

THE WATCHTOWER

FEBRUARY 1, 2006

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



MONEY and MORALS Can You Have Both?

THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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

IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 Money and Morals—A Lesson From History
- 4 True Prosperity in God's New World
- 8 Jehovah's Word Is Alive—Highlights From the Book of Nehemiah
- 12 Jehovah Helped Me to Find Him
- 17 Imitate the Patience of Jehovah
- 22 "A Witness to All the Nations"
- 31 Questions From Readers
- 32 Are You Like a *Lagani Auna* Tree?

WATCHTOWER STUDIES

FEBRUARY 27–MARCH 5:
Imitate the Patience of Jehovah.
Page 17. Songs to be used: 81, 98.

MARCH 6–12:
"A Witness to All the Nations."
Page 22. Songs to be used: 14, 211.

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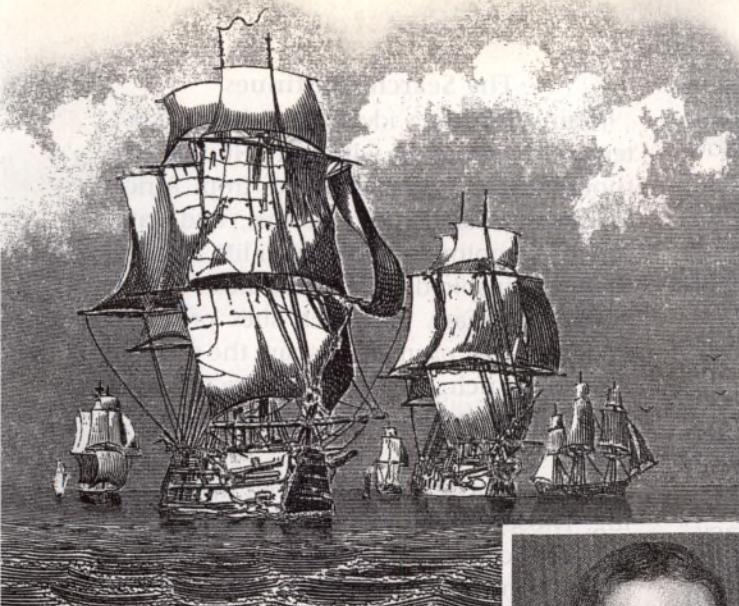
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MONEY and MORALS

A Lesson From History



ON April 7, 1630, about four hundred people in four ships set sail from England for the New World. Many among them were highly educated. Others were successful businessmen. Some were even members of parliament. The economy back home was in a slump, made worse by the ongoing Thirty Years' War in Europe (1618-48). So taking a chance, they left homes, businesses, and relatives and set out in search of better opportunities.

That hopeful company was not simply a group of opportunistic traders, however. They were zealous Puritans, running from religious persecution.* Their real goal was to establish a godly community where they and their descendants could prosper materially without having to compromise the Bible's standards. Shortly after landing at Salem, Massachusetts, they laid claim to a small

* The name Puritans was given in the 16th century to Protestants within the Church of England who wanted to purify their church of every shred of Roman Catholic influence.

plot of land down the coast. They called their new home Boston.

An Awkward Balancing Act

John Winthrop, their leader and governor, did his best to

promote private wealth and public good in the new colony. He wanted the people to have both money and morals. But this proved to be an awkward balancing act. Anticipating challenges, he spoke at length to his companions about the role of wealth in a godly society.

Like other Puritan leaders, Winthrop believed that the pursuit of wealth was not wrong in itself. The chief purpose of riches, he argued, was to help others. Thus, the wealthier a person was, the more good he could do. "Few subjects agitated the Puritan mind more than wealth," historian Patricia O'Toole observes. "It was both a sign of God's blessing and a powerful temptation to the sin of pride . . . and to the sins of the flesh."

To avoid the sins that can be spawned by wealth and luxury, Winthrop urged moderation and temperance. All too soon, however, the entrepreneurial spirit of his fellow citizens tended to clash with his attempts to force them to practice godliness and to love one another. Dissidents began challenging what they saw as Winthrop's heavy-handedness in their private affairs. Some began agitating for an elected assembly that would share in decision making. Others simply voted with their feet by moving to neighboring Connecticut to pursue their own interests.

"Opportunity, prosperity, democracy," O'Toole says, "all were potent forces in the life of Puritan Massachusetts, and all tended to fuel individual ambitions at the expense of Winthrop's collective ideal." In 1649, Winthrop died almost penniless, at the age of 61. Though the fragile colony survived despite many hardships, Winthrop never lived to see his dream come true.

The Search Continues

John Winthrop's idealistic vision of a better world did not die with him. Hundreds of thousands each year emigrate from Africa, Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America, hoping to find a better life. Some of them are inspired by the hundreds of new books, seminars, and Web sites produced each year that promise to share the secret of how to get rich. Clearly, many are still striving to have money, hopefully without forsaking moral values.

Frankly, the results have been disappointing. Those seeking wealth all too often end up sacrificing their principles and sometimes even their faith on the altar of Mammon. Therefore, you may rightly ask: "Can one be a true Christian and also be rich? Will there ever be a God-fearing society that is prosperous both materially and spiritually?" The Bible answers those questions, as the following article shows.

TRUE PROSPERITY in God's New World

DAVID,* a Christian husband and father, moved to the United States, confident that he was doing the right thing. Though he did not like leaving his wife and children behind, he felt sure that he could make a better life for all of them if only he had more money. So he accepted an invitation from relatives in New York and soon found employment there.

As the months wore on, though, David's confident outlook began to fade. There was

little time spent in spiritual activities. At one point, he almost lost faith in God. It was not until he gave in to a moral temptation that he finally woke up to the reality of his situation. His focus on material prosperity was gradually leading him away from everything that really mattered to him. Something had to change.

Like David, many emigrate from impoverished homelands each year, hoping to improve their economic situation. Yet, all too often they pay a terrible spiritual price.

* The name has been changed.

Some have wondered, ‘Can a Christian pursue material riches and also be rich toward God?’ Popular writers and preachers say that this is possible. But as David and others have learned, achieving one without losing the other can be difficult.—Luke 18:24.

Money Is Not Evil

Money, of course, is a human invention. Like many other inventions, it is not bad or wrong in itself. Really, it is nothing more than a medium of exchange. Thus, when used properly, it can serve a good purpose. For instance, the Bible acknowledges that “money is for a protection,” especially against the problems associated with poverty. (Ecclesiastes 7:12) It seems, for some at least, that “money is the answer for everything.”—Ecclesiastes 10:19, *New International Version*.

The Scriptures condemn laziness and encourage hard work. We are to provide for our immediate family, and if we have a little extra, we have “something to distribute to someone in need.” (Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:8) Moreover, rather than promoting self-denial, the Bible encourages us to enjoy our possessions. We are told to “carry off [our] portion” and enjoy the fruits of our labors. (Ecclesiastes 5:18-20) There are, in fact, several examples in the Bible of faithful men and women who were wealthy.

Faithful Men Who Were Wealthy

Abraham, a faithful servant of God, acquired great flocks and herds, much silver and gold, and a large household of servants



Job trusted in God, not in his riches

numbering in the hundreds. (Genesis 12:5; 13:2, 6, 7) Righteous Job also had considerable wealth—in livestock, servants, gold, and silver. (Job 1:3; 42:11, 12) These men were rich even by today’s standards, but they were also rich toward God.

The apostle Paul calls Abraham “the father of all those having faith.” Abraham was neither stingy nor overly attached to what he had. (Romans 4:11; Genesis 13:9; 18:1-8) Likewise, God himself described Job as “blameless and upright.” (Job 1:8) He was always ready to help the poor and afflicted. (Job 29:12-16) Both Abraham and Job trusted in God rather than in their riches.—Genesis 14:22-24; Job 1:21, 22; Romans 4:9-12.

King Solomon is another example. As heir to God’s throne in Jerusalem, Solomon was blessed not only with divine wisdom but also with abundant riches and glory. (1 Kings 3:4-14) For most of his life, he was faithful. In his later years, though, Solomon’s “heart did not prove to be complete

with Jehovah." (1 Kings 11:1-8) Actually, his sad experience illustrates some of the common pitfalls of material prosperity. Consider a few.

Pitfalls of Prosperity

The most serious danger is that of falling in love with money and what it can purchase. Wealth generates in some an appetite that is never satisfied. Early on, Solomon noticed this tendency in others. He wrote: "A mere lover of silver will not be satisfied with silver, neither any lover of wealth with income. This too is vanity." (Ecclesiastes 5:10) Both Jesus and Paul later warned Christians about this insidious love.—Mark 4:18, 19; 2 Timothy 3:2.

When money becomes the object of our affection rather than merely a means to get things done, we become susceptible to all sorts of moral temptations, including lying, theft, and treachery. Judas Iscariot, one of Christ's apostles, betrayed his master for just 30 pieces of silver. (Mark 14:11; John 12:6) Going to the extreme, some have even replaced God with money as the object of their ultimate devotion. (1 Timothy 6:10) Christians should therefore always try to be honest about their real motive for making more money.—Hebrews 13:5.

The pursuit of wealth also poses dangers that are more subtle. First, an abundance of riches tends to foster self-reliance. Jesus included this when he referred to "the deceptive power of riches." (Matthew 13:22) The Bible writer James similarly cautioned Christians not to forget God even when making business plans. (James 4:13-16) Since money appears to grant us a measure of independence, for those who have it, there is the ever-present danger of trusting in their money rather than in God.—Proverbs 30:7-9; Acts 8:18-24.

Second, as David, mentioned earlier, found out, the pursuit of wealth often absorbs so much of a person's time and energy that it gradually draws him away from spiritual pursuits. (Luke 12:13-21) For the wealthy, there is also the ongoing temptation to use what they have primarily for pleasurable activities or personal pursuits.

Could Solomon's spiritual demise to some extent be attributed to his allowing luxurious living to dull his senses? (Luke 21:34) He knew God's direct prohibition against marriage alliances with foreign nations. Yet, he eventually gathered a harem of some one thousand women. (Deuteronomy 7:3) Eager to please his foreign wives, he attempted a sort of interfaith arrangement for their benefit. As was noted earlier, Solomon's heart was gradually inclined away from Jehovah.

Clearly, these examples show the truthfulness of Jesus' counsel: "You cannot slave for God and for Riches." (Matthew 6:24) How, then, can a Christian successfully cope with the economic challenges that most now face? More important, what hope is there for a better life ahead?

True Prosperity Ahead

Unlike the patriarchs Abraham and Job and the nation of Israel, the followers of Jesus have the commission to "make disciples of people of all the nations." (Matthew 28:19, 20) Fulfilling that commission requires time and effort that might otherwise be used in secular pursuits. The key to success, therefore, lies in doing what Jesus told us to do: "Keep on, then, seeking first [God's] kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you."—Matthew 6:33.

After nearly losing his family and his spirituality, David finally got his life back on track. As Jesus promised, when David again



The most valuable things in life cannot be obtained with money

started to give Bible study, prayer, and the ministry priority in his life, other things began to fall into place. His relationship with his wife and children was gradually restored. His joy and contentment returned. He still works hard. His is no rags to riches story. Still, from his painful experience, he learned some valuable lessons.

