

The WATCHTOWER

DECEMBER 1, 1957

Semimonthly

THE LOVED WOMAN OF THE
SUPERLATIVE SONG

THE TYRANNY OF CASTE

THE SPIRIT WORLD

GUIDED SWEDENBORG

GLORY FROM THE WEAK

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Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**



"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Literal towers in Bible times were elevated vantage points from which watchmen could observe happenings, warn of danger, or announce good news. Our magazine figuratively occupies such a vantage point, for it is founded on the very pinnacle of wisdom, God's Word. That elevates it above racial, national and political propagandas and prejudices, frees it from selfish bias. It is not bound by any traditional creed, but its message advances as the light on God's purposes and works increases.—Habakkuk 2:1-3.

It sees things Scripturally. When it observes this generation afflicted with greed, delinquency, hypocrisy, atheism, war, famine, pestilence, perplexity and fear, and persecution of unpopular minorities, it does not parrot the old fable about history repeating itself. Informed by Bible prophecy, it sees in these things the sign of the world's time of the end. But with bright hope it also sees opening up for us just beyond these woes the portals of a new world.

Thus viewed, "The Watchtower" stands as a watchman atop a tower, alert to what is going on, awake to note signs of danger, faithful to point out the way of escape. It announces Jehovah's kingdom established by Christ's enthronement in heaven, feeds his kingdom joint-heirs with spiritual food, cheers men of good will with glorious prospects of eternal life in a paradise earth, comforts us with the resurrection promise for the dead.

It is not dogmatic, but has a confident ring in its voice, because it is based on God's Word. It does not privately interpret prophecy, but calls attention to physical facts, sets them alongside prophecy, and you see for yourself how well the two match, how accurately Jehovah interprets his own prophecy. In the interests of our salvation, it keeps sharp and faithful focus on Bible truth, and views religious news generally.

'Be watchful in these perilous times,' God admonishes. So keep on the watch by regularly reading "The Watchtower".

PUBLISHED BY THE

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA
117 Adams Street

Brooklyn 1, N. Y., U. S. A.

N. H. KNORR, President

GRANT SUITER, Secretary

"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6:45; Isaiah 54:13

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Printing this issue: 3,350,000		Five cents a copy
PUBLISHED IN THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGES		
Semimonthly Monthly		
Afrikaans	Finnish	Japanese
Arabic	French	Norwegian
Cebu-Visayan	German	Burmese
Cinyanja	Greek	Spanish
Cishona	Ilocano	Swedish
Danish	Indonesian	Tagalog
Dutch	Italian	Twi
English		
		Hiligaynon-
		Russian
		Sesotho
		Ibo
		Zulu
		Siamese

Yearly subscription rates for semimonthly editions	
America, U. S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn 1, N. Y.	\$1
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Stratfield, N.S.W.	8/-
Canada, 150 Bridgeland Ave., Toronto 10, Ontario	\$1
England, 34 Craven Terrace, London W. 2	7/-
Jamaica, 151 King St., Kingston	7/-
New Zealand, G.P.O. Box 30, Wellington C. 1	7/-
South Africa, Private Bag, P.O. Elandsfontein, Transvaal	7/-
Trinidad, 21 Taylor St., Woodbrook, Port of Spain	\$1.75

Monthly editions cost half the above rates.

Remittances should be sent to office in your country in compliance with regulations to guarantee safe delivery of money. Remittances are accepted at Brooklyn from countries where no office is located, by International money order only. Notice of expiration (with renewal blank) is sent at least two issues before subscription expires. Change of address when sent to our office may be expected effective within one month. Send your old as well as new address.

Entered as second-class matter at Brooklyn, N.Y.
Printed in U. S. A.

The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

Vol. LXXVIII

December 1, 1957

Number 23

GLORY

from the weak



Would a mighty king choose the weakest people of his realm to represent him? Would he send such people out to bring glory to his kingdom? Rather than choose the weakest, would he not choose the strongest, the most valiant and the wisest?

This is what a human king would do, but it is not what God would do. The Sovereign of the universe does not choose those whom the world considers strong, valiant and wise to bring glory to his name. He chooses the weak, those who are looked down upon, those who are considered foolish and unintellectual. These are the ones he prefers to represent him. Why? Because he is glorified in weakness.

Does it not bring greater glory to a king to win a victory with fighting farmers than with expert warriors? Does it not magnify his wisdom to outwit and outmaneuver a professional fighting force and

then overcome it with men unskilled in warfare?

As a human king can bring glory to himself by such means, so can God. The descendants of Jacob are a good example of how he has done it. When they were in Egypt 3500 years ago they were not a mighty people, but rather were weak and oppressed, slaves to a militarily strong government. It was upon these insignificant people that God placed his name, and not upon powerful Egypt. Regarding this choice Deuteronomy 7:7 says: "It was not because of your being the most populous of all the peoples that Jehovah showed affection for you so that he chose you, for you were the least of all the peoples."

He took these people and did the seemingly impossible—freed them from slavery to a mighty world power and then made them an independent nation. They could not have done this themselves; that was evident. From a human viewpoint their situation was hopeless, but yet they were delivered. This fact magnified the power of God.

Many years after the Israelites had settled in the Promised Land they came under the oppressive yoke of the Midianites. God had permitted this because of their disobedience, but when they had manifested proper repentance he chose Gideon to lead them in a fight for freedom. But Gideon was not to raise a large army, for God's hand in a victory would not then be so

evident. Jehovah said to Gideon: "The people who are with you are too many for me to give Midian into their hand. Perhaps Israel would brag about itself against me, saying, 'My hand it was that saved me.' "—Judg. 7:2.

Gideon's fighting force was then cut to 10,000 men. But that was still too many. Finally it was reduced to 300. These were sent out against the Midianite army, who had an overwhelming numerical advantage. From a worldly viewpoint that small band was doomed. Yet they came off victorious. God magnified himself in their weakness. By means of it he brought glory to his name.

As Jehovah did not choose the mighty of the world to be his people in the days of Moses and Gideon, neither did he choose such in the days of Christ. It was to the common people that his long-promised Messiah went. Christ chose his apostles from them and not from the powerful religious leaders and intellectuals of his day. The apostle Paul was an exception, but he lost his respected position in the world when he became a Christian.

The elite of that time looked down upon the common people as inferiors. But it was these "inferiors" that Christ favored. They were humble and not self-exalting. By becoming the representatives of Christ's Father the apostles and other disciples were privileged to preach and teach. This was a work the pompous religious leaders imagined to be theirs alone. They considered themselves to be the only ones capable and worthy of doing it. Nevertheless, poor fishermen, tax collectors and tentmakers were appointed to do it. They became the proclaimers of God's truth.

Those common people did great things because God's spirit was upon them. 'From a weak state they were made powerful,' as God's servants before their day. Any

boasting they might do would have had to be in the power of God and not in any natural strength or ability those early Christians had.

As Jehovah did not choose the mighty religious leaders of the first century to represent him, neither has he done so today. His reasons are the same: "For you behold his calling of you, brothers, that not many wise in a fleshly way were called, not many powerful, not many noble; but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put the wise men to shame, and God chose the weak things of the world, that he might put the strong things to shame; and God chose the ignoble things of the world and the things looked down upon, the things that are not, that he might bring to nothing the things that are, in order that no flesh might boast in the sight of God."—1 Cor. 1:26-29.

The common people whom God has chosen to represent him today are not wise, powerful and noble in a fleshly way, yet they are doing a tremendous work to the honor of Jehovah's name. Like the first-century Christians, they too are bringing hope to multitudes through the preaching of the good news of God's kingdom. They too are giving testimony before worldly rulers, and they too are courageously enduring frightful persecution.

These modern witnesses of Jehovah boast not in themselves but rather in God. He is the one who has caused their preaching of the Kingdom to extend into the farthest corners of the inhabited earth; he is the one who is causing it to prosper; and he is the one who strengthens them to testify before rulers and to endure severe mistreatment. These people who are weak in the eyes of the world are strong in God. By means of them God brings glory to his name.

THE TYRANNY OF CASTE

While the term "caste" is generally associated with India, the practice of it is by no means limited to that land. Whatever its form, however, it represents tyranny and is condemned in God's Word.



NO DOUBT the last place in the world you would look for an example of caste would be among farm animals. Yet did you know that research has discovered that among hens and cows, even in the barnyard, are to be found all "the special privilege, the oppression, the cruelty and snobbery of caste"?

Yes, in the farmer's henyard "a definite social hierarchy, or 'pecking order,' is always established. Every bird has a wholesome fear of those above her in rank and will know which ones are below her." (*Saturday Review*, June 22, 1957) And regarding the cows we are told that each herd has its queen, "who always precedes the others into barn and pasture and has an unresented right to push aside any other cow at a feed bunk. Behind her other cows of good social standing walk in unvarying order." In a herd of a hundred cows this may include twelve, as at Cornell University's dairy barn, where "the rest stood respectfully aside as the privileged few entered the building" first.—*American Mercury*, November, 1956.

Caste among the lower animals, and it is not limited to domestic animals by any means, seems amusing to us humans. To what extent those oppressed by it suffer we can only surmise. But caste among hu-

mans is not amusing; it is a brutal, harsh yoke of tyranny that rests heavily on the shoulders of many, many millions, causing them to mourn, sigh and groan, and arouses in all lovers of righteousness, whether affected by it or not, strong sentiments of righteous indignation.

MANY KINDS OF CASTE

Caste invariably involves tyranny. It is the use of power to oppress others because of claimed superiority. The supposed difference may be entirely imaginary, as in the case of Indian caste, or it may be due to circumstances of birth, such as in the racial

discrimination of a minority. Thus in many Eastern lands those of light skin are discriminated against, whereas in Western lands those who have a dark skin are oppressed. Among the major kinds of caste tyranny are the Brahman caste system of India, racial discrimination, national prejudice and aesthetic snobbery due to possession of education, culture, wealth, etc., and that of religion, the distinction between clergy and laity.

Caste distinction is generally considered as being native to India, although actually it goes all the way back to the priesthood established by Nimrod's mother after his death. As regards its Indian manifestation, it appears that many centuries before Christ light-skinned Aryan invaders subjugated the people and foisted upon them an arbitrary caste system. The Hindu word



for caste has inherent the thought of color, light color, while the Portuguese root for the English word "caste" means "race," and, by implication, pure or unmixed race. According to one Hindu writer, the Brahman "caste system was soon discovered to be a very effective instrument of domination and exploitation, for keeping the people ignorant in order to make them submissive, and for keeping them weak by increasing divisions among them."—*The Menace of Hindu Imperialism*, Swami Dharm Theertha, 1946.

