

OCTOBER 15, 2005

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



**What Is the  
Best  
Education?**



# THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

October 15, 2005

Average Printing Each Issue: 26,439,000

Vol. 126, No. 20

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.

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Publication of *The Watchtower* is part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*.

*The Watchtower* (ISSN 0043-1087) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, NY, and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Watchtower, Wallkill, NY 12589.

**Changes of address** should reach us 30 days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label).

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Semimonthly

ENGLISH

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# What Kind of Education Can Make Your Life a Success?

HAVE you ever been so overwhelmed by problems that you felt as though you were drowning in a whirlpool? Just imagine how much suffering could result if you made a mistake in coping with one or more of those problems! No one is born with the ability to solve all problems successfully, making good decisions every time. This is where education comes in. Where can you get education to prepare yourself to cope with life's problems?

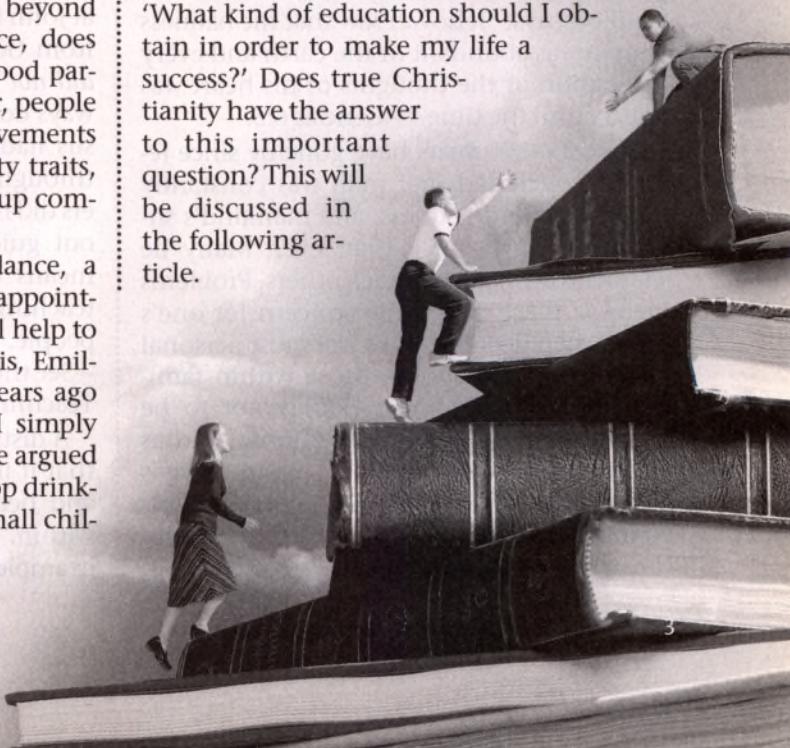
Many, both young and old, extol the importance of an academic education. Some experts even say that they "fully believe that you will never be able to find a [decent] job without a college degree." Yet, there are a number of human needs that go beyond material achievements. For instance, does higher learning help you to be a good parent, mate, or friend? For that matter, people admired for their intellectual achievements may develop undesirable personality traits, fail in their family life, or even end up committing suicide.

Some look to religion for guidance, a source of education, but become disappointed because of not receiving practical help to face life's difficulties. Illustrating this, Emilia\* from Mexico says: "It was 15 years ago that I felt that my husband and I simply could not be together any longer. We argued all the time. I couldn't get him to stop drinking. I frequently had to leave our small chil-

dren by themselves while I went looking for my husband. I was emotionally worn out. Several times I went to church seeking something that might help me find a solution. Although the Bible was occasionally used, I never heard any counsel that directly dealt with my situation; neither did anyone approach me to tell me what to do. Sitting in church for a while and repeating some prayers did not satisfy me." Others may become disillusioned when they see how far their own spiritual leaders are from living an exemplary life. As a result, many lose confidence in religion as a source of training or education for a successful life.

Therefore, you might ask yourself, 'What kind of education should I obtain in order to make my life a success?' Does true Christianity have the answer to this important question? This will be discussed in the following article.

\* Name has been changed.



# Benefit From the Best Education Available!

**T**HE Bible identifies Jehovah God as the Creator of all things, including humans. (Genesis 1:27; Revelation 4:11) As the Grand Instructor, he educated the first human couple, Adam and Eve, and prepared them for life in the beautiful garden in Eden. It was his purpose to continue educating them and caring for them eternally. (Genesis 1:28, 29; 2:15-17; Isaiah 30:20, 21) Just think of that prospect!

Sadly, however, the first pair threw everything away. Their disobedient course opened the way for moral and physical degradation of the human race. (Genesis 3:17-19; Romans 5:12) Referring to those who lived just a few generations after the founding of mankind, the Bible says: "Jehovah saw that the badness of man was abundant in the earth and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only bad all the time."—Genesis 6:5.

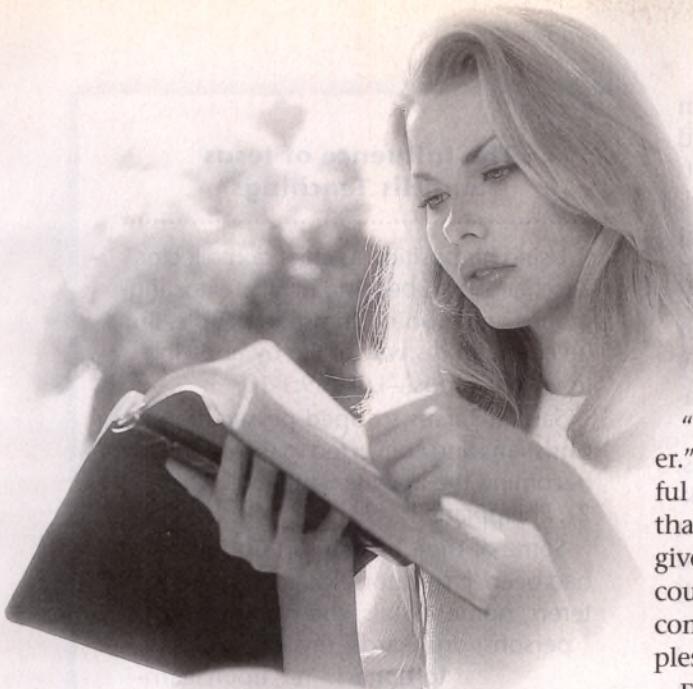
Almost 4,500 years have gone by since Jehovah concluded that man was constantly inclined toward badness, and mankind's situation is now worse than ever. Many lie shamelessly, steal, or attack others. Problems increase every day, while concern for one's fellow man decreases. Are not most personal relationships, including those within families, in real crisis? Yet, God is not to be blamed for the present conditions, nor has he ceased to be concerned about today's problems. Jehovah has always been interested in man's welfare, and he is ready to educate those who look to him for guidance to

attain a happy life. Some 2,000 years ago, he sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to the earth and demonstrated His interest in educating people who want to make a success of their life. Jesus left a model for education that was perfect because he had been taught by the Grand Instructor for untold aeons of time.

## True Christianity—An Education

Jesus Christ instituted true Christianity, a way of life based on love. In it, all thoughts and actions are to harmonize with God's will, for the purpose of bringing honor and glory to his name. (Matthew 22:37-39; Hebrews 10:7) Behind Jesus' teachings on this way of life was his Father, Jehovah. We read at John 8:29 about the support Jesus received from God: "He that sent me is with me; *he did not abandon me to myself*, because I always do the things pleasing to him." Yes, Jesus had his Father's support and guidance throughout his ministry. Jesus' early followers did not have to face life's challenges without guidance. Jehovah educated them by means of his Son. Their following Jesus' teachings and example made them better people. This is true of his disciples today.—See the box "The Influence of Jesus and His Teachings," on page 6.

A distinctive feature of true Christianity is that it includes education that affects mind and heart so as to transform people from within. (Ephesians 4:23, 24) To cite just one example, consider what Jesus taught about



being faithful to one's mate: "You heard that it was said, 'You must not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone that keeps on looking at a woman so as to have a passion for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Matthew 5:27, 28) With these words, Jesus was teaching his disciples that the heart should be kept clean and that improper thoughts and desires, though not yet carried out, may have grave consequences. Is it not true that bad thoughts can lead to acts that offend God and hurt others?

Therefore, the Bible offers this counsel: "Quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Romans 12:2) 'Is it really possible to make the mind over through education?' you may ask. Making the mind over involves motivating it in a different direction by filling it with the principles and instruction given in God's Word. This can be accomplished by accepting education that God provides through his Word.

### Motivated to Change

"The word of God is alive and exerts power." (Hebrews 4:12) It is still exerting a powerful influence on individuals, thus proving that it does not become outdated. It can give a person the motivation to change his course, embrace true Christianity, and become a better person. The following examples illustrate the value of Bible education.

Emilia, mentioned in the preceding article, states: "Just making an effort by myself was not enough to improve the situation in my home. When I started to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, I realized that there was hope and began to change my attitude. I learned to be more patient and not to indulge in fits of anger. In time, my husband joined me in the study. It was not easy for him to stop drinking, but he was able to quit. This gave our marriage a fresh start. Now we are happy Christians and are inculcating in our children the fine principles of the Bible."

—Deuteronomy 6:7.

The education that true Christianity provides can free a person from vices and an immoral lifestyle. Manuel\* found this to be true. At the age of 13, he ran away from home and began to use marijuana. In time, he turned to heroin. He had sexual encounters with men and women in exchange for shelter and money. At times, Manuel also supported himself by mugging people. He was almost always under the influence of drugs.

\* Some names have been changed.

His violent conduct often landed him in prison. Once he spent four years behind bars, and there he became involved in trafficking in weapons. After he got married, Manuel's life course continued to cost him dearly. He says: "We ended up living in what was once a henhouse. I still remember my wife cooking on some bricks. Our circumstances were so precarious that my own family encouraged my wife to abandon me."