David has had second thoughts about the wisdom of moving to the United States, and he has resolved never again to let money dominate his decisions. He now knows that the most valuable things in life—a loving family, good friends, and a relationship with God—cannot be obtained with money. (Proverbs 17:17; 24:27; Isaiah 55:1, 2) Indeed, moral integrity is far more valuable than material

riches. (Proverbs 19:1; 22:1) Together with his family, David is determined to keep first things first.—Philippians 1:10.

Human efforts to build a truly prosperous yet moral society have repeatedly failed. However, God has promised that his Kingdom will provide an abundance of the material and spiritual things that we need in order to live well. (Psalm 72:16; Isaiah 65:21-23) Jesus taught that true prosperity begins with spirituality. (Matthew 5:3) So whether we are materially rich or poor, giving priority to spiritual things now is the best way any of us can prepare for God's new world just ahead. (1 Timothy 6:17-19) That world will be a truly prosperous society both materially and spiritually.

Jehovah's Word Is Alive

Highlights From the Book of Nehemiah

TWELVE years have passed since the closing events recorded in the Bible book of Ezra took place. The time is now near for “the going forth of the word to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem”—the occurrence that marks the beginning of the 70 weeks of years leading up to the Messiah. (Daniel 9:24-27) The book of Nehemiah is a history of God’s people involving the rebuilding of Jerusalem’s wall. It covers a crucial period of over 12 years, from 456 B.C.E. to some time after 443 B.C.E.

Written by Governor Nehemiah, the book is an exciting account of how true worship is exalted when resolute action is combined with total reliance on Jehovah God. It clearly shows how Jehovah maneuvers matters to have his will accomplished. It is also the story of a strong and courageous leader. The message of the book of Nehemiah provides valuable lessons for all true worshippers today, “for the word of God is alive and exerts power.”—Hebrews 4:12.

“AT LENGTH THE WALL CAME TO COMPLETION” (Nehemiah 1:1-6:19)

Nehemiah is in Shushan the castle, serving King Artaxerxes Longimanus in a trusted position. Upon hearing the news that his people “are in a very bad plight and in reproach; and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its very gates have been burned with



“A king’s heart is as streams of water in the hand of Jehovah”

fire,” Nehemiah is deeply disturbed. He fervently prays to God for direction. (Nehemiah 1:3, 4) In time, the king notices Nehemiah’s sadness, and the way opens up for him to go to Jerusalem.

After arriving in Jerusalem, Nehemiah inspects the wall under the cover of darkness, and he reveals to the Jews his plan to rebuild the wall. Construction begins. So does opposition to the work. Under the courageous leadership of Nehemiah, however, “at length the wall [comes] to completion.”—Nehemiah 6:15.

Scriptural Questions Answered:

1:1; 2:1—Is “the twentieth year” mentioned in these two verses counted from the same reference point? Yes, the 20th year is that of the reign of Artaxerxes the king. However, the method of counting used in these verses is different. Historical evidence points to 475 B.C.E. as the year of Artaxerxes’ ascension to the throne. Since the Babylonian scribes customarily counted the years of the Persian kings’ reign from Nisan (March/April) to Nisan, Artaxerxes’ first regnal year began in Nisan of 474 B.C.E. Hence, the 20th year of rulership mentioned at Nehemiah 2:1 began in Nisan of 455 B.C.E. The month of Chislev (November/December) mentioned at Nehemiah 1:1 logically was the Chislev of the preceding year—456 B.C.E. Nehemiah refers to that month as also falling in the 20th year of Artaxerxes’ reign. Perhaps in



Nehemiah—a man of action and tender feelings—comes to Jerusalem

this case, he was counting the years from the accession date of the monarch. It could also be that Nehemiah was counting time by what the Jews today call a civil year, which begins in the month of Tishri, corresponding to September/October. In any case, the year in which the word went out to restore Jerusalem was 455 B.C.E.

4:17, 18—How could a man do the work of rebuilding with just one hand? For burden bearers this would not be a problem. Once the load was placed on their head or shoulders, they could easily balance it with one hand “while the other hand was holding the missile.” The builders who needed both hands to do their work “were girded, each one with his sword upon his hip, while building.” They were ready to go into action in case of an enemy attack.

5:7—In what sense did Nehemiah begin “finding fault with the nobles and the deputy rulers”? These men were exacting usury from their fellow Jews in violation of the Mosaic Law. (Leviticus 25:36; Deuteronomy 23:19) Moreover, the interest the lenders were demanding was high. If demanded monthly, “the hundredth” would be equivalent to 12 percent a year. (Nehemiah 5:11) It was cruel to impose this on people already heavily burdened with taxes and a food shortage. Nehemiah found fault with the rich in that, using God’s Law, he reproved and rebuked them and thus exposed their wrongdoing.

6:5—Since confidential letters were usually placed in a sealed bag, why did Sanballat send “an open letter” to Nehemiah? Sanballat may have intended to make public the false charges brought forth by sending them in an open

letter. Perhaps he hoped that this would anger Nehemiah so much that he would leave the building work and come to defend himself. Or Sanballat may have thought that the contents of the letter would cause such alarm among the Jews that they would stop their work altogether. Nehemiah refused to be intimidated and calmly continued in his God-assigned work.

Lessons for Us:

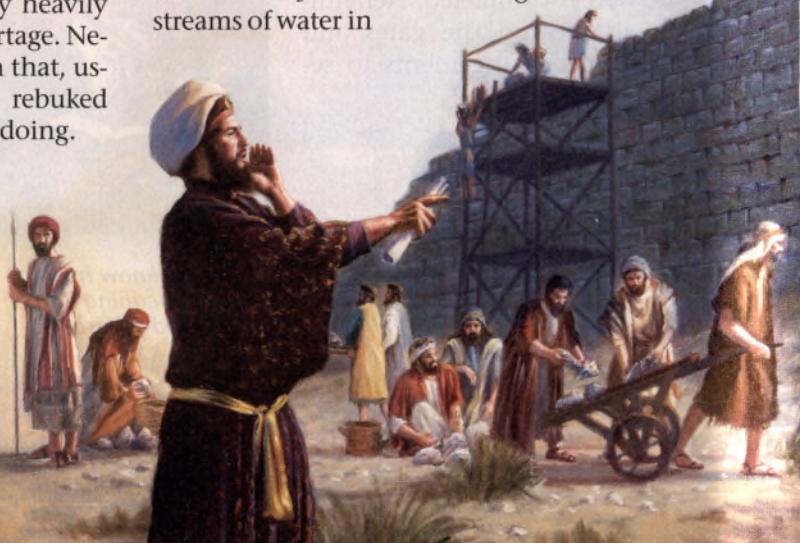
1:4; 2:4; 4:4, 5. When faced with difficult situations or when making important decisions, we should “persevere in prayer” and act in harmony with theocratic direction.
—Romans 12:12.

1:11–2:8; 4:4, 5, 15, 16; 6:16. Jehovah answers the sincere prayers of his servants.
—Psalm 86:6, 7.

1:4; 4:19, 20; 6:3, 15. While Nehemiah was a man of tender feelings, he set a fine example as a man of action who was firm for righteousness.

1:11–2:3. Nehemiah’s main source of joy was not his prestigious position as a cupbearer. It was the advancement of true worship. Should not Jehovah’s worship and all that promotes it be our main concern and chief source of joy?

2:4–8. Jehovah caused Artaxerxes to grant Nehemiah permission to go and rebuild the wall of Jerusalem. “A king’s heart is as streams of water in



the hand of Jehovah," says Proverbs 21:1. "Everywhere that he delights to, he turns it."

3:5, 27. We should not consider manual work done in the interests of true worship beneath our dignity, as did the "majestic ones" of the Tekoites. Rather, we can imitate the common Tekoites who willingly expended themselves.

3:10, 23, 28-30. While some are able to move where the need for Kingdom proclaimers is greater, many of us support true worship close to our home. We can do so by participating in Kingdom Hall construction work and disaster relief efforts but primarily by sharing in the Kingdom-preaching work.

4:14. When faced with opposition, we too can overcome fear by keeping in our mind "the great and the fear-inspiring One."

5:14-19. For Christian overseers, Governor Nehemiah is a splendid example of humility, unselfishness, and discretion. Though zealous in enforcing God's Law, he did not domineer over others for selfish gain. Rather, he showed concern for the oppressed and the poor. In displaying generosity, Nehemiah set an outstanding example for all of God's servants.

"DO REMEMBER ME, O MY GOD, FOR GOOD" (Nehemiah 7:1-13:31)

As soon as Jerusalem's wall is completed, Nehemiah sets up the gates and makes arrangements to se-

cure the city. He proceeds to make a genealogical record of the people. As all the people assemble "at the public square that was before the Water Gate," Ezra the priest reads the book of the Law of Moses, and Nehemiah and the Levites explain the Law to the people. (Nehemiah 8:1) Learning about the Festival of Booths leads to their holding an observance of it with rejoicing.

Another gathering follows, during which "the seed of Israel" make confession of national sins, the Levites review God's dealings with Israel, and the people take an oath "to walk in the law of the true God." (Nehemiah 9:1, 2; 10:29) Since Jerusalem is still underpopulated, lots are cast to have 1 of every 10 men living outside the city move into the city. Next, the wall is inaugurated with such spirit that "the rejoicing of Jerusalem [can] be heard far away." (Nehemiah 12:43) Twelve years after his arrival, Nehemiah leaves Jerusalem to return to his duties with Artaxerxes. Uncleanliness soon creeps in among the Jews. Upon his return to Jerusalem, Nehemiah takes decisive action to correct the situation. For himself, he makes a humble request: "Do remember me, O my God, for good."—Nehemiah 13:31.

Scriptural Questions Answered:

7:6-67—Why does Nehemiah's list of the remnant who returned to Jerusalem with Zerubbabel differ from Ezra's in individual figures for each household? (Ezra 2:1-65) The reason for these variations may be that Ezra and Nehemiah used different source material. For example, the number of those who registered to return may have been different from the number who actually did return. The two records may also have differed because some



*Do you know how to
'put meaning into'
God's Word?*



Jews who were unable to establish their genealogy at the outset did so in time. Both accounts, however, agree on one point: The number of initial returnees was 42,360, apart from slaves and singers.

10:34—Why were the people required to supply wood? The wood offering was not commanded in the Mosaic Law. This requirement stemmed strictly from the need. Large quantities of wood were needed in order to burn the sacrifices on the altar. Apparently, there were not enough Nethinim, who served as non-Israelite temple slaves. Hence, lots were cast to ensure a continuous supply of wood.

13:6, footnote—How long was Nehemiah absent from Jerusalem? The Bible says only that “sometime later,” or “at the end of days,” Nehemiah asked for a leave of absence from the king to return to Jerusalem. Therefore, it is impossible to determine the length of his absence. Upon his return to Jerusalem, though, Nehemiah found that the priesthood was not being supported, nor was the Sabbath law being observed. Many had taken foreign wives, and their offspring did not even speak the language of the Jews. For conditions to deteriorate so much, Nehemiah must have been gone for a long time.