Originally Brahman caste had four major divisions: (1) the Brahmins, or priests and scholars; (2) the warriors and rulers; (3) the husbandmen, merchants and artisans; (4) the servants. Those who for one reason or another forfeited their caste became a fifth group, the outcastes or "untouchables." (*The Encyclopedia Americana*, Vol. 6, p. 1, 1956 Ed.) The lot of this last class was so pitiable and wretched that the government of India finally made it illegal.

A particularly ruthless form of the tyranny of caste is that based on skin color. Caste distinction in the form of *apartheid* is the burning question in South Africa today. In the summer of 1957 the public press in the United States told of incident after incident of the tyranny of this type of caste. A new \$500,000 school in Nashville, Tennessee, was dynamited, becoming a total loss simply because it had admitted one Negro child among its 390 pupils. To keep nine Negro youths from entering a high school in Little Rock, Arkansas, the governor of the state sent out hundreds of militia armed with guns, clubs and gas masks, ostensibly to prevent trouble, but taking the side of those flouting the law and at the same time defying the sovereignty of the federal government. In Los Angeles, California, all forty-three members of a certain Methodist church re-

signed to protest having a Negro pastor appointed to their church.

Many more incidents could be cited, all taking place within just a few months. Most of the incidents reported are a protest against the order of the Supreme Court of the land that made it illegal to segregate students according to race. Advocates of racial caste may boast of being Christians and good Americans, but their actions prove that they have no regard for God's law, which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and no regard for the law of the land as interpreted by its Supreme Court.

More prevalent but perhaps less brutal is the tyranny of caste distinction because of advantages of culture, education and wealth. Those who possess these frequently exercise snobbery toward the have-nots. Even as with Indian caste, all social contacts are regulated in line with these distinctions. Of a similar kind is the caste of royalty in such lands as Great Britain.

Clannishness because of nationality is also a form of caste tyranny. The foreigner is looked down upon regardless of what merits he may have. Devotees of nationalistic caste usually have more hatred for other peoples than love for their own country.

And then there is the religious caste system in which those who wear the cloth, whether clergy, monks or nuns, are set apart as a people more holy than others. These are also distinguished by such titles as "Reverend," "Father," "Bishop," "Monsignor," etc. All such caste distinction is likewise a form of tyranny, causing others to bow in fear and respect and to feel obligated to give financial support to the preferred ones.

NO SCRIPTURAL SUPPORT

Organized religion generally supports the caste *status quo*, and in the United States the tyranny of caste is most pronounced

in what is known as the "Bible Belt." But nowhere does God's Word countenance the tyranny of caste. Among the ancient Israelites there was no caste system; intermarriage was forbidden only to keep the worship of Jehovah pure. Israelites were allowed to marry non-Israelite proselytes, two examples being that of Rahab and Ruth.

While the Israelites were recognized as Jehovah's chosen people because of God's covenant with their ancestor Abraham, they were warned against any caste consciousness. They were told that Jehovah himself loves these foreigners and were reminded of the fact that they themselves were at one time foreigners—in the land of Egypt. In fact, time and again God's prophets reminded them that God's favor depended not upon race but upon properly worshiping Him.

Even more explicit are the Christian Greek Scriptures. Thus the apostle Paul plainly declared that God "made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth." If all came from one man, Adam, then all are related and there can be no superiority because of color or any other physical characteristic. (This is borne out by the fact that the blood from any one of the various races cannot be distinguished from that of the others.) Paul also shows that Christians are not to make distinctions because of national or politico-economic differences: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor freeman" in the Christian congregation.—Acts 17:26; Gal. 3:28.

And far from recognizing any caste distinction because of worldly education, we are told that "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." (1 Cor. 3:19) And to those who set up a caste system as regards wealth by favoring the rich over the poor the disciple James bluntly

wrote: "You have class distinctions among yourselves and you have become judges rendering corrupt decisions, is that not so? Listen, my beloved brothers. God chose the ones who are poor respecting the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he promised to those who love him, did he not? You, though, have disdained the poor man. The rich . . . blaspheme the beautiful name by which you were called, do they not? If, now, you practice carrying out the kingly law according to the Scriptures, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself,' you are doing quite well. But if you continue showing favoritism, you are working a sin, for you are reproved by the law as transgressors."—Jas. 2:4-9.

Nor is there to be any caste within the Christian congregation because of special privileges of service. Because two of his apostles had asked for chief seats in his kingdom Jesus said to them: "You know that the rulers of the nations lord it over them and the great men wield authority over them. This is not the arrangement among you; but whoever wants to become great among you must be your minister, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave."—Matt. 20:25-27.

Jesus also definitely ruled out a titled clergy caste system among his followers. Condemning such practices among the Jews, he, among other things, stated: "But you, do not you be called 'Rabbi', for one is your teacher, whereas all you are brothers. Moreover, do not call anyone your father on earth, for One is your Father, the heavenly One. Neither be called 'leaders', for your Leader is one, the Christ. But the greatest one among you must be your servant."—Matt. 23:8-11, margin.

HOW CASTE DISTINCTION HARMS

No question about it, regardless of where practiced and why, caste distinctions cause much suffering. Their practice is cruel and

selfish. Those who do impose caste distinctions upon others fail to heed Jehovah's command "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God." They neglect to 'love their neighbor as themselves' and overlook Jesus' commandment: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them; this, in fact, is what the Law and the Prophets mean."—Mic. 6:8, RS; Matt. 22:39; 7:12.

Caste distinction harms not only those oppressed by it but also those exalted by it. How so? In that it is a manifestation of pride, and "pride is before a crash, and a haughty spirit before stumbling." Also, we are warned that "whoever exalts himself will be humbled," and that "what is lofty among men is a disgusting thing in God's sight." And to the extent that caste makes men unmerciful and harsh, to that extent practicing it means receiving like treatment at the hands of the great Judge, Jehovah God.—Prov. 16:18; Matt. 23:12; Luke 16:15; Matt. 7:2.

Caste distinctions, as we have seen, foster pride, jealousy and strife. Being opposed to God's Word, they are of Satan the Devil, and being practiced by the lower animals, they are animalistic. The words of

censure by the disciple James therefore apply to it: "If you have bitter jealousy and contentiousness in your hearts, do not be bragging and lying against the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is the earthly, animal, demonic. For where jealousy and contentiousness are, there disorder and every vile thing are."—Jas. 3:14-16.

But most serious of all, caste distinctions exalt creatures and are therefore a form of creature worship. As such they invite God's wrath, for he is "a God exacting exclusive devotion." Because He cannot deny himself he will, in the near-at-hand battle of Armageddon, bring low proud man and have his name alone exalted.—Ex. 20:5.

Those who love God and their fellow man will have nothing to do with any caste distinctions, nor with organizations that practice them. As for those who are discriminated against because of caste distinction and who are unable to get out from under this yoke, rather than making an issue of it and dedicating one's life to fighting it as some do, the wise course is to wait on Jehovah until his due time to end all injustices, which he will do in his new world of righteousness.

After Prayer, the Rifle Range

 A former clergyman recommends that church members follow their prayers with rifle practice. Reporting on the former clergyman's views, which were expressed in a letter, the Houston Post of August 5, 1950, said: "Dr. E. C. Nance, president of the University of Tampa, advised leaders of groups interested in peace, including churches, to launch a campaign of instruction in the use of firearms, civil defense, guerrilla warfare and so forth to every man, woman and child in the United States." Dr. Nance, 50-year-old veteran of two world wars and former pastor in several Christian churches, said if he occupied a pulpit today he would tell his congregation not to be too high-minded even in their prayers. "I would tell them that religion is not, at least in our day, to help them escape the realities of life, but to help face them. I would say it is better to be a live sinner than a dead saint. After leading my congregation in prayer services I would invite them to the rifle range for practice in firearms. I believe we should have total preparedness based on the laws of the jungle—that we should learn every art and science of killing." How unlike Christ Jesus!



EMANUEL SWEDENBORG, widely known in the eighteenth century for his contributions in government, education and science, says that he also had ready access to the spirit world. He tells us that, having finished his dinner one evening, the Lord appeared to him. That night He appeared again and told Swedenborg that he had been chosen to explain to men the spiritual sense of the Scriptures. Whereupon the spirit world opened to his gaze, both heaven and hell and those in them. He did not drop his other pursuits, but religious interests dominated his activities.

In the introduction to his *Arcana Cœlestia* he says: "It has been granted me, now for several years, to be constantly and uninterruptedly in company with spirits and angels, hearing them converse with each other, and conversing with them." That in some way he did see and hear things there seems to be little question. The question is, What were they and where did they originate? The good advice of God's Word is: "Test the inspired expressions to see whether they originate with God." (1 John 4:1) Because something is supernatural it is not necessarily only for super-

stitious people, nor is all that is supernatural from God.

The expressions that Swedenborg was inspired to make cover a wide field and many of them are found in some thirty works written by him. Briefly, some of the high lights are set out below. He rejects Christendom's concept of the trinity. Setting aside the idea of the equality of three members in the Godhead, he replaces it with the teaching of the exclusive divinity of Jesus Christ, which is said to be the keynote of Swedenborg theology. Along with this he teaches that Jehovah God and Jesus Christ are not two Gods or two persons, but one God from different aspects. In referring to Jehovah he means the unapproachable and supreme Divine Being. Christ is termed the Divine Humanity. The book *Divine Providence* explains it in this way: "God is one in essence and in person. This God is the Lord. The Divinity itself, which is called Jehovah 'the Father,' is the Lord from eternity. The Divine Humanity is 'the Son' begotten from His Divine from eternity, and born in the world. The proceeding Divinity is 'the Holy Spirit.' "

A different viewpoint toward the atonement is also presented, so that Christ is said, not to have provided a "ransom price" to be presented to God in order to redeem humanity, but rather to be a champion or exemplar who showed the way for man to overcome the spiritual enemies he confronts.

In a book published by the Swedenborg Foundation, George Trobridge makes the statement: "The Bible is truly the 'Word of God.' "¹ However, Swedenborg teaches that the Scriptures have an inner or spiritual sense, which is not immediately apparent on the surface. Since his work was to make known the "inner sense" of the

Scriptures, it is understandable why he defined the "books of the Word" as being only "those which have an internal sense." Thus the Bible is stripped down to about thirty-four books, instead of the usual sixty-six, according to the listing he gives in his *Arcana Coelestia*.

Of those that are accepted such statements as the following are made: "He tells us that the early chapters of Genesis are purely allegorical in character and do not describe the creation of the universe and the history of the first human pair."¹ On this basis he has built up a doctrine of "correspondencies." "The natural world is an image or mirror of the spiritual world, every object, fact, and phenomenon, representing, or 'corresponding' to, some immaterial idea which is its spiritual counterpart."¹

Thus everything on earth is said to correspond with those things in heaven, and even the different heavens of which he speaks are said to correspond with one another. On this idea he bases nearly all his Bible commentary and in it he presents what he terms the inner sense of the Word. The revealing of these things through Emanuel Swedenborg is said to fulfill the second coming of Christ. Not a personal coming, but a coming by means of revelation through Swedenborg of the interior sense of the Word.