What changed his life? Manuel answers: "An acquaintance came to our house talking about the Bible. I accepted his visits just to show him that a God who was interested in people did not exist. I considered myself living proof of that. I was surprised that the Witness was patient and polite, so I agreed to attend the meetings at the Kingdom Hall. Although some there knew my background, they greeted me in a friendly manner. They made me feel like one of them. This was a great comfort. I was moved to the point of deciding to leave the world of drugs to get an honest job. Four months after beginning my Bible study, I qualified to join in the preaching work, and four months after that, I was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses."

What has true Christianity meant for Manuel and his family? "Without Bible education I would surely have been dead years ago. The way of life that Jesus taught gave my family back to me. My two children do not have to go through what I went through as a youth. I feel proud and very grateful to Jehovah for the good relationship I now have with my wife. Some of my former acquaintances have congratulated me and told me that they think that the course I am now following is the best one."

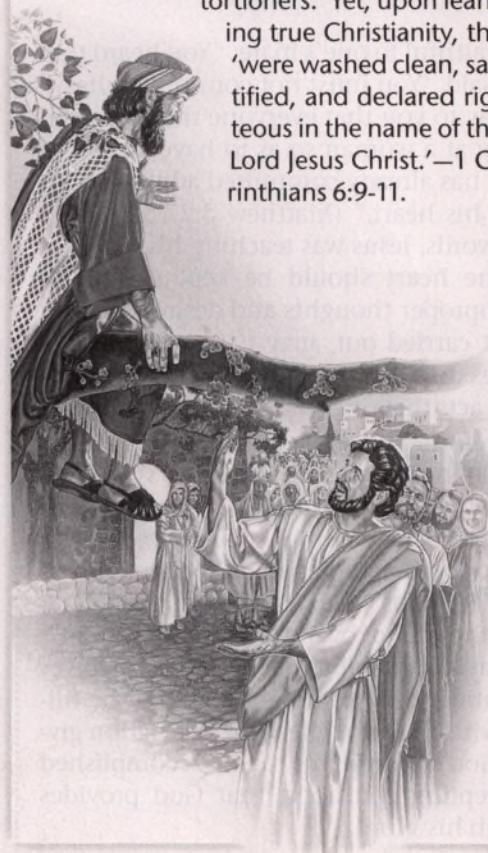
In the Christian way of life, moral cleanliness is accompanied by physical cleanliness. John, who lives in a poverty-stricken area

## The Influence of Jesus and His Teachings

Using his position as chief tax collector, Zacchaeus had become rich by extorting money and robbing common people. But he changed his way of life by applying Jesus' teachings.—Luke 19:1-10.

Saul of Tarsus stopped persecuting Christians and converted to Christianity, becoming the apostle Paul.—Acts 22:6-21; Philippians 3:4-9.

Some of the Christians in Corinth had been 'fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, homosexuals, thieves, greedy persons, drunkards, revilers, and extortioners.' Yet, upon learning true Christianity, they 'were washed clean, sanctified, and declared righteous in the name of their Lord Jesus Christ.'—1 Corinthians 6:9-11.



in South Africa, came to understand that. He explains: "Our daughter would sometimes not wash for a week, and none of us seemed to care." His wife acknowledges that their home had a terrible appearance. But with Christian education, things changed. John stopped associating with a gang of car thieves and began to give more attention to his family. "We learned that as Christians, we should keep our bodies and clothing clean. I like the words at 1 Peter 1:16, which exhort us to be holy because Jehovah God is holy. Now we also try to make our simple home look nice."

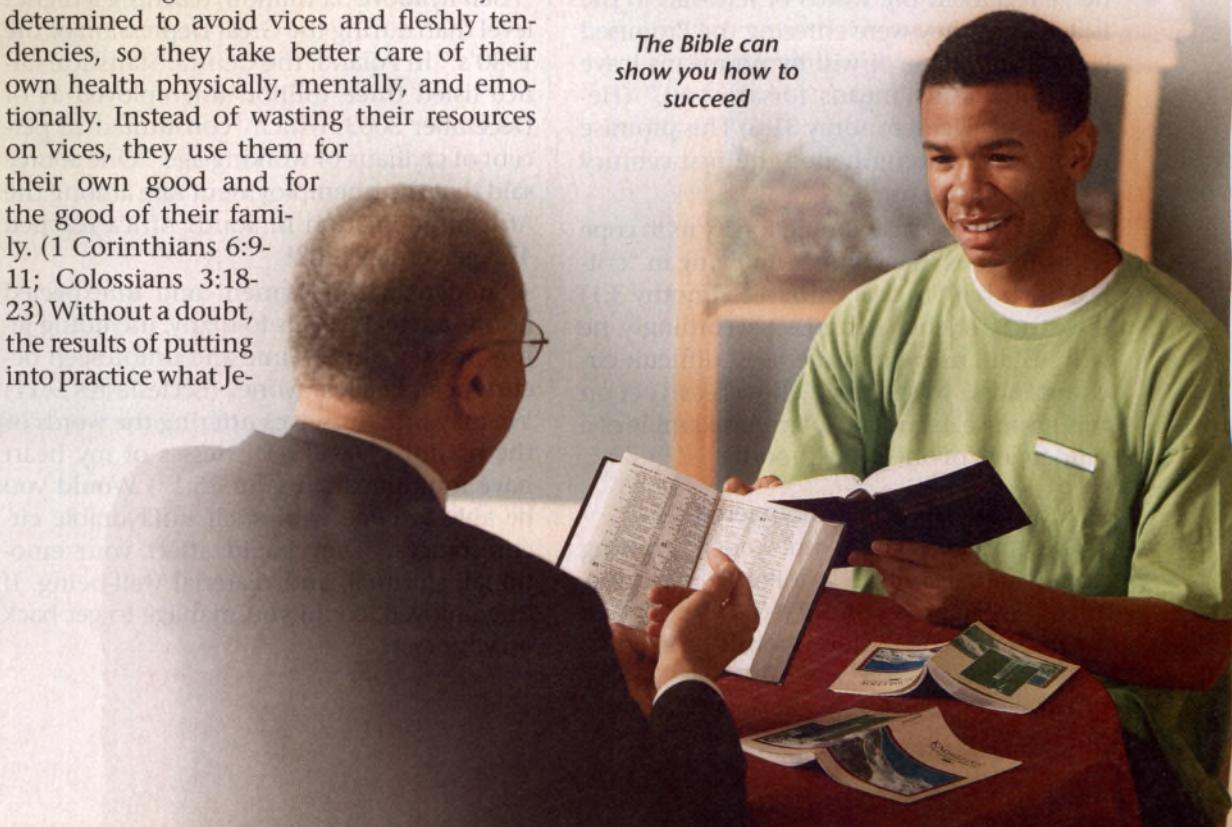
### You Can Find the Best Education

The experiences mentioned above are not isolated cases. As a result of education based on the Bible, thousands of people have learned to live better lives. By being honest and industrious, they are appreciated by their employers. They have become good neighbors and friends, taking an interest in the well-being of their fellow man. They are determined to avoid vices and fleshly tendencies, so they take better care of their own health physically, mentally, and emotionally. Instead of wasting their resources on vices, they use them for their own good and for the good of their family. (1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Colossians 3:18-23) Without a doubt, the results of putting into practice what Je-

hovah sets forth in the Bible demonstrate that living by true Christianity is the best course in life, providing the best education available. With respect to a person who lives in harmony with God's laws, the Bible states: "Everything he does will succeed."—Psalm 1:3.

It is encouraging to know that Almighty God, Jehovah, is willing to educate us. He says of himself: "I, Jehovah, am your God, the One teaching you to benefit yourself, the One causing you to tread in the way in which you should walk." (Isaiah 48:17) Yes, Jehovah has shown the way through the example and teachings of his Son, Jesus Christ. His teachings made a difference in the life of many who knew him when he was on earth, and the same is true of many others who live by his teachings today. Why not take the time to learn more about these teachings? Jehovah's Witnesses in your neighborhood will be happy to help you to receive such valuable education.

*The Bible can  
show you how to  
succeed*





## Jehovah Will By No Means Leave You

CHRISTIANS in Judaea were experiencing vicious opposition, and they had to contend with the materialistic view of people around them. To encourage them, the apostle Paul quoted the words of Jehovah to the Israelites as they were entering the Promised Land. Paul wrote: "I will by no means leave you nor by any means forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5; Deuteronomy 31:6) This promise undoubtedly strengthened the first-century Hebrew Christians.

The same promise should fortify us to cope with anxieties that come from living in "critical times hard to deal with." (2 Timothy 3:1) If we trust in Jehovah and act accordingly, he will sustain us even in the most difficult circumstances. To see how Jehovah can act on this promise, let us consider the example of a sudden loss of one's livelihood.

### Facing the Unexpected

The number of unemployed is growing worldwide. According to a Polish magazine, unemployment is considered to be "one of the most difficult socioeconomic problems."

Industrialized nations are no exception. For example, even among the members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, by 2004 unemployment had "risen to above 32 million, reaching a higher level than during the Great Depression of the 1930's." In Poland, the Central Statistical Office listed three million unemployed as of December 2003, which "constituted 18 percent of civilians of working age." One source said that the unemployment rate among the African population in South Africa reached 47.8 percent in 2002!

Sudden unemployment and unexpected layoffs are real threats to many, including Jehovah's servants. "Time and unforeseen occurrence" befall anyone. (Ecclesiastes 9:11) We may find ourselves uttering the words of the psalmist David: "Distresses of my heart have multiplied." (Psalm 25:17) Would you be able to cope with such unfavorable circumstances? They could affect your emotional, spiritual, and material well-being. If unemployed, could you manage to get back on your feet?