13:25, 28—In addition to ‘finding fault’ with the backsliding Jews, what other corrective measures did Nehemiah take? Nehemiah ‘called down evil upon them’ in that he recited against them the judgments found in God’s Law. He ‘struck some of them,’ perhaps by ordering judicial action against them. As a symbol of his moral indignation, he ‘pulled out some of their hair.’ He also chased away the grandson of High Priest Eliashib, who had married a daughter of Sanballat the Horonite.

Lessons for Us:

8:8. As teachers of God’s Word, we ‘put meaning into it’ by using good enunciation

and oral emphasis and by expounding on the Scriptures correctly, making clear their application.

8:10. “The joy of Jehovah” comes from being conscious of and satisfying one’s spiritual need and from following theocratic direction. How vital that we diligently study the Bible, regularly attend Christian meetings, and zealously share in the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work!

11:2. Leaving one’s hereditary possession and moving into Jerusalem involved personal expense and some disadvantages. Those who volunteered to do this showed a self-sacrificing spirit. We too can show such a spirit when opportunities arise to volunteer our services in behalf of others at conventions and on other occasions.

12:31, 38, 40-42. Singing is a fine way to praise Jehovah and express our gratitude to him. We should sing wholeheartedly at Christian gatherings.

13:4-31. We must be on guard against allowing materialism, corruption, and apostasy to make inroads into our lives.

13:22. Nehemiah was well-aware that he was accountable to God. We too need to be aware of our accountability to Jehovah.

Jehovah’s Blessing a Must!

“Unless Jehovah himself builds the house,” sang the psalmist, “it is to no avail that its builders have worked hard on it.” (Psalm 127:1) How beautifully the book of Nehemiah illustrates the truth of those words!

The lesson for us is clear. If we want to succeed in whatever endeavors we undertake, we must have Jehovah’s blessing. Can we really expect Jehovah to bless us unless we give true worship the first place in our lives? Like Nehemiah, then, let us make Jehovah’s worship and its advancement our prime concern.



JEHOVAH HELPED ME TO FIND HIM

AS TOLD BY
FLORENCE CLARK

I held the hand of my gravely ill husband. As an Anglican, I prayed to God that my husband would recover, and I promised that if he did not die, I would search for God until I found him. Then I would belong to him.

I WAS born Florence Chulung on September 18, 1937, in the Aboriginal Oombulgurri Community in the remote Kimberley Plateau region of Western Australia.

I have very fond memories of my childhood in those carefree, happy days. From the church mission, I learned a few basic things about God and the Bible, but it was my mother who taught me Christian principles. She read the Bible to me regularly, and from an early age, I developed a love for spiritual things. I also admired one of my aunts, who was a missionary for her church. In my heart I knew that I wanted to follow in her footsteps.

Our community, formerly known as the Forrest River Mission, had provisions for schooling from grade one through grade five. I attended school for just two hours every morning. This meant that my formal education was quite limited, a point that was of concern to my father. He wanted his children to have a better education, so he decided to leave Oombulgurri and move the family into the town of Wyndham. The day we left was a sad day for me, but in Wyndham, I was able to attend school full-time for the next four years, from 1949 to 1952. I am very grateful that my father enabled me to have that education.

Mother worked for the local doctor, and when I left school at the age of 15, this doctor offered me a job as a nurse at the Wyndham hospital. I gladly accepted, for at that time employment was difficult to find.

Some years later I met Alec, a white stockman. We were married in 1964 in the town of Derby, where I regularly attended the Anglican Church. One day Jehovah's Witnesses called at my door. I told them that I was definitely not interested and asked them not to call again. Nevertheless, something they said intrigued me—God had a personal name, Jehovah.

"Can't You Say Your Own Prayers?"

In 1965 life started to become very difficult. My husband had three quite serious accidents—two with his horse and one with his car. Fortunately, he recovered from these injuries and returned to work. Shortly afterward, however, he had yet another accident with his horse. This time, he suffered severe head injuries. When I arrived at the hospital, the doctor told me that my husband was going to die. I was devastated. A nurse asked the local priest to see me, but he said: "Not now. I will come tomorrow!"

I wanted to have the priest by my side to pray with me and mentioned this to the nun. She said: "What is wrong with you? Can't you say your own prayers?" So I began praying to the church's statues for help—but to no avail. My husband seemed to be losing his grip on life. I thought, 'How am I going to cope if my husband dies?' I was also concerned for my three children—Christine, Nannette, and Geoffrey. What kind of life would they have without a father? Happily, three days later my husband regained consciousness, and he was discharged on December 6, 1966.

Although he otherwise recovered remarkably well, my husband had sustained brain damage. He suffered some memory loss and was now prone to violence and mood swings. He had trouble coping with the children and became very aggressive if they did not respond as adults would. Caring for him was difficult. I had to do practically everything for him. I even taught him to read and write again. The strain of attending to him while caring for my other domestic duties took its toll, and I had a nervous breakdown. Seven years after my husband's accident, we agreed to separate for a while to let me regain my health.

I took the children and moved south to the city of Perth. Prior to this move, my sister had started to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses in Kununurra, a small town in Western Australia. She showed me a picture in the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*,^{*} depicting the Bible's promise of a paradise earth. From this book, she also showed me that God has a name, Jehovah, and this appealed to me. Since I had never been told these things in my church, I decided to telephone Jehovah's Witnesses once I got settled in Perth.

However, I was a little hesitant to contact them. Then one evening, the doorbell rang. My son went to the door and came hurrying back to me, saying, "Mum, those people you said you would telephone are here." I was a bit surprised and said, "Tell them that I am not here!" But he replied, "You know that I should not tell a lie, Mum." Chastened, I answered the door. As I greeted the callers, I noticed a puzzled look on their faces. They had come to see another tenant, who had moved. I invited them in and bombarded

* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses but now out of print.

them with questions and received satisfying answers from the Bible.

The following week, I started to study the Bible regularly with the Witnesses, using the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. The study reawakened my love for spiritual things. Two weeks later I attended the Memorial of Christ Jesus' death. I began to attend meetings every Sunday, and before long I was attending the midweek meetings as well. I also began to share with others what I was learning. I discovered that helping others learn Bible truths improved my mental and emotional health. Six months later I was baptized at a district convention in Perth.

As I progressed spiritually, I came to appreciate Jehovah's view of the sacredness of marriage, including the Bible principle found at 1 Corinthians 7:13, which says: "A woman who has an unbelieving husband, and yet he is agreeable to dwelling with her, let her not leave her husband." This scripture prompted me to go back to Alec.

Returning to Derby

I arrived back in Derby on June 21, 1979, after having been away from my husband for more than five years. Of course, I had mixed feelings and wondered how he would react to my return. To my surprise, he was delighted that I came back to him, though he expressed some disappointment that I had become one of Jehovah's Witnesses. He immediately suggested that I attend his church, the one I had attended before I left for Perth. I explained that I could not do that. I tried hard to respect his headship and did my best as a Christian wife. I attempted to talk to him about Jehovah and His won-

derful promises for the future, but he was unresponsive.

In time, though, Alec not only accepted my new way of life but also began helping me financially so that I could attend conventions and assemblies, as well as the weekly meetings. I was very grateful when he purchased a car—a valuable asset in this remote part of Australia—for me to use in the Christian ministry. Brothers and sisters, including the circuit overseer, often stayed for several nights at our place. This enabled Alec to get to know various Witnesses, and he seemed to like their company.

I Felt Like Ezekiel

I enjoyed the visits of the brothers and sisters, but I faced a challenge. I was the only Witness resident in the town of Derby. The nearest congregation was in Broome, 135 miles away. So I decided to do my best to spread the good news. With Jehovah's help, I got organized and began to witness from door to door. I found this task difficult, but I kept reminding myself of the apostle Paul's words: "For all things I have the strength by virtue of him who imparts power to me."—Philippians 4:13.

The local clergy were not happy with my activity, especially my witnessing among fellow Aborigines. They tried to intimidate me and stop my preaching activity. Their opposition just made me more determined to keep going, and I regularly prayed to Jehovah to help me. I often recalled the words of encouragement given to Ezekiel: "Look! I have made your face exactly as hard as their faces and your forehead exactly as hard as their foreheads. Like a diamond, harder than flint, I have made your forehead. You



Working as a nurse
at Wyndham
hospital, 1953



Derby Congregation, 2005

Kangaroo and lyrebird: Lydeker; koala: Moyes

must not be afraid of them, and you must not be struck with terror at their faces."

—Ezekiel 3:8, 9.

On several occasions, two men from a church group approached me while I was shopping. They ridiculed me in a loud and boisterous way, trying to attract the attention of other shoppers. I ignored them. Once, while I was making a return visit on an interested person, the minister from the local church came and accused me of not believing in Jesus. He snatched the Bible out of my hand, shook it in my face, and pushed it back into my hand. Looking him straight in the eye, I mildly but firmly quoted John 3:16 and assured him that I did have faith in Jesus. He was dumbfounded at my confident response and walked away without saying another word.

I enjoyed preaching to the Aborigines in the Derby area. A local priest tried to pre-

vent me from reaching the people in one particular community, but he was transferred. Thus, I was able to bring them the Bible's message. I had always wanted to be a missionary like my aunt, and now I was doing missionary work, helping others to learn about God's Word. Many of the Aboriginal people responded well to my preaching, and I started several Bible studies.

Conscious of My Spiritual Need

For five years, I was the only Witness of Jehovah in Derby. I found it difficult to stay spiritually strong without the encouragement of regular meetings with fellow worshippers. On one occasion, I was feeling particularly low and went out for a drive. When I returned home late that afternoon, a sister

and her seven children were there waiting for me. They had brought a supply of literature for me from the congregation in Broome, miles away. From then on, this sister, Betty Butterfield, arranged to come to Derby once a month and stay with me for a weekend. We went preaching together and then studied *The Watchtower* together at my home. In turn, I traveled to Broome once a month.

The brothers in Broome were very helpful and occasionally were able to make the long trip to Derby to assist me in the field service. They urged any brothers or sisters from other towns who would be passing through Derby to look me up and share with me in the ministry. These travelers also brought me tapes of public talks. Some joined in studying *The Watchtower* with me. These brief visits were very encouraging.

More Help on the Way

For some years, I received a further boost when Arthur and Mary Willis, a retired cou-

ple from the southern part of Western Australia, came to help me for three months at a time in the cooler season. Brother Willis conducted most of the meetings and took the lead in the field ministry. Together, we traveled to the more remote parts of the Kimberley Plateau, visiting cattle stations (ranches) in these distant areas. Each time Brother and Sister Willis departed, I felt a great void in my life.

Finally, toward the end of 1983, I received the happy news that a family—Danny and Denise Sturgeon and their four sons—were coming to live in Derby. After their arrival, we were able to hold regular weekly meetings and share together in field service. In 2001 a congregation was formed. Today, Derby has a strong congregation of 24 Kingdom publishers, with two elders and one ministerial servant taking good care of us spiritually. At times, we have up to 30 at our meetings.