His correspondencies are carried through even in other matters. Thus life in heaven is said to be merely a continuation of the natural human existence. "When the body is no longer able to perform its functions in the natural world, a man is said to die. Still the man does not die; he is only separated from the bodily part which was of use to him in the world. The man himself lives. . . . It is plain, then, that when a man dies, he only passes from one world into the other."² Swedenborg was fully convinced of the matter, because he

himself claims to have spoken with some of his deceased friends.

In this other world one is said to carry on an existence much like the one he enjoyed on earth, but in a spirit form. Thus there is said to be heavenly marriage—a marriage of the minds, that is—which may be a continuation of the marriage union formed on earth. Children, all of whom are automatically said to be saved, are reared by angel women. He speaks of abodes in heaven with bedrooms, parlors, gardens and lawns. Even regular church services are said to be held there.

What are the heaven and hell of Swedenborgianism? Not merely places but also internal conditions. Anyone is free to ascend into heaven, but not all would want to stay, because each one after death goes the way of his love. Those who love good find their place in the society of heaven; those who love evil prefer the society of hell. For that reason he says: "Heaven is in a man; and they who have heaven within themselves, come into heaven. . . . Every angel receives the heaven which is around him according to the heaven which is within him."²

The same holds true with respect to those bound for hell, so that "a man casts himself into hell, and not the Lord." This leads to the further teaching that there is no individual in hell who is the Devil, nor is there any individual spirit anywhere else that was once perfect and who became the Devil, because, says Swedenborg, "there is not a single angel in the universal heaven who was originally created such, nor any devil in hell who was created an angel of light and afterwards cast down thither; but all, both in heaven and in hell, are from the human race."¹

WEIGHING THE EVIDENCE

One of Swedenborg's books is entitled "The True Christian Religion," and the

religion that he taught and claims to have received by revelation from God out of heaven is said to fit that description. Does it? If so, it must conform to the teachings of Christ and to the example set by him. Is an organization that exalts the Son Christ Jesus above the Father Jehovah God following the example of Christ, who said to his Father: "I have glorified you on the earth"? (John 17:4) The inspired psalmist said: "That they may know that thou alone, whose name is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth." (Psalm 83:18, AS) Jesus showed complete agreement with that divinely inspired expression when he said: "The Father is greater than I am."—John 14:28.

When the foundation collapses, so does the system built upon it. "The foundation stone of the whole system is the doctrine of the supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ," says the book *Swedenborg—Life and Teaching*. But that doctrine is not taught in the Bible, which is the truth. With a bad foundation stone, it should not surprise us to find further faulty workmanship in the structure.

Christ tells us that "the Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many." (Matt. 20:28) When he instituted the celebration in memorial of his death among his disciples he said: "This means my 'blood of the covenant' which is to be poured out in behalf of many for forgiveness of sins." (Matt. 26:28) The apostle Paul supports the need for this provision, saying: "Unless blood is poured out no forgiveness takes place." (Heb. 9:22) Can anyone deny these things and still claim to be a Christian? Swedenborg does, claiming that salvation is not based so much on a blood sacrifice as on the good that God has implanted in man.

Minimizing the need of paying attention to God when He speaks to us through his

Word, Swedenborg declares: "The Lord provides that there shall be religion everywhere, and in each religion the two essentials of salvation, which are, to acknowledge God, and not to do evil because it is contrary to God."³ He also says: "The heathen come into heaven with less difficulty than Christians."² Then why be a Christian?

No, Jesus did not teach that all religion is of God. To false religionists of his day he said: "You are from your father the Devil." (John 8:44) Not every religious road, but only a narrow, cramped way leads to life. "Go in through the narrow gate; because broad and spacious is the road leading off into destruction, and many are the ones going in through it; whereas narrow is the gate and cramped the road leading off into life, and few are the ones finding it." (Matt. 7:13, 14) True Christianity heeds the counsel of Christ Jesus.

The Bible sets forth the purpose of Almighty God in creating man and woman, when it says: "Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is creeping upon the earth." (Gen. 1:28) It was God's purpose for man to fill the earth, but Swedenborg's inspired expression says: "The object of creation was an angelic heaven from the human race."⁴ Obviously his inspiration came from another source. Lest someone answer that such a conclusion shows ignorance of the interior sense of the Word in Genesis, let it be noted that even Swedenborg, in *Doctrine Concerning the Sacred Scriptures*, said: "The doctrine of genuine truth can also be drawn in full from the literal sense of the Word."

He further betrays the source of his inspiration when he makes the statement that "man has been so created that as to his inward being he cannot die."⁵ The

plain-spoken Word of God says that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23) God's judgment is that the sinning man "will positively die." (Gen. 2:17) "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." —Ezek. 18:4, AV.

The ideas set forth by Swedenborg may be fascinating to some persons, but they hold no interest for those who love God. While the group is called "The New Jerusalem descended from God out of heaven," it has demonstrated that it is not of God, denying his supremacy and rejecting his Word. (Rev. 22:18, 19) Although claiming to be the true Christian religion, it has proved false to that boast by ignoring the teachings of Christ and rejecting his ransom sacrifice. Swedenborg claimed that

there is no Devil, but in so doing he blinded himself to danger and fell into the trap. Although perhaps unknowingly, he served the interests of the adversary Satan the Devil by teaching his lie of immortality of the human soul, by distorting God's purpose regarding man and by setting aside God's Word.

Regarding those who thus make a show of godly devotion but prove false to its power, God's Word says: "From these turn away."—2 Tim. 3:5.

REFERENCES

- ¹ Swedenborg—*Life and Teaching*, by George Trobridge, pages 112, 129, 137, 179.
- ² *Heaven and Its Wonders and Hell*, by Emanuel Swedenborg, pp. 54, 319, 445, 447, 547, 324.
- ³ *Divine Providence*, p. 328.
- ⁴ *True Christian Religion*, pp. 66, 70.
- ⁵ *Heavenly Doctrine*, p. 223.

Demons Defeat Clergymen

IN A recently published volume called *Shane Leslie's Ghost Book*, author Leslie, a Roman Catholic, writes about "instances of ghosts, apparitions and messages from the other or twilight world which have come under Catholic cognizance." He relates what he calls "the last word" about the "Coonian ghost" that disturbed the peace of a house in Coonian, Ireland, with rappings, rushings, snatchings and putting out of lights.

To put an end to the activity of the wicked spirit the bishop sent three priests to the house. The priests went inside and prayed. The result of their exorcism was not what they expected. One priest said he felt the influence of the evil spirit like an eel twisting around his wrist. Another priest saw an empty bed do strange things: the bedclothes moved up and down as if someone were in bed. "Soon we could hear," he said, "the heavy breathing, the gurgling in the throat . . . what country people would call 'a hard death.'"

Seeing that the priests, after repeated efforts, were unable to clean out the evil spirits,

the family moved to America. The priests? Author Leslie says: "The gallant clergy, who made such constant efforts on their behalf, seem to have been the worse for it. One priest had a nervous breakdown, another spinal meningitis and the third facial paralysis."

The outcome of that clerical venture into exorcism reminds one of the Bible account about the seven sons of a Jewish chief priest. These sons were exorcists who, though they were not true followers of Christ, "undertook to name the name of the Lord Jesus over those having the wicked spirits, saying: 'I solemnly charge you by Jesus whom Paul preaches.'"

In one house they got unexpected results: "In answer the wicked spirit said to them: 'I know Jesus and I am acquainted with Paul; but who are you?' With that the man in whom the wicked spirit was leaped upon them, got the mastery of the two of them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled naked and wounded out of that house."—Acts 19:13-16.

Pursuing my Purpose in Life

As told by Julia Clogston

SO YOU have time to listen to some of my experiences as a full-time minister!

In 1938 I symbolized my dedication by water baptism during the convention at Seattle, Washington. Our congregation in Tulelake, California, grew in a few months from one publisher to five, and most of us attended the "Government and Peace" convention in Portland, Oregon. After reading a letter in *The Watchtower* for July, 1938, sent by Brother Rutherford to an Australian boy about accepting pioneer privileges, I decided to pursue my purpose in life by becoming a pioneer.

My first outstanding experience was in Dunsmuir, California. I unknowingly called at the home of the Roman Catholic priest and witnessed to his housekeeper. A few minutes later a tall policeman stood beside me, listening as I witnessed to a housewife. He explained that since he had heard me try to sell the woman a book he now was the complainant and I was under arrest. At the trial the judge sentenced me to a heavy fine or thirty days in prison. The zone servant followed the policeman who had arrested me, and he explained that we would not pay the fine; so it looked like it would be thirty days for me! But a property owner of good will came to my rescue. He signed a bond for me and I enjoyed beans and corn bread with the other pioneers that night even more than usual.

Feeling Jehovah's protective shadow over me increased my happiness and determination to continue pursuing my purpose in life.

In 1940 several other pioneers and I worked our way to the Detroit convention, witnessing in the principal cities during the six-week trip from California. In 1941 did you attend the St. Louis convention? Thanks to the generosity of some good-hearted folks, I did, never in my life having enjoyed more a few days. It was the first time I had volunteered for service at a convention. I was thrilled to discover how much more I enjoyed all the instruction when I realized that I had some small part in the tremendous amount of work necessary to care for so many people.

Returning from St. Louis to California, I next started working there in the Imperial Valley. A fifteen-year-old pioneer girl and I lived in a tiny house in Calipatria. Twice a week we hitchhiked forty miles to meetings in El Centro, sometimes taking our good-will students with us. One family of eight adults learned the truth and in a few months six became pioneers.

When my special pioneer assignment came I was in Brawley, California, and was directed to proceed immediately to Whittier. Early the following morning, with all my belongings packed into a weekend case, I started hitchhiking. Late that night when I reached the other special pioneers in Whittier, at their trailer door, they warmly welcomed me and we began a lifelong friendship.

In December of 1942 I moved on to Boulder City, Nevada, on a special assignment, arriving there alone but in high spirits. The other girl who had been assigned with me had not arrived. It was trouble territory, so I went to the police station first and asked whether they had received the letter from J. Edgar Hoover of the Department of Justice, asking that Jeho-

vah's witnesses be protected in their work. Then I started door-to-door witnessing with my copy of *The New World*, explaining that I could bring them a book like it when my supply of books came. As I worked a ranger followed me in his car. I hoped it was to protect me, but I was not sure. But that evening, as I stood in front of the theater with magazines, placing many, the police went right by me into the theater without even noticing me. I was really grateful to Jehovah at the close of that day of service.

