents, I refused. My mother superior put me out to service with a French family, who gave me much work but little pay. It was then that I met my future husband. He spoke to me about Bible truth. In spite of all my religious education, I had never heard of God's personal name—Jehovah. . . . I thought that this man who someday would become my husband was mad, but he remained calm. This made me think, so I accepted a Bible study with the help of the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. I asked many questions. This little book taught me more about the Bible than did all the learning I had received during the thirteen years I had spent in various convents. My wish now is that many nuns might hear the wonderful good news of the Kingdom and, like me, become real 'sisters' who know their God."

Take the case of a man of over seventy in Brest, France's westernmost seaport. He had been brought up in a devout Catholic family. He was educated in a school run by friars. He then studied for the priesthood in a seminary, where he was initiated in Thomist theology-philosophy and learned English, Latin and Greek. At the age of twenty-four and a half, just before taking his solemn vows for the priesthood, he decided to quit what he called the atmosphere of "blue mystery" in which he had been living. One would think that after having spent so many years studying in Catholic institutions this man would have an excellent knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. Yet he confesses: "I had to wait until my seventy-second year before getting to know the Bible and recognizing its truthfulness," through one of Jehovah's Witnesses who studied with him free of charge for two years. He adds: "I should like to thank and congratulate this [Witness] for his patience and humility." This man is himself now a baptized Witness who helps still others to understand the Bible.

From Arles, a historical town in southern France, probably best known throughout the world for Bizet's music *L'Arlésienne* (The Girl from Arles), an ex-Catholic writes the following: "I was a practicing Catholic, educated entirely in Catholic schools, and I was an active member of Catholic Action. After going through university I became a philosophy teacher in a Catholic school run by nuns. I also held catechism classes for senior students. I first met one of Jehovah's Witnesses in February 1974. . . . Confident in my knowledge of the Bible, of philosophy and in my experience as a debater, I accepted an invitation to discuss matters. I raised many objections, but, to my great surprise, I received calm, precise and well-documented answers. . . . I perceived, to my shame, that I actually knew little or

nothing about the Holy Scriptures. . . . I also knew very well that Christendom had borrowed much from Greek philosophy." This sincere Catholic accepted a home Bible study and ended up by quitting the Catholic Church and resigning from his position as philosophy teacher in a Catholic school. He accepted a menial job, and he and his wife became baptized Witnesses at the Divine Sovereignty district assembly held in 1975. He concludes his report by saying: "Today, my mind is no longer polluted by Babylonian mysteries and philosophical gobbledegook. My wife and I are really happy, and we appreciate Jehovah's blessings."

Jehovah's Witnesses in France rejoice at having been able to help so many honest Catholics to discover the wonderful truths outlined in the Bible.

BIBLE KNOWLEDGE IMPROVES FAMILY LIFE AND HELPS DELINQUENTS

Combating Bible illiteracy brings many rewards. Not only does Bible knowledge give people a wonderful hope for the future, but it also brings immediate benefits in terms of practical living.

For instance, in a mountainous region of eastern France there was a couple with five children: three sons and two daughters. The husband often came home drunk, and the three sons wore long hair and eccentric dress, took girls out at night and would come home in the wee hours of the morning. One day, the eldest son subscribed for the *Awake!* magazine offered to him by a Witness at work. He became interested in the Bible, and soon he and his two brothers were studying the Scriptures with the help of a Witness. Within three months they had completed the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* and went on to study deeper Bible truths.

As the study progressed, their hair got shorter, their clothes became more pleasing and their conduct improved. Noticing

this, the father, the mother and the two daughters joined in the study. The marked improvement in their family life so impressed another family of seven that these too began studying the Bible. The youngest son of the first family succeeded in arousing the interest of one of his school-teachers, who also consented to study the Bible. Thus, within a year, fifteen persons dedicated their lives to Jehovah God and were baptized. Several of the sons and daughters of these two families are now full-time proclaimers of the Good News.

Or take the case of that professional poker player living in a town at the foot of the Pyrenees, who for ten years spent his nights playing cards in cafés, driving his wife and three daughters to despair. Nothing had been able to deliver him from this vice until he agreed to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. Bible

knowledge not only freed him from his life of idleness, but also brought back happiness to his family, who discovered the truthfulness of Paul's statement that "godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come."—1 Tim. 4:8.

Do not these true-life examples prove what a powerful force for good the Bible can be in people's lives, and why the fight against Bible illiteracy is so important?

On April 14, 1976, 123,696 persons were present in the Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's Witnesses throughout France to celebrate the Memorial of Christ's death. This shows that thousands of people are interested in the hope given by God's Word, and doubtless many more thousands are yet to be found and taught. Jehovah's Witnesses will therefore continue to do their utmost to combat Bible illiteracy in France.

What Did The Wise Man Mean?

Possessions Without Enjoyment

In his survey of human affairs, wise King Solomon did not overlook the circumstances that often make it impossible for people to enjoy what they have.

Regarding one situation, he wrote: "There exists a calamity that I have seen under the sun, and it is frequent among mankind: a man to whom the true God gives riches and material possessions and glory and who, for his soul, is in no need of anything that he shows himself longing for, and yet the true God does not enable

him to eat from it, although a mere foreigner may eat it. This is vanity and it is a bad sickness."—Eccl. 6:1, 2.

The Almighty permits any individual to use his God-given abilities to acquire possessions and to gain recognition or glory among his contemporaries. In that sense Solomon could rightly speak of God as 'giving' riches, material possessions and glory to such a man. Sadly, however, though a man may have everything, circumstances may prevent his enjoying those possessions.

He may have tasty food and, yet, because of some stomach or intestinal disorder, be unable to enjoy it. The case of Nebuchadnezzar provides an interesting illustration. He gained the position of world ruler at Babylon. Then, Jehovah God humiliated him on account of his pride, depriving him of his sanity. The delights of the palace, including fine food and excellent wine, no longer had any appeal to Nebuchadnezzar. Imagining himself to be a beast, he left the luxurious palace and subsisted on grass like a bull. While Nebuchadnezzar was missing out on the pleasures of palace life, 'mere foreigners' benefited from his riches. Truly what befell Nebuchadnezzar was a severe malady, "a bad sickness," for seven years.—Dan. 4: 28-37.

Next, Solomon pointed out that long life and a large family in themselves are not enough for a satisfied, contented life. He continues: "If a man should become a father a hundred times, and he should live many years, so that numerous the days of his years should become, yet his own soul is not satisfied with good things and even the grave has not become his [perhaps meaning that he longs for the grave, as did Job in his affliction (Job 3:11-22)], I must say that one prematurely born is better off than he is. For in vain has this [prematurely born] one come and in darkness he goes away, and with darkness his own name will be covered. Even the sun itself he has not seen, neither known. This one has rest rather than the former one. Even supposing that he has lived a thousand years twice over and yet he has not seen what is good, is it not to just one place that everyone is going?"—Eccl. 6:3-6.

Really, without one's being able to get any enjoyment from life, of what value are even a long life and many children? Whether rich or poor, young or old, at death all go to but one place—gravedom.

For the man who gets no real joy in living, a long life just means more problems and troubles over a longer period than for one who dies young. The one prematurely born, a stillborn baby, is better off in the sense of never having to endure all the hardships of an empty, frustrated life.

Solomon writes further: "All the hard work of mankind is for their mouth, but even their own soul does not get filled. For what advantage does the wise have over the stupid one? What does the afflicted one have in knowing how to walk in front of the living ones? Better is the seeing by the eyes than the walking about of the soul. This too is vanity and a striving after the wind."—Eccl. 6:7-9.

People work hard to get what they need to keep themselves alive; they work "for their mouth." Yet this seldom satisfies their many desires, their soulful longings. The wise but discontented man may try to suppress troublesome desires, whereas the fool gives in to them, exercising no restraint. This was apparently the basis for Solomon's questions: "For what advantage does the wise have over the stupid one? What does the afflicted one have in knowing how to walk in front of the living ones?" In the sense that both the wise and the stupid one have nagging desires, the wise person has no advantage. Similarly, the afflicted one may know how to conceal his disturbing desires before others, but this still does not remove them. Unfulfilled, they continue to trouble him. He, too, is no better off than the fool. So the truly wise course is for a person to be content, enjoying what he has, what he can see with his eyes, instead of longingly looking at something else, letting soulful desire deprive him of peace.

Another factor that can interfere with contentment is a failure to recognize that many things simply cannot be changed. Solomon stated: "Whatever has come to

be, its name has already been pronounced, and it has become known what man is; and he is not able to plead his cause with one that is more powerful than he is." (Eccl. 6:10) A man may attain riches and position. But he remains nothing more than the first man was pronounced to be, earthling man, '*a-dham*', a Hebrew designation drawn from a root meaning "red" or "ruddy." Yes, he continues to be an earthling, a mortal. So he cannot make any bargain to keep himself alive indefinitely. The psalmist expressed this thought as follows: "Not one of them can by any means redeem even a brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; (and the redemption price of their soul is so precious that it has ceased to time indefinite) that he should still live forever and not see the pit."—Ps. 49:7-9.