When I look back over the years, it warms my heart to see how Jehovah helped me to serve him. Even though my husband has not yet joined me in the faith, he continues to support me in other ways. Five members of my immediate family have become baptized Witnesses—my two daughters, two granddaughters, and a niece. In addition, several more of my relatives are studying the Bible with Jehovah's people.

I am truly grateful that Jehovah helped me to find him. I am determined to belong to him forever.—Psalm 65:2.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Do We Need a Messiah?

Bolivia's Isolated Towns
Hear Good News

Gathering Things in Heaven
and Things on Earth



IMITATE THE PATIENCE OF JEHOVAH

"Jehovah is not slow respecting his promise, . . . but he is patient."

—2 PETER 3:9.

JEHOVAH has offered us something that no one else can offer. It is something immensely appealing and precious, yet it can be neither purchased nor earned. What he offers is the gift of everlasting life—for most of us, endless life on a paradise earth. (John 3:16) What a delight that will be! Gone will be the things that cause so much sorrow—strife, violence, poverty, crime, sickness, and even death. People will live in perfect peace and unity under the loving rule of God's Kingdom. How we yearn for that Paradise!—Isaiah 9:6, 7; Revelation 21:4, 5.

² Jehovah too looks forward to the time when he will establish Paradise on earth. After all, he is a lover of righteousness and justice. (Psalm 33:5) It gives him no pleasure to gaze upon a world indifferent or hostile to his righteous principles, a world that spurns his authority and abuses his people. Yet, there are good reasons why he has not yet acted to remove Satan's wicked system of things. Those reasons have to do with moral issues involving his sovereignty. In settling these issues, Jehovah displays a particularly appealing quality, a quality that many today lack—patience.

³ There is a Greek word that in the *New World Translation* is three times rendered

1. What incomparable gift has Jehovah offered humans?
2. Why has Jehovah not yet removed Satan's system of things?
3. (a) What is the meaning of the Greek and Hebrew words translated "patience" in the Bible?
(b) What questions will we now consider?

"patience." It literally means "longness of spirit" and thus is frequently rendered "long-suffering" and once "exercising of patience." Inherent in both the Greek and Hebrew words for "patience" is the thought of forbearance and slowness to anger. How does Jehovah's patience benefit us? What lessons are to be learned from the patience and endurance of Jehovah and of his faithful servants? How do we know that Jehovah's patience is not limitless? Let us see.

Consider Jehovah's Patience

⁴ Concerning Jehovah's patience, the apostle Peter wrote: "Let this one fact not be escaping your notice, beloved ones, that one day is with Jehovah as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day. Jehovah is not slow respecting his promise, as some people consider slowness, but he is patient with you because he does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance." (2 Peter 3:8, 9) Please notice two points expressed here that can help us to understand Jehovah's patience.

⁵ The first point is that Jehovah does not view time as we do. To the One who lives forever, a thousand years are as one day. He is not restrained or pressured by time, but he is not slow in acting. Possessing limitless wisdom, Jehovah knows precisely the best time

4. Concerning Jehovah's patience, what did the apostle Peter write?
5. How does Jehovah's view of time affect his actions?

to act for the benefit of all concerned, and he patiently waits for that time to come. However, we should not conclude that Jehovah is insensitive to any suffering that his servants may experience in the meantime. He is a God of "tender compassion," the personification of love. (Luke 1:78; 1 John 4:8) He is able to undo, completely and permanently, any harm that this temporary permission of suffering might have caused.—Psalm 37:10.

⁶ It is, of course, not easy to wait for something that one yearns for. (Proverbs 13:12) Thus, when people do not swiftly fulfill their promises, others may conclude that they do not intend to do so. How unwise it would be to think that of God! If we mistake God's patience for slowness, the passing of time can easily cause us to give way to doubt and discouragement, and we risk becoming spiritually drowsy. Even worse, we might be misled by those whom Peter earlier warned against—ridiculers, those without faith. Such ones mockingly say: "Where is this promised presence of his? Why, from the day our forefathers fell asleep in death, all things are continuing exactly as from creation's beginning."—2 Peter 3:4.

⁷ A second point that we can draw from Peter's words is that

6. What should we not conclude about God, and why?
7. How is Jehovah's patience related to his desire that people repent?

Jehovah is patient because he desires all to attain to repentance. Those who stubbornly refuse to turn back from their bad ways face execution at the hand of Jehovah. However, God finds no pleasure in the death of the wicked one. Rather, he delights to see people repent, turn back from their bad ways, and keep living. (Ezekiel 33:11) Consequently, he is exercising patience and is having the good news declared in all the earth so that people may have every opportunity to live.

⁸ The patience of God is also seen in his dealings with the ancient nation of Israel. For centuries, he put up with their disobedience. By means of his prophets, time and again he urged them: "Turn back from your bad ways and keep my commandments, my statutes, according to all the law that I commanded your forefathers and that I have sent to you by means of my servants the proph-

8. How is God's patience seen in his dealings with the nation of Israel?

Jesus' patience perfectly mirrored that of his Father



ets." What was the result? Regrettably, the people "did not listen."—2 Kings 17:13, 14.

⁹ Finally, Jehovah sent his Son, who tirelessly appealed to the Jews to become reconciled to God. Jesus' patience perfectly mirrored that of his Father. With full knowledge that he was soon to be put to death, Jesus lamented: "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the killer of the prophets and stoner of those sent forth to her,—how often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks together under her wings! But you people did not want it." (Matthew 23:37) These poignant words are not those of a stern judge who is eager to punish someone but those of a loving friend who is patient with people. Jesus, like his Father in heaven, wanted the people to repent and escape adverse judgment. Some did respond favorably to the warnings of Jesus and escaped the terrible judgment that came upon Jerusalem in 70 C.E.—Luke 21:20-22.

¹⁰ Is not the patience of God something to marvel at? In spite of the magnitude of human disobedience, Jehovah has allowed each one of us, along with millions of other people, the opportunity to come to know him and to embrace the hope of salvation. "Consider the patience of our Lord as salvation," wrote Peter to fellow Christians. (2 Peter 3:15) Are we not grateful that Jehovah's patience has opened the way to salvation for us? Do we not pray that Jehovah may continue to be patient with us as we serve him day by day?—Matthew 6:12.

¹¹ When we understand why Jehovah is patient, we are helped to wait patiently for the salvation he will bring, never concluding

9. How did Jesus' patience mirror that of his Father?

10. In what way has the patience of God benefited us?

11. What will an understanding of Jehovah's patience move us to do?

that he is slow in fulfilling his promises. (Lamentations 3:26) While we continue to pray for God's Kingdom to come, we trust that God knows the best time to answer that prayer. Further, we are moved to imitate Jehovah by showing godly patience in our dealings with our brothers and with those to whom we preach. We too do not desire any to be destroyed but would like to see them repent and share our hope of everlasting life.—1 Timothy 2:3, 4.

Consider the Patience of the Prophets

¹² By considering the patience of Jehovah, we are helped both to appreciate and to cultivate that quality. It is not easy for imperfect humans to cultivate patience, but it can be done. We learn from God's servants of old. The disciple James wrote: "Brothers, take as a pattern of the suffering of evil and the exercising of patience the prophets, who spoke in the name of Jehovah." (James 5:10) It is comforting and encouraging to know that others have successfully faced what we have to face.

¹³ The prophet Isaiah, for example, certainly needed patience in his assignment. Jehovah said as much by telling him: "Go, and you must say to this people, 'Hear again and again, O men, but do not understand; and see again and again, but do not get any knowledge.' Make the heart of this people unreceptive, and make their very ears unresponsive, and paste their very eyes together, that they may not see with their eyes and with their ears they may not hear, and that their own heart may not understand and that they may not actually turn back and get healing for themselves." (Isaiah 6:9, 10) Despite the unresponsiveness of the people, Isaiah patiently declared Jehovah's warning messages for no less than 46 years! In like manner, patience will help us to endure in

12, 13. In line with James 5:10, how did the prophet Isaiah successfully exercise patience?



How did Jehovah reward Jeremiah's patience?

our work of preaching the good news, even though many are unreceptive.

¹⁴ Of course, as the prophets carried out their ministry, they had to cope with more than unresponsiveness; they suffered evil. Jeremiah was put in stocks, imprisoned in "the house of fetters," and thrown into a cistern. (Jeremiah 20:2; 37:15; 38:6) He suffered this abuse at the hands of the very people whom he wished to help. Yet, Jeremiah did not become bitter, nor did he retaliate. He patiently endured for decades.

¹⁵ Persecution and ridicule did not silence Jeremiah, and they do not silence us today. Of course, we may feel discouraged at times. Jeremiah felt discouraged. "The word of Jehovah became for me a cause for reproach and for jeering all day long," he wrote. "And I said: 'I am not going to make mention of him, and I shall speak no more in his name.'" What happened then? Did Jeremiah stop preaching? He continued: "In my

14, 15. What helped Jeremiah to cope with adversities and discouragement?

heart [the word of God] proved to be like a burning fire shut up in my bones; and I got tired of holding in, and I was unable to endure it." (Jeremiah 20:8, 9) Notice that when he focused on the ridicule of the people, he lost his joy. When he turned his attention to the beauty and importance of the message itself, his joy was rekindled. Moreover, Jehovah was with Jeremiah "like a terrible mighty one," strengthening him to proclaim the word of God with zeal and boldness.—Jeremiah 20:11.

¹⁶ Did the prophet Jeremiah find joy in his work? Absolutely! He said to Jehovah: "Your words were found, and I proceeded to eat them; and your word becomes to me the exultation and the rejoicing of my heart; for your name has been called upon me, O Jehovah." (Jeremiah 15:16) Jeremiah rejoiced in his privilege of representing the true God and preaching his word. We too can rejoice. What is more, we rejoice, as do the angels in heaven, that worldwide so many accept the Kingdom message, repent, and get on the road to everlasting life.—Luke 15:10.

"The Endurance of Job"

¹⁷ After commenting about the prophets of old, the disciple James wrote: "You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome Jehovah gave, that Jehovah is very tender in affection and merciful." (James 5:11) The Greek word here translated "endurance" has a meaning similar to that of the word James used in the preceding verse for "patience." Pointing out the difference between the two words, one scholar wrote: "The former is patience when persons abuse us, the latter is brave perseverance under things that distress us."

16. How can we maintain joy in our work of preaching the good news?

17, 18. In what way did Job endure, and what was the outcome?

¹⁸ Job experienced profound distress. He suffered financial ruin, the loss of his children, and a painful disease. He also grappled with false charges that Jehovah was punishing him. Job did not suffer in silence; he lamented his situation and even implied that he was more righteous than God. (Job 35:2) However, he never lost faith, nor did he break his integrity. He did not curse God as Satan said he would. (Job 1:11, 21) The outcome? Jehovah “blessed the end of Job afterward more than his beginning.” (Job 42:12) Jehovah restored Job’s health, doubled his wealth, and blessed him with a full, happy life with his loved ones. Job’s faithful endurance also enabled him to understand Jehovah more fully.