On a clear winter evening when I returned from a back-call on a Mormon bishop, I received the long envelope containing the application to attend the first class of a new school the Society was starting for preparing missionaries to be sent to foreign fields. After prayerfully considering it I filled out that application that night and sent it back. The remainder of that month was filled with excitement. My partner came with her car and trailer. Then when I had about given up the secret hope that I cherished of going to Gilead, there came a letter accepting my application, with a check for my fare to New York.

With ten days of travel, visiting friends in Los Angeles, Sacramento, and my mother in Oregon, I arrived in Ithaca, New York, and from there went on to Gilead. The next five months were a delightful experience without a single shadow. We read and studied the entire Bible and had much training in theocratic ministry for the first time. Many fine friendships also were begun that we are still enjoying.

Some of us expected to proceed immediately to our foreign assignment in Mexico, but the Mexican government delayed the visas for many of our group for nearly three years. Finally all of them came through but mine. The night the last four left I experienced a kind of sadness I never had known. Morning came and I moved on

to organize my work so as to take care of the best of the studies the other girls had left, along with my own. As a result of our combined labors many persons of good will came into the truth that summer. It is a deep satisfaction to see them at the international conventions, with their families and the little ones who have grown up with theirs. One of the girls attended Gilead School.

At last came my visa to go to Mexico! There, during ensuing months, the dream of preaching to those bright-eyed, friendly people became a grand reality. Then came more special pioneering in Houston, Texas, followed in the fall of 1948 by my assignment to El Salvador and with it another delightful surprise. I was to go to New York to sail. While in New York, my new partner, Sister Bowin (who also had worked in Mexico), and I spent a week at Bethel, helping some in the home and factory, and I also visited Gilead and radio station WBBR on Staten Island.

At sea we found interest in the Kingdom message among the officers and our fellow passengers. Guatemala and El Salvador we crossed by land, seeing much of the country that was to be our home. Our room was waiting for us in the city of San Salvador. Here during our first three years a local radio station gave us an hour a week without charge; so we broadcast the contents of the books "*Let God Be True*" and "*This Means Everlasting Life*" in Spanish, also many Watchtower articles. Soon we had learned much about tropical living; but above all, we learned that our work is more that of teaching persons of good will to be mature witnesses than to place large quantities of literature. To see at meetings the happy faces of firm witnesses whom one has helped to learn the truth is indeed a great reward, ever stirring me to keep on pursuing my purpose in life.

Tell the Good News from Day to Day

TO DAY the nations of the world have no good news to offer to the distressed people. In fact, ever since 1914 this earth has been a place of ever-increasing bad news because of wickedness.

But there is good news to be had, and that from the only possible source of good news, Jehovah God. All his dedicated servants have been commissioned to bring good news to the people. Good news regarding what? Good news regarding the establishment of God's kingdom. The fulfillment of Bible prophecy shows that we are living in the days of Christ's second presence, in the days when the God of heaven has set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, at the time when Christ's period of waiting has ended and he has begun to rule in the midst of his enemies.—Dan. 2:44, AV; Ps. 110:1, 2.

Now, therefore, applies the psalmist's prophetic command: "From day to day tell the good news of salvation by him." (Ps. 96:2) * This good news we must tell in all cleanliness, "in holy adornment"; and we must tell God's enemies to "be in severe pains because of him."—Verse 9.

Note that we are to tell this good news from day to day, continually. Why? Because the days to tell it are limited before Armageddon strikes, in fact, are getting fewer with each passing day. And does not each passing day bring with it opportunities to tell the good news?

And how many different ways there are to tell this good news! To one another as members of a family or of a Christian congregation; to those not yet familiar with the good news by means of the printed page by offering it to them from door to door and on the streets. Also tell the good news from the public platform, to those coming to our homes, to those with whom

we work or have business relations; nor would we overlook traveling companions. And where God's truth is banned, tell the good news underground.

And not only must we ourselves tell the good news from day to day, but we must get others to tell it. That means patient training work, first of all by making return visits and then regularly studying the Bible with them. As they progress, show them their privilege to share in telling the good news. Were all ministers to do this to the best of their ability and opportunity, what increases could be expected in the coming months!

The inspired psalmist tells the sea, the open field and the trees of the forest to join in exulting before Jehovah because of his coming to judge the earth. (Ps. 96: 11, 12) If all nature is to exult because of what it will mean to them, how much more so should we living, intelligent, speech-endowed and Bible-reading creatures sing praise to Jehovah and say that he has become king and tell the good news of his salvation from day to day!

Yes, if the heavenly sons of God and the morning stars had occasion to sing at the time of earth's creation; if the Israelites had occasion to sing praise to Jehovah at the time of their deliverance at the Red Sea; if the heavenly hosts had occasion to sing for joy at the birth of the babe Jesus; truly, if anyone ever had occasion to exult and sing for joy, we now do because Jehovah has become King! And what a beautiful song we have to sing, one that will become the song hit of the universe! Jehovah is its Composer, who inspired it by his holy spirit; and the one teaching us to sing it is his Son, Jesus Christ. So let each one sing for joy and sing unitedly and unceasingly, telling the good news of salvation by Jehovah from day to day.

* For details see *The Watchtower*, December 15, 1956.

The Loved Woman of the SUPERLATIVE SONG

"You are altogether beautiful, O girl companion of mine, and there is no defect in you."

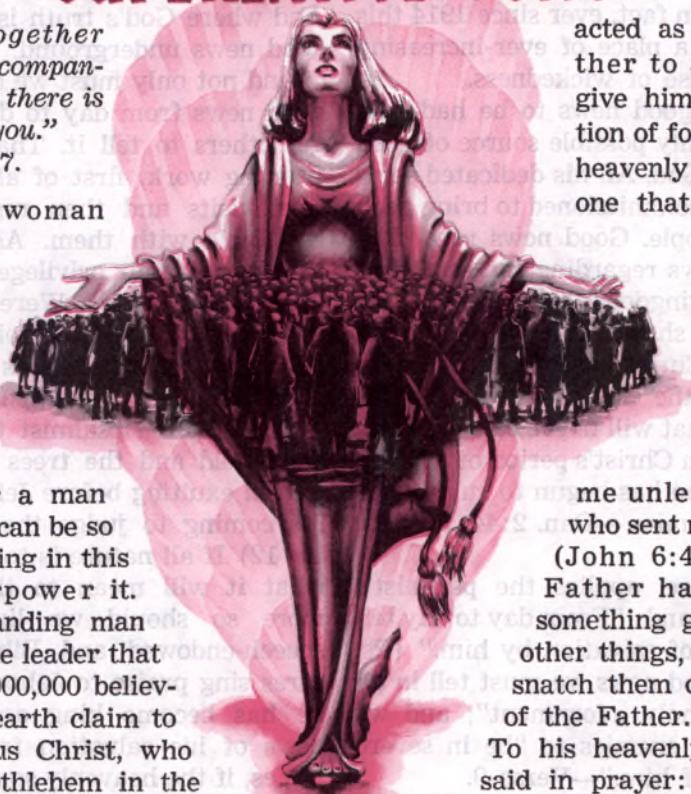
—Cant. 4:7.

LOVE for a woman can be surpassed by love for an organization of men and women. In turn, the love of an organization for a man or for its leader can be so strong that nothing in this world can overpower it. The most outstanding man ever on earth, the leader that more than 800,000,000 believers around the earth claim to follow, was Jesus Christ, who was born in Bethlehem in the Middle East over 1900 years ago and who suffered a martyr's death in the year 33 of the Christian era. Did he ever fall in love with a woman and take her for his wife? No; he died unmarried and childless, at the age of thirty-three and a half years. However, he formed an organization of men and women around himself, and these he dearly loved as members of the organization. In fact, he laid down his life for those men and women and for the men and women who are yet to become members of the organization.

² Joseph the carpenter of Nazareth, who

1. What love can surpass that of a man for a woman, and how much did Christ love the group that he formed about him?

2. With what sayings did Jesus acknowledge the one who gave him the organization of followers?



acted as an earthly father to Jesus, did not give him this organization of followers. God his heavenly Father was the one that gave him the organization. Jesus himself acknowledged that fact. He said: "No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him."

(John 6:44) "What my Father has given me is something greater than all other things, and no one can snatch them out of the hand of the Father." (John 10:29)

To his heavenly Father Jesus said in prayer: "I have made your name manifest to the men you gave me out of the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me." (John 17:6) The heavenly Father gave them to his Son Jesus in the relationship of a girl promised in marriage to her future husband.

³ So the organization or congregation of men and women was spoken of as his bride, an organizational woman that was to be married or inseparably united to him in the future in the home of his heavenly Father. His cousin John, the son of priest Zechariah, spoke of matters in this way,

3. With what figure of speech did John the Baptist and Paul speak about this organization of followers?

saying: "He that has the bride is the bridegroom. However, the friend of the bridegroom, when he stands and hears him, has a great deal of joy on account of the voice of the bridegroom. This, indeed, has been fulfilled as my joy." (John 3:29) The Christian apostle Paul, who won many followers for Jesus Christ, used language like John's and talked like the Bridegroom's friend to these followers, saying: "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy, for I personally promised you in marriage to one husband that I might present you as a chaste virgin to the Christ." (2 Cor. 11:2) The apostle Paul urged them to be faithful in their love and devotion to their Bridegroom, Christ.

⁴ The love of Jesus Christ for the organization or congregation that his heavenly Father gives to him as a wife has been proved by his own death. Paul says: "Christ also is head of the congregation, he being a savior of this body. . . . Christ also loved the congregation and delivered up himself for it, that he might sanctify it, cleansing it with the bath of water by means of the word, that he might present the congregation to himself in its splendor, not having a spot or a wrinkle or any of such things, but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph. 5:23, 25-27) However, the love of the congregation for Christ the Bridegroom must be proved till the last of these 144,000 members of the congregation has met all the tests. There are many religious organizations that call themselves Christian and that profess to love Christ. In the United States alone 265 of such religious sects have been listed; in South Africa there are more than a thousand of such. But by their works they prove that they love this world more than

Jesus Christ and the kingdom for which his heavenly Father, Jehovah God, has anointed and enthroned him to be King. These religious sects court the good will of this immoral world. The disciple James asks all Christians having such a divided love: "Adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God."—Jas. 4:4.