At best, in this system of things, life is very uncertain. Time and circumstance befall all, adding to the uncertainty. For this reason, Solomon raised these questions: "Because there exist many things that are causing much vanity, what advantage does a man have? For who is there knowing what good a man has in life for the number of the days of his vain life, when he spends them like a

shadow? For who can tell man what will happen after him under the sun?"—Eccl. 6:11, 12.

A MAGAZINE reporter in Korea met one of Jehovah's Witnesses who told him of the paradise hope, and of people not getting sick or dying. He thought, "This man does not appear to be abnormal, but how can intelligent people believe such things?" He determined to write a magazine article to expose the way simple people are taken by religion. To this end, he started to attend meetings and to study with the Witnesses. He also looked into how the Witnesses practiced their beliefs and was amazed to learn that they really did! He quickly appreciated that they were zealous in living their faith and in showing love to one another. Now he began to study in earnest. He finished

his study in the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* in twenty-three days. Then he wrote his last magazine article. It was about the Creator, Jehovah, and his wonderful purpose for mankind. Within one month he had stopped smoking and also resigned from the magazine staff. From the second month he began to proclaim God's kingdom from door to door with the Witnesses, and from the third month he was devoting a hundred and more hours a month to this. Very soon he was baptized, and he continues to devote his full time to God's service, conducting ten home Bible studies of his own with interested people. He himself now rejoices in having a living faith.

In view of the fact that death ends all of a person's striving and struggling, what real advantage is there in what material possessions or prominence a man may acquire? Who really can say just which worldly goal—riches, prominence, power—is worth striving for? How often people think that something is desirable and, then, after obtaining it, are disappointed, perhaps even bitter. The fact that life is so brief, 'passing like a shadow,' only adds to the aggravation. There is no way to regain time and redirect one's efforts toward another goal. Furthermore, because there is no way of determining what will happen after a person's death, pursuing materialistic goals in behalf of children and grandchildren, to the exclusion of spiritual things, does not lead to real satisfaction either.

How forcefully the wise man's words illustrate the need for being content, getting wholesome enjoyment out of life! Rather than letting materialistic desires build up, the truly wise person concentrates on maintaining a good relationship with God.

Appreciating Those Who Practice Their Faith

'A DOOR *Leading to Activity*

"A large door that leads to activity has been opened."—1 Cor. 16:9.

OVER nineteen hundred years ago a new era dawned. It opened up marvelous opportunities that to this day have not been closed. The Most High God, by means of his firstborn Son, extended to people of all tribes, nations and races the privilege of serving him with never-ending life in view.—Acts 14:15; 17:30; Titus 3:4, 5; 1 John 5:13.

² For centuries before the time of Jesus' coming to the earth Jehovah God dealt exclusively with the Israelites, or Jews. They alone "were entrusted with the sacred pronouncements of God." (Rom. 3:2) Only natural Israelites or Gentiles associating with them in worship could gain an understanding of Jehovah's revealed purpose. That is why Jesus could say to a Samaritan woman: "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know." (John 4:22) The Samaritans accepted the Pentateuch, or five books of Moses, but rejected the rest of the inspired Hebrew Scriptures. Hence, their knowledge of the true God Jehovah was defec-

1. According to Acts 14:15; 17:30; Titus 3:4, 5 and 1 John 5:13, what did Jehovah God do in the first century C.E., and what privilege did this open up to individuals?

2. (a) With whom had Jehovah God dealt exclusively for centuries before our Common Era? (b) Why did only the Jews know the One whom they were worshiping?

'OPENS'

tive. They did not know him to the extent that he had revealed himself. However, Jews who accepted all the Hebrew Scriptures as inspired of God and who endeavored to worship according to the way outlined in those Scriptures certainly knew the One whom they were venerating. They worshiped according to the divinely designated arrangement centered at the temple in Jerusalem.—Deut. 12:5, 6; 1 Ki. 14:21.

³ However, in speaking to the Samaritan woman, Jesus indicated that a change was at hand. He said: "The hour is coming when neither in this mountain [Gerizim, regarded as sacred by the Samaritans] nor in Jerusalem will you people worship the Father." (John 4:21) Foregleams regarding such a change had already been provided in the Hebrew Scriptures. Jehovah God, by means of his prophet Jeremiah, had declared that a new covenant would replace the old Law covenant. (Jer. 31:31-34) Through the inspired psalmist David, the Most High had revealed that the high priestly office would be bestowed upon one not of the line of

3. (a) To what change in worship did Jesus Christ point when speaking to a Samaritan woman? (b) What evidence is there in the Hebrew Scriptures that there would, in time, be a change in the arrangement for pure worship?

Aaron. This one would be a king-priest as was Melchizedek of ancient Salem. At Psalm 110:4 we read: "Jehovah has sworn (and he will feel no regret): 'You are a priest to time indefinite according to the manner of Melchizedek!'" This change in the priesthood also called for a different sacrifice. This, too, had been pointed to prophetically. Psalm 40:6 tells us: "Sacrifice and offering you did not delight in; these ears of mine you opened up [“but a body you prepared,” *Septuagint Version*]. Burnt offering and sin offering you did not ask for."

⁴ From the Christian Greek Scriptures we learn that Jesus Christ is the Mediator of the new covenant, that he is the king-priest according to the manner of Melchizedek and that his perfect human body constitutes the divinely acceptable atoning sacrifice. (Heb. 7:15-28; 8:6; 9:15; 10:1-10) Accordingly, acceptance of Jesus Christ as the sole means to approach the Father became essential for all desiring to worship in the right manner. The Son of God said: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6) Along with this change in worship came the grand opportunity for individuals to become part of the new nation of spiritual Israel, with "citizenship" in the kingdom of the heavens.—Phil. 3:20.

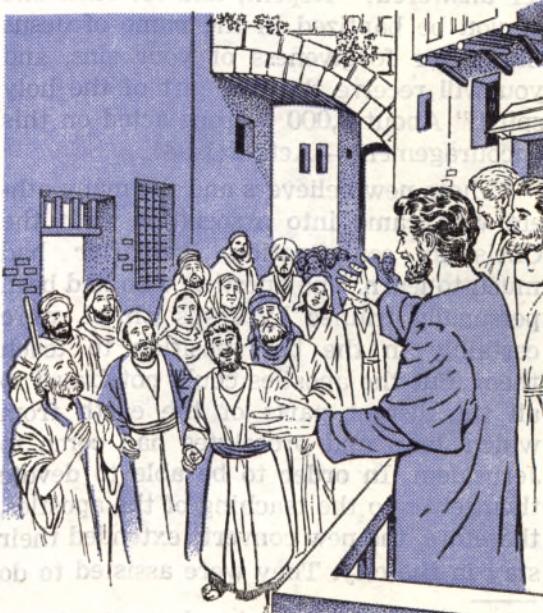
⁵ But how would people learn about this? The answer is found in the commission that Jesus Christ gave his disciples after his resurrection from the dead: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." (Matt. 28:19, 20) Yes, there was a work to be done in proclaiming and teaching God's truth to others. During the three and a

half years that Jesus Christ taught publicly, the apostles and other disciples had been trained to do that important work. On account of this vital activity, other opportunities opened up to those who were able and willing to make themselves available for service.

THE CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION BEGINS FUNCTIONING

⁶ Came the day of Pentecost of the year 33 C.E. That date marks the start of the Christian congregation. Unmistakable evidence was then provided that the congregation God was now using consisted of his Son's disciples. On that day, the Most High, through the Lord Jesus Christ, poured out the holy spirit on about 120 disciples assembled in an upper room of a house at Jerusalem. This outpouring of the spirit was preceded by "a noise just like that of a rushing stiff breeze." That

⁶. When did the Christian congregation have its start, and how did Jehovah show that he was no longer using the Jewish congregation?



Peter explains the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy to assembled Jews and proselytes

4. Why can acceptable worship be rendered only through Jesus Christ?

5. What did Jesus' disciples have to do in order that others might learn about the way to worship God acceptably? (Rom. 10:10-15)

noise attracted the attention of many Jews and proselytes, causing them to assemble in the vicinity of the house where the disciples were located. These disciples, empowered by the holy spirit, began speaking in foreign languages "about the magnificent things of God." The Jews and the proselytes who had come to Jerusalem from distant places were simply amazed to hear their native tongues being spoken by Galileans.—Acts 2:1-12.