¹⁹ What do we learn from the patient endurance of Job? Like Job, we may suffer sickness or other hardships. We may not fully understand why Jehovah allows us to undergo a particular trial. Yet, of this we may be sure: If we remain faithful, we will be blessed. Jehovah without fail rewards those earnestly seeking him. (Hebrews 11:6) Jesus said: “He that has endured to the end is the one that will be saved.”—Matthew 10:22; 24:13.

“Jehovah’s Day Will Come”

²⁰ Though Jehovah is patient, he is also just and will not forever tolerate wickedness. There are limits to his patience. Wrote Peter: “[God] did not hold back from punishing an ancient world.” While Noah and his family were preserved alive, that ungodly world was deluged with water. Jehovah also brought judgment upon Sodom and Gomorrah, reducing them to ashes. These judgments set “a pattern for ungodly persons of things to come.” Of this, we may be certain: “Jehovah’s day will come.”—2 Peter 2:5, 6; 3:10.

19. What do we learn from the patient endurance of Job?

20. Why can we be certain that Jehovah’s day will come?



How did Jehovah reward Job’s endurance?

²¹ Let us, then, imitate the patience of Jehovah by assisting others to attain to repentance so that they might be saved. Let us also imitate the prophets by patiently declaring the good news despite the unresponsiveness of those to whom we preach. Further, we can be sure that Jehovah will bless us richly if, like Job, we endure trials and maintain integrity. There is every reason to rejoice in our ministry when we note how Jehovah’s rich blessing has been on the efforts of his people to preach the good news throughout all the earth. This we shall see in the next article.

21. How might we demonstrate our patience and endurance, and what subject will we consider in the next article?

Do You Remember?

- Why does Jehovah show patience?
- What do we learn from the patience of the prophets?
- How did Job display endurance, and what was the outcome?
- How do we know that Jehovah’s patience is not without limits?

"A WITNESS TO ALL THE NATIONS"

"You will be witnesses of me . . . to the most distant part of the earth."—ACTS 1:8.

JESUS' words recorded at Matthew 24:14 are so familiar that many of us know them by heart. And what a truly remarkable prophecy it is! Imagine what the disciples must have thought when they first heard it! The year was 33 C.E. The disciples had been with Jesus for about three years, and now they had come with him to Jerusalem. They had seen his miracles and had listened to his teachings. Though they delighted in the precious truths that Jesus had taught them, they were well-aware that not all shared their delight. Jesus had powerful and influential enemies.

² On the Mount of Olives, four disciples sat with Jesus, listening intently as he spoke of the coming dangers and challenges that they would face. Earlier, Jesus had told them that he would be killed. (Matthew 16:21) Now he made it clear that they too would experience brutal opposition. "People will deliver you up to tribulation and will kill you," he said. "And you will be objects of hatred by all the nations on account of my name." That was not all. False prophets would mislead many. Others would be stumbled and would betray and hate one another. Still others, in fact "the greater number," would allow their love for God and for his Word to cool off.—Matthew 24:9-12.

³ It was against such a negative backdrop

1. When and where did the disciples first hear the prophecy recorded at Matthew 24:14?
2. What dangers and challenges would the disciples face?
3. Why are Jesus' words found at Matthew 24:14 truly stunning?

that Jesus made a statement that must have caused the disciples to marvel. He said: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14) Yes, the work that Jesus began in Israel—to "bear witness to the truth"—would continue and expand to global proportions. (John 18:37) What a truly stunning prophecy! To extend that work to "all the nations" would be challenging; to do so in the face of "hatred by all the nations" would be nothing short of miraculous. The accomplishment of this immense task would magnify not only Jehovah's supremacy and power but also his love, mercy, and patience. In addition, it would give his servants an opportunity to show their faith and devotion.

⁴ Jesus left his disciples in no doubt that they had on their hands a monumental work. Before his ascension to heaven, Jesus appeared to them and said: "You will receive power when the holy spirit arrives upon you, and you will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) Of course, others would soon join them. Still, the disciples were few in number. How comforting it must have been to know that God's powerful holy spirit would empower them to accomplish this divine assignment!

⁵ The disciples knew that they were to

4. Who were told to carry out the work of witnessing, and what comfort did Jesus impart?
5. What did the disciples not know about the witnessing work?

preach the good news and “make disciples of people of all the nations.” (Matthew 28:19, 20) But they did not know how thorough a witness would be given, and they did not know when the end would come. Neither do we. These are matters for Jehovah alone to determine. (Matthew 24:36) When the witness is given to Jehovah’s satisfaction, he will bring an end to this wicked system of things. Only then will Christians discern that the preaching work has been accomplished to the extent Jehovah purposed. Those early disciples could hardly have envisioned the magnitude of the witness that would be given in this time of the end.

The Witness in the First Century

⁶ In the first century, the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work produced astounding results. On the day of Pentecost 33 C.E., about 120 disciples were in an upper room in Jerusalem. God’s holy spirit was poured out upon them, the apostle Peter gave a stirring talk explaining the meaning of this miracle, and some 3,000 became believers and were baptized. That was only the beginning. Despite the determined efforts by religious leaders to crush the preaching of the good news, “Jehovah continued to join to [the disciples] daily those being saved.” Soon, “the number of the men became

6. What happened at Pentecost 33 C.E. and shortly thereafter?

about five thousand.” After that, “believers in the Lord kept on being added, multitudes both of men and of women.”—Acts 2:1-4, 8, 14, 41, 47; 4:4; 5:14.

⁷ The year 36 C.E. saw another significant development—the conversion and baptism of Cornelius, a Gentile. In directing the apostle Peter to this God-fearing man, Jehovah indicated that Jesus’ command to “make disciples of people of all the nations” was not limited to Jews in various lands. (Acts 10:44, 45) What was the reaction of those taking the lead? When the apostles and older men in Judaea discerned that the good news was also to be taken to those of the nations—non-Jews—they glorified God. (Acts 11:1, 18) Meanwhile, the preaching work continued to bear fruit among the Jews. Some years later, possibly about 58 C.E., there were in addition to Gentile believers “many thousands of [Jewish] believers.”—Acts 21:20.

⁸ Though numerical increase among first-century Christians is impressive, never should we forget the individuals whom the figures represent. The Biblical message they heard was powerful. (Hebrews 4:12) It dramatically changed the lives of those embracing it. Individuals cleaned up their lives, put on the new personality, and became

7. Why was the conversion of Cornelius a significant development?

8. How does the good news affect individuals?



reconciled to God. (Ephesians 4:22, 23) The same is true today. And those accepting the good news all have the marvelous prospect of living eternally.—John 3:16.

Fellow Workers With God

⁹ The early Christians did not take credit for what was being accomplished. They recognized that their work as ministers was supported by “power of holy spirit.” (Romans 15:13, 19) Jehovah was the one responsible for spiritual growth. At the same time, those Christians knew that they had the privilege and responsibility of being “God’s fellow workers.” (1 Corinthians 3:6-9) Consequently, in harmony with Jesus’ admonition, they exerted themselves vigorously in the work they were assigned to do.—Luke 13:24.

¹⁰ As “an apostle to the nations,” Paul journeyed thousands of miles on land and sea, establishing many congregations in the Roman province of Asia and in Greece. (Romans 11:13) He also traveled to Rome and possibly even to Spain. Meanwhile, the apostle Peter, entrusted with “the good news . . .

9. What privilege and responsibility did the early Christians recognize that they had?

10. What efforts did some early Christians make to give a witness to all nations?

Jehovah directed Peter to witness to Cornelius and his family



for those who [were] circumcised,” traveled in the other direction to serve in Babylon, an important center of Judaism at that time. (Galatians 2:7-9; 1 Peter 5:13) Among the many others who labored in the work of the Lord were such women as Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Another woman, named Persis, is said to have “performed many labors in the Lord.”—Romans 16:12.

¹¹ Jehovah richly blessed the efforts of those and other zealous workers. Less than 30 years after Jesus foretold that there would be a witness to all the nations, Paul wrote that the “good news” had been “preached in all creation that is under heaven.” (Colossians 1:23) Did the end then come? In a sense, yes. It came upon the Jewish system of things in the year 70 C.E. when Roman armies destroyed Jerusalem along with the temple. Yet, Jehovah had determined that a far greater witness would be given before he would bring an end to Satan’s global system of things.

The Witness Given Today

¹² During the latter part of the 19th century, after a long period when religious apostasy prevailed, pure worship was reestablished. The Bible Students, as Jehovah’s Witnesses were then known, well understood the command to make disciples in all the earth. (Matthew 28:19, 20) By the year 1914, there were

about 5,100 who actively participated in the preaching activity, and the good news had reached some 68 lands. However, those early Bible Students did not grasp the full significance of Matthew 24:14. By the late 19th cen-

11. How did Jehovah bless the efforts of the disciples?

12. How did the early Bible Students understand the command to preach?

Paul traveled thousands of miles on land and sea to preach the good news

tury, the Bible, which contains the good news, or gospel, had been translated and printed by Bible societies in many languages and distributed around the world. Thus, for some decades, the Bible Students reasoned that a witness to the nations had already been given.

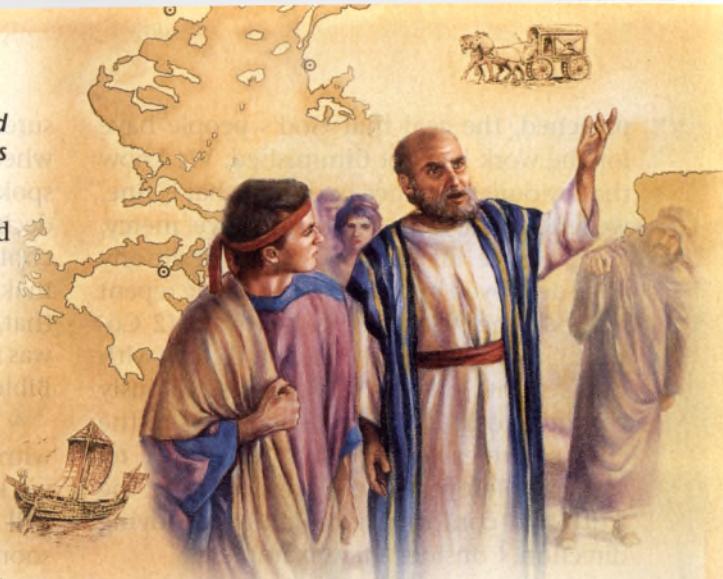
¹³ Gradually, Jehovah gave his people a clearer understanding of his will and purpose. (*Proverbs 4:18*) *The Watch Tower* of December 1, 1928, said: “Can we say that [the] circulation of the Bible accomplished the foretold preaching of the gospel of the kingdom? Decidedly no! In spite of this Bible distribution it is still necessary for God’s little band of witnesses in the earth to print literature explaining God’s [purpose] and to call upon the homes where these Bibles have been placed. Otherwise the people would be left in ignorance as to the setting up of the Messianic government in our day.”

¹⁴ That issue of *The Watch Tower* further stated: “In 1920, . . . Bible Students came to a correct understanding of our Lord’s prophecy contained in Matthew 24:14. They then realized that ‘this gospel’ which was to be preached in all the world for a testimony to the Gentiles or all nations, was not a gospel of a kingdom yet to come but a gospel to the effect that the Messianic King has begun his reign over earth.”