⁵ But there is only one congregation that is truly espoused or engaged to marry Jesus Christ in the royal heavens, and to these Jesus said: "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were part of the world, the world would be fond of what is its own. Now because you are no part of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, on this account the world hates you." (John 15:18, 19) The true congregation of 144,000 faithful ones has no love for this corrupt passing world. It gives to Jehovah God, the heavenly Father, exclusive devotion and to his Son Jesus Christ the full love that is due its heavenly Bridegroom. For the past 1900 years the heavenly Father has been begetting truly dedicated believers by this holy spirit and in this way espousing them to his beloved Son. Today, when all the evidences indicate that he enthroned his Son, the Bridegroom,

5. How many congregations are truly espoused to Christ, and how will those that remain of the espoused ones prove their loving devotion?



4. (a) To what extent has Christ's love for the organization been proved? (b) How far must the congregation's love for Christ be proved, and as against what organization?

in the heavenly kingdom in the year 1914, there is merely a remnant of the bridal congregation on earth. As long as this old world, now in its troubrous "time of the end," stands, they have yet to prove the full measure of their loving devotion to their heavenly Bridegroom, Christ. They will do so because of the ardent, unquenchable love that they have for him. The beautiful book of the Bible known as The Song of Solomon makes this certain.

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

⁶ In Jesus' days on earth The Song of Solomon was accepted by the Jewish congregation as a part of the inspired writings and was included in the catalogue of their sacred Hebrew manuscripts. It was likewise accepted by the early Christian congregation as a genuine part of the Holy Scriptures. Rightly understood, it is a book beneficial for us to study. The apostle Paul included The Song of Solomon when he said: "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproofing, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work." (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) Said the Jewish rabbi Akiba, who lived in the first century of the Christian era, in expressing his appreciation of the book: "The whole world was not worthy of the day in which this sublime Song was given to Israel; for all the Scriptures are holy, but this sublime Song is most holy."

—*Mishnah*, in the Sixth Division under "Yadaim," section 3, ¶5.

However, the writer of the song, King Solomon of Jerusalem, says in the opening verse of his poem: "The superlative song, which is Solomon's." According to the He-

brew text, word for word, it is "the song of songs," that is to say, the most beautiful, the most excellent song. It is not a collection of songs, but is one song, though usually divided into eight chapters. It was written by King Solomon after he had built the wonderful temple to Jehovah God at Jerusalem and after he had married. So the date of the Song was about the year 1010 before the Christian era. It has one theme running throughout, that of the love of a country girl of the village of Shunem, or Shulem, for a shepherd boy. King Solomon fell in love with the same girl, but her love for her dear one, the shepherd, held true and the king lost out. It could therefore be rightly called The Song of Solomon's Frustrated Love.

⁸ The ancient Hebrews attached a symbolic meaning to the book. They understood the girl to picture the Jewish church from the days of the prophet Moses onward. The object of that church's affection was Jehovah God, who was accordingly pictured by her shepherd lover. But an examination of the Jewish church over the past 1900 years bears out the sad fact that it has proved untrue in its love to Jehovah as its God; it has long ceased to be the church of witnesses for Jehovah God. Their own history, as written down in the Hebrew Scriptures, testifies that they rejected the prophets whom he sent in his name; and the Christian Greek Scriptures show that they reached the high point in their course of rejecting God's spokesmen when they refused Jesus Christ, who came and preached to them in Jehovah's name, and finally had him put to a horrible death on a torture stake. This displayed no true, unswerving love for Jehovah, the great Shepherd of his flock.

6. Is The Song of Solomon a part of inspired Scripture, and what evidence do we have upon the matter?
7. What is the so-called Song of Solomon, when was it written, and what is its theme?

8. What meaning did the ancient Hebrews attach to the Song, but what does history show regarding the correctness of this?

⁹ Writing to the Christian congregation in the first century, the apostle Paul tells of a number of occasions where the Israelites fell away from the love of Jehovah God, and then comments: "Now these things went on befalling them as examples and they were written for a warning." A warning to whom? "To us upon whom the accomplished ends of the systems of things have arrived." (1 Cor. 10:11) It must be, then, that The Song of Solomon finds its fulfillment in connection with the Christian congregation of which the apostle Paul was a member in that century when the Jewish system of things no longer found favor in God's eyes and it ended, Jehovah God now transferring his loving-kindness to the Christian congregation that he espoused to his Bridegroom-Son, Jesus Christ.

¹⁰ So the loved girl of the Song must be the true Christian congregation of 144,000 espoused members; and her shepherd lover must be the Lord Jesus Christ now glorified in heaven for his burning love for his heavenly Father. The third day after he was killed on the torture stake Almighty God raised him from the dead, a spiritual Son again but now immortal, highly exalted above the human flesh that he once had. After forty days Jehovah God had him ascend to the heavens, where he has his throne. He had him sit at his own right hand to await, among other things, the marriage in heaven to his bridal congregation in his heavenly Father's due time. Since his ascension to heaven the members of his bridal congregation have been espoused to him in faith. To such ones the apostle Peter wrote: "Though you never saw him, you love him. Though you are not looking upon him at present, yet you exer-

cise faith in him and are greatly rejoicing with an unspeakable and glorified joy, as you receive the accomplished end of your faith, the salvation of your souls." (1 Pet. 1:8, 9) This same thing applies to the small remnant of his congregation today, who must prove their love for the unseen Christ as the Shulammite girl did to her lover.

¹¹ Telling of what he found by experiment in the book of Ecclesiastes, King Solomon, as the congregator of his people, wrote: "'See! This I have found,' said the congregator, 'one thing [taken] after another, to find out the sum-up, which my soul has continuously sought, but I have not found. One man out of a thousand I have found, but a woman among all these I have not found.'" (Eccl. 7:27, 28) If, however, in the Song King Solomon describes his own unsuccessful love attempt toward the Shulammite girl, then to his own disillusionment he did find in her a woman of integrity in her love toward a man not outwardly so glamorous as Solomon. If he had lived in the first century of the Christian era King Solomon would have had to confess that in Jesus Christ he found the "one man out of a thousand," yes, outstandingly the man of all men ever on earth. The congregation espoused to Jesus Christ must copy him. In the faithful quality of her love to him she must prove herself to be like an outstanding woman of integrity, a rarity among women, the only bridal organization among all the religious systems of Christendom that stays loyal and maintains her chastity in this world that she may be judged worthy of heavenly marriage with Christ.

THE CHARACTERS AND THE PLOT

¹² In the Song Solomon introduces him-

9. What written warning does Paul call to our attention, and so in connection with whom does the Song find its fulfillment?

10. Whom does the loved girl of the Song picture, and whom her shepherd lover, and whose example must the remnant today copy?

11. What did Solomon find by experiment concerning man as contrasted with woman, and whom must the congregation copy in the faithful quality of its love?

12. Who are the characters mentioned or having speaking parts in the Song?



self and plays the part of the king of Jerusalem, the city that was also called Zion because of its fortress or citadel bearing that name. The chief character in the Song is the unnamed country girl from Shunem, or Shalem, whom King Solomon calls the Shulammite. (Cant. 6: 13) The village of Shunem, today called Solem, lay at the southwestern border of the territory of the tribe of Issachar, about fifteen miles southwest of the sea of Galilee, or about fifty-five miles north of Jerusalem. The beautiful girl named Abishag was found at Shunem and was taken to the palace of Solomon's father, King David, to act as a nurse toward him in his old age. (1 Ki. 1:1-4; 2:17-22) It was at Shunem that the prominent woman, a childless wife of an old man, provided lodgings in a little roof chamber for the prophet Elisha, whenever he was passing through. (2 Ki. 4:8-10) The mother of the Shulammite girl lived at Shunem. She is mentioned in the Song, but not the Shulammite's father. The girl has a number of brothers who take part in the dramatic Song. Another prominent character is the beloved shepherd. Others with speaking parts in the Song are ladies of Solomon's court, called "daughters of Jerusalem," and also women residents of the city, who are called "daughters of Zion." (Cant. 1:5; 2:7; 3:5, 10, 11) The

characters in the Song are identified by what they say or by what is said to them.

¹³ How did the Shulammite girl meet the shepherd? She recalls it to his mind, saying: "Under the apple tree I aroused you.

There your mother was in birth pangs with you. There she that was giving birth to you experienced birth pangs." (Cant. 8: 5) It was a tree that would remind the shepherd of his own humble birth, out in the field, away from the com-

forts and conveniences of home. But his mother was strong and brought him up to be the handsome youth that he was. On meeting at the place of his birth the shepherd lad found what was lovable in the Shulammite girl, and she found what was altogether lovely in the shepherd.

¹⁴ But, like the apostle Paul toward the Christian congregation, the Shulammite's brothers were very jealous of their sister. They were anxious to safeguard the virginity of their sister about whose steadiness they were not too certain. They tried to shield her from temptation. Once they felt they had reason to get angry with her. Evidently this was when the shepherd sped to her side and suggested that they go out strolling to enjoy the beauties of early spring. To quote her words to the women of King Solomon's court: "The sound of my dear one! Look! this one is coming, climbing upon the mountains, leaping upon

13. Where did the shepherd meet the Shulammite girl, and with what reactions?

14. What was the attitude of the Shulammite's brothers toward her, and why did they once get angry with her?



the hills. My dear one is resembling a gazelle or the roe of the stags. Look! this one is standing behind our wall, gazing through the windows, glancing through the lattices. My dear one has answered and said to me: 'Rise up, you girl companion of mine, my beautiful one, and come away. For, look! the rainy season itself has passed, the downpour itself is over, it has gone its way. Blossoms themselves have appeared in the land, the very time of vine trimming has arrived and the voice of the turtledove itself has been heard in our land. As for the fig tree, it has gained a mature color for its early figs; and the vines are abloom, they have given [their] fragrance. Rise up, come, O girl companion of mine, my beautiful one, and come away. O my dove in the retreats of the crag, in the hiding place of the steep way, show me your form, let me hear your voice, for your voice is pleasurable and your form is comely.' "—Cant. 2:8-14.

¹⁵ The Shulammite's brothers become angry at her desire to respond to his invitation. To prevent her and the shepherd from going out hiking together alone and coming into temptation, they now see the urgent need for guards to be stationed in their vineyards against the little foxes that cause damage to the vines by burrowing holes beneath them. So the brothers cry out: "Do you people grab hold of the foxes for us, the little foxes that are making spoil of the vineyards, as our vineyards are abloom."

—Cant. 2:15.

¹⁶ Taking advantage of

the seasonal need, the brothers require their sister to keep herself in the vineyards, standing on guard against the ruinous little foxes. As she herself tells it to the "daughters of Jerusalem" who are in King Solomon's court: "The sons of my own mother grew angry with me; they appointed me the keeper of the vineyards, [although] my vineyard, one that was mine, I did not keep." (Cant. 1:6) This explains why she lost the fairness of her skin: "A black girl I am but comely, O you daughters of Jerusalem, like the [black hair] tents of Kedar, [yet] like the [beautiful] tent curtains of Solomon. Do not you look at me because I am swarthy, because the sun has caught sight of me." (Cant. 1:5, 6) Vineyard guard duty exposed her to the sun's rays.