⁷ The apostle Peter then explained to the assembled throng that God's spirit had been poured out in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy. Continuing, he showed that Jesus, whom they had impaled, had been resurrected from the dead and that he was indeed the Christ, King David's Lord, seated at the right hand of God. What was the response to Peter's words? The account tells us: "When they heard this they were stabbed to the heart, and they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles: 'Men, brothers, what shall we do?'" Peter answered: "Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the free gift of the holy spirit." About 3,000 persons acted on this encouragement.—Acts 2:14-41.

⁸ These new believers and the many others who came into association with the Christian congregation thereafter had much to learn. The apostles, who had been personally trained by Jesus Christ, were certainly in the best position to teach them. But the apostles could not travel to all the distant parts of the earth from which Jews and proselytes had come to Jerusalem. In order to be able to devote themselves to the teaching of the apostles, therefore, the new converts extended their stay in the city. They were assisted to do

7. How could Jews and proselytes become members of the Christian congregation?

8. What arrangements were made to enable those who had come to Jerusalem from distant places to remain so as to benefit from the teaching of the apostles?

so when many of their fellow believers voluntarily sold their possessions and turned over the funds to the apostles for distribution to needy ones.—Acts 2:44, 45; 4:34, 35.

⁹ The growth of the Jerusalem congregation opened up opportunities for others besides the apostles to serve in caring for the needs of all. Very early in the history of the congregation we read of young men who evidently rendered manual services for the apostles. They may have been regularly on hand for running necessary errands. (Acts 5:6, 9, 10) What fine training for the future these young men were receiving by being in close association with the apostles! In time, the relief work became just too much for the apostles to supervise. When a problem arose in connection with the distributing of food to needy widows, the apostles realized that it would be inappropriate to slight their teaching responsibilities to look after this less important matter. Hence, they invited the brothers in the congregation to select from among themselves seven qualified men to handle the daily distribution of food. After having prayed, the apostles appointed these men by the laying on of hands. All seven were men of outstanding spiritual qualifications, "full of spirit and wisdom." (Acts 6:1-6) Also, as the congregation grew, the apostles must have appointed capable men "full of spirit and wisdom" to serve along with them as elders in caring for the spiritual needs of the disciples.

CONTACT MAINTAINED WITH NEW CONGREGATIONS

¹⁰ Soon after the establishment of the congregation at Jerusalem a great persecution arose against it, forcing most of

9. As the Jerusalem congregation grew in size, what appointments were made, and why?

10. (a) What effect did a severe outbreak of persecution against the Jerusalem congregation have on the spread of the "good news"? (b) How did the body of elders a Jerusalem maintain contact with other congregations

the disciples to leave the city. Those who were scattered seized the opportunity to spread the "good news." As a result, congregations sprang up in such cities as Samaria and Antioch. (Acts 8:1, 4-8; 11: 19-21) When news about these congregations and their needs reached Jerusalem, arrangements were made, doubtless by the body of elders there, to provide spiritual help. The apostles Peter and John were sent to the city of Samaria and, as they returned to Jerusalem, made it a point to declare the "good news" in many Samaritan villages. (Acts 8:14-17, 25) We also read of Peter's later visiting congregations at Lydda and Joppa. (Acts 9:32-43) It was from Joppa that Peter, at the direction of God's spirit, went to Caesarea, there to open up for the first time to uncircumcised Gentiles—Cornelius, his household and intimate friends—the opportunity to become disciples of Jesus Christ.—Acts 10:23-48.

¹¹ The Jerusalem congregation sent the disciple Barnabas to Antioch, where he did much to encourage his fellow believers. (Acts 11:22-24) Since he needed help in advancing true worship in that city, Barnabas took the initiative to search for Paul in Tarsus and to invite him to share in the work at Antioch. This was probably some twelve years after Paul, a former persecutor of Christ's followers, had become a believer. Together, Paul and Barnabas spent a year with the Antioch congregation. (Acts 11:25, 26) During this time prophets from Jerusalem would visit the Antioch congregation. (Acts 11:27) One of these prophets, Agabus, foretold a great famine. This prompted the Antioch congregation to organize relief measures for the brothers in Judea and then to send Paul and Barnabas with their contribution to Jerusalem. (Acts 11:28-30) Accompanied by John Mark, the cousin of

Barnabas, the two men returned to Antioch.—Acts 12:25.

¹² Thereafter the holy spirit directed that Paul and Barnabas be set aside for special work. (Acts 13:1, 2) In harmony with the spirit's guidance, Paul and Barnabas traveled through Cyprus and parts of Asia Minor, preaching the "good news" and establishing new congregations. On revisiting these congregations they appointed elders to care for the spiritual needs of the disciples. (Acts 14:21-23) Returning to Antioch, they gathered the congregation together and related the many things that God had done by means of them and that he had opened to the nations the door to faith.'—Acts 14:27.

¹³ Then a problem arose. Certain brothers from Judea came to Antioch, insisting that non-Jews who embraced Christianity had to be circumcised and charged to obey the law of Moses. Otherwise they could not gain salvation. (Acts 15:1) Where could this matter be settled? The most logical place would be Jerusalem, as that was the congregation with which the apostles were associated. Moreover, it was from there that the work of preaching and making disciples had spread out to all the many places where congregations were then located. Hence, the elders of the Jerusalem congregation occupied the position of a central body to which other elders could direct inquiries. So we find that Paul and Barnabas were sent to the "apostles and older men in Jerusalem regarding [the circumcision] dispute."—Acts 15:2.

¹⁴ The central body of elders, including the apostles, thoroughly discussed the mat-

12. (a) Why did Paul and Barnabas leave Antioch to open up new territories? (b) How did the new congregations that they established come to have bodies of elders? (c) How did the Antioch congregation learn about the activity of Paul and Barnabas?

13. (a) Why did a problem arise in the Antioch congregation respecting Gentile believers? (b) Why was it logical for the matter to be decided at Jerusalem?

14. (a) How did the central body of elders at Jerusalem go about resolving the circumcision issue? (Acts 15:6-21) (b) How were other congregations informed regarding the decision that was reached? (Acts 15:22-29)

1. Why did Barnabas go to Antioch, and how did he get help for building up the congregation there?

ter. Testimony was presented showing that God himself had accepted the non-Jews in their uncircumcised state, pouring out his spirit upon them. It thus became clear that the bringing of the Gentiles into association with the Christian congregation fulfilled Hebrew Scripture prophecy. A decision was reached and written up in letter form. (Acts 15:6-21) This letter stated:

"The apostles and the older men, brothers, to those brothers in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia who are from the nations: Greetings! Since we have heard that some from among us have caused you trouble with speeches, trying to subvert your souls, although we did not give them any instructions, we have come to a unanimous accord and have favored choosing men to send to you together with our loved ones, Barnabas and Paul, men that have delivered up their souls for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are therefore dispatching Judas and Silas, that they also may report the same things by word. For the holy spirit and we

ourselves have favored adding no further burden to you, except these necessary things, to keep abstaining from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication. If you carefully keep yourselves from these things, you will prosper. Good health to you!"—Acts 15:23-29.

¹⁵ Through such letters from the central body of elders at Jerusalem and the visits of various faithful brothers, the congregations were built up and strengthened to continue declaring the "good news" and helping fellow believers to remain firm in the faith. (Acts 15:30-32; 16:4, 5) Additionally, inspired letters from Paul, Peter, James, Jude and John did much to fortify the disciples spiritually.

¹⁶ Truly, the beginning of the Christian era opened up grand opportunities for service. All disciples, both men and women, had the privilege of proclaiming the "good news," and of encouraging fellow believers and helping them in time of difficulty or in spiritual ways. Evangelizers were needed to get the "good news" declared in new territories. There was also a need for capable brothers who could spend time in visiting and working with congregations for a period of time to strengthen them and to share in making appointments of elders and congregational servants. Since a heavy load of responsibility fell on these traveling brothers, they were helped by young men who could run errands for them and in other ways render personal services. What about today? Are opportunities of this kind still open?



When Gentiles were taken into the Christian congregation, the central body of elders gave directions to maintain unity

15. How did the decisions of the central body of elders at Jerusalem and the visits of faithful brothers help the congregations?

16. (a) What opportunities for service did the Christian era open up for all disciples, both men and women? (Matt. 28:19, 20; Gal. 2:9 6:10; 1 Tim. 5:10; Titus 2:3-5) (b) What other opportunities for service opened up to capable men who made themselves available?

THE command of Jesus Christ for his followers to preach and to make disciples is still vitally urgent. This is clear from his assurance: "Look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things." (Matt. 28:20) Hence, many grand opportunities for service are still to be enjoyed today as "this good news of the kingdom" continues to be preached vigorously from door to door. (Matt. 24:14) Also, due to the growth of the congregation of Jehovah's Christian witnesses world wide, there is a great need for capable and willing workers to build up fellow believers and to render other vital services for the advancement of spiritual interests. Additionally, people everywhere need to hear the "good news" so that they can take a stand for it or against it before the execution of God's righteous judgment upon the present ungodly world.