¹⁵ That “little band of witnesses” in the 1920’s did not remain little. In the decades to come, “a great crowd” of “other sheep” was

13, 14. What clearer understanding of God’s will and purpose was presented in a 1928 issue of *The Watch Tower*?

15. How has the witnessing work expanded since the 1920’s?



identified and began to be gathered. (*Revelation 7:9; John 10:16*) Today, there are 6,613,950 proclaimers of the good news in 235 lands of the earth. What a marvelous fulfillment of prophecy! Never before has “this good news of the kingdom” been preached on such a large scale. Never before have there been so many faithful servants of Jehovah on earth.

¹⁶ Together, this vast throng of Witnesses have been busy during the 2005 service year. Over a billion hours were spent in proclaiming the good news in 235 lands. Millions of return visits were made, and millions of Bible studies were conducted. This work has been accomplished by Jehovah’s Witnesses, who have freely given of their time and resources to share God’s Word with others. (*Matthew 10:8*) By means of his powerful holy spirit, Jehovah continues to empower his servants to accomplish his will.—*Zechariah 4:6*.

Working Hard to Give a Witness

¹⁷ Though nearly 2,000 years have passed since Jesus said that the good news would be

16. What was accomplished in the past service year? (See chart on pages 27-30.)

17. How are Jehovah’s people responding to Jesus’ words about preaching the good news?

preached, the zeal that God's people have for the work has not diminished. We know that by our endurance in doing what is fine, we reflect Jehovah's qualities of love, mercy, and patience. Like him, we do not desire any to be destroyed but desire that people repent and become reconciled to Jehovah. (2 Corinthians 5:18-20; 2 Peter 3:9) Aglow with God's spirit, Jehovah's Witnesses zealously continue to proclaim the good news to the ends of the earth. (Romans 12:11) As a result, people everywhere are accepting the truth and conforming to Jehovah's loving direction. Consider a few examples.

¹⁸ Charles was a farmer in western Kenya. In 1998 he sold over 18,000 pounds of tobacco and was awarded a certificate that named him the Best Tobacco Farmer. At that time, he began to study the Bible. Soon he came to realize that a person involved in tobacco production violates Jesus' command to love one's neighbor. (Matthew 22:39) Upon concluding that 'the best tobacco farmer' was really 'the best killer,' Charles sprayed his tobacco plants with poison. He progressed toward dedication and baptism and is now a regular pioneer and a ministerial servant.

¹⁹ There is no doubt that Jehovah is rocking the nations by means of the global witness being given, and the desirable things—people—are coming in. (Haggai 2:7) Pedro, who lives in Portugal, entered a seminary when he was 13 years old. His goal was to become a missionary and to teach the Bible. After a short time, however, he left the seminary because the Bible received so little attention in his classes. Six years later found him studying psychology at a university in Lisbon. He lived with his aunt, one of Jehovah's Witnesses, who encouraged him to study the Bible. At that point, Pedro was not

18, 19. What experiences can you relate of some who responded favorably to the good news?

sure that God existed, nor could he decide whether to have a Bible study or not. He spoke to his psychology professor about indecisiveness. The professor said that psychology teaches that people who cannot make decisions tend to be self-destructive. At that, Pedro resolved to have a Bible study. He was recently baptized and is now conducting Bible studies of his own.

²⁰ We still do not know to what extent a witness will be given to the nations, nor do we know the day and hour when the end will come. We only know that it will be soon. We rejoice that the preaching of the good news on such a vast scale is but one of the many indications that the time is near for God's Kingdom to replace human governments. (Daniel 2:44) With each passing year, millions are being given an opportunity to respond to the good news, and this glorifies our God, Jehovah. May it be our determination to remain faithful and along with our brothers worldwide to keep busy in the work of bearing witness to all the nations. By doing so, we will save both ourselves and those who listen to us.—1 Timothy 4:16.

20. Why may we rejoice that a witness to the nations is being given on such a vast scale?

Do You Remember?

- Why is Matthew 24:14 such a remarkable prophecy?
- What efforts did early Christians make in preaching, and with what results?
- How did the Bible Students come to understand the need to bear witness to all the nations?
- In considering the activity of Jehovah's people in the past service year, what impresses you?

2005 SERVICE YEAR REPORT OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WORLDWIDE

Country or Territory	Population	2005 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, 1 Publisher to Av. Pubs.	2005 % Inc. Over 2004	2004 Av. Pubs.	2005 No. Bptzd.	Av. Aux. Pio. Pubs.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance	
Alaska	660,000	2,340	282	2,160	-3	2,225	65	65	167	26	356,299	905	4,702
Albania	3,135,000	3,556	882	3,483	7	3,268	337	267	729	81	1,272,598	5,080	10,144
American Samoa	57,881	198	292	187	3	182	7	9	15	2	39,455	225	730
Andorra	78,607	177	444	159	3	154	3	6	11	2	28,528	73	297
Angola	13,000,000	58,157	224	55,517	6	52,218	4,206	1,773	4,442	821	12,492,893	151,425	259,412
Anguilla	11,430	41	279	34	0	34	1	4	2	8,045	56	197	
Antigua	75,741	434	175	401	4	385	16	15	27	5	75,355	441	1,292
Argentina	36,260,130	131,513	276	128,158	0	127,579	4,980	5,887	10,735	1,782	25,789,026	95,894	287,478
Armenia	3,210,000	8,998	357	8,757	5	8,343	654	663	1,192	71	2,469,132	7,782	20,662
Aruba	100,517	743	135	717	1	707	25	27	36	10	116,340	649	2,356
Australia	20,111,297	61,444	327	60,399	0	60,533	1,284	1,761	3,148	775	9,426,942	20,598	111,269
Austria	8,065,166	20,436	395	20,205	0	20,156	366	528	988	301	3,183,640	9,810	33,776
Azerbaijan	8,200,000	528	15,530	485	15	423	49	35	79	4	152,568	765	1,227
Azores	241,876	626	386	605	3	587	12	21	53	15	125,368	654	1,427
Bahamas	304,913	1,607	190	1,460	2	1,435	44	46	127	29	288,478	1,513	3,533
Bangladesh	144,319,628	110	1,311,997	106	7	99	2	2	14	2	22,223	111	270
Barbados	277,264	2,372	117	2,315	-1	2,327	55	111	112	29	370,526	1,702	5,608
Belarus	9,970,688	3,872	2,575	3,789	4	3,637	361	232	525	45	994,282	2,945	8,126
Belgium	10,445,852	24,749	422	23,739	-1	23,909	553	550	920	373	3,310,560	8,360	44,261
Belize	270,000	1,681	161	1,607	4	1,538	115	65	222	42	420,181	2,298	6,296
Benin	6,769,914	8,366	809	7,836	5	7,498	515	423	865	155	2,070,715	15,993	33,612
Bermuda	65,365	443	148	433	-5	454	12	9	60	5	95,435	283	1,019
Bolivia	8,857,870	17,843	496	16,918	0	16,905	739	909	1,755	208	4,303,308	22,226	60,596
Bonaire	13,393	72	186	66	12	59	5	2	5	1	12,975	98	224
Bosnia & Herzegovina	4,130,000	1,136	3,636	1,114	2	1,093	65	82	177	15	353,692	661	2,151
Botswana	1,727,372	1,486	1,162	1,410	6	1,333	131	62	110	37	311,451	2,150	3,803
Brazil	184,184,264	637,655	289	608,963	2	596,355	28,683	19,745	45,170	9,706	112,590,546	712,463	1,527,133
Britain	58,355,789	127,206	459	121,166	1	120,514	2,435	3,042	7,183	1,500	17,997,443	46,701	215,101
Bulgaria	7,928,901	1,500	5,286	1,459	5	1,383	90	67	201	23	393,062	1,542	3,687
Burkina Faso	12,202,704	1,145	10,657	1,111	2	1,085	61	37	120	27	296,848	1,859	3,617
Burundi	7,703,000	6,026	1,278	5,689	9	5,234	517	301	668	101	1,740,455	14,143	18,982
Cambodia	13,607,069	195	69,780	185	8	172	17	9	71	7	97,169	537	1,022
Cameroon	17,000,000	30,361	560	29,986	3	29,249	1,480	869	1,967	601	5,746,423	46,056	90,245
Canada	32,115,270	109,604	293	107,534	0	108,012	2,028	3,453	7,436	1,318	18,412,405	38,579	181,810
Cape Verde	418,224	1,629	257	1,584	1	1,569	84	59	213	31	394,727	3,193	7,329
Cayman Islands	42,599	188	227	163	-4	170	5	2	7	3	20,240	93	487
Central Afr. Rep.	3,900,000	2,646	1,474	2,312	-2	2,350	132	96	288	55	595,354	4,606	13,807
Chad	8,250,000	635	12,992	594	1	586	22	14	71	18	154,645	891	4,696
Chile	16,136,137	70,019	230	64,416	1	64,079	2,425	2,791	6,393	761	13,376,862	57,161	165,447
Chuuk	63,525	61	1,041	60	-2	61	8	4	28	3	38,511	308	718
Colombia	46,045,109	126,586	364	122,807	2	120,175	5,925	3,305	11,233	1,874	23,431,469	152,420	426,835
Congo, Dem. Rep. of	56,100,000	131,905	425	127,835	4	122,976	8,491	3,583	9,803	2,893	25,773,380	272,512	777,460
Congo, Rep. of	3,900,000	4,854	803	4,508	6	4,252	277	190	293	70	1,120,343	17,235	23,722
Cook Islands	21,388	191	112	179	7	167	6	10	16	2	37,100	211	524
Costa Rica	4,215,569	21,024	201	20,187	3	19,694	747	700	950	272	3,177,022	19,230	53,404
Côte d'Ivoire	19,231,757	7,002	2,747	6,811	4	6,528	400	330	673	162	1,816,858	16,225	26,995
Croatia	4,437,460	5,434	817	5,393	0	5,409	114	220	393	71	1,087,078	2,255	9,606