## Coping With Emotional Strain

"The loss of employment hurts men more," since they are traditionally viewed as the breadwinner of the family, explains psychologist Janusz Wietrzyński. He said that it can start a man on "a roller coaster of emotions," from anger to resignation. A father who has been laid off may lose his self-esteem and start "quarreling with his family."

Adam, a Christian father of two, explains how he felt when he lost his job: "I easily became agitated; everything irritated me. Even at night my dreams were all about work and how to provide for my children and my wife, who had also been laid off unexpectedly." When Ryszard and Mariola, a married couple with a child, lost their means of income, they had a large, outstanding bank loan. The wife relates: "I was constantly troubled, my conscience telling me that it was a mistake to have taken out that loan. I kept thinking that it was all my fault." Faced with such situations, we may easily feel angry, anxious, or bitter, and our emotions can get the better of us. How, then, can we control the negative emotions that may well up in us?

The Bible gives effective advice on how to maintain a positive attitude. "Do not be anxious over anything," the apostle Paul admonished, "but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4: 6, 7) Approaching Jehovah in prayer will give us "the peace of God," a calm state of mind based on our faith in him. Adam's wife, Irena, says: "In our prayers, we told Jehovah about our situation and how we would simplify our lives even more. My husband, who has usually been quick to find



*Use the time for spiritual activities*

reasons to be anxious, began to feel that a solution would present itself."

If you are faced with the unexpected loss of your job, you are in a good position to apply Jesus Christ's admonition in the Sermon on the Mount: "Stop being anxious about your souls as to what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your bodies as to what you will wear. . . . Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you." (Matthew 6:25, 33) Ryszard and Mariola applied this counsel in coping with their emotions. "My husband always comforted me and emphasized that Jehovah would not abandon us," recalls Mariola. Her husband adds: "Through persistent prayers together, we have drawn closer to God and to each other, and that has provided the needed comfort."

God's holy spirit will also help us to cope. Self-control, which the spirit can produce in us, can help us to keep ourselves and our feelings intact. (Galatians 5:22, 23) It may not be easy, but it is possible, for Jesus promised that "the Father in heaven [will] give holy spirit to



those asking him.”—Luke 11:13; 1 John 5:14, 15.

### Do Not Neglect Your Spiritual Needs

Unexpected dismissal from a job may at first unnerve even the most balanced Christian, but we should not neglect our spiritual needs. Take, for example, 40-year-old Moses, whose whole life changed when he lost his position within the aristocracy and had to become a shepherd, a job the Egyptians despised. (Genesis 46:34) Moses had to adjust to his new circumstances. For the following 40 years, he allowed Jehovah to mold and prepare him for new tasks ahead. (Exodus 2:11-22; Acts 7:29, 30; Hebrews 11:24-26) Despite facing difficulties, Moses was spiritually focused, willing to accept Jehovah’s training. May we never allow unfavorable circumstances to overshadow our spiritual values!

Although suddenly losing a job can be traumatic, that is a good time to strengthen



*Learn to be thrifty, and do not be too choosy when you are looking for a job*

our bonds with Jehovah God and his people. Adam, mentioned earlier, felt that way. He says: “When my wife and I both lost our jobs, the thought of staying away from Christian meetings or reducing our share in the evangelizing work never crossed our minds. That perspective protected us from becoming overly worried about tomorrow.” Ryszard shares similar sentiments: “If it were not for the meetings and the ministry, we could never have coped; we would definitely have been eaten up by worry. Spiritual conversations with others are uplifting, for they turn our attention to their needs and away from our own.”—Philippians 2:4.

Yes, instead of worrying about employment, try to use the extra time for spiritual activities, engaging in personal study, sharing in congregational activities, or expanding your ministry. Rather than living the life of the unemployed, you will have "plenty to do in the work of the Lord"—which will bring joy both to you and to any sincere individuals who respond to the Kingdom message you preach.—1 Corinthians 15:58.

### Providing for Your Family Materially

However, spiritual nourishment will not fill an empty stomach. We do well to keep in mind the following principle: "Certainly if anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he has disowned the faith and is worse than a person without faith." (1 Timothy 5:8) "Even though the brothers in the congregation are quick to respond to our physical needs," Adam admits, "as Christians, we have an obligation to work at searching for employment." We can count on Jehovah's support and that of his people, but we should never forget that we need to take the initiative to find a job.

What initiative? "Do not wait with folded arms for God to act, hoping for a miracle," explains Adam. "When you are looking for work, do not hesitate to identify yourself as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. Employers usually value that." Ryszard gives this advice: "Ask anyone you know about job opportunities, keep checking at the employment agency, read advertisements, such as: 'Wanted, woman to care for a disabled person'; or, 'Temporary employment: Strawberry picking.' Keep on searching! Do not be too choosy, even if you have to do something menial or something that does not fulfill your ambitions."

Yes, "Jehovah is [your] helper." He will "by no means leave you nor by any means forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5, 6) You do not have

to be overly anxious. The psalmist David wrote: "Roll upon Jehovah your way, and rely upon him, and he himself will act." (Psalm 37:5) 'Rolling our way upon Jehovah' means that we rely on him and do things his way, even when circumstances may not look favorable to us.

Adam and Irena managed to support themselves by window washing and stairwell cleaning and by being thrifty when purchasing things. They also visited the employment agency regularly. "Help always came just when we needed it," notes Irena. Her husband adds: "Time has shown that the matters we brought up in our prayers were not necessarily in line with God's will. This has taught us to rely on his wisdom and not to act according to our own understanding. It is better to wait calmly for the solution God will provide."—James 1:4.

Ryszard and Mariola took various odd jobs but at the same time became involved in witnessing in territories where the need was greater. "We got needed jobs right at the times when we had nothing left to eat," says Ryszard. "We refused well-paying jobs that would interfere with our theocratic responsibilities. We preferred to wait on Jehovah." They believe that Jehovah maneuvered matters so that they were able to rent a flat very cheaply and Ryszard finally found a job.

Losing one's livelihood can be very painful, but why not view it as an opportunity to see for yourself that Jehovah will never forsake you? Jehovah looks after you. (1 Peter 5:6, 7) He has promised through the prophet Isaiah: "Do not gaze about, for I am your God. I will fortify you. I will really help you." (Isaiah 41:10) Never allow an unexpected incident, including job loss, to paralyze you. Do everything you can, and then leave the rest in Jehovah's hands. Wait on Jehovah, "even silently." (Lamentations 3:26) Rich blessings will be yours.—Jeremiah 17:7.



## CHRISTIANITY SPREADS AMONG FIRST-CENTURY JEWS

A NIMPORTANT meeting took place in Jerusalem about 49 C.E. "The ones who seemed to be pillars" of the first-century Christian congregation—John, Peter, and Jesus' half brother James—were there. The other two named as attending the meeting were the apostle Paul and his companion Barnabas. On the agenda was how to divide the vast territory for the preaching work. Paul explained: "[They] gave me and Barnabas the right hand of sharing together, that we should go to the nations, but they to those who are circumcised."—Galatians 2:1, 9.\*

How should we understand this agreement? Was the territory in which the good news should be preached divided into Jews and proselytes on the one hand and Gentiles on the other? Or was the agreement rather a geographical division of the territory? To find a possible answer, we need some historical information about the Diaspora, Jews living outside of Palestine.

### The Jewish World in the First Century

How many Jews were in the Diaspora in the first century? Many scholars seem to agree with the publication *Atlas of the Jewish World*: "Absolute figures are hard to ar-

rive at, but it has been plausibly estimated that shortly before 70 there were two and a half million Jews in Judaea and well over four million in the Roman diaspora. . . . It is likely that the Jews represented something like a tenth of the whole population of the empire, and in the places where they were most concentrated, in the cities of the eastern provinces, they may have been a quarter or more of the inhabitants."

The main centers were in Syria, Asia Minor, Babylon, and Egypt, in the East, with smaller communities in Europe. Some well-known early Jewish Christians had a Diaspora background, such as Barnabas from Cyprus, Prisca and Aquila from Pontus and then Rome, Apollos from Alexandria, and Paul from Tarsus.—Acts 4:36; 18:2, 24; 22:3.

The Diaspora communities had many links with their homeland. One was the annual tax sent to the temple in Jerusalem, a way to participate in temple life and worship. Regarding this, scholar John Barclay observes: "There is good evidence that the collection of this money, supplemented by extra donations from the wealthy, was scrupulously undertaken by Diaspora communities."

Another link was the tens of thousands of pilgrims who went to Jerusalem every year for the festivals. The account at Acts 2:9-11

\* This meeting was probably held at the time of or in connection with the discussion of the first-century governing body on the matter of circumcision.—Acts 15: 6-29.

about Pentecost 33 C.E. illustrates this. The Jewish pilgrims present came from Parthia, Media, Elam, Mesopotamia, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Rome, Crete, and Arabia.

The temple administration in Jerusalem communicated with Jews in the Diaspora in writing. It is known that Gamaliel, the law teacher mentioned at Acts 5:34, sent letters to Babylon and other parts of the world. When the apostle Paul arrived as a prisoner in Rome about 59 C.E., “the principal men of the Jews” told him that “neither have we received letters concerning you from Judea, nor has anyone of the brothers that has arrived reported or spoken anything wicked about you.” This indicates that letters and reports were frequently sent from the homeland to Rome.—Acts 28:17, 21.

The Bible of the Diaspora Jews was a Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures known as the *Septuagint*. A reference work notes: “It is plausible to conclude that the LXX [*Septuagint*] was read and received throughout the diaspora as the diaspora Jewish Bible or ‘holy writ.’” The same translation was extensively used by the early Christians in their teaching.