To accomplish all that is necessary in an orderly way, obviously there must be some centralized, coordinated direction. (1 Cor. 14:33) In the first century C.E., the head of the congregation, Jesus Christ, provided this through the apostles and other elders of the Jerusalem congregation. Also, Paul, who had been directly chosen by the Lord Jesus Christ as an apostle to the nations, did much to build up the congregations spiritually. The manner in which Paul and his associates fulfilled their commission from Jesus to teach and make disciples was acknowl-

"I have set before you an opened door, which no one can shut."

—Rev. 3:8.

Can You Enter

THE OPEN DOOR?

edged as fully acceptable by the body of elders at Jerusalem.—Gal. 2:1-9.

What about today? Very early in the modern history of Jehovah's Witnesses members of the oldest congregation came to be associated with their publishing agency, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. Today, living at "Bethel," the hive of activity centered at the headquarters of the Watch Tower Society in Brooklyn, New York, there are over 250 persons who have energetically pursued spiritual interests for more than ten years. Many have done so far longer. They have spent a lifetime in faithful service to Jehovah God as devoted disciples of his Son. During this time they have gained a wealth of experience in Christian living and in helping fellow believers with their problems. They have also deepened their understanding of God's Word. Among these are those dedicated men who constitute the governing body for the worldwide congregation of

1. Why are grand opportunities for service still available in the Christian congregation?

2. (a) Why is centralized, coordinated direction needed in the Christian congregation? (b) Through whom did the head of the congregation provide this direction in the first century C.E.?

3, 4. (a) Why are men associated with the publishing agency of Jehovah's Witnesses rightly providing centralized, coordinated help for fellow believers world wide? (b) What is a prime responsibility of elders, and how has this been discharged by the governing body at Brooklyn Bethel?

Jehovah's Witnesses. While there are many capable, experienced brothers elsewhere, at no one location on earth are so many elders available for immediate consultation. At Brooklyn Bethel, therefore, can be found an excellent representation of Christian knowledge and experience that have been gained up to this time by the worldwide congregation of God's people. Much the same can be said regarding the smaller Bethel families associated with the branch offices of the Watch Tower Society in other parts of the earth.

⁴ Understandably, when elders in other congregations are faced with perplexing problems, they write to the Society or its branches for Scriptural assistance. At times Biblical answers provided would be of great benefit to all the congregations throughout the earth. When that is the case, as in the first century C.E., written material is prepared. Furthermore, since one of the prime responsibilities of elders is to teach, the central body of elders, through its committees, supervises the preparation and publication of information designed to provide spiritual instruction for persons both inside and outside the Christian congregation world wide.

⁵ Manifestly a sizable staff is needed at Brooklyn to care for all the vital work of providing help and direction in furthering spiritual interests throughout the earth, including relief measures whenever necessary. While some are directly involved in preparing Biblical information or in directing what needs to be done for the association of brothers, all the others render important services that make it possible for this material to reach the ends of the earth. Many of those serving at Bethel, therefore, occupy a position comparable to that of Timothy, Mark and others who acted as attendants for elders in the first-century congregation. Without them, the

5. What vital work is accomplished at Bethel, and why is every individual working there needed?

governing body would find it very difficult to care for the spiritual interests of the congregations world wide.

BETHEL SERVICE

⁶ Since much of the work done at Bethel* requires physical strength and stamina, especially young men are needed. If you are a young man, have you ever given thought to making yourself available for hard manual labor in behalf of your spiritual brothers, as well as for those who might become such? Of course, it is not just a matter of being able and willing to serve. Spiritual qualifications are also involved. In the case of Timothy, for example, we read: "He was well reported on by the brothers in Lystra and Iconium." (Acts 16:2) Yes, Timothy had proved himself to be a young man of fine reputation both in his home congregation, evidently in Lystra, and in the neighboring congregation in Iconium. By his words and actions he must have gained the respect and confidence of fellow believers. Though young, he was well grounded in the Scriptures, having been taught these from infancy by his mother and grandmother.—2 Tim. 3:14, 15.

⁷ Young men with Timothy's qualifications are certainly an asset to any congregation. Doubtless the brothers in Lystra very much appreciated what Timothy was able to do in their behalf. He must also have been a real source of encouragement to his mother Eunice, especially since his father was an unbeliever. Yet, when the apostle Paul expressed the desire that Timothy accompany him in his travels

* This applies not only to Brooklyn Bethel but also to other large printing branches of the Watch Tower Society.

6. (a) Why are especially young men needed at Bethel? (b) As illustrated in the case of Timothy, what should be expected of one who makes himself available for Bethel service?

7. (a) What evidently was the commendable attitude of the elders in Lystra and of Eunice respecting Timothy's serving with Paul? (b) In connection with Bethel service, who today could benefit from this example and why?

the body of elders did not selfishly try to keep the young man in their congregation. No, these elders evidently joined the apostle in laying their hands upon Timothy, thereby setting him apart for special service. (Acts 16:3; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6) So when qualified young men today desire to make themselves available for service at Bethel, it is indeed commendable when elders and believing family members encourage them and give them wholehearted support.

⁸ Though service at Bethel brings rich spiritual rewards, it is not easy. But neither was Timothy's assignment an easy one. Besides working under the apostle Paul's direction in advancing spiritual interests, Timothy apparently also labored with his hands to provide for his personal needs. (Compare 2 Corinthians 12:14-18; 1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:7, 8.) He shared the dangers and problems that the apostle described in his second letter to the Corinthians: "In journeys often, in dangers from rivers, in dangers from highwaymen, in dangers from my own race, in dangers from the nations, in dangers in the city, in dangers in the wilderness, in dangers at sea, in dangers among false brothers, in labor and toil, in sleepless nights often, in hunger and thirst, in abstinence from food many times, in cold and nakedness."—2 Cor. 11:26, 27.

⁹ Despite all of this, Timothy continued to labor in cooperation with Paul, not just for a short period, but for some fifteen years, yes, evidently until the apostle's death as a martyr. What made it possible for Timothy to stick to the work rather than to return to his home congregation for a more settled way of life? It was his sincere desire to serve others regardless of the personal cost to himself. The ap-

tle Paul could say respecting Timothy: "I have no one else of a disposition like his who will genuinely care for the things pertaining to you. For all the others are seeking their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. But you know the proof he gave of himself, that like a child with a father he slaved with me in furtherance of the good news." (Phil. 2:20-22) Furthermore, Timothy was humble, recognizing his own limitations. He did not capitalize on his association with Paul and proudly assert his authority. (Compare 1 Timothy 4:11-14; 2 Timothy 1:6, 7; 2:1.) Of course, through his laboring with the apostle, Timothy learned much and was eventually qualified to shoulder the responsibilities of an elder in the Christian congregation.

¹⁰ As in the case of Timothy, humility, a spirit of self-sacrifice and an intense interest in the welfare of others are essential for happy service at Bethel or anywhere else in Jehovah's organization. Wherever one may serve, pride, desire for prominence and selfishness not only diminish personal happiness but also make life unpleasant for others. Being imperfect, God's servants have to continue to fight against these undesirable traits and they should not allow themselves to become overly disturbed by the noticeable failings of others in this respect. One's cultivating the right spirit is always worth the effort, for the real reward will come, not from men, but from Jehovah God. Furthermore, one's setting a good example can have a wholesome, upbuilding effect on others.

SERVING AS A PIONEER OR HELPING OUT IN ANOTHER LOCATION

¹¹ Bethel service, of course, is a door of opportunity that does not open to all those

10. (a) As is evident from Timothy's example, what qualities are essential for being happy in one's serving in behalf of others? (b) What are the bad effects of pride, desire for prominence and selfishness, and what should one do when noticing a measure of these undesirable traits in some fellow believers?

11. What opportunities are open in connection with preaching and disciple-making, and what should motivate one's seizing them? (Matt. 22:37-39)

. Why was Timothy's special service with the apostle Paul demanding?

. What enabled Timothy to persevere in his special service instead of returning home to enjoy a more settled way of life?

associated with congregations of God's people world wide. But there are other fine opportunities that are open in connection with the work that must be done. For example, servants of God are privileged to devote all the time that they can make available to the important work of preaching and making disciples. There is no limit to the time that they may spend in this service. All of us surely want to be whole-souled in it. For many, this may mean being able to devote some sixty hours monthly to this work as an "auxiliary pioneer" or some ninety hours or more monthly as a "regular pioneer." Have you entered the open door of pioneer activity or are you planning to do so? As you pioneer let your motive for sharing in this service continue to be love for Jehovah God and your fellow humans.