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Cuba	11,217,100	88,947	126	88,451	0	88,472	2,760	4,015	6,694	1,279	15,957,528	131,439	188,076
Curaçao	133,700	1,508	89	1,464	5	1,398	45	34	98	20	238,970	1,641	4,163
Cyprus	749,200	1,967	381	1,944	2	1,904	60	69	153	25	347,742	947	3,708
Czech Rep.	10,223,713	15,617	655	15,534	-1	15,649	299	438	663	232	2,250,380	6,453	27,408
Denmark	5,411,405	14,314	378	14,190	-1	14,309	167	354	638	205	2,002,733	4,202	21,984
Dominica	71,794	362	198	341	1	337	9	15	33	8	83,553	510	1,082
Dominican Rep.	8,949,725	25,936	345	25,475	2	25,055	1,287	1,496	3,404	363	6,664,451	45,268	98,355
East Timor	924,642	66	14,010	53	39	38	11	4	17	1	29,809	127	290
Ecuador	13,026,890	52,490	248	50,843	5	48,560	2,830	2,363	6,119	661	12,315,802	82,600	208,929
El Salvador	6,874,926	30,687	224	29,482	2	28,946	1,188	800	1,551	531	4,976,446	29,838	81,869
Equatorial Guinea	535,881	974	550	866	4	835	66	39	136	15	244,982	2,295	4,126
Estonia	1,366,723	4,141	330	4,077	1	4,037	165	162	388	49	788,928	2,689	7,383
Ethiopia	70,000,000	7,563	9,256	7,415	3	7,191	546	521	1,077	147	2,248,219	5,815	20,058
Faeroe Islands	48,214	88	548	86	-3	89	3	21	4	25,279	64	119	
Falkland Islands	2,900	4	725	3	-40	5	1	1	402	2	9		
Fiji	806,217	2,071	389	1,955	0	1,949	96	69	172	34	386,992	2,066	7,042
Finland	5,236,611	19,044	275	18,911	-1	19,094	319	528	1,375	301	2,730,577	8,507	26,951
France	60,561,200	119,131	508	113,731	1	113,038	2,318	3,840	4,956	1,495	17,968,668	40,589	203,370
French Guiana	182,500	1,764	103	1,693	4	1,621	85	81	124	28	391,460	3,282	6,920
Gabon	1,389,201	2,818	493	2,582	10	2,356	221	120	180	34	614,801	6,331	9,356
Gambia, The	1,593,256	167	9,540	158	-1	159	4	5	28	3	50,114	315	406
Georgia	4,560,000	15,748	290	15,182	2	14,863	669	647	1,785	151	3,180,264	7,615	31,034
Germany	82,500,849	164,593	501	162,512	0	163,092	3,467	3,732	7,777	2,209	24,631,687	72,264	275,164
Ghana	20,892,796	78,002	268	74,511	3	72,624	3,346	1,545	4,641	1,217	13,541,932	174,561	244,943
Gibraltar	28,759	98	293	91	0	91	1	2	6	2	14,527	24	145
Greece	10,539,771	28,055	376	27,900	0	27,959	518	751	2,486	377	4,853,019	10,025	44,408
Greenland	56,854	121	470	118	-7	127	2	22	7	27,599	85	270	
Grenada	89,258	568	157	549	-6	584	16	23	43	9	97,674	493	1,455
Guadeloupe	438,500	7,713	57	7,579	1	7,508	219	258	286	114	1,192,804	8,434	18,691
Guam	154,805	622	249	612	-1	617	15	40	101	10	162,329	857	1,987
Guatemala	12,736,752	24,008	531	22,859	3	22,217	1,169	661	1,736	364	4,325,356	22,481	68,653
Guinea	9,402,000	883	10,648	686	-6	729	40	35	81	21	208,216	1,710	3,255
Guinea-Bissau	1,416,027	114	12,421	109	16	94	13	6	32	4	59,418	405	906
Guyana	777,648	2,192	355	2,143	2	2,093	82	77	146	38	372,979	2,404	9,930
Haiti	8,304,062	13,849	600	12,720	3	12,311	871	582	1,039	209	2,763,874	22,376	59,372
Hawaii	1,262,840	7,864	161	7,708	0	7,698	179	283	916	97	1,652,730	5,415	18,579
Honduras	7,619,600	15,716	485	14,915	3	14,454	634	513	1,371	231	3,343,533	20,175	49,624
Hong Kong	6,880,000	4,654	1,478	4,527	0	4,507	249	269	628	49	1,193,920	5,361	8,755
Hungary	10,085,000	22,085	457	20,869	0	20,876	565	532	1,044	256	3,281,905	11,281	41,375
Iceland	293,577	289	1,016	280	1	278	6	8	27	5	51,166	172	572
India	1,083,093,040	26,333	41,131	24,333	3	23,583	1,543	861	1,069	422	3,627,207	18,976	62,069
Indonesia	219,900,000	18,576	11,838	18,111	3	17,564	1,064	712	1,067	412	3,737,087	20,455	44,155
Ireland	5,746,428	5,096	1,128	4,904	3	4,757	109	135	485	114	946,666	2,295	9,370
Israel	10,669,900	1,223	8,724	1,181	-2	1,201	47	46	58	17	209,192	756	2,401
Italy	58,462,375	234,795	249	232,060	1	230,880	4,802	9,030	22,380	3,070	47,109,056	97,202	416,248
Jamaica	2,650,900	11,174	237	10,663	0	10,685	412	421	640	196	1,722,749	11,107	35,803
Japan	126,869,397	218,262	581	217,227	0	217,097	3,785	15,743	56,411	3,164	73,502,684	159,834	338,330
Kazakhstan	14,860,000	14,716	1,010	14,112	4	13,606	966	855	1,484	156	3,275,176	12,160	30,662
Kenya	32,480,000	20,286	1,601	18,998	5	18,044	1,429	739	2,529	466	5,298,633	31,609	52,157
Kiribati	78,300	75	1,044	62	-3	64	1	8	10	1	25,860	178	266
Korea, Rep. of	48,460,590	91,996	527	91,379	1	90,282	2,694	6,675	31,735	1,403	38,556,539	60,202	137,738
Kosovo	2,350,000	137	17,153	131	14	115	10	8	34	4	57,744	244	636
Kosrae	9,728	30	324	27	8	25	1	5	1	1	8,620	90	153
Kyrgyzstan	5,010,000	4,001	1,252	3,750	4	3,622	260	256	506	39	935,564	4,319	8,343
Latvia	2,299,000	2,403	957	2,327	2	2,281	82	117	328	39	617,753	2,273	4,035

Country or Territory	Population	2005 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, 1 Pub- lisher to	2005 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 2004	2004 Av. Pubs.	2005 No. Bptzd.	Av. Aux. Pio. Pubs.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Atten- dance
Lebanon	3,777,218	3,585	1,054	3,527	0	3,535	104	90	123	70	526,893	1,718	6,547
Lesotho	2,389,339	3,133	763	3,049	2	2,978	310	123	260	64	674,503	4,161	8,039
Liberia	3,390,635	4,581	740	4,352	9	4,008	357	206	597	84	1,386,160	15,225	26,777
Liechtenstein	34,604	59	587	49	0	49	1	1	1	1	4,322	17	80
Lithuania	3,500,000	2,916	1,200	2,773	2	2,732	104	139	322	39	666,589	2,078	5,613
Luxembourg	525,119	1,835	286	1,777	1	1,752	37	37	86	33	274,812	809	3,634
Macao	476,000	129	3,690	120	12	107	4	4	20	2	38,805	127	286
Macedonia	2,032,017	1,129	1,800	1,072	1	1,060	35	64	80	16	258,484	658	3,160
Madagascar	17,105,000	15,701	1,089	15,254	7	14,282	1,476	611	2,218	334	4,067,430	35,922	80,184
Madeira	244,906	1,132	216	1,093	0	1,089	32	41	52	18	180,796	743	2,097
Malawi	12,296,072	65,702	187	63,576	8	58,620	4,802	2,682	4,920	1,007	12,494,986	60,790	192,814
Malaysia	26,127,000	2,615	9,991	2,519	4	2,427	122	125	350	57	667,554	3,906	6,880
Mali	12,291,529	234	52,528	214	0	215	10	11	41	7	86,485	544	859
Malta	417,000	544	767	527	-3	545	11	17	26	7	83,655	214	1,038
Marshall Islands	71,056	218	326	213	3	206	6	17	38	5	68,471	620	1,300
Martinique	381,427	4,215	90	4,083	1	4,024	137	209	222	52	776,330	4,041	9,392
Mauritius	1,145,196	1,536	746	1,498	1	1,477	52	38	96	26	274,448	1,364	2,794
Mayotte	160,265	60	2,671	57	14	50	3	3	4	1	13,705	83	104
Mexico	106,451,679	593,802	179	586,501	1	581,651	21,879	13,713	59,183	11,192	115,274,246	667,649	1,784,042
Moldova	3,941,500	18,414	214	17,915	1	17,702	678	482	1,256	234	2,621,766	9,019	40,198
Mongolia	2,791,272	109	25,608	99	18	84	17	11	23	1	47,916	262	571
Montserrat	3,000	8	375	8	0	8	1	1	1	1	760	6	44
Mozambique	19,420,036	41,563	467	40,517	6	38,260	2,912	1,171	4,576	935	8,737,746	53,824	174,126
Myanmar	54,300,000	3,111	17,454	3,044	4	2,938	125	67	203	96	540,763	2,061	7,120
Namibia	1,830,330	1,308	1,399	1,226	3	1,189	116	43	98	26	265,732	1,647	3,675
Nauru	10,600	4	2,650	2	0	2	1	1	1	1	144	3	45
Nepal	27,676,547	739	37,451	695	10	630	64	40	86	10	175,493	1,314	2,644
Netherlands	16,316,058	30,728	531	29,438	-1	29,632	635	674	1,078	419	3,893,902	9,792	52,000
Nevis	10,080	53	190	47	-4	49	1	2	1	1	8,450	26	136
New Caledonia	230,789	1,675	138	1,592	2	1,563	61	95	68	22	299,522	1,958	5,271
New Zealand	4,104,351	13,427	306	12,821	-1	12,943	413	375	716	170	1,985,175	5,856	25,639
Nicaragua	5,650,000	19,003	297	17,596	4	16,977	942	626	1,767	322	3,963,836	29,828	74,315
Niger	11,665,937	243	48,008	230	1	227	11	7	32	7	66,231	381	1,248
Nigeria	128,771,988	276,756	465	260,489	2	256,024	12,460	6,038	26,184	4,751	48,719,242	446,446	600,692
Niue	1,761	30	59	28	4	27	1	4	1	1	6,192	24	71
Norfolk Island	1,828	19	96	15	15	13	1	1	1	1	1,946	6	18
Norway	4,621,299	9,953	464	9,659	0	9,638	164	168	468	172	1,222,917	3,418	16,283
Pakistan	162,419,946	1,032	157,384	743	7	692	58	22	43	16	123,057	643	2,897
Palau	20,164	96	210	91	-2	93	6	8	18	1	30,991	207	405
Panama	3,228,186	11,704	276	11,101	5	10,592	546	440	1,126	235	2,394,301	14,771	36,501
Papua New Guinea	5,930,419	3,506	1,692	3,086	-1	3,110	104	114	224	54	607,995	3,275	19,333
Paraguay	6,240,485	7,943	786	7,687	0	7,667	490	271	847	131	1,686,990	9,325	19,622
Peru	27,947,000	95,108	294	87,529	5	83,755	4,940	4,156	18,308	991	25,771,871	136,347	312,011
Philippines	85,000,000	146,613	580	143,811	1	142,313	6,719	4,993	19,916	3,393	27,785,173	114,209	453,898
Pohnpei	39,721	80	497	78	4	75	10	6	11	1	21,313	209	400
Poland	38,175,000	128,519	297	127,729	0	127,377	3,681	3,385	5,218	1,799	15,214,120	45,850	224,400
Portugal	10,055,952	48,165	209	47,622	-1	47,896	1,129	1,691	2,276	651	7,006,017	24,344	94,588
Puerto Rico	3,937,316	24,600	160	24,351	-2	24,752	628	628	2,045	323	4,103,458	13,249	59,094
Réunion	766,214	2,625	292	2,551	-1	2,567	77	92	133	34	452,720	1,955	5,591
Rodrigues	35,546	39	911	35	6	33	2	1	3	1	6,606	21	67
Romania	21,733,556	38,423	566	38,045	-1	38,361	1,064	909	2,464	562	5,823,537	18,829	79,370
Rota	2,899	9	322	8	14	7	1	2	1	1	2,496	14	43
Russia	145,200,000	142,439	1,019	136,726	3	132,978	8,466	7,695	16,363	1,438	33,691,348	117,167	267,434
Rwanda	8,162,715	13,341	612	12,318	8	11,431	1,020	813	2,036	274	4,644,874	29,565	44,655
Saba	1,600	6	267	6	50	4	1	1	1	1	1,987	17	22