¹⁷ But this safety measure of her brothers, while keeping her from her shepherd lover in the springtime, led her to being

17. What other danger, however, did the Shulammite come into in connection with King Solomon's encampment?



15. What did her brothers do to prevent her private stroll with the shepherd?

16. What effect did her guard duty in the vineyards have upon her, as stated to the "daughters of Jerusalem"?

found in the way of another danger. King Solomon himself came to the neighborhood of Shunem, or Shulem, and pitched his tents with their beautiful curtains not far from her home and the vineyards. One day the Shulammite found herself near the camp of King Solomon. She had not gone there to parade her charms and to show off her beauty either to King Solomon or to the sixty mighty men of Israel, all of whom were trained warriors armed with swords at the thigh, or to the charioteers. (Cant. 3:7) She had not in fickleness forgotten her shepherd lover and that her charms belonged only to him. But as she herself later explained it to King Solomon: "To the garden of nut trees I had gone down, to see the buds in the torrent valley, to see whether the vine had sprouted, whether the pomegranate trees had blossomed. I did not know [what, but] my own soul had put me at the chariots of my willing people." (Cant. 6:11, 12) Because of going on an errand of service, she had come unintentionally upon the encampment of the king of Israel.

¹⁸ Then either King Solomon himself saw her directly or she was recommended to him by his camp servants who saw her. Solomon then took her away from her mother and brothers and their vineyards and brought her into his stately camp. There, amid the eye-filling dignity and splendor of the royal camp that could be expected to overawe a modest country girl, glorious King Solomon expressed his admiration for her and proposed that she come with him back to Jerusalem and become one of his wives. Unimpressed by the royal richness all about her, feeling strange and out of place in the midst of it, she feels no attraction toward the king. With longing for her only love she speaks out as if talking to him there:

18. How did the Shulammite get into Solomon's encampment, and with what effect upon her?

¹⁹ "May he kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, for your expressions of endearment are better than wine. For fragrance your oils are good. Like an oil that is poured out is your name. That is why maidens themselves have loved you. Draw me with you; let us run. The king has brought me into his interior rooms! Do let us be joyful and rejoice in you. Do let us mention your expressions of endearment more than wine. Deservedly they have loved you. Do tell me, O you whom my soul has loved, where you do shepherding, where you make the flock lie down at midday. Just why should I become like a woman wrapped in mourning among the droves of your partners?" —Cant. 1:2-4, 7.

²⁰ To this question the court ladies, "daughters of Jerusalem," reply: "If you do not know for yourself, O you most beautiful one among women, go out yourself in the footprints of the flock and pasture your kids of the goats alongside the tabernacles of the shepherds." They knew she would have to leave the camp of Solomon and go out to where her lover fed his sheep. But Solomon was unwilling to let her go. He began expressing his admiration for her and to make promises of how he would adorn her in the city palace. To her he said: "To a mare of mine in the chariots of Pharaoh I have likened you, O girl companion of mine. Your cheeks are handsome among the hair braids, your neck in a string of beads. Circlets of gold we shall make for you, along with studs of silver." But the Shulammite resists Solomon's advances and lets him know that the only love she can feel is for another. She says: "As long as the king is at his round table my own spikenard has given out its fragrance. As a bag of myrrh my

19. What did she say in address to her absent shepherd lover?

20. How do the "daughters of Jerusalem" reply to her, and how does she react to Solomon's advances?

dear one is to me; between my breasts he will spend the night. As a cluster of henna my dear one is to me, among the vineyards of En-gedi." (Cant. 1:8-14) The Shulammite yearns to have her shepherd lover within her embrace.

MATERIAL ATTRACTIONS

²¹ In all this, what may we see of likeness to the faithful remnant of Christ's bridal congregation today? Jehovah God enthroned his Son Jesus Christ in the heavens in 1914, but still he has not taken the remnant to himself. So these espoused ones are absent from him. They find themselves in the world, but they dare not make themselves a part of this world, going back to the world out of which they were drawn to Christ. They must keep themselves as chaste virgins, not spotted by this world. Corresponding with King Solomon's outward glory as king, this world has much outward attractiveness. By this it tries to win away the affections of the espoused remnant from Christ. But the remnant obey the command not to love the things in this world, "the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one's means of life." (1 John 2:15, 16) In Paul's day some Christians were enticed by the thought of now ruling as kings, like Solomon, not waiting for the reigning King, Jesus Christ, to exalt them to a seat in his throne at the end of their earthly course. "You are rich already, are you? You have begun ruling as kings without us, have you?" asks Paul.—1 Cor. 4:8.

²² But the remnant today know that we are not called to reign on this earth during this present wicked world. Our calling is to follow in the footsteps of Jehovah's Right Shepherd, the Master Jesus Christ, who found the lost sheep and fed them and

protected them and even laid down his earthly life for them. The remnant do not yield to the materialism of this world, nor to the outward glory of the political rulerships of this world. They follow, not the kings of this world, but Jehovah's Right Shepherd, imitating him by doing shepherd work as he did on earth, gathering his sheep, feeding his sheep because they love him, keeping the sheep together in peace and unity and protecting them against selfish, wolfish men of this world who would oppress the sheep and make gain from them. (John 21:15-17) The remnant fix their minds on the things above, not on the things on the earth, and thus continue to seek the things above, seeking first the kingdom of God and the righteousness that comes from him through Christ. Their wholehearted love for their heavenly Bridegroom makes them spurn the seductive advances that this world makes toward them with its materialism.

²³ The remnant are like the Shulammite in seeking the loving expressions of their Shepherd, Jesus Christ. This counterbalances the hatred of this world. They are overjoyed to have the evidence that he is with them, though unseen, just as when the Shulammite's shepherd lover made his way into Solomon's camp and got in touch with her and poured out his love upon her in these words: "Look! you are beautiful, O girl companion of mine. Look! you are beautiful. Your eyes are [those of] doves." The Shulammite prefers nearness to her dear one, oneness with him out in the fields and woods, under the cedar and juniper trees. The splendid camp of King Solomon had no appeal for her. Showing that she is not flattered or impressed by being in the royal camp of such outward material glory, she says to the shepherd:

21. In view of what took place in 1914, what must the remnant do now as regards their affections?

22. How do the remnant show their preference now for the Shepherd rather than for kingship?

23. How are the remnant like the Shulammite as regards the love expressions of the shepherd, and how does she show how she feels toward Solomon's encampment?

"Look! you are beautiful, my dear one, also pleasant. Our divan also is one of foliage. The beams of our grand house are cedars, our rafters juniper trees."—Cant. 1:15, 16.

²⁴ In the Shulammite we find a humble woman, not aspiring to any greatness on this earth. Says she: "A mere saffron of the coastal plain I am, a lily of the valleys." Just a mere flower of the field that grows without cultivation! Her shepherd lover thinks her to be without compare, saying: "Like a lily among thorny weeds, so is my girl companion among the daughters." The Shulammite shows how she esteems him above all others, likening him to a fruitful, shady, airy tree among the general run of trees of a forest: "Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my dear one among the sons. His shade I have passionately desired and there I have sat down, and his fruit has been sweet to my palate. He brought me into the house of wine, and his banner over me was love. Do you people refresh me with cakes of raisins, sustain me with apples, for I am lovesick. His left hand is under my head, and his own right hand embraces me." With a love like that for her dear shepherd, how could she in fickleness shift her love to another? So she strictly charges the women of King Solomon's court: "I have put you under oath, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the female gazelles or by the hinds of the field, that you try not to awaken or arouse love [in me] until it feels inclined." (Cant. 2:1-7) Thus by all that is beautiful and graceful, she solemnly obligates the court women not to try to arouse love in her for King Solomon, to make her prove untrue to her first love, her love for her shepherd.

24. (a) How does the Shulammite regard herself, but how does her lover regard her? (b) How does she regard him, and so what does she charge the "daughters of Jerusalem"?

²⁵ In the constancy of her love toward the shepherd the remnant today have a fine example of how changeless, how irremovable their love for Christ, the Right Shepherd of Jehovah God, should be. Nothing in this world or on this earth should be able to lessen or turn aside their love from Christ. Attempts at persuasion by materialistic persons should all fail to arouse love or selfish desire for anything outside of the Right Shepherd and his dear sheep. We should be found reminding persons who use worldly persuasion that our affections are fixed upon Christ the Right Shepherd, the Bridegroom, and we will follow him and not this world of materialism and outward glory.

²⁶ The Shulammite was a reliable worker, keeping guard over the family vineyards. Her present-day counterpart, the espoused remnant, is likewise charged with abiding in the Vine, Jesus Christ, and serving as branches to bring forth much fruit to the glory of the great Cultivator, Jehovah God. This is for their safety. (John 15: 1-8) The Shulammite had a good report from those outside the family. The courtly "daughters of Jerusalem" called her the "most beautiful one among women." Even King Solomon said she was beautiful, "like Pleasant City, comely like Jerusalem, awesome as companies gathered around banners." The women of the city, the queens and the concubines, remarked that she looked "like the dawn, beautiful like the full moon, pure like the glowing sun." (Cant. 1:8; 6:1, 4, 9, 10) No less must the espoused remnant "have a favorable testimony from people on the outside." They must be "walking decently as regards people outside," thus bringing no cause for finding fault with the truth but, rather,

25. Of what do the remnant have a fine example in the constancy of the Shulammite's love, and how do they deal with persuasions by materialistic persons?

26. How must the remnant be a faithful vineyard guard like the Shulammite, and how must they have a report outside like hers?

commending it by their lives.—1 Tim. 3:7; 1 Thess. 4:12.

²⁷ The reign of the Bridegroom-King is an invisible heavenly reign. It is at his heavenly Father's right hand. It is far above the spirit angels and all other levels of rulerships, "angels and authorities and powers [being] made subject to him." (1 Pet. 3:22) We must therefore continue to walk by faith, although the evidences of his reign on the heavenly Zion since the year 1914 make his being on the throne and his wielding the scepter of power very real to us. (Ps. 110:1, 2) We joyfully hail him as reigning King, and the great crowd of the espoused remnant's companions wave palm branches, as it were, in loyal public acknowledgment of him. But still there is a separation between the espoused remnant and their Bridegroom-Shepherd, like a big mountain in between them and him, because the remnant are still in the flesh and not yet resurrected from the dead with glorious spirit bodies.—1 Cor. 15:42-44; 2 Cor. 5:1-8.