¹² Just as Paul and Barnabas began serving with the Antioch congregation because of the great need there, you may be in a position to move to another location to advance spiritual interests. Again, humility, self-sacrifice and a keen interest in the welfare of others can be a big help in making needed adjustments to a new environment. This was true of the apostle Paul, who could say of himself: "Though I am free from all persons, I have made myself the slave to all, that I may gain the most persons. . . . I have become all things to people of all sorts." (1 Cor. 9:19-22) "I have learned, in whatever circumstances I am, to be self-sufficient. I know indeed how to be low on provisions, I know indeed how to have an abundance." (Phil. 4:11, 12) With full trust in Jehovah, Paul was able to bear up under very trying circumstances.

¹³ Today serving in another area, or per-

12. How does the apostle Paul's example illustrate what is required of those who would be successful in taking up sacred service in another location?

13. Why should a person contemplating missionary service count the cost, and what are some things that he might consider prayerfully about his being able to share in this service?

haps as a missionary in another part of the world, requires making sacrifices and being willing to slave in behalf of others. These things need to be given prayerful thought beforehand. (Compare Luke 14: 28-32.) For example, a person who has always had an automobile available for his service should consider whether he would be willing to walk for miles over rough terrain or with the hot sun beating down upon him, or whether he would be willing to put up with crowded or sporadic public transportation facilities. If he balks at such things now, then he may have great difficulty in adjusting to a totally new and strange environment. Likewise, persons who have a hard time in adapting to different circumstances and surroundings and to people with varying backgrounds, customs, living standards and habits, should recognize that they must 'work at it' in order to qualify for evangelizing work in a foreign field.

OPPORTUNITIES IN SLAVING AS SERVANTS AND ELDERS

¹⁴ Ministering to fellow believers in the capacity of servants or elders is a door of opportunity that is open to men in the Christian congregation. The qualifications set forth in the Scriptures make it clear that those thus serving must be spiritual persons, fine examples in Christian living; yes, men who have the respect and confidence of the congregation as a whole (1 Tim. 3:1-10, 12, 13; Titus 1:5-9) Because elders have teaching responsibilities, they should also be men who are careful students of God's Word. A man who rarely reads the Bible and has perhaps never read it in its entirety could hardly be considered qualified to teach it to fellow believers.—Compare 1 Timothy 1:6-7; James 3:1.

14. What is required of those who are appointed as servants or as elders in the congregation?

¹⁵ According to the Scriptures, congregational servants and elders are not a titled class but are the slaves of their brothers. Jesus Christ told the apostles: "You know that the rulers of the nations lord it over them and the great men wield authority over them. This is not the way among you; but whoever wants to become great among you must be your minister, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave." (Matt. 20:25-27) Hence, basic to a man's qualifying as a servant in the congregation or as an elder is his desire to slave for his brothers, sacrificing of his time and energies in their behalf.

¹⁶ Those who are servants and elders in the true sense of the word are thought of by their brothers as humble slaves who are willing and eager to give of themselves wholeheartedly in helping them. (Acts 20:25-35; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3) It is because they are working hard in the advancement of spiritual interests that the congregation has high regard, appreciation and love for such servants and elders. (1 Thess. 5:12, 13; Heb. 13:17) They are men who are living up to the trust conferred upon them by reason of their appointment. Especially should this be true of traveling elders. The congregations rightly expect them to be spiritual men of outstanding humility.

—Compare Luke 12:48.

¹⁷ Obviously men who want prominence and position, rather than to do the work of a slave, are not qualified to be servants or elders. They have not begun to 'reach out for an office of overseer.' Why not? Because they are not really seeking the fine work" that is associated therewith.

—1 Tim. 3:1.

5. As is evident from Jesus' words at Matthew 20:25-27, what is basic to a man's qualifying to be a servant or an elder in the congregation?

6. Just what makes a man a servant or an elder in the illest sense?

7. Why can it be said that ambitious, position-conscious men have not begun to reach out for an office of overseer?

¹⁸ The opportunities that are open to disciples of Jesus Christ are not positions of prestige and esteem in the eyes of men. All are opportunities that call for the unselfish, wholehearted exertion of effort, demanding work. This is only reasonable, for Jehovah God and his Son have set the perfect example as workers that we are called upon to imitate. Jesus Christ said: "My Father has kept working until now, and I keep working." (John 5:17) May this also be true of all of us, as we make ourselves available to be used to the greatest extent of our God-given abilities. If we do, our life will be filled with joy and satisfaction as we confidently look forward to receiving Jehovah's blessing. The apostle Paul's words to the Hebrews are most encouraging: "God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name, in that you have ministered to the holy ones and continue ministering. But we desire each one of you to show the same industriousness so as to have the full assurance of the hope down to the end, in order that you may not become sluggish, but be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."—Heb. 6:10-12.

18. (a) What do all opportunities associated with sacred service call for, and why? (b) What can we expect if we make ourselves available to be used to the greatest extent of our God-given abilities?

IN COMING ISSUES

■ Your Future—Can It Be Predicted?

■ "Keeping a Tight Grip on the Word of Life."

■ Are You Walking as in God's Presence?

Insight on the News

- Canadian researchers at the Bureau of Microbial Hazards report that wine may be able to kill viruses as well as bacteria. Though the bactericidal properties of wine have been known for years,

Wine Versus Viruses

"Science News" says that this is believed to be "the first study of the effects of grapes and wine on viruses affecting humans." The microbiologists noted that, in their test tubes, especially red wines were somewhat "effective against herpes simplex virus, poliovirus and reovirus (an apparent cause of meningitis, mild fever and diarrhea)."

These findings lend further backing to the Biblical indications of wine's value medicinally and as a mild disinfectant. The apostle Paul recommended to Timothy: "Use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent cases of sickness." And the Samaritan of Jesus' parable bound up the wounds of the ancient "mugging" victim, "pouring oil and wine upon them."—1 Tim. 5:23; Luke 10:34.

Of course, Paul suggested "a LITTLE wine" to Timothy and also stated that responsible servants of God should not be given "to a LOT of wine." But, in moderation, it can make "the heart of mortal man rejoice," with God's approval.—1 Tim. 3:8; Ps. 104:15.

- Recent government bans on the sweetener saccharin have aroused intense criticism.

Saccharin and Tobacco

Of course, it is commendable that governments have concern for their citizens' health, whether all agree with specific actions or not. Many have raised questions, though, about how heartfelt this concern is, when the same opposition is not shown toward a substance already proved to be infinitely more deadly than saccharin—tobacco.

Between a half and a third of all cigarette smokers will die prematurely because of their habit, according to a twenty-year study of 34,000 British doctors recently reported in the "British Medical Journal." And "Natural History" magazine notes that "despite the publicity that the cigarette-cancer connection has received, far more deaths arising from cigarette smoking involve coronary heart disease—the leading killer in most developed coun-

tries—than cancer. . . . Moreover, smoking combines with other major risk factors, such as high blood cholesterol and high blood pressure, to multiply manyfold the heart disease risk." Yet, no bans—only easily overlooked warnings on the packs.

Why such delicate treatment for a deadly killer while a comparatively minor offender receives full wrath? "Natural History" spoke of "governmental hypocrisy in the treatment of tobacco" and of governments being "held hostage to the political power of the tobacco and cigarette producers or lured by self-interest [tax revenues]."

How refreshing it will be when God's kingdom, unaffected by such pressures, will rule with only mankind's permanent good at heart!—Isa. 32:1.

- "If I had 10 Catholic Jehovah's Witnesses we could begin to change the world," declared

the Franciscan nun who founded the Our Lady of the Angels Monastery in Birmingham, Alabama. "Mother" Angelica also noted that the kind of evangelism needed "is not going after the one lost sheep or making Catholics out of non-Catholics; it is making Christians out of the 99 who are sitting in the pew."

But if many centuries of religious efforts have not yet 'made Christians out of the 99 in the pew,' then how could ten or even 1,000 Catholics with the zeal of Jehovah's Witnesses do so? Surely something is missing that no amount of zeal can supply.

The Bible identifies what is missing when it tells of people who "have zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; for, ignorant of the justice of God and seeking to establish their own, they have not submitted to the justice of God."—Rom. 10:2, 3, "Catholic Confraternity Version."

On the other hand, the Bible shows that genuine Christians develop through knowledge and use of the Scriptures. "All scripture is inspired by God and can profitably be used," it states, "for guiding people's lives and teaching them to be holy. This is how the man who is dedicated to God becomes fully equipped and ready for any good work."—2 Tim. 3:16, 17, Catholic "Jerusalem Bible."

THE Israelites of ancient times were noted for their fine music. Not only singing but instrumental music played a prominent role in their worship of Jehovah God, particularly on special occasions.