The members of the Christian governing body in Jerusalem were familiar with these circumstances. The good news had already reached Diaspora Jews in Syria and beyond, including Damascus and Antioch. (Acts 9: 19, 20; 11:19; 15:23, 41; Galatians 1:21) At the meeting in 49 C.E., the ones present were evidently planning for future work. Let us consider the Biblical references to the expansion among the Jews and proselytes.

### Paul’s Travels and Jews in the Diaspora

The apostle Paul’s original assignment was “to bear [Jesus Christ’s] name to the nations as well as to kings and *the sons of Isra-*

*el.*”\* (Acts 9:15) After the Jerusalem meeting, Paul continued to reach out to the Diaspora Jews wherever he traveled. (See the box on page 14.) This indicates that the territorial agreement likely became a geographical one. Paul and Barnabas expanded their missionary work to the west, and the others served the Jewish homeland and the large Jewish communities in the Eastern world.

When Paul and his companions started the second missionary trip from Antioch in Syria, they were guided westward through Asia Minor up to Troas. From there they crossed over to Macedonia because they concluded that “God had summoned [them] to declare the good news to [the Macedonians].” Later, Christian congregations were started in other European cities, including Athens and Corinth.—Acts 15:40, 41; 16:6-10; 17:1-18:18.

About 56 C.E., at the end of his third missionary trip, Paul planned to move even farther westward and expand the territory that he had been assigned at the Jerusalem meeting. He wrote: “There is eagerness on my part to declare the good news also to you there in Rome,” and, “I shall depart by way of you for Spain.” (Romans 1:15; 15:24, 28) But what about the large Diaspora communities in the East?

### Jewish Communities in the East

During the first century C.E., Egypt had the largest Diaspora community, especially in its capital, Alexandria. This center of trade and culture had a Jewish population numbering into the hundreds of thousands, with synagogues scattered all over the city. Philo, an Alexandrian Jew, claimed that in all of Egypt, there were at least a million Jews at that time. A considerable

\* This article focuses on Paul’s witnessing to the Jews, not on his activities as “an apostle to the nations.”—Romans 11:13.

number had also settled in nearby Libya, in the city of Cyrene and vicinity.

Some Jews who became Christians were from these areas. We read of "Apollos, a native of Alexandria," "some men of Cyprus and Cyrene," and "Lucius of Cyrene," who supported the congregation in Syrian Antioch. (Acts 2:10; 11:19, 20; 13:1; 18:24) Otherwise the Bible is silent about the early Christian work in Egypt and its vicinity, except for the Christian evangelizer Philip's witnessing to the Ethiopian eunuch.—Acts 8:26-39.

Babylon, with extensions into Parthia, Media, and Elam, was another major center. One historian says that "every territory in the plain of the Tigris and Euphrates, from Armenia to the Persian gulf, as well as north-eastward to the Caspian Sea, and eastward to Media, contained Jewish populations." The *Encyclopaedia Judaica* estimates their number at 800,000 or more. The first-century Jewish historian Josephus tells us that tens

of thousands of Babylonian Jews traveled to Jerusalem for the annual festivals.

Were some of the Babylonian pilgrims baptized at Pentecost 33 C.E.? We do not know, but among those who heard the apostle Peter on that day were ones from Mesopotamia. (Acts 2:9) We do know that the apostle Peter was in Babylon about 62-64 C.E. While there, he wrote his first letter and possibly the second one as well. (1 Peter 5:13) Babylon with its large population of Jews was obviously considered part of the territory assigned to Peter, John, and James at the meeting referred to in the letter to the Galatians.

### Jerusalem Congregation and Jews in the Diaspora

James, who also attended the meeting where territories were mentioned, served as an overseer in the Jerusalem congregation. (Acts 12:12, 17; 15:13; Galatians 1:18, 19) He was an eyewitness at Pentecost 33 C.E. when thousands of visiting Jews in the Diaspora

## THE APOSTLE PAUL'S CONCERN FOR JEWS IN THE DIASPORA

### BEFORE THE MEETING IN JERUSALEM IN 49 C.E.

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| Acts 9:19, 20 | Damascus — "in the synagogues he began to preach"                            |
| Acts 9:29     | Jerusalem — "talking . . . with the Greek-speaking Jews"                     |
| Acts 13:5     | Salamis, Cyprus — "publishing the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews" |
| Acts 13:14    | Antioch in Pisidia — "going into the synagogue"                              |
| Acts 14:1     | Iconium — "entered . . . into the synagogue of the Jews"                     |

### AFTER THE MEETING IN JERUSALEM IN 49 C.E.

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| Acts 16:14 | Philippi — "Lydia, . . . a worshiper of God"                                     |
| Acts 17:1  | Thessalonica — "a synagogue of the Jews"   |
| Acts 17:10 | Beroea — "the synagogue of the Jews"   |
| Acts 17:17 | Athens — "reason in the synagogue with the Jews"                                 |
| Acts 18:4  | Corinth — "give a talk in the synagogue"   |
| Acts 18:19 | Ephesus — "entered into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews"                |
| Acts 19:8  | Ephesus — "entering into the synagogue, he spoke with boldness for three months" |
| Acts 28:17 | Rome — "called together . . . the principal men of the Jews"                     |



responded to the good news and were baptized.—Acts 1:14; 2:1, 41.

Then and thereafter tens of thousands of Jews came for the annual festivals. The city became overcrowded, and visitors had to stay in the neighboring villages or encamp in tents. Besides their meeting friends, *Encyclopaedia Judaica* explains, the pilgrims entered the temple to worship, offer sacrifices, and engage in the study of the Torah.

No doubt, James and the other members of the Jerusalem congregation used these opportunities to witness to Diaspora Jews. Perhaps the apostles did so with great discretion during the period when the “great persecution arose against the congregation that was in Jerusalem” as a result of Stephen’s death. (Acts 8:1) Before and after this event, the record indicates, the zeal of these Christians for preaching resulted in continued increase.—Acts 5:42; 8:4; 9:31.

### What Can We Learn?

Yes, the early Christians made sincere efforts to contact the Jews wherever they lived. At the same time, Paul and others reached out to the Gentiles in the European

*Those who heard the good news at Pentecost 33 C.E. came from a wide area*

field. They observed Jesus’ parting command to his followers to make disciples “of people of all the nations.”—Matthew 28:19, 20.

From their example, we can learn the importance of preaching in an organized way in order to have the support of Jehovah’s spirit. We can also see the advantages of contacting those who have respect for God’s Word, especially in territories with few of Jehovah’s Witnesses. Are some areas of the territory assigned to your congregation more productive than others? It might be beneficial to cover these more frequently. Are there public events in the neighborhood suitable for special efforts of informal and street witnessing?

It is enriching for us not only to read in the Bible about the early Christians but also to acquaint ourselves with some of the historical and geographic details. One tool that we can use to expand our understanding is the brochure “See the Good Land,” with its many maps and photographs.



Eagle: © Brian K. Wheeler/VIREO

## Jehovah's Word Soars in "the Land of the Eagle"

**T**HÉ Land of the Eagle." That is what the Albanians call their country in their language. This country facing the Adriatic Sea lies on the Balkan Peninsula, snuggled between Greece and the former Yugoslavia. Although there are many theories about the origin of Albanians, most historians agree that Albanians and their language descend from the ancient Illyrians, whose culture, according to *The Encyclopædia Britannica*, dates back to 2000 B.C.E.

Albania's natural beauty ranges from jagged mountains in the far north to long, white sandy beaches in the south on the Adriatic. The greatest beauty, however, lies in the people. They are warm and hospitable, lively and expressive, quick learners who passionately express their opinions with animated gestures.

### A Visit by a Renowned Missionary

The attractive personality of the people and the beautiful scenery no doubt caught



the attention of one unique traveler centuries ago. About 56 C.E., the well-traveled apostle Paul wrote: "As far as Illyricum I have thoroughly preached the good news about the Christ." (Romans 15:19) The southern part of Illyricum corresponds to modern-day central and northern Albania. Paul was writing from Corinth, Greece, south of Illyricum. Saying that he thoroughly preached "as far as Illyricum" indicates that he went either up to the border or right into the region. In either case, he would have preached in what is now southern Albania. So the earliest known Kingdom-preaching work in Albania can be attributed to Paul.

Centuries passed. Empires rose and fell. Foreign powers came and went in this little corner of Europe until Albania became an independent state in 1912. About a decade later, the word about Jehovah's Kingdom was again heard in Albania.

### An Exciting Modern Beginning

In the 1920's, a few Albanian immigrants to the United States who were associated with the International Bible Students, as Jeho-

vah's Witnesses were then known, returned to Albania to share what they had learned. Among these was Nasho Idrizi. Some people responded favorably. To care for the increased interest, in 1924 the Romanian office was assigned oversight of the preaching work in Albania.

Thanas Duli (Athan Doulis) was among those who learned about Jehovah in Albania during those years. He recalled: "In 1925 there were three organized congregations in Albania, as well as isolated Bible Students and interested persons here and there throughout the land. Their love among themselves was so much in contrast with . . . the people around them!"\*

The lack of a road system made travel extremely difficult. Yet, zealous publishers took up the challenge. For example, on the southern coast in Vlorë, Areti Pina got baptized in 1928, when she was 18. She climbed up and down rugged mountains, preaching with Bible in hand. She was part of a strong congregation in Vlorë in the early 1930's.

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\* For the life story of Thanas Duli, see *The Watchtower*, December 1, 1968.



*Young Witnesses imitate the zeal of older ones*

By 1930 the preaching work in Albania was directed by the branch office in Athens, Greece. In 1932 a traveling overseer from Greece visited Albania to encourage and strengthen the brothers. Most of those learning Bible truth back then had the heavenly hope. Their reputation for being clean and upright people earned them deep respect far and wide. The work of these faithful brothers bore much fruit. In each of the years 1935 and 1936, some 6,500 pieces of Bible literature were placed in Albania.