Country or Territory	Population	2005 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, 1 Publisher to	2005 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 2004	2004 Av. Pubs.	2005 No. Bptzd.	Av. Aux. Pio. Pubs.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
St. Eustatius	2,900	18	161	13	-13	15	1	1	1	1	1,752	13	47
St. Helena	4,047	134	30	127	-2	129	3	1	1	3	11,882	66	270
St. Kitts	31,800	183	174	166	3	161	3	6	15	3	36,630	188	487
St. Lucia	162,157	697	233	672	2	662	12	29	70	10	147,509	911	1,766
St. Maarten	40,000	317	126	287	4	276	16	10	39	4	71,313	391	958
St. Pierre & Miquelon	7,012	13	539	12	-25	16	1	1	1	1	2,550	6	15
St. Vincent	102,253	313	327	302	0	301	6	13	31	7	75,742	362	898
Saipan	71,400	174	410	164	4	157	7	10	26	2	48,080	293	697
Samoa	177,287	427	415	384	4	370	18	8	49	8	89,229	451	1,431
San Marino	28,880	184	157	181	1	179	1	10	14	2	41,710	86	297
São Tomé & Príncipe	187,410	432	434	420	8	389	34	29	69	9	144,209	1,762	1,687
Senegal	11,126,832	1,001	11,116	983	2	966	37	40	131	25	291,510	1,608	2,538
Serbia & Montenegro	8,129,395	3,998	2,033	3,930	0	3,936	110	204	385	57	888,708	1,845	8,359
Seychelles	81,755	253	323	240	4	230	9	10	24	4	58,441	352	700
Sierra Leone	6,017,643	1,450	4,150	1,348	7	1,257	60	50	109	35	318,055	2,730	7,107
Slovakia	5,386,699	11,785	457	11,645	-2	11,933	238	213	238	161	1,290,556	3,054	20,727
Slovenia	1,998,079	1,901	1,051	1,884	2	1,853	41	64	148	29	374,939	815	3,031
Solomon Islands	471,266	1,890	249	1,792	-3	1,844	107	80	249	42	422,716	1,810	7,411
South Africa	44,344,136	77,954	569	74,427	2	73,047	4,474	2,245	6,625	1,521	14,836,105	86,311	178,976
Spain	43,975,400	104,170	422	99,634	1	98,922	1,697	3,764	7,745	1,377	19,441,201	41,051	176,669
Sri Lanka	19,300,000	4,019	4,802	3,787	5	3,613	234	134	285	79	680,347	3,502	10,310
Sudan	30,765,000	1,353	22,738	1,267	5	1,212	70	40	210	50	371,829	2,621	5,927
Suriname	438,026	2,045	214	1,988	0	1,990	110	106	146	40	406,594	2,585	6,871
Swaziland	1,126,350	2,335	482	2,204	4	2,122	123	75	195	64	491,690	2,844	6,456
Sweden	9,024,186	22,561	400	21,980	-1	22,178	337	681	1,412	322	3,129,240	8,163	35,567
Switzerland	7,415,102	17,958	413	17,036	0	17,079	319	376	569	283	2,322,346	7,059	29,989
Tahiti	245,516	1,782	138	1,760	2	1,722	64	70	83	25	314,387	1,912	5,614
Taiwan	22,562,663	5,566	4,054	5,429	7	5,091	315	397	1,115	78	1,865,171	7,188	13,080
Tajikistan	6,540,000	522	12,529	469	11	422	45	41	106	5	176,294	623	1,255
Tanzania	37,267,550	13,697	2,721	12,710	5	12,049	951	519	1,589	386	3,279,785	21,534	53,437
Thailand	65,450,000	2,318	28,236	2,207	4	2,122	95	99	309	65	550,397	2,524	5,490
Tinian	2,740	18	152	16	14	14	1	1	5	1	5,592	39	54
Togo	5,126,000	13,664	375	13,106	2	12,796	780	657	923	221	2,949,210	33,088	51,360
Tonga	112,422	229	491	197	9	181	31	9	24	5	47,924	244	556
Trinidad & Tobago	1,300,000	8,202	158	8,073	0	8,069	251	442	769	104	1,541,401	8,642	21,286
Turkey	67,803,927	1,765	38,416	1,730	2	1,697	71	71	131	28	350,470	879	3,287
Turks & Caicos Isls.	20,556	137	150	126	1	125	18	3	13	3	27,217	204	366
Tuvalu	9,403	62	152	45	5	43	1	1	1	1	5,544	35	109
Uganda	26,800,000	4,051	6,616	3,781	8	3,513	398	164	453	91	984,929	7,791	13,281
Ukraine	47,026,773	137,210	343	129,687	2	127,761	5,624	5,932	12,005	1,434	26,163,469	87,079	264,514
U.S. of America	291,737,129	1,035,802	282	995,071	0	992,809	28,384	28,031	94,049	12,261	185,834,994	508,525	2,257,453
Uruguay	3,163,700	10,950	289	10,825	0	10,877	377	287	476	156	1,405,824	7,762	24,508
Vanuatu	217,000	351	618	319	10	289	15	15	31	5	73,199	666	1,943
Venezuela	25,375,281	98,785	257	95,107	1	93,979	4,864	4,108	11,688	1,297	22,675,021	128,591	330,340
Virgin Isls. (Brit.)	20,647	184	112	176	-2	180	15	6	24	3	36,218	179	634
Virgin Isls. (U.S.)	109,343	619	177	595	-2	607	22	20	84	9	131,402	585	1,972
Wallis & Futuna Isls.	15,301	94	163	85	23	69	13	6	4	1	19,636	111	366
Yap	11,241	25	450	23	-8	25	1	9	1	1	9,456	56	158
Zambia	11,441,461	127,151	90	119,810	1	118,068	7,242	3,191	9,410	2,152	22,398,187	188,912	569,891
Zimbabwe	11,984,108	32,038	374	30,119	1	29,745	2,239	1,033	2,847	888	6,457,881	50,306	76,512
28 Other Lands		11,916		11,100	9.2	10,164	559	558	1,709	216	3,200,499	12,908	23,209
Grand Total (235 Lands)		6,613,950		6,390,022	1.3	6,308,341	247,746	219,925	623,308	98,311	1,278,235,504	6,061,534	16,390,116

During the 2005 service year, Jehovah's Witnesses spent over \$104 million in caring for special pioneers, missionaries, and traveling overseers in their field service assignments.

MEMORIAL PARTAKERS WORLDWIDE: 8,524

Questions From Readers

Did Joseph, a faithful servant of Jehovah, use a special silver cup to read omens, as seems to be indicated at Genesis 44:5?

There is no reason to believe that Joseph actually employed any form of divination.

The Bible reveals Joseph's real understanding on the use of magical arts to learn the future. Earlier, when he was asked to interpret Pharaoh's dreams, Joseph repeatedly insisted that only God can "announce" upcoming events. As a result, Pharaoh himself came to believe that the God whom Joseph worshipped—the true God, not occult powers—caused Joseph to know details about the future. (Genesis 41:16, 25, 28, 32, 39) In the Law given to Moses later on, Jehovah prohibited the use of magic or divination, thus confirming that He alone foretells the future.
—Deuteronomy 18:10-12.

Why, then, did Joseph indicate through his servant that he used a silver cup to 'read omens expertly'?* (Genesis 44:5) We need to consider the circumstances under which this statement was made.

Because of a very severe famine, Joseph's brothers had traveled to Egypt to obtain food. Years earlier, these same brothers had sold Joseph into slavery. Now, unbeknownst to them, they requested assistance from their own brother, who had become Egypt's food administrator. Joseph did not reveal himself to them. Instead, he decided to test them.

* Describing this ancient practice, *The Holy Bible, With an Explanatory and Critical Commentary*, edited by F. C. Cook, explains: "It was practised either by dropping gold, silver, or jewels, into the water, and then examining their appearance; or simply by looking into the water as into a mirror." Bible commentator Christopher Wordsworth says: "Sometimes the cup was filled with water, and the answer was given by means of imagery, produced by the sun on the water in the cup."



Fittingly, Joseph wanted to determine the genuineness of their repentance. He also wanted to find out whether—and to what degree—they loved their brother Benjamin and their father, Jacob, who was especially fond of Benjamin. Thus, Joseph resorted to a ruse.
—Genesis 41:55–44:3.

Joseph commanded one of his servants to fill his brothers' bags with food supplies, return each one's money in the mouth of his bag, and put Joseph's silver cup in the mouth of Benjamin's bag. In all of this, Joseph was representing himself as an administrator of a pagan land. He adapted himself, his actions, and his language to the character of such an administrator, as it would appear in the eyes of his unsuspecting brothers.

When Joseph confronted his brothers, he continued with his subterfuge, asking them: "Did you not know that such a man as I am can expertly read omens?" (Genesis 44:15) Thus, the cup was evidently all part of the stratagem. Joseph's use of the cup to read omens was no more real than Benjamin's theft of it.

ARE YOU LIKE A *Lagani Auna* Tree?

In a village on the outskirts of Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, two ministers were returning home from their preaching activity. As they walked, they saw a beautiful tree. "Ah, a *lagani auna*!" said the older man. Turning to the younger man, he continued: "That name means 'yearly tree.' Unlike many other trees of the tropics, every year it loses its leaves and looks dead. However, when the rains come, it revives, puts forth flowers, and again shows its beauty."

A lesson can be learned from the *lagani auna*, or royal poinciana, as it is commonly known. According to some authorities, it is counted among the five most beautiful flowering trees in the world. Though it loses its flowers and leaves during the dry season, the tree stores a supply of water. Its root system is strong and can grow around rocks that are deep underground. By this means, it anchors itself against strong winds. In short, it thrives by making the most of difficult circumstances.

We may find ourselves in circumstances that test the quality of our faith. What will help us to endure? Like the *lagani auna*, we can drink in and store up the life-giving water of God's Word. We should also cling tightly to 'our rock,' Jehovah, as well as to his organization. (2 Samuel 22:3) Truly, the *lagani auna* is an attractive reminder that even in a harsh environment, we can maintain our spiritual strength and beauty if we take advantage of the provisions that Jehovah makes available. By doing so, we will "inherit the promises" that he has made, including the promise of everlasting life.—Hebrews 6:12; Revelation 21:4.