This was the case when King David first tried and later when he succeeded in bringing the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem. There was a tremendous orchestra and chorus at the dedication of Solomon's temple. When King Hezekiah later restored temple worship he saw to it that there was instrumental music as well as vocal music. Both were prominent at the time of the dedication of the walls of Jerusalem in Nehemiah's day. —2 Sam. 6:5; 1 Chron. 15:28; 2 Chron. 5:12-14; Neh. 12:27-31, 38-42.

However, there is a total silence as to instrumental music in Christian worship, except in a figurative sense. (Rev. 14:2) But singing? Yes, for example, at the end of the Lord's Evening Meal and when Paul and Silas were in prison in Philippi. The apostle Paul mentions and encourages the singing of praise to Jehovah. However, because the use of instrumental music by Christians is not mentioned, some sects of Christendom strictly forbid the use of any such music in their church services. (Matt. 26:30; Acts 16:25; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19, 20; Col. 3:16, 17) The mere absence of such mention is, however, not a strong basis for such a position.

Coming now down to our day, what about the use of instrumental music to accompany the singing at larger assemblies? A spirit of a sound mind would dictate that extremes be avoided. Instrumental music *well played* is an encouragement to congregation singing and beautifies the praise rendered to Jehovah. But where *good* musicians are lacking, it would be well to use the recordings provided by the Watchtower Society.

An orchestra is usually taken for

Making Melody to Jehovah with INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

granted at the larger assemblies, to accompany the singing and to furnish a brief program before the various sessions. But as for orchestras and choruses, it seems that a word of caution is advisable. They both involve many persons, and rehearsals take up much time. Also, if the chorus uses microphones when the conventioners are singing, or if the orchestra is too loud, this tends to overshadow the singing by the audience. It would seem best, therefore, to limit the use of an orchestra or a chorus, if used at all, to the larger assemblies.

With music, as with everything else that we do to God's glory, balance is desirable. Instrumental music, aside from accompanying the singing, is really incidental, although it does add to the festiveness of the assembly, even as does a beautifully arranged platform. But often the tendency of those in charge of music is to go to extremes, to go "overboard," as it were. Most fitting, therefore, is the counsel given at Psalm 47:6, 7: "Make melody to God, make melody. Make melody to our King, make melody. For God is King of all the earth; make melody, *acting with discretion.*"

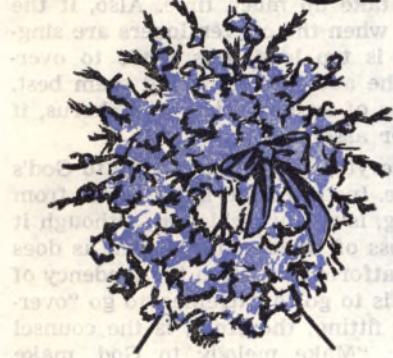
It seems that some could do better in heeding this counsel. At times needless liberties have been taken with the melodic line and with the tempos, thus doing violence to the sentiments expressed by the words. In fact, it is confusing and contrary to the spirit of a Christian assembly to "jazz up" or otherwise take liberties with the simple, expressive melodies that customarily are sung. It would seem that there is ample opportunity for originality and inventiveness and musical inspiration within the limits of the sentiments of the words that are inseparably wedded to the musical themes. Talented arrangers can tend to overarrange, bringing in subtle effects in modulations and dynamics that most likely are lost on all save a few musically knowledgeable listeners who take the time and pains to listen attentively. Also, it might be questioned whether an individual with musical talent might not wisely limit his enthusiasm and pleasure in arranging programs, so as not to let this encroach too much on his per-

sonal study, public witnessing and shepherding privileges.

Of course, music must be taken seriously to make it worth listening to. But if taken too seriously, quite likely there will be some spiritual loss. Instrumental music cannot take the place of personal study or public witnessing, nor should one's enjoyment of a district assembly be

based chiefly on the pleasure of playing in an orchestra. An individual who for many years made arrangements for and conducted the music at large assemblies stated that only afterward did he realize how much his musical activity had cut down on his benefiting spiritually from these assemblies. By keeping balance, such loss can be minimized.

MOURNING and FUNERALS



—For
Whom?

IT HAS been truthfully stated: "No known human group . . . simply throw[s] out its dead without any ritual or ceremony. In stark contrast, no animal practices burial of dead individuals of its own species." "Man is the only living being who has a developed self-awareness and death-awareness."*—See Genesis 23: 3, 4.

Those words of the contemporary Russian-born scientist Theodosius Dobzhansky throw light on why King Solomon counseled some three thousand years earlier: "Better is it to go to the house of mourning than to go to the banquet

house, because that is the end of all mankind; and the one alive should take it to his heart." Yes, because we do have a sense of self-awareness and death-awareness humans usually arrange some kind of service for a deceased friend, fellow believer or relative.—Eccl. 7:2.

Does the fact that Solomon says it is better to go to the house of mourning mean that it is right and proper for Christians to go to any house of mourning and commiserate with the survivors? Is

it proper to mourn the death of every kind

of person? What does the Bible, God's Word, indicate?

The Bible gives us many examples of mourning for dead persons. There was proper mourning on the part of Jacob and Esau when their father Isaac died. Jacob mourned because he thought his favorite son Joseph had been killed by a wild animal. When the patriarch Jacob himself died there was great mourning, not only by his own household, but also by the Egyptians. The Israelites deeply mourned the death of their leader Moses. Though King Josiah was killed in a battle that he unwisely entered, there was great mourn-

* *The Uniqueness of Man*, edited by J. D. Roslansky.

ing on the part of Jeremiah and all Judah over the death of that good ruler. In later periods of time there were mourning and lamentation over the deaths of Lazarus, Jesus Christ, Stephen and others.—Gen. 27:41; 37:34, 35; 50:1-14; Deut. 34:8; 2 Chron. 35:24, 25; Luke 24:15-24; John 11:17-44; Acts 8:2; 9:36-42.

There is one thing to be noted, however, about these particular instances of mourning recorded in the Scriptures. All the mourned ones had been fearers of Jehovah God and were relatives or held in high esteem by their survivors. But there were those whose deaths were not mourned. For example, there is not the slightest hint that Noah and his family mourned the death of the wicked and violent generation that perished in the Deluge. Nor is there any record that Lot mourned the destruction of the grossly wicked people of Sodom and Gomorrah. When Pharaoh and his army were drowned in the Red Sea, Moses and his people, far from mourning, exultingly sang a victory song.—Ex. 15:1-21; see also Jeremiah 22:18, 19.

Why, in all these instances, did God's servants not mourn or were they not to mourn those who had perished? Because they had been executed by Jehovah God. To have mourned over them would have been tantamount to finding fault with the execution of Jehovah's righteous judgments. So Jeremiah was commanded not to mourn over the calamity that was to befall his apostate people Israel. And in the book of Revelation we read that although Babylon the Great was mourned by some of her political and commercial paramours, the hosts of heaven rejoiced at her destruction.—Jer. 15:4-7; Rev. 18:9-20.

Most fittingly, therefore, when King David so greatly mourned the death of his ambitious, perfidious, immoral son Absalom, his general Joab justly reproved David. (2 Sam. 19:1-8) But, on the other

hand, when David mourned over unfaithful King Saul, he was given no reproof. (2 Sam. 1:17-27) Why was this? King Saul was Jehovah's anointed. So David was mourning the individual in loyalty to the anointed office occupied by Saul. (See *The Watchtower*, October 1, 1938, p. 297.) Besides, David did not want to allow for any suspicion that he rejoiced at the death of his enemy.—Prov. 24:17.

All these things were written for our learning, instruction and comfort at this time of the end of the wicked system of things. (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11) In the near future this generation will see the foretold "great tribulation" that will bring an end to this present wicked system. (Matt. 24:21) At that time none of Jehovah's faithful servants, the only ones surviving, will mourn over the destruction of the wicked. To the contrary, they will rejoice, even as Moses and his people rejoiced at the destruction of Pharaoh and his army.

MOURNING IN OUR TIME

But what about the present time? With what attitude do we hear of mishaps, great loss of life because of terrible accidents, earthquakes, hurricanes and tidal waves? Without a doubt our human sympathies go out to the victims and, in particular, to the mourning survivors, even though they may not have been lovers of righteousness. After all, they were not executed by Jehovah God for having been wicked. So also when relatives, acquaintances or business associates die, Christians normally show kindness in expressing sincere condolences to surviving family members.

When a faithful anointed Christian dies, even though we confidently believe he has received his heavenly reward, we mourn him. After all, we shall miss him; but we do not sorrow inconsolably as do those who have no hope. (1 Thess. 4:13-

15) We also mourn the death of those having an earthly hope even though it is reasonable to expect an early resurrection for these. As Jesus made clear, "all those in the memorial tombs" will come forth in a resurrection.—John 5:28, 29; see also Acts 24:15; Revelation 20:13.

WHY A FUNERAL OR MEMORIAL SERVICE?