One day, in the center of Vlorë, Nasho Idriizi played one of J. F. Rutherford's discourses on the gramophone. People closed their businesses and came to listen as Brother Idriizi interpreted in Albanian. The zeal of those early, untiring Bible educators was blessed. By 1940 there were 50 Witnesses in Albania.

### An Atheistic State

In 1939, Italian Fascists occupied the country. The legal recognition of Jehovah's Witnesses was revoked, and their preaching work was banned. Soon afterward, German



*Areti Pina served faithfully from 1928 until her death in 1994*

troops invaded the country. As World War II ended, a charismatic military leader, Enver Hoxha, emerged. His Communist Party won the 1946 elections, and he became prime minister. The years that followed came to be called the time of liberation, but they meant just the opposite for Jehovah's people.

Gradually, the government became less and less tolerant of religion. True to their Christian neutrality, Jehovah's Witnesses in Albania refused to take up arms and to get involved in politics. (Isaiah 2:2-4; John 15:17-19) Many were thrown in prison, without food or the bare necessities of life. In many cases, their spiritual sisters on the outside washed their clothes and cooked for them.

### Fearless in the Face of Persecution

In the early 1940's, Frosina Xheka, then a teenager in a village near Përmet, heard what her older fleshly brothers were learning from a Witness shoemaker named Nasho Dori.\* The

authorities were cracking down on Jehovah's Witnesses, but to her parents' displeasure, Frosina's faith grew stronger. "They would hide my shoes and beat me if I went to Christian meetings. They tried to arrange for me to marry an unbeliever. When I refused, they kicked me out of the house. It was snowing that day. Nasho Dori asked Brother Gole Filloko in Gjirokastër to help me. They arranged for me to live with his family. My brothers were in prison for two years because of their neutral stand. After they were released, I moved to Vlorë to live with them.

\* For the life story of Nasho Dori, see *The Watchtower*, January 1, 1996.

*The first group of foreign pioneers attending a language course*

"The police tried to force me to take part in political activities. I refused. They arrested me, took me to a room, and surrounded me. One of them threatened me: 'Do you know what we can do to you?' I answered: 'You can only do what Jehovah lets you do.' He retorted: 'You must be crazy! Get out of here!'"

That same loyal spirit characterized the Albanian brothers throughout those years. By 1957 a peak of 75 Kingdom publishers was reached. In the early 1960's, the headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses arranged for John Marks, an Albanian immigrant in the United States, to visit Tiranë to help organize the Christian work.\* Soon, though, Luçi Xheka, Mihal Sveci, Leonidha Pope, and other responsible brothers were sent to labor camps.

### **Light at the End of the Tunnel**

Until 1967 all religion was frowned upon in Albania. Then it was no longer tolerated. No Catholic, Orthodox, or Muslim priests could officiate at rituals. Churches and mosques were closed or converted into gymnasiums, museums, or markets. No one was supposed to have a Bible. The very thought of belief in God was not to be expressed.

Preaching and meeting together were next to impossible. Individual Witnesses did their best to serve Jehovah, despite being separated from one another. From the 1960's through the 1980's, the number of Witnesses dwindled to a handful. Yet they were spiritually strong.

In the late 1980's, political changes in Albania inched forward. Food and clothing were scarce. People were not happy. The

\* For the life story of John Marks' wife, Helen, see *The Watchtower*, January 1, 2002.



reforms sweeping through Eastern Europe reached Albania in the early 1990's. After 45 years of the totalitarian regime, a new government allowed religious freedom once again.

At the direction of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses, the branch offices in Austria and Greece quickly set out to contact local Albanian brothers. Greek brothers who knew Albanian brought some newly translated Bible literature to Tiranë and Berat. Joy filled the hearts of the formerly dispersed local brothers as they met Witnesses from abroad for the first time in years.

### **Zealous Foreign Pioneers Spearhead the Work**

In early 1992, the Governing Body arranged for Michael and Linda DiGregorio, a missionary couple with an Albanian background, to transfer to Albania. They contacted the elderly faithful ones, helping them come together once again as part of an international spiritual family. A group of 16 hardworking Italian special pioneers, or full-time evangelizers, arrived in November, along with four Greek pioneers. To help them learn the local tongue, a language course was organized.

Daily life was rough for these foreign pioneers. Electricity was erratic. Winter was cold and damp. People stood in line for hours to

get food and other necessities of life. Yet, the biggest problem the brothers faced was how to find buildings large enough to hold the throngs of interested ones responding to the truth!

Pioneers struggling to speak Albanian learned that a language is only a means to an end. An experienced Bible teacher told them: "We don't need to conjugate verbs perfectly to smile warmly or to hug our brothers. Albanians will respond to love from your heart, not perfect grammar. Don't worry, they'll understand."

After the first language course, the pioneers got down to work in Berat, Durres, Gjirokastër, Shkodër, Tiranë, and Vlorë. Soon congregations mushroomed in those cities. Areti Pina, now in her 80's and in poor health, was still in Vlorë. Two special pioneers were sent there to preach with Areti. People were amazed that foreigners were speaking Albanian: "Missionaries from other religious groups make us learn English or Italian if we want to learn anything. You must really love us and have something important to say, for you've actually learned Al-

banian!" Areti faithfully finished her earthly course in January 1994, active in preaching down to the very last month. The zeal that she and the pioneers showed was blessed. A congregation was reestablished in Vlorë in 1995. Today, three thriving congregations are busy preaching in that seaport.

Throughout the country, people were starving spiritually and had little religious prejudice. They devoured any and all Bible-based literature they received from the Witnesses. Many young ones began to study and quickly made progress.

Over 90 congregations and groups continue "to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day" throughout the country. (Acts 16:5) The 3,513 Witnesses in Albania still have much work to do. In March 2005, the Memorial of Christ's death was attended by 10,144. Discussions with the hospitable people in the preaching work have led to over 6,000 Bible studies. Clearly, thousands will be benefiting from the recently released *New World Translation* in Albanian. Indeed, Jehovah's word soars in "the Land of the Eagle" to Jehovah's praise.

## ETHNIC STRIFE MELTS AWAY IN KOSOVO!

Kosovo became a household name in the late 1990's when territorial disputes and deep-seated ethnic hatred led to war and international intervention.

During the war in the Balkans, many Witnesses had to flee to neighboring lands. After the war subsided, a small band of them returned to Kosovo, ready for work. Albanian and Italian special pioneers offered to move to Kosovo to help the 2,350,000 inhabitants there. Four congregations and six active groups, totaling about 130 publishers, are serving Jehovah in this territory.

A special assembly day was held in Priština in

the spring of 2003, and 252 were present. Among them were individuals of Albanian, German, Gypsy, Italian, and Serbian backgrounds. At the end of the baptism talk, the speaker asked two questions. Three individuals stood to answer affirmatively: an ethnic Albanian, a Gypsy, and a Serbian.

Thunderous applause broke out after the audience heard the loud simultaneous: "Va!," "Da!," and "Po!" from the three baptismal candidates. They hugged one another. They have found the answer to the deeply rooted ethnic problems that have plagued their land.

# BEWARE OF DEVELOPING A HAUGHTY HEART

*"God opposes the haughty ones."*—JAMES 4:6.

**H**AS some event ever caused your heart to swell with pride? Most of us have experienced that pleasurable sensation. Our capacity for feeling a measure of pride is not bad. For example, when a Christian couple read a school report about their daughter's good behavior and hard work, their faces likely glow with warm satisfaction over her accomplishments.

The apostle Paul and his companions took pride in a new congregation that they had helped to establish, for the brothers faithfully endured persecution.—1 Thessalonians 1:1, 6; 2:19, 20; 2 Thessalonians 1:1, 4.

<sup>2</sup> From the foregoing examples, we can see that pride may imply a sense of delight that comes from some act or possession. Frequently, though, pride reflects unseemly self-esteem, a feeling of superiority because of one's abilities, appearance, wealth, or rank. It is often displayed in arrogance of demeanor, a haughty bearing. Such pride is definitely something that we as Christians should guard against. Why? Because we have an in-born tendency to selfishness that we inherited from our forefather Adam. (Genesis 8:21) As a result, our hearts can easily mislead us into feeling proud for the wrong reasons.

1. Give an example of appropriate feelings of pride.
2. Why are feelings of pride usually undesirable?

For instance, Christians must resist feeling pride over race, wealth, education, natural abilities, or work performance in comparison with others. Pride that arises from such things is improper and is displeasing to Jehovah.—Jeremiah 9:23; Acts 10:34, 35; 1 Corinthians 4:7; Galatians 5:26; 6:3, 4.

<sup>3</sup> There is another reason for rejecting improper pride. If we allow such to grow in our heart, it can develop into a very despicable form of pride called haughtiness. What is haughtiness? In addition to feeling superior, a haughty person looks down on others, those whom he or she views as inferior. (Luke 18:9; John 7:47-49) Jesus listed "haughtiness" along with other wicked traits that come "out of the heart" and "defile a man." (Mark 7:20-23) Christians can see how vital it is to avoid developing a haughty heart.

<sup>4</sup> You can be helped to avoid haughtiness by considering some Bible accounts of haughty ones. You will thus be in a better position to detect improper feelings of pride that might reside within you or that may develop in time. This will help you to reject thoughts or feelings that could lead to a haughty heart. As a result, you will not be

3. What is haughtiness, and what did Jesus say about it?
4. How can a consideration of Bible examples of haughtiness help us?

affected negatively when God acts in line with his warning: "I shall remove from the midst of you your haughtily exultant ones; and you will never again be haughty in my holy mountain."—Zephaniah 3:11.