²⁸ For this reason the espoused remnant must still keep longing for the Bridegroom to come and take them to him by a heavenly resurrection, thus ending their separation from him. They feel with the Shulammite when she said: "My dear one is mine and I am his. He is shepherding among the lilies. Until the day breathes and the shadows have fled, turn around, O my dear one, be like the gazelle or like the roe of the stags upon the mountains of separation." (Cant. 2:16) As the apostle John expresses the longing at the very end of the Bible: "Amen! Come, Lord Jesus."

—Rev. 22:20.

²⁹ In these days of his second presence

27. Despite the Bridegroom's beginning to reign, why must the espoused remnant continue to walk by faith, and the great crowd of their companions with them?

28. How do the remnant feel with the Shulammite in expressing her desire toward her shepherd lover?

29. In these days of his second presence, where may we find him, and where may we have fellowship with him?

since the year 1914, we may search for Christ where we will, but we shall find him nowhere on earth. He is present in his heavenly throne and has extended the 'rod of his strength' to this earth, making his power felt here on earth among his enemies. We can find fellowship with him, however, by going out to meet with his followers in their gatherings, for he said: "Where there are two or three met together in my name, there I am in their midst." (Matt. 18:20) This may often require our going out nights to attend meetings of his followers and also to visit the "other sheep" whom he is now gathering, in order to carry on Bible study with them, that they may be fed in the name of the Right Shepherd.—John 10:16.

³⁰ In this manner the espoused remnant enjoy a special fellowship with their Shepherd-King in a congregational way, within the organization of their spiritual mother, the heavenly Zion, the "Jerusalem above." The Shulammite, detained in King Solomon's camp, describes it in this way: "On my bed during the nights I have sought the one whom my soul has loved. I sought him but I did not find him. Let me rise up, please, and go round about in the city; in the streets and in the public squares let me seek the one whom my soul has loved. I sought him but I did not find him. The watchmen who were going around in the city found me: 'The one whom my soul has loved have you men seen?' Hardly had I passed on from them until I found the one whom my soul has loved. I grabbed hold of him and I would not let go of him, until I had brought him into my mother's house and into the interior room of her that had been pregnant with me. I have put you under oath, O daughters of Jerusalem, by the female gazelles or by the hinds of the field, that you

30. How does the Shulammite describe the remnant's getting to enjoy special fellowship with their Shepherd in a congregational way?

try not to awaken or arouse love [in me] until it feels inclined." (Cant. 3:1-5) All our fellowship with Christ in a spiritual way, at cost of effort, strengthens us in our determination to let no other love on earth replace our whole-souled love for him.

THE TEST IN THE CITY OF JERUSALEM

³¹ The test of the Shulammite in the camp of King Solomon near her village of Shunem failed, such was the intensity of her love for a mere shepherd. How would the making of attractive proposals by the King in the midst of the regal palace within the capital city of Jerusalem affect her? When his camp moved back to Jerusalem, about fifty-five miles to the south, King Solomon had the Shulammite taken with him. The womenfolk of the capital city, the "daughters of Zion," see the procession approaching the city. Says one: "What is this thing that is coming up from the wilderness like columns of smoke, being perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, even with every sort of scent powder of a trader?" Another answers: "Look! it is his couch, the one belonging to Solomon. Sixty mighty men are all around it, from the mighty men of Israel, all of them in possession of a sword, being taught in warfare, each one with his sword upon his thigh because of dread during the nights." Exclaims still another: "It is the litter that King Solomon has made for himself from the trees of Lebanon. Its pillars he has made of silver, its supports of gold. Its seat is of wool dyed reddish purple, its interior being fitted out lovingly by the daughters of Jerusalem." Another woman of the city calls out: "Go out and look, O you daughters of Zion, on King Solomon with the wreath that his mother wove for him on the day of his marriage and on the

31. Where is the Shulammite taken for a further test, and how is the procession to that place described?

day of the rejoicing of his heart." (Cant. 3:6-11) A final test faces the Shulammite!

³² In this "time of the end" the test because of the materialism of this world increases. To resist the tempting offers of this gaudy old world our Shepherd prepares and strengthens us by assuring us of his continued love for us and by expressing his admiration for our right kind of Christian works. This is just as the shepherd lover did by following Solomon's cortège into Jerusalem and there getting in touch with the Shulammite, now veiled, to say to her: "Look! you are beautiful, O girl companion of mine. Look! you are beautiful. Your eyes are [those of] doves, behind your veil. Your hair is like a drove of goats that have hopped down from the mountainous region of Gilead. Your teeth are like a drove of freshly-shorn [ewes] that have gone up from the washing, all of which are bearing twins with none among them having lost its young ones. Your lips are just like a scarlet thread, and your speaking is agreeable. Like a slice of pomegranate are your temples behind your veil. Your neck is like the tower of David, built in courses of stone, upon which are hung a thousand shields, all the circular shields of the mighty men. Your two breasts are like two roes, the twins of a female gazelle, that are feeding among the lilies." The Shulammite tells her shepherd she wants to get free and leave the city: "Until the day breathes and the shadows have fled, I shall go my way to the mountain of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense."—Cant. 4:1-6.

³³ In the midst of the worldly temptations of materialism today, can the Right Shepherd say to his espoused remnant:

32. How are the remnant prepared to resist the tempting offers of this world, and how is this now shown in the case of the Shulammite?

33. How can the Shepherd say to the remnant that their lips are like a scarlet thread and their speaking is agreeable, and to what is all this form of expression like to him?

"Your lips are just like a scarlet thread, and your speaking is agreeable"? Yes; because with their mouth the remnant are making public declaration to the name of Jehovah, the course that leads to salvation and to union with their Bridegroom. (Rom. 10:8-10) Their lips are beautiful with the praises of Jehovah, whose glory has risen upon them and is reflected from them to this dark world. They are Jehovah's witnesses. (Isa. 43:10, 12, AS) Their speaking is most agreeable to their Right Shepherd, because they are speaking in fulfillment of his own prophetic command to them: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for the purpose of a witness to all the nations, and then the accomplished end will come." (Matt. 24:14) This is like expressions of endearment, like a delightful fragrance, like the sweetness of honey to the heavenly Bridegroom. In the shepherd's words to the Shulammite he says: "You are altogether beautiful, O girl companion of mine, and there is no defect in you. . . . How beautiful your expressions of endearment are, O my sister, my bride! How much better your expressions of endearment are than wine and the fragrance of your oils than all sorts of perfume! With comb honey your lips keep dripping, O [my] bride. Honey and milk are under your tongue, and the fragrance of your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon."—Cant. 4:3, 7-11.

³⁴ By loving, courageous witnessing for the kingdom of God's dear Son the remnant invite their dear Shepherd-Bridegroom to come and eat of the Kingdom fruits that they hold forth. He does come and enjoy these public expressions of endearment for him, saying: "I have eaten my honeycomb along with my honey; I

have drunk my wine along with my milk." Like the women of Jerusalem, many friendly persons who discern the public expression of devotion by the remnant for their heavenly Bridegroom encourage the remnant along in their loving work of gathering the Shepherd's "other sheep," that the remnant and the Bridegroom may continue to enjoy each other's love. They say: "Eat, O companions! Drink and become drunk with expressions of endearment!"—Cant. 4:16; 5:1.

³⁵ Once since the Bridegroom became present in his Father's kingdom in 1914 the remnant did not respond quickly enough to the Bridegroom's invitation to have fellowship with him in the gathering of his sheep, because of the inconvenience of the darkness of the time. It was in the time of the climax of World War I, particularly in 1918. The experience is now like the bad dream that the Shulammite related to the court women at Solomon's palace: "I am asleep, but my heart is awake. There is the sound of my dear one knocking!" In the dream she hears him plead outside the door: "Open to me, O my sister, my girl companion, my dove, my perfect one! For my head is filled with dew, the locks of my hair with the drops of the night." She answers that she is in bed: "I have put off my robe. How can I put it back on? I have washed my feet. How can I soil them?" When she finally got up to open to him he had disappeared into the night. Then, in her words, "I sought him but I did not find him. I called him but he did not answer me. The watchmen that were going about in the city found me. They struck me, they wounded me. The watchmen of the walls [impudently] lifted my wide wrap off me." Like the Shulammite, the remnant became heartsick when their hope of becoming united in the heav-

34. By such witnessing for the Kingdom, what do the remnant invite their Shepherd to do, and in giving what encouragement do friendly persons imitate the women of Jerusalem?

35. How was the remnant's slowness of response during World War I met with trialsome experiences like those of the Shulammite in her bad dream?

only kingdom was not realized and they met up, instead, with persecution at the hands of the guardians of Christendom.—Cant. 5:2, 3, 6, 7.

³⁶ Since that nightmare of an experience the remnant, like the Shulammite in her dream, have given public evidence unashamed that they are lovesick for their heavenly Bridegroom. By going out in obedience to their Shepherd's command to preach the Kingdom good news to all the inhabited earth for a witness they have served notice, especially upon Christendom, that they love the Shepherd-Bridegroom: "I have put you under oath, O daughters of Jerusalem, that, if you find my dear one, you should tell him that I am lovesick." They want to gather his sheep, that such gathered sheep may be as written "letters of recommendation" testifying to their undying love for him. (2 Cor. 3:1-3) Persons of good will wonder and ask why the remnant want them to seek Christ and to show in themselves the result of the loving witness work of the remnant: "How is your dear one more than any other dear one, that you have put us under such an oath as this?"—Cant. 5:8, 9.

³⁷ The remnant are warned not to be ashamed to confess Christ before men. Having love for him, they have no fear of doing so. To the sheeplike persons who want to seek Christ with them they describe him as the Shepherd and as God's anointed King now reigning in heaven since 1914. They give reason why they love him, describing him in the most attractive way. In the Shulammite's words:

³⁸ "My dear one is dazzling and ruddy, the most conspicuous of ten thousand. His head is gold, refined gold. The locks of his

hair are date clusters. His black [hair] is like the raven. His eyes are like doves by the channels of water, which are bathing themselves in milk, sitting within the rims. His cheeks are like a garden bed of spice, towers of scented herbs. His lips are lilies, dripping with liquid myrrh. His hands are cylinders of gold, filled with chrysolite. His abdomen is an ivory plate covered with sapphires. His legs are pillars of marble based on socket pedestals of refined gold. His appearance is like Lebanon, choice like the cedars. His palate is sheer sweetness, and everything about him is altogether desirable. This is my dear one and this is my boy companion, O daughters of Jerusalem. . . . I am my dear one's and my dear one is mine. He is shepherding among the lilies."—Cant. 5:10-16; 6:2, 3.