Some have thought that a funeral is for the purpose of eulogizing the deceased, for the purpose of speaking well of such a one and giving him what is known as a "good death." But is this correct? Remember that Jehovah God permitted the nation of Israel to weep over Nadab and Abihu, the two sons of Aaron who perished because they offered illegitimate fire—although their immediate family was forbidden to mourn them.—Lev. 10:1-7.

Nor can it be said that a funeral service is somewhat like a sacrament that bestows virtue upon the deceased. True, most church members of Christendom would view with horror the prospect of a burial without a church service. Thus the Roman Catholic Church has various kinds of Masses for this very purpose. These may contain blessings for the deceased and are claimed to help a soul in purgatory. However, all such practices have no Scriptural backing, for God's Word makes clear that the dead are unconscious and remain so until the resurrection.—Eccl. 9:5, 10.

Then why should a funeral or memorial service be held for a deceased person? There are a number of good reasons. To begin with, there is the matter of comforting the bereaved. Christians are commanded to comfort all that mourn, including those among themselves who may mourn. (Isa. 61:1, 2; 2 Cor. 1:3-5) As a rule death causes mourning. In particular, it is comforting to hear a discussion on Jehovah's marvelous attributes, especially his great love in providing his Son

as a ransom so that mankind can have the hope of everlasting life. Aside from personal expressions that they may feel impelled to make, those in attendance bring comfort to the bereaved by their very presence.

There is also the matter of giving a witness to Bible truths. Usually a funeral is attended by neighbors, acquaintances, business associates and relatives, who may not be believers. All these stand to benefit from a funeral or memorial service at which a discourse is given presenting the Bible view as to the condition of the dead, why men die and the hope of a resurrection. Because of such fine purposes being served, it seems that a Christian minister could see his way clear to conduct the funeral of a Witness' unbelieving relative—or even of one who, in a condition of extreme despondency or mental derangement, had taken his own life. And fellow Christians could extend comfort to the bereaved Witness by attending.

Another good purpose that a funeral service can fulfill is that called to our attention by Solomon. Remember, he said: "Better is it to go to the house of mourning than to go to the banquet house, because that is the end of all mankind; and the one alive should take it to his heart." (Eccl. 7:2) The fact of death gives us cause for reflection on the transitoriness of life. It should also help us to appreciate what a blessing life is. In death there is no consciousness, no feeling, no communication, no joy, no accomplishment.

Among some ancient peoples a funeral was an exceedingly sad affair, symbolizing defeat. It was therefore held at night. While it is true that Christians do not sorrow as do others who have no hope, nevertheless it would seem that at a funeral or memorial service, or in the presence of the deceased at home or at a funeral parlor, there should not be any hilarity or jocularity, as though one were at

a picnic or a feast. There is a time for every affair, and the time of death is not the time for noisy laughter.—Eccl. 3:1, 4.

97 And further, when a service is held for a deceased faithful servant of Jehovah God, the occasion could well be used to note that one's integrity-keeping course in spite of all manner of obstacles. (2 Sam. 1:26) True, as Mark Anthony said in his famed funeral oration: "I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him." So our purpose is not to eulogize or extol creatures, but to consider their example as one to be imitated. As the apostle Paul put it: "[Do] not become sluggish, but be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."—Heb. 6:12.

FUNERALS OF DISFELLOWSHIPPED PERSONS?

However, suppose the deceased is a disfellowshiped person, someone who has been expelled from the Christian congregation for one reason or another. In "Questions from Readers" (*The Watchtower*, 1961, p. 544) the position was taken that a funeral for a disfellowshiped person was improper. The comment was made: "We never want to give the impression to outsiders that a disfellowshiped person was acceptable in the congregation when in truth and in fact he was not acceptable but had been disfellowshiped from it." Are there no exceptions, in arranging a funeral for a disfellowshiped person?

Before answering that question it would be well briefly to review the matter of disfellowshiping. That it has a Scriptural basis can be seen from First Corinthians chapter 5, in which the apostle Paul commands the disfellowshiping of an immoral man. However, it was not until 1952 that Jehovah's people of modern times acted in the growing urgency along this line. With strong zeal for righteousness and a hatred for what is wicked, they set guidelines for those taking the lead so as to

keep congregations spiritually, doctrinally and morally clean.

Through the years Jehovah's people have come to see the matter of disfellowshiping ever more clearly. Not only were details spelled out, but more and more it was seen that wisdom and love, as well as justice, have come into play. They saw the need of showing mercy to truly repentant erring ones, and of considering extenuating circumstances and any evidence of sincere sorrow. In quite recent years it was also pointed out that there is a difference between the way Christians should conduct themselves toward a notorious sinner or an aggressive apostate and toward one who is viewed as "a man of the nations"—to whom the common courtesy of a greeting may be extended.—Matt. 18:17; 2 John 9, 10.

It would seem that this distinction could even be observed in connection with the funeral of a disfellowshiped person. A Christian congregation would not want its good name besmirched by having it associated with any to whom 2 John 9, 10 applied, even in their death. But suppose a disfellowshiped person had been giving some evidence of genuine repentance and had been coming to the meetings and manifesting a desire to be reinstated in the congregation. Then, if the elders felt that it would not disturb the peace and harmony of the congregation nor bring reproach upon God's people, there would be no objection to an elder's giving a talk. How are they to know whether Jehovah has already forgiven him or not, since there is some evidence of repentance? Properly, the elders may have been waiting, wanting to make sure that his seeming repentance was sincere. Obviously, each case being different, it would need to be judged on its own merits. Of course, if a funeral talk is given, care would need to be taken not to dwell on personal matters nor to make any positive statements

about whether he will be resurrected. But a fine Scriptural presentation and witness could certainly be given.

Moreover, we should not overlook two of the cardinal reasons for disfellowshipping a wrongdoer. One is to jolt him to his senses if possible. The other is to protect the congregation from his bad influence. Neither of these would apply now, since the disfellowshiped person is deceased. Even where a disfellowshiped person has continued as a mere "man of the nations," so to speak, a Scriptural funeral talk can serve more than one good purpose, even as previously noted: It can provide comfort for the bereaved and a witness to outsiders. The very fact that a fine wit-

ness is given can be a comfort and consolation to the bereaved ones regardless of the circumstances.

We alone of all earth's creatures were made in God's image. Because of this we have the capacity to appreciate what death is all about. That is why we also have the capacity to mourn another's loss of life and the desire to comfort bereaved ones. Is not our heavenly Father truly "the Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort"? Surely! So in the matter of mourning and funerals we let his principles of wisdom, justice and love dictate our feelings and actions, even as they should in all other affairs of life.—2 Cor. 1:3, 4; 1 Cor. 16:14.



ASTONISHING JUDGMENTS FROM GOD

THE Hebrew prophet Habakkuk was greatly disturbed about conditions existing in his day. Everywhere he looked in the land of Judah he could see violence, oppression, quarreling, strife and injus-

tices. This moved him to exclaim: "How long, O Jehovah, must I cry for help, and you do not hear? How long shall I call to you for aid from violence, and you do not save?"—Hab. 1:1-4.

Perhaps you, too, have raised similar questions when seeing the lawlessness that has become so prevalent among those claiming to represent God—members of the religious organizations of Christendom. The answer Habakkuk received seemed unbelievable. (Hab. 1:5) It even shocked the prophet. (Hab. 1:13-17) No less shocking to religious sensibilities will be the means by which the re-

ligious systems of Christendom will come to their end.

THE CHALDEANS TO BE USED

The pronouncement of Jehovah through Habakkuk was: "For here I am raising up the Chaldeans, the nation bitter and impetuous, which is going to the wide-open places of earth in order to take possession of residences not belonging to it. Frightful and fear-inspiring it is. From itself its own justice and its own dignity go forth. And its horses have proved swifter than leopards, and they have proved fiercer than evening wolves. And its steeds have pawed the ground, and from far away its own steeds come. They fly like the eagle speeding to eat something. In its entirety it comes for mere violence. The assembling of their faces is as the east wind, and it gathers up captives just like the sand. And for its part, it jeers kings themselves, and high officials are something laughable to it. For its part, it laughs even at every fortified place, and it piles up dust [as when building siegeworks] and captures it [the fortified place]. At that time it will certainly move onward like wind and will pass through and will actually become guilty [because of its ruthless conquests]. This its power is due to its god," evidently its great military machine that it elevates to the position of a deity.—Hab. 1:6-11.

Yes, nothing would stop the Chaldean armies from capturing city after city. The kingdom of Judah simply could not hope to escape.