### God Deals With Haughty Ones

<sup>5</sup> You can also see Jehovah's view of haughtiness in the way he dealt with such powerful rulers as Pharaoh. There can be no doubt that Pharaoh had a haughty heart. Viewing himself as a god to be worshipped, he despised his slaves, the Israelites. Consider his reaction to the request that Israel be allowed to go into the wilderness to "celebrate a festival" to Jehovah. "Who is Jehovah, so that I should obey his voice to send Israel away?" was Pharaoh's haughty reply.—Exodus 5:1, 2.

<sup>6</sup> After Pharaoh had experienced six plagues, Jehovah told Moses to ask Egypt's ruler: "Are you still behaving haughtily against my people in not sending them away?" (Exodus 9:17) Moses now announced the seventh plague—hail that devastated the land. Once the Israelites were free to leave after the tenth plague, Pharaoh changed his mind and pursued them. Finally, Pharaoh and his armies were trapped in the Red Sea. Imagine what they must have thought as the waters closed in upon them! What was the fruitage of Pharaoh's haughtiness? His elite troops said: "Let us flee from any contact with Israel, because Jehovah certainly fights for them against the Egyptians."—Exodus 14:25.

<sup>7</sup> Humiliation at Jehovah's hand also came to other haughty rulers. One was Sennacherib, king of Assyria. (Isaiah 36:1-4, 20; 37:36-38) Eventually, Assyria was conquered by the Babylonians, but two haughty Babylonian kings were humiliated too. Recall the feast that King Belshazzar had during which he

and his royal guests drank wine out of vessels taken from Jehovah's temple, praising Babylon's gods. Suddenly, the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote a message on the wall. Asked to explain the mysterious writing, the prophet Daniel reminded Belshazzar: "The Most High God himself gave to Nebuchadnezzar your father the kingdom . . . But when his heart became haughty . . . , he was brought down from the throne of his kingdom, and his own dignity was taken away from him. . . . As for you, his son Belshazzar, you have not humbled your heart, although you knew all this." (Daniel 5:3, 18, 20, 22) That very night, the Medo-Persian army conquered Babylon, and Belshazzar was killed.—Daniel 5:30, 31.

<sup>8</sup> Think, too, of other haughty men who despised Jehovah's people: the Philistine giant Goliath, the Persian Prime Minister Haman, and King Herod Agrippa, who ruled the province of Judaea. Because of their haughtiness, those three men suffered a humiliating death at God's hand. (1 Samuel 17:42-51; Esther 3:5, 6; 7:10; Acts 12:1-3, 21-23) How Jehovah dealt with those haughty men underlines this truth: "Pride is before a crash, and a haughty spirit before stumbling." (Proverbs 16:18) Indeed, there can be no doubt that "God opposes the haughty ones."—James 4:6.

<sup>9</sup> In contrast with the haughty rulers of Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon, the king of Tyre at one time proved helpful to God's people. During the reigns of Kings David and Solomon, he provided skilled craftsmen and materials for royal buildings and for God's temple. (2 Samuel 5:11; 2 Chronicles 2: 11-16) Sadly, in time, the Tyrians turned against Jehovah's people. What caused that development?—Psalm 83:3-7; Joel 3:4-6; Amos 1:9, 10.

5, 6. How did Pharaoh show haughtiness, and with what result?

7. How did rulers of Babylon show haughtiness?

8. How did Jehovah deal with various haughty ones?

9. How did the kings of Tyre prove to be traitors?

## "Your Heart Became Haughty"

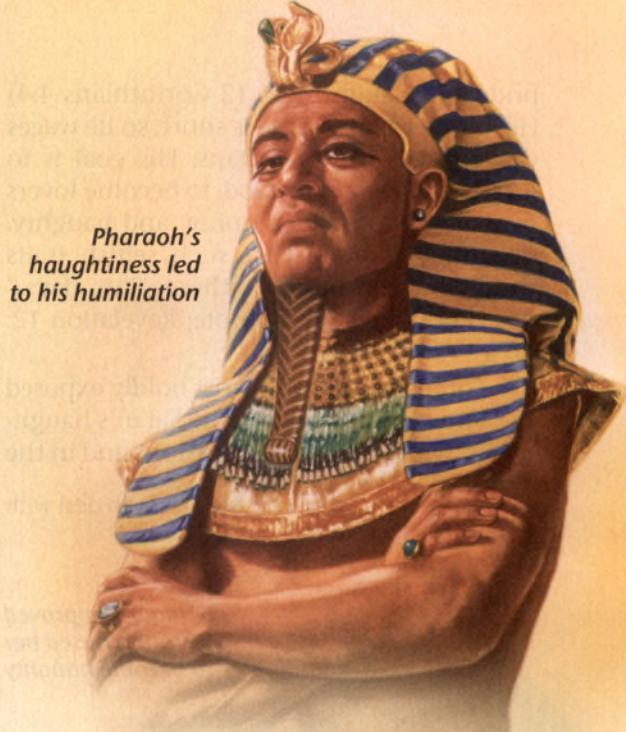
<sup>10</sup> Jehovah inspired his prophet Ezekiel to expose and condemn Tyre's dynasty of kings. That message addressed to "the king of Tyre" contains expressions that fit both the Tyrian dynasty and the original traitor, Satan, who "did not stand fast in the truth." (Ezekiel 28:12; John 8:44) Satan was once a loyal spirit creature in Jehovah's organization of heavenly sons. Jehovah God gave indication through Ezekiel of the basic cause of the defection of both the Tyrian dynasty and Satan:

<sup>11</sup> "In Eden, the garden of God, you proved to be. Every precious stone was your covering . . . You are the anointed cherub that is covering . . . You were faultless in your ways from the day of your being created until unrighteousness was found in you. Because of the abundance of your sales goods they filled the midst of you with violence, and you began to sin. And I shall . . . destroy you, O cherub that is covering . . . Your heart became haughty because of your beauty. You brought your wisdom to ruin on account of your beaming splendor." (Ezekiel 28:13-17) Yes, haughtiness moved Tyre's kings to violence against Jehovah's people. Tyre became exceedingly wealthy as a commercial center and famous for its beautiful products. (Isaiah 23:8, 9) Tyre's kings came to think too much of themselves, and they began to oppress God's people.

<sup>12</sup> Similarly, the spirit creature who became Satan once had the wisdom needed to fulfill any assignment God gave him. Instead of being thankful, he became "puffed up with pride" and began to despise God's way

10, 11. (a) Who might be compared to the kings of Tyre? (b) What changed the Tyrians' attitude toward Israel?

12. What led to Satan's course of treachery, and what has he continued to do?



*Pharaoh's haughtiness led to his humiliation*

of ruling. (1 Timothy 3:6) He thought so much of himself that he began to crave the worship of Adam and Eve. This wicked desire became fertile and gave birth to sin. (James 1:14, 15) Satan seduced Eve into eating the fruit of the only tree that God had ruled out. Then, Satan used her to get Adam to eat of the forbidden fruit. (Genesis 3:1-6) Thus the first human pair rejected God's right to rule over them and, in effect, became worshippers of Satan. His haughtiness knows no bounds. He has tried to seduce all intelligent creatures in heaven and on earth, including Jesus Christ, into worshipping him in rejection of Jehovah's sovereignty.—Matthew 4:8-10; Revelation 12:3, 4, 9.

<sup>13</sup> You can thus see that haughtiness originates with Satan; it is the basic cause of sin, suffering, and corruption in the world today. As "god of this system of things," Satan continues to promote improper feelings of

13. What fruitage has haughtiness produced?

pride and haughtiness. (2 Corinthians 4:4) He knows that his time is short, so he wages war against true Christians. His goal is to turn them away from God, to become lovers of themselves, self-assuming, and haughty. The Bible foretold that such selfish traits would be common in these “last days.” —2 Timothy 3:1, 2, footnote; Revelation 12:12, 17.

<sup>14</sup> For his part, Jesus Christ boldly exposed the rotten fruitage caused by Satan’s haughtiness. On at least three occasions and in the

14. According to what rule does Jehovah deal with his intelligent creatures?

*Hagar’s improved status caused her to become haughty*



presence of self-righteous enemies, Jesus laid down the rule by which Jehovah deals with mankind: “Everyone that exalts himself will be humiliated, but he that humbles himself will be exalted.”—Luke 14:11; 18:14; Matthew 23:12.

### Guard Your Heart Against Haughtiness

<sup>15</sup> You may have noted that the examples of haughtiness mentioned above involved prominent men. Does that mean that ordinary people are not prone to becoming haughty? Definitely not. Consider an incident that occurred in Abraham’s household. The patriarch had no son to be his heir, and his wife, Sarah, was beyond the age of child-bearing. It was customary for a man in Abraham’s situation to take a second wife and have children. God tolerated such marriages because it was not yet his time to reestablish his original standard of marriage among true worshippers.—Matthew 19:3-9.

<sup>16</sup> At his wife’s urging, Abraham agreed to produce a potential heir through Sarah’s Egyptian maid servant, Hagar. As a secondary wife of Abraham, Hagar became pregnant. She should have been deeply grateful for her honored status. Instead, she allowed her heart to become haughty. The Bible relates: “When she became aware that she was pregnant, then her mistress began to be despised in her eyes.” That attitude caused such strife in Abraham’s household that Sarah chased Hagar away. But there was a solution to the problem. God’s angel counseled Hagar: “Return to your mistress and humble yourself under her hand.” (Genesis 16:4, 9) Evidently, Hagar followed this counsel, adjusted her attitude toward Sarah, and became ancestress to a multitude.

15, 16. What caused Hagar to become haughty?

<sup>17</sup> The case of Hagar illustrates that when someone's situation changes for the better, haughtiness may result. The lesson is that even a Christian who has shown a good heart in serving God can become haughty upon gaining wealth or authority. That attitude can also develop if others praise him for his success, wisdom, or ability. Yes, a Christian should be alert to keep haughtiness out of his heart. That is especially true if he achieves success or receives more responsibility.