³⁹ When the remnant make such a public declaration of Jesus Christ, who is now gathering together his "other sheep," it keeps him and their espousal to him in mind. It strengthens them to resist the seductions of earthly glory and the pleasures of worldly riches. Such a test of love to the Shepherd and his gathering work has come upon the remnant in this materialistic day, just as it came upon the Shulammite detained in Jerusalem by King Solomon. At that time Solomon was already married to queens and concubines. His love for the Shulammite would be neither his first love nor an undivided love. He wanted her as another of his secondary wives, not as the only woman of his marital affection. He could not offer to her what her shepherd lover offered her. After she has told the court ladies of her belonging only to her shepherd lover and finding only him "altogether desirable," King Solomon approaches her. He expresses his admiration of her, finding her exceptionally

36. How have the remnant given public evidence that they are lovesick for their heavenly Bridegroom, and what question does this excite in persons of good will?

37. Why do the remnant have no fear of confessing Christ before men, and what reason do they give for loving him?

38. How did the Shulammite describe her lover to the "daughters of Jerusalem"?

39. (a) How does making such public declaration of Christ benefit the remnant? (b) What final test now comes upon the Shulammite in Jerusalem, and with what question by her?

lovely, more so than sixty queens and eighty concubines. He would place her first in his affections. Such expressions from world-famous King Solomon could turn the head of many ordinary girls, but not the Shulammite's. She tells him she had not tried to seek his company, and she turns away. "Come back, come back, O Shulammite! Come back, come back, that we may behold you!" cries out Solomon. The Shulammite then asks what he and his people see in a village girl from Shunem as she is!—Cant. 6:4-13.

⁴⁰ Taking advantage of this innocent question, King Solomon tells how lovely she appears to him from the soles of her feet to the crown of her head: "How beautiful you are and how pleasant you are, O beloved girl, among exquisite delights!" He wants to have her as his own to enjoy. (Cant. 7:1-9) It would be such an opportunity for her to enjoy luxury in the chief city, with honor and glory and position as a wife of the king himself! How well this pictures the appeal of materialism today! So what example does the Shulammite give to the espoused remnant to meet this appeal?

TRIUMPH BY THE "FLAME OF JAH"

⁴¹ In the supreme moment of her life the Shulammite repels the wooings of the chief dignitary of the land. "I am my dear one's and toward me is his longing," she courageously replies. Turning from the glorious king before her, she bursts out in a call for her shepherd lover to come and take her away. O that he were as her own brother who had sucked the breasts of her mother! Kissing him without fear of public scorn, she would bring him to the house of her mother, who used to teach her the principles of integrity and faithfulness.

40. How does Solomon answer her question, and what example does the Shulammite give to the remnant today to meet such an appeal?

41. In reacting to Solomon's wooings, what does the Shulammite do, and what does Solomon then do?

She has made her decision, and she calls upon the court ladies not to join King Solomon in trying to awaken or arouse love for Solomon when it does not feel inclined to come forth spontaneously. (Cant. 7:10 to 8:4) Mighty King Solomon has lost. It is hopeless to try further to win her over. He lets her go home.

⁴² Her brothers at Shunem see her approaching, but not alone. They ask: "Who is this woman coming up from the wilderness, leaning upon her dear one?" They had not realized that their one-time little sister had such integrity and constancy in love. In earlier years one brother had said of her: "We have a little sister that does not have any breasts. What shall we do for our sister on the day that she will be spoken for [in marriage]?" To this question another brother replied: "If she should be a wall, we shall build upon her a battlement of silver; but if she should be a door, we shall block her up with a cedar plank." (Cant. 8:5, 8, 9) Her experience with King Solomon was a searching test to make sure whether she was unsteady in love and virtue, like a door turning on its pivot and that needed to be barred shut with a sturdy cedar plank to prevent its swinging open to someone unwelcome, unwholesome.

⁴³ Having triumphed over all the enticements of a glorious king, having stood like a wall against all the attractions of the artificial material things of this world, she has proved her stature, that she is a fully matured woman with breasts, and firm in the virtuous principles that her mother has taught her. In no self-admiration she could rightly say: "I am a wall, and my breasts are like towers [on the wall]. In this case I have become in his eyes like her that is

42. When her brothers saw her approaching Shunem, what question flashed through their minds that they had once asked concerning her, together with what determination on how to deal with her?

43. In no self-admiration, what could she now say regarding herself, thus obliging her brothers to take appropriate action?

finding peace." (Cant. 8:10) So now let her brothers build upon her a battlement of silver, in recognition of her integrity. Let them consent to her marriage to her shepherd lover.

⁴⁴ Down till the battle of Armageddon destroys the materialism of this old world the espoused remnant of Christ the Shepherd must meet the test of unwavering love for him. How will they triumph in this searching test? By having a love for him as the Shulammite had for her dear shepherd. Let King Solomon have his thousand vineyards; such material possessions do not tempt her. She is content with her own vineyard. (Cant. 8:11, 12) Why? Because she loves one really dear to her, and such love cannot be bought with material things of value. "Place me," she says to him, "as a seal upon your heart, as a seal upon your arm; because love is as strong as death is, insistence on exclusive devotion is as unyielding as Sheol is. Its blazings are the blazings of a fire, the flame of Jah. Many waters themselves are not able to extinguish love, nor can rivers themselves wash it away. If a man [even King Solomon] would give all the valuable

44. (a) The remnant must meet the test of love for Christ down till what event? (b) How will they be able to triumph in the test, according to the expressions of the Shulammite?

things of his house for love, persons would positively despise them."—Cant. 8:6, 7.

⁴⁵ Such an unconquerable love assured her of the shepherd's love for her. He wants to hear her voice that speaks out of a faithful heart: "O you who are dwelling in the gardens, the partners are paying attention to your voice. Let me hear it." At this invitation she expresses the desire that he come leaping, crossing the mountains that separate them and transforming them into fragrant mountains of the glorious heights of union with him: "Run away, my dear one, and make yourself like a gazelle or like a roe of the stags upon the mountains of spices."—Cant. 8:13, 14.

⁴⁶ Crowned with joy is the loved Shulammite woman of this superlative song of King Solomon. Crowned with joy will the espoused remnant also be by resisting worldly materialism and holding true to the Shepherd-Bridegroom. All the "other sheep," like the "virgins in her train as her companions," will share in the faithful remnant's joy. Thanks be to Jehovah God for this inspired Song that stirs us all to integrity in our love toward his Right Shepherd, Jesus Christ.

45. What does the shepherd lover now want to hear, and what desire toward him does she express?

46. For holding true to her lover, with what was the Shulammite crowned, and for what will the remnant be likewise crowned, and who will share in their crowning experience?

A Clergyman's Advice Boomerangs

To those who live in figurative glass houses, a familiar proverb advises that they not throw stones. A small town in the country of Panama threatened to stone the Watch Tower missionaries every time they entered to preach to them. The people finally did carry out their threat, but instead of stoning Jehovah's witnesses they vented their anger by stoning the priest out of town because of an argument over funds that had been collected for a *fiesta*. One man remarked to a Watch Tower missionary: "We gave him what he always wanted us to give you." The little town has been excommunicated, the doors of the church are closed.

Now, however, Jehovah's witnesses are well received. Due to this a door of opportunity is being opened to the people of that vicinity that before has always been closed to them, that is, a chance for them to learn and understand the Bible. The townspeople express an eagerness to want to find out what true Christianity really is.

Questions from Readers

● Ecclesiastes 1:4 says that the earth abides forever, but how do we know "forever" means throughout eternity, and not just to some future, indefinite, concealed time? The same was said of the law covenant, but it came to an end.

—R. S., United States.

The Hebrew word translated "forever" in most translations, and "to time indefinite" in the *New World Translation*, is 'olam'. Its basic meaning is "hidden" or "concealed" and relates to time. Hence it means "time indefinite." It may mean many years or it may mean eternity. Exodus 31:16 and Leviticus 24:8 use it concerning a part of the law covenant and Isaiah 24:5 uses it concerning the entire law covenant, calling it "the everlasting covenant." (AV) Numbers 25:13 uses it when speaking of "an everlasting priesthood." (AV) But Galatians 3:24, 25 and Colossians 2:14 show the law covenant ended with Christ's death and resurrection, and Hebrews chapter 7 shows an ending to the law and the "everlasting priesthood." This time period was concealed, but it had an end.

'Olam' may mean eternity, as is apparent when it is used where Jehovah is called "the everlasting God," and spoken of as being "from everlasting to everlasting." (Gen. 21:33; Isa. 40:28; Ps. 90:2, AV) It is used to depict Jehovah as the "king of eternity." (Jer. 10:10, Da; AV, margin) Hence, as Gesenius' *Hebrew and English Lexicon* says, the word indicates "time

future, ever, forever, evermore, in such a way that the *terminus ad quem* [end to which] as it is called is to be determined from the nature of the subject."

So it is "from the nature of the subject" at Ecclesiastes 1:4 that we must determine whether 'olam' as there used means to a concealed but limited time or to eternity. The text reads: "A generation is going and a generation is coming, but the earth is standing even to time indefinite." Jehovah made the earth as man's home. He made man to live, not die. Death was the penalty of disobedience. As long as the perfect man obeyed he would live, even forever if forever obedient. Even after sin and death entered, obedient men who exercise faith in Christ have the promise of everlasting life on earth: "The meek ones themselves will possess the earth." Jesus said: "Everyone that is living and exercises faith in me will never die at all." To know Jehovah and Christ "means everlasting life." (Ps. 37:11; John 11:26; 17:3) Jehovah God "formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited."—Isa. 45:18, AV.

He made the earth to be inhabited by obedient men who would live forever; so the earth must remain forever as their home, else its creation would be in vain. This is made sure by Psalm 104:5. For emphasis two Hebrew words are used, 'olam' and 'ad. The latter means, according to Harkavy's *Students' Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary*, "duration, everlastingness, eternity, for ever." So by both these Hebrew words Psalm 104:5 makes doubly sure the earth's permanence: "He has founded the earth upon its established places; it will not be made to totter to time indefinite, nor forever."

CHECK YOUR MEMORY ✓✓

After reading this issue of "The Watchtower," do you remember—

- ✓ Why God chooses the weak to magnify his name rather than the strong and worldly wise? P. 707, ¶2.
- ✓ How animals use the caste system? P. 709, ¶2.
- ✓ How Jesus ruled out a clergy caste system? P. 711, ¶5.
- ✓ What claim Emanuel Swedenborg made concerning the spirit world? P. 713, ¶1.

- ✓ Who the loved girl of The Song of Solomon prophetically pictured? P. 723, ¶10.
- ✓ What woman rejected the love of a king for the love of a shepherd? P. 728, ¶24.
- ✓ How the girl of Solomon's song was like a wall? P. 733, ¶43.
- ✓ What considerations prove "to time indefinite" means "forever" at Ecclesiastes 1:4? P. 735, ¶4.