Habakkuk, however, found it hard to understand how Jehovah God could use the *idol-worshiping* Chaldeans to execute his judgment. Not only were they not his worshipers but they were ruthless, simply out for conquest. They viewed men as mereish and creeping things to be captured and subdued. These factors prompted Habakkuk to exclaim: "Why do you [Jehovah] make earthling man like the fishes of

the sea, like creeping things over whom no one is ruling? All these he [the Chaldean] has brought up with a mere fishhook; he drags them away in his dragnet, and he gathers them in his fishing net. That is why he rejoices and is joyful. That is why he offers sacrifice to his dragnet and makes sacrificial smoke to his fishing net; for by them his portion is well oiled, and his food is healthful. Is that why he will empty out his dragnet, and does he have to kill nations constantly, while he shows no compassion?"—Hab. 1:14-17.

In having raised questions as to Jehovah's use of the ruthless Chaldeans to execute judgment upon his own people, Habakkuk recognizes that he is in line for a reproof. So he waits for a revelation from God, saying: "At my guard post I will keep standing, and I will keep myself stationed upon the bulwark; and I shall keep watch, to see what he will speak by me and what I shall reply at the reproof of me."—Hab. 2:1.

CONFIRMATION AND JUDGMENT

AGAINST BABYLON

The answer of Jehovah confirmed that the prophecy was certain of fulfillment. Habakkuk was told: "Write down the vision, and set it out plainly upon tablets, in order that the one reading aloud from it may do so fluently. For the vision is yet for the appointed time, and it keeps panting on to the end, and it will not tell a lie. Even if it should delay, keep in expectation of it; for it will without fail come true. It will not be late." (Hab. 2:2, 3) There was no question about the fact that the Chaldeans would be the means for executing judgment upon unfaithful Judah. What had been revealed to Habakkuk was "panting" or eagerly moving forward to its fulfillment.

The Chaldeans, however, would act according to their own desires and, unknown to themselves, would serve as God's means

for executing His righteous judgment against an unfaithful people. Answering Habakkuk's objection about his use of the Chaldeans, Jehovah God made known that they would not remain unpunished for their ruthless greed and bloodguiltiness. He declared: "Because you yourself despoiled many nations, all the remaining ones of the peoples will despoil you, because of the shedding of blood of mankind and the violence to the earth, the town and all those dwelling in it."—Hab. 2:8.

HABAKKUK'S PROPHECY FULFILLED

According to Jehovah's word to Habakkuk, the Chaldeans came against Jerusalem and the land of Judah. The historical record preserved in the Bible informs us that the king of the Chaldeans, Nebuchadnezzar, "proceeded to kill their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, neither did he feel compassion for young man or virgin, old or decrepit. . . . Furthermore, he carried off those remaining from the sword captive to Babylon."—2 Chron. 36:17-20.

Less than seventy years later, in 539 B.C.E., Babylon faced her day of reckoning. It was then that Cyrus, commanding the armies of the Medes, Persians and Elamites, captured the city. He diverted the course of the Euphrates River that flowed through Babylon. He then marched his forces through the riverbed. The river-front gates of Babylon had providentially been left open, enabling his armies to get into the city without any difficulty. Quickly they passed through the streets, slaughtering anyone who put up resistance. Then they captured the palace and killed the resident king, Belshazzar. Thus in one night Babylon fell.

To those who heard the prophecies about Judah and Babylon, they seemed unbelievable, even shocking. Yet the prophetic word was fulfilled.

MODERN PARALLELS

The Bible indicates that like events are soon to take place. Today the members of the religious systems of Christendom are much like the inhabitants of Judah in the time of Habakkuk. Christendom is filled with lawlessness and injustices. The people are very much a part of the world in word, attitude and action. Therefore, James 4:4 can rightly be applied to Christendom: "Adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God?" This being the case, the religious organizations of Christendom show themselves to be a part of a worldwide religious system that is referred to in the Bible as a "harlot," "Babylon the Great." (Rev. 17:1-5) That "harlot" will become an object of hatred in the eyes of political rulers. In symbolic language, the book of Revelation describes what will take place. 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 fleshy parts and will completely burn her with fire."—Rev. 17:11-16.

In resorting to such violence against the world's religious organizations, including those of Christendom, the "wild beast" and its "ten horns," or political rulers, will not be acting out of any love for Jehovah God. Like the Babylonians, they will act in a vicious and beastly way, without any regard for the true God.

As in the case of the Babylonians, those sharing in the destruction of false religion will not escape the execution of God's judgment. Their day will come when Jesus Christ, in command of angelic armies moves against them. Regarding this, God's Word states: "I saw the heaven opened and, look! a white horse. And the one seated upon it is called Faithful and True and he judges and carries on war in righteousness. . . . And I saw the wild beas

and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage the war with the one seated on the horse and with his army." What happens to the rulers and their armies? The account shows that they suffer defeat, being "killed off with the long sword of the one seated on the horse." "And all the birds were filled from the fleshy parts of them."—Rev. 19:11-21.

Unbelievable though it may sound to many today, the religious organizations of Christendom will perish at the hands of

Examinations Yet Ahead for a Graduating Class

APRIl 10, 1977, was graduation day for the students of the sixty-second class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. In addition to final remarks from the two regular classroom instructors, U. V. Glass and K. Adams, the program included searching talks by members of the governing body of Jehovah's Witnesses. A. D. Schroeder, who himself had been a long-time instructor in the School, was chairman. Though school examinations had been completed four days earlier, the graduation discourses made each student examine himself and alerted him to examinations that he must yet face.

W. K. Jackson reminded the audience of the graduation of the first class of Gilead School, back in 1943. At that time, as he said, N. H. Knorr, president of the Watchtower Society, had told the graduating class: 'You can expect hardships, calling for endurance, but Jehovah God will sustain you.' Would they endure? What about the sixty-second class? Jackson told of recently meeting graduates of the first class who are still in full-time service abroad. They told him about their experiences, well aware that Jehovah had sustained them. "Jehovah is not going to forsake you either," Jackson assured this new missionary group that would soon be leaving for service in twelve lands.

With great feeling, the next speaker let the class know that there was much schooling yet ahead for them. "You'll be in Jehovah's permanent school of life-giving instruction for-

the political systems, and the anti-God political systems will not escape the executional sword of the "King of kings," the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rev. 19:16) Does this not point up the need to make sure whether one is approved by God? Have you separated yourself from what Jehovah God disapproves? Are you seeking to conform to his righteous ways? If so, you can take comfort in the encouraging words of Zephaniah 2:3: "Probably you may be concealed in the day of Jehovah's anger."

for a Graduating Class

Again probing deep and urging each one to consider his motives, E. C. Chitty spoke first of service at the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Brooklyn, New York, and then of missionary work. He counseled: "Don't let personal happiness be a deciding factor" in whether you stay with your assignment. Happiness comes from doing Jehovah's will. At times endurance is needed, but confidence in Jehovah's arrangement is shown by willingness to serve, even at personal cost. He pointed to Jesus' own example, in his prayer at John 12:27, 28, and that of the apostle Paul as expressed at Acts 20:23, 24, as setting a pattern for all to take to heart.

Tying in nicely with what had already been said, K. F. Klein cautioned the students: "One of the most important and yet most difficult lessons to learn is that of lowness of mind." He especially emphasized how important it is in getting along with fellow missionaries, and he illustrated how a craving for greater personal recognition could cause one to lose sight of the fine privilege of service that he had. He concluded: "You will enjoy to the full your privilege as a missionary if you are content to be a lesser one."

Before the distribution of diplomas, F. W. Franz also addressed the class. He reminded them of the school examinations that they had had earlier, but then arrested their attention by asking: "Have you had the more vital and serious examination of your kidneys?" He showed from Job 19:27 that in the Bible "kidneys" often represent the innermost recesses of one's being. So, when Jeremiah 17:10 says that Jehovah 'examines the kidneys,' Franz explained, this is not a medical examination, but is done in a judicial capacity. In their postgraduate life, the speaker pointed out, the missionaries will face such an examination of their kidneys. How? In that new situations in life will confront them. When put to the test, what will they really prove to be, deep inside? The psalmist David, though a sinner, did not fear such an inspection by God. (Ps. 26:1-3) Nor should we. Concluding, Franz advised: "Be genuine Christians, not hypocritical, not counterfeit. Be sound Christians down to the

core of your personality. If you are, you will pass the examination of your kidneys with everlasting credits to yourself and a clean bill of spiritual health."

Later in the day, following a discussion of *The Watchtower*, there was a student program of multilingual entertainment, also two fine Bible dramas: "Youths, What Is Your Goal in Life?" and "The Scriptural Adornment of Christian Women."

All present for the program realized that the spiritual examinations discussed, and the counsel in the dramas, were not only for the missionaries. Each one found that he was asking himself, 'Am I really the sort of Christian that I ought to be?'

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

July 10: 'A Door Leading to Activity Opens.'
Page 332. Songs to Be Used: 32, 25.

July 17: Can You Enter the Open Door? Page
337. Songs to Be Used: 103, 63.