<sup>18</sup> The most powerful reason for avoiding haughtiness is God's view of this trait. His Word states: "Haughty eyes and an arrogant heart, the lamp of the wicked ones, are sin." (Proverbs 21:4) Interestingly, the Bible in particular warns Christians "who are rich in the present system of things" not to be "high-minded," or "haughty." (1 Timothy 6:17, footnote; Deuteronomy 8:11-17) Those Christians who are not rich should avoid having "an envious eye," and they should remember that haughtiness can develop in anyone—rich or poor.—Mark 7:21-23; James 4:5.

<sup>19</sup> Haughtiness along with other wicked traits can ruin a good relationship with Jehovah. Consider, for example, the first part of King Uzziah's reign: "He kept doing what was right in Jehovah's eyes . . . And he continually tended to search for God . . . ; and, in the days of his searching for Jehovah, the true God made him prosperous." (2 Chronicles 26:4, 5) Sadly, though, King Uzziah spoiled his good record, for "his heart became haughty even to the point of causing ruin." He came to think so much of himself that he entered the temple to offer up incense. When the priests warned him not to commit this presumptuous act, "Uzziah became enraged." As a result, Jehovah struck

17, 18. Why do all of us need to guard against haughtiness?

19. In what way did Uzziah ruin his good record?



*Hezekiah humbled himself and regained God's favor*

him with leprosy, and he died in God's disfavor.—2 Chronicles 26:16-21.

<sup>20</sup> You can contrast that with the example of King Hezekiah. On one occasion, that king's excellent record was in danger of being spoiled because "his heart became haughty." Happily, "Hezekiah humbled himself for the haughtiness of his heart" and regained God's favor. (2 Chronicles 32:25, 26) Notice that the cure for Hezekiah's haughtiness was humility. Yes, humility is the opposite of haughtiness. Therefore, in the next article, we will consider how we can cultivate and maintain Christian humility.

<sup>21</sup> May we not forget, though, all the bad fruitage that has been produced by

20. (a) How was King Hezekiah's good record endangered? (b) What will be considered in the next article?

21. To what can humble Christians look forward?

haughtiness. Since "God opposes the haughty ones," let us be firmly resolved to reject feelings of improper pride. As we strive to be humble Christians, we can look forward to surviving God's great day, when haughty ones and their fruitage will be removed from the earth. Then "the haughtiness of the earthling man must bow down, and the loftiness of men must become low; and Jehovah alone must be put on high in that day."—Isaiah 2:17.

### Points for Meditation

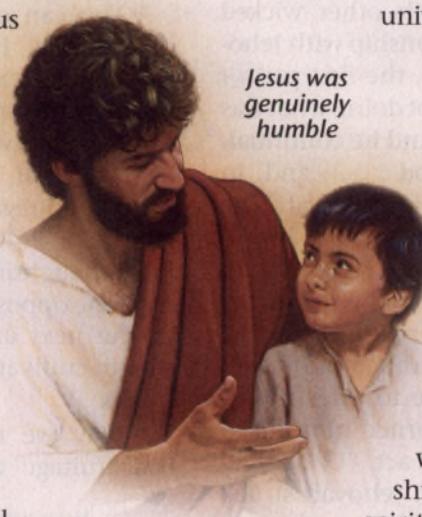
- How would you describe a haughty person?
- What is the origin of haughtiness?
- What can cause a person to become haughty?
- Why must we guard against haughtiness?

## CULTIVATE GENUINE HUMILITY

*"The humble people you will save."*—2 SAMUEL 22:28.

THE pyramids of Egypt bear testimony to men who once ruled that land. Others who left their mark on history were Sennacherib of Assyria, Alexander the Great of Greece, and Julius Caesar of Rome. All such rulers had one thing in common. They did not leave a record of being genuinely humble.—Matthew 20:25, 26.

<sup>2</sup> Could you imagine any of the above-mentioned rulers being in the habit of searching their realm to find lowly subjects in need of comfort? Of course not! Nor could you imagine that they would go to the humble dwell-



*Jesus was genuinely humble*

ings of crushed citizens to uplift the spirits of such ones. How different their attitude toward lowly human creatures is from that of the Supreme Ruler of the universe, Jehovah God!

### The Greatest Example of Humility

<sup>3</sup> Jehovah is unsearchably great and lofty, yet "his eyes are roving about through all the earth to show his strength in behalf of those whose heart is complete toward him." (2 Chronicles 16:9) And what does Jehovah do when he finds lowly worshippers who are crushed in spirit as a result of various trials?

1, 2. What have many world rulers had in common?

3. How does the Supreme Ruler treat his human subjects?

In a sense, he “is residing” with such ones by means of his holy spirit “to revive the spirit of the lowly ones and to revive the heart of the ones being crushed.” (Isaiah 57:15) Thus, his revived worshippers are better able to resume serving him with rejoicing. What humility on God’s part!

<sup>4</sup> No one else in the universe has humbled himself to the same extent as the Sovereign Lord in order to help sinful humans. The psalmist could write: “Jehovah has become high above all the nations; his glory is above the heavens. Who is like Jehovah our God, him who is making his dwelling on high? He is condescending to look on heaven and earth, raising up the lowly one from the very dust; he exalts the poor one from the ashpit itself.”—Psalm 113:4-7.

<sup>5</sup> Note the word “condescending.” When referring to humans, that word can have a bad connotation, ‘to assume an air of superiority to one inferior or less fortunate.’ Such a haughty attitude could never describe Jehovah God, who is pure and holy and thus devoid of “haughtiness.” (Mark 7:22, 23) But “descend” can also carry the sense of coming down to the level of one socially lower or descending from one’s rank or dignity in dealings with an inferior. Thus, some Bibles render Psalm 113:6 as saying that God humbles himself. How well that conveys the image of our humble God giving loving attention to the needs of his imperfect human worshippers!—2 Samuel 22:36.

### Why Jesus Was Humble

<sup>6</sup> God’s greatest act of humility and love was that of sending his beloved firstborn Son to be born on earth and raised as a hu-

4, 5. (a) How did the psalmist feel about God’s way of ruling? (b) What does God’s “condescending” to help “the lowly one” mean?

6. What was Jehovah’s greatest act of humility?

man for the salvation of mankind. (John 3:16) Jesus taught us the truth about his heavenly Father and then gave up his perfect human life to take away “the sin of the world.” (John 1:29; 18:37) Perfectly reflecting his Father, including Jehovah’s humility, Jesus was willing to do what God asked of him. That was the greatest example of humility and love ever set by one of God’s creatures. Not all appreciated Jesus’ humility, his enemies even considering him to be “the lowest one of mankind.” (Daniel 4:17) Nonetheless, the apostle Paul realized that his fellow believers should imitate Jesus and thus be humble in their dealings with one another.—1 Corinthians 11:1; Philippians 2:3, 4.

<sup>7</sup> Paul highlighted Jesus’ outstanding example, writing: “Keep this mental attitude in you that was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he was existing in God’s form, gave no consideration to a seizure, namely, that he should be equal to God. No, but he emptied himself and took a slave’s form and came to be in the likeness of men. More than that, when he found himself in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake.”—Philippians 2:5-8.

7, 8. (a) How did Jesus learn to be humble? (b) What appeal does Jesus make to potential disciples?

### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Can Anyone Really Change the World?

The Ransom Magnifies God’s Righteousness

Jehovah Is Our Shepherd

<sup>8</sup> Some might wonder, ‘How did Jesus learn to be humble?’ It was a marvelous benefit of his close association with his heavenly Father for aeons of time, during which he served as God’s “master worker” in the creation of all things. (Proverbs 8:30) After the rebellion in Eden, God’s First-born was in a position to note his Father’s humble dealings with human sinners. Accordingly, when on earth, Jesus reflected his Father’s humility and made the appeal: “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls.”—Matthew 11:29; John 14:9.

<sup>9</sup> Because Jesus was genuinely humble, little children were not afraid of him. Rather, they felt drawn to him. He for his part showed fondness for children and gave attention to them. (Mark 10:13-16) What was it about children that Jesus found so appealing? Certainly, they had desirable qualities that some of his adult disciples did not always display. It is a simple fact that little children view adults as being superior. You can see this by the many questions they ask. Yes, compared with many adults, children are more teachable and not as prone to pride. On one occasion, Jesus singled out a young child and said to His followers: “Unless you turn around and become as young children, you will by no means enter into the kingdom of the heavens.” He continued:

9. (a) What did Jesus find appealing in children?
- (b) Using a young child, what lesson did Jesus teach?

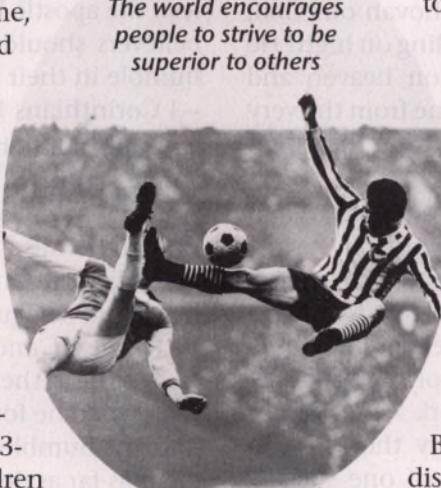
“Whoever will humble himself like this young child is the one that is the greatest in the kingdom of the heavens.” (Matthew 18:3, 4) Jesus stated the rule: “Everyone that exalts himself will be humbled and he that humbles himself will be exalted.”—Luke 14:11; 18:14; Matthew 23:12.

<sup>10</sup> That truth raises important questions. Our prospect of gaining everlasting life is in part dependent on our cultivating genuine humility, but why do Christians sometimes find it difficult to be humble? Why is it a challenge for us to swallow our pride, so to speak, and react to trials with humility? And what will help us to succeed in cultivating genuine humility?—James 4:6, 10.

### Why It Is Difficult to Be Humble

<sup>11</sup> If you have found yourself struggling to be humble, you are not alone. Back in 1920, this journal discussed the Bible’s counsel on the need for humility, commenting: “As we thus see how great a value the Lord places upon humility it should encourage all true disciples to cultivate this quality daily.” Then came this frank admission: “Notwithstanding all these exhortations of the Scriptures the perversity of human nature seems to be such that those who become the Lord’s people and who engage to run in this way seem to find more trouble, more to contend against, in this matter than in any other.” That highlights one reason why true Christians have to

10. What questions will we consider?
11. Why is it not surprising that we struggle to be humble?



WHO photo by L. Almasi/K. Hemza

struggle to be humble—our sinful human nature craves undue glory. This is because we are the descendants of a sinful couple, Adam and Eve, who gave in to selfish cravings.—Romans 5:12.

<sup>12</sup> Another reason we may find it difficult to display humility is that we are surrounded by a world that encourages people to strive to be superior to others. Among this world's common goals is a craving for satisfying "the desire of the [sinful] flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one's means of life." (1 John 2:16) Rather than being dominated by such worldly desires, Jesus' disciples are to keep their eye simple and to focus on doing God's will. —Matthew 6:22-24, 31-33; 1 John 2:17.

<sup>13</sup> A third reason why cultivating and displaying humility is difficult is that the originator of haughtiness, Satan the Devil, rules this world. (2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 Timothy 3:6) Satan promotes his wicked traits. For example, he sought worship from Jesus in exchange for giving him "all the kingdoms of the world and their glory." Ever humble, Jesus flatly rejected the Devil's offer. (Matthew 4:8, 10) Likewise, Satan tempts Christians to seek glory for themselves. Instead, humble Christians strive to follow Jesus' example, directing praise and honor to God. —Mark 10:17, 18.

12, 13. (a) How is the world an obstacle to Christian humility? (b) Who makes our struggle to cultivate humility even more difficult?

## Cultivating and Displaying Genuine Humility

<sup>14</sup> In his letter to the Colossians, the apostle Paul warned against the outward pretense of humility to impress men. Paul described this as "a mock humility." Those who make a mere pretense of being humble are not spiritual people. Rather, they betray that they are really "puffed up" with pride. (Colossians 2:18, 23)

Jesus pointed to examples of such false humility. He condemned the Pharisees for their showy prayers and for the way they fasted with sad and disfigured faces to be observed by men. In contrast, for our private prayers to have value before God, they should be uttered humbly.—Matthew 6:5, 6, 16.

<sup>15</sup> Christians are helped to maintain genuine lowliness of mind by focusing on the best examples of humility, Jehovah God and Jesus Christ. Doing this involves a regular study of the Bible and Bible study aids provided through "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matthew 24:45) Such a study is vital for Christian overseers,

"that [their] heart may not exalt itself above [their] brothers." (Deuteronomy 17:19, 20; 1 Peter 5:1-3) Reflect on the numerous examples of ones who were blessed for their humble attitude, such as Ruth, Hannah, Elizabeth, and many others. (Ruth 1:16, 17; 1 Samuel 1:11, 20; Luke 1:41-43) Think, too, of the many fine examples of prominent

14. What is "mock humility"?

15. (a) What can we do to maintain lowliness of mind? (b) What are some good examples of humility?



*Humility helps us to approach strangers in our ministry*

men who remained humble in Jehovah's service, such as David, Josiah, John the Baptizer, and the apostle Paul. (2 Chronicles 34:1, 2, 19, 26-28; Psalm 131:1; John 1:26, 27; 3:26-30; Acts 21:20-26; 1 Corinthians 15:9) And what about the many modern-day examples of humility that we find in the Christian congregation? By meditating on these examples, true Christians will be helped to have "lowliness of mind toward one another."—1 Peter 5:5.

<sup>16</sup> Having a regular share in the Christian ministry can also help us to be humble. Lowliness of mind can make us effective when we approach strangers we find from house to house and in other places. This is especially true when householders initially respond to the Kingdom message with apathy or rudeness. Our beliefs are often challenged, and humility can help the Christian to keep answering questions "with a mild temper and deep respect." (1 Peter 3:15) Humble servants of God have moved to new territories and have helped people with different cultures and standards of living. Such ministers may humbly have to cope with the difficult task of learning a new language in order to be of better service to those with whom they want to share the good news. How commendable! —Matthew 28:19, 20.

16. How does the Christian ministry help us to be humble?

### Points for Meditation

- Who are the best examples of humility?
- Why is humility difficult to cultivate?
- What can help us to be humble?
- Why is it so important to remain humble?

<sup>17</sup> With humility, many have fulfilled their Christian duties, putting the interests of others ahead of their own. For example, it takes humility for a Christian father to set aside time from his own pursuits to prepare and conduct an effective Bible study with his children. Humility also helps children to honor and be obedient to their parents, who are imperfect. (Ephesians 6:1-4) Wives who have unbelieving husbands often face humbling situations as they try to win over their mates by "chaste conduct together with deep respect." (1 Peter 3:1, 2) Humility and self-sacrificing love are assets too when we lovingly care for the needs of sick and aging parents.—1 Timothy 5:4.

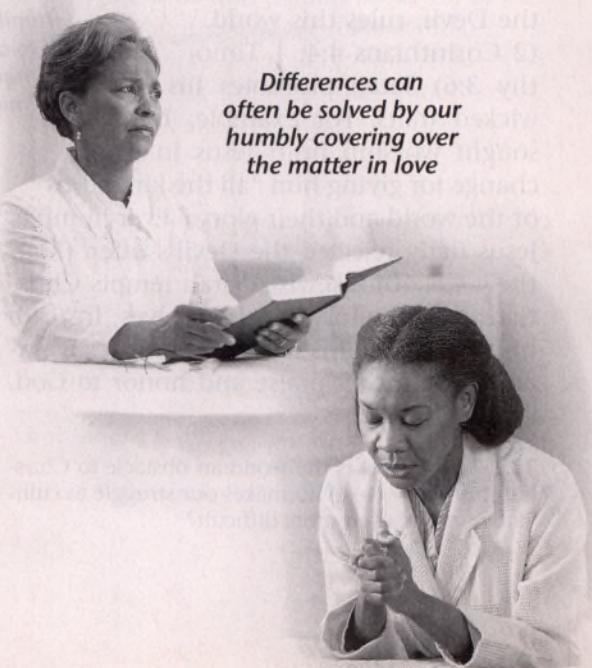
### Humility Solves Problems

<sup>18</sup> All of God's human servants are imperfect. (James 3:2) At times, differences or misunderstandings may develop between two Christians. One may have a valid cause for complaint against another. Usually, such situations can be solved by applying this coun-

17. What Christian responsibilities require humility?

18. How can humility help us to resolve problems?

*Differences can  
often be solved by our  
humbly covering over  
the matter in love*





*There are many ways in which Christians show humility*

sel: "Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also." (Colossians 3:13) Admittedly, following this advice is not easy, but humility will help one put it into practice.

<sup>19</sup> Sometimes a Christian may feel that a valid cause for complaint is too serious to be covered over. Then, humility will help him to approach the alleged offender with a view to restoring peace. (Matthew 18:15) One reason that problems between Christians sometimes persist is that one or perhaps both parties are too proud to admit being at fault. Or the one who takes the initiative to approach the other may do so in a self-righteous, critical manner. In contrast, a genuinely humble attitude will go a long way toward solving many differences.

<sup>20</sup> A key step in developing humility is to pray for God's help and spirit. But remember,

19. What must we remember when we speak to someone who has upset us?

20, 21. What is one of the greatest helps to being humble?



"God . . . gives undeserved kindness [including his holy spirit] to the humble ones." (James 4:6) So if you have a difference with a fellow believer, pray to Jehovah to help you humbly to admit any minor or major blame on your part. If you have been hurt and the offender says a sincere, "I'm sorry," then humbly forgive. If doing this is difficult, prayerfully seek Jehovah's help to rid your heart of any lingering haughtiness.

<sup>21</sup> Understanding the many benefits that humility brings should move us to cultivate and maintain this precious quality. To that end, what wonderful examples we have in Jehovah God and Jesus Christ! Never forget the divine assurance: "The result of humility and the fear of Jehovah is riches and glory and life."—Proverbs 22:4.

# "They That Go Down to the Sea in Ships"

FACING the outer harbor of Gloucester, Massachusetts, U.S.A., stands a bronze statue depicting a helmsman, intent on steering his ship through a storm. The statue commemorates the thousands of Gloucester fishermen known to have died at sea. On the statue's base and a nearby plaque are the words of Psalm 107:23, 24: "They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; These see the works of the Lord, and his wonders in the deep."

—King James Version.

Working on the rich undersea banks of the Atlantic is perilous business. Over the years, as many as 5,368 men from Gloucester, which now has a population of some 30,000, are known to have lost their lives while fishing at sea. Says the memorial: "Some were overtaken by the howling winds and mountainous seas of a catastrophic northeaster. Some met their fate in the solitude of a small dory gone astray from the schooner that brought them to the banks. Some ships collided in storms and tragically sank. Others were run down by steamers in shipping lanes."

The memorial stands as a sad witness to the toil and dangers that fishermen have faced over the centuries. Imagine the tears of desperation shed for lost husbands, fathers, brothers, and sons. Yet, Jehovah God does not forget the widows, the orphans, or those who lost their lives at sea. The apostle John pointed to this future development: "The sea gave up those dead in it, and death and Hades gave up those dead in them." (Revelation 20:13) At the time of their resurrection, those who went "down to the sea in ships" will see wonderful "works of the Lord" indeed.

