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Jehovah, Our Father, Loves Us Dearly

“You must pray, then, this way: ‘Our Father.’”—MATT. 6:9.

SONG 135

Jehovah’s Warm Appeal: “Be Wise, My Son”

PREVIEW

We often think of Jehovah as our Creator and Sovereign Ruler. But we have good reasons for viewing him as a loving and caring Father. This article will consider those reasons. We will also learn why we can be sure that Jehovah will never abandon us.

IMAGINE that you are living some 2,500 years ago in Persia. You want to speak to the king of the land about a matter, so you travel to the royal city of Shushan. You would not even think of approaching the monarch without first receiving his permission. To do otherwise could very well cost you your life! —Esther 4:11.

² How thankful we are that Jehovah is not like that Persian king! Jehovah is vastly superior to any human ruler, and yet he welcomes us at any time. He wants us to feel free to approach him. For example, although Jehovah bears such lofty titles as Grand Creator, Almighty, and Sovereign Lord, we are invited to call on him using the familiar term “Father.” (Matt. 6:9) How touching that Jehovah wants us to view him in such a warm and intimate way!

³ We can rightly call Jehovah “Father”—he is the Source of our life. (Ps. 36:9) Because he is our Father, we have a responsibility to obey him. When we do what he asks of us, we will enjoy marvelous blessings. (Heb. 12:9) Those blessings include everlasting life, whether in heaven or on earth. We also enjoy

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1. What was involved in approaching a king of Persia?
 2. How can we feel about approaching Jehovah?
 3. Why can we call Jehovah “Father,” and what will this article discuss?

benefits now. This article will discuss how Jehovah acts as a loving Father now and why we can be sure that he will never abandon us in the future. But first, let us consider why we can be confident that our heavenly Father loves us dearly and cares for us.

JEHOVAH IS A LOVING AND CARING FATHER

⁴ Do you find it difficult to think of God as your Father? Some may feel small and insignificant in comparison to Jehovah. They doubt that Almighty God cares about them as individuals. Yet, our loving Father does not want us to feel that way. He gave us life and wants us to have a relationship with him. After stating this truth, the apostle Paul explained to his listeners in Athens that Jehovah “is not far off from each one of us.” (Acts 17:24-29) God wants each one of us to go to him just as a child naturally goes to a loving and caring parent.

⁵ Others may find it hard to view Jehovah as their Father because their own human father showed them little or no love and affection. Consider the comments of one Christian sister. “My father was very abusive,” she says. “When I first began to study the Bible, it was difficult for me to relate to a heav-

4. Why do some find it difficult to view Jehovah as their Father?

5. What do we learn from the experience of one Christian sister?

only Father. But after I came to know Jehovah, that all changed.” Do you have similar feelings? If so, be assured that you too can come to see Jehovah as the best possible Father.

⁶ One way that Jehovah has helped us to view him as our loving Father is by having Jesus’ words and actions recorded in the Bible. (Read Matthew 11:27.) Jesus so perfectly reflected his Father’s personality that he could say: “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father also.” (John 14:9) Jesus often spoke about the role that Jehovah fulfills as a Father. In the four Gospels alone, Jesus used the term “Father” some 165 times in reference to Jehovah. Why did Jesus speak so much about Jehovah? One reason is that people might be convinced that Jehovah is a loving Father.—John 17:25, 26.

⁷ Consider what we learn about Jehovah from the way that he treated his Son, Jesus. Jehovah always heard Jesus’ prayers. He not only heard Jesus’ prayers but also answered them. (John 11:41, 42) No matter what trials Jesus faced, he sensed his Father’s love and support.—Luke 22:42, 43.

6. According to Matthew 11:27, what is one way that Jehovah has helped us to view him as our loving Father?

7. What do we learn about Jehovah from the way that he treated his Son?

⁸ Jesus acknowledged that his Father was the Source and Sustainer of his life when he stated: “I live because of the Father.” (John 6:57) Jesus completely trusted in his Father, and Jehovah supplied his physical needs. Most important, Jehovah cared for Jesus spiritually.—Matt. 4:4.

⁹ As a loving Father, Jehovah made sure that Jesus knew he had his Father’s backing. (Matt. 26:53; John 8:16) While Jehovah did not shield Jesus from all injury, He helped him to endure trials. Jesus was assured that any harm he might suffer would be temporary. (Heb. 12:2) Jehovah proved that he cared for Jesus by listening to him, providing for him, training him, and supporting him. (John 5:20; 8:28) Let us now see how our heavenly Father cares for us in similar ways.

HOW OUR LOVING FATHER CARES FOR US

¹⁰ *Jehovah listens to our prayers.* (Read Psalm 66: 19, 20.) He does not want us to limit our prayers; he urges us to pray often. (1 Thess. 5:17) We can re-

8. In what ways did Jehovah provide for Jesus?

9. How did Jehovah prove to be a loving and caring Father to Jesus?

10. According to Psalm 66:19, 20, how does Jehovah show that he loves us?

spectfully approach our God at any time, no matter where we are. He is never too busy to listen to us; he is always available and attentive. When we appreciate that Jehovah listens to our prayers, we are drawn to him. “I love Jehovah,” said the psalmist, “because he hears my voice.”—Ps. 116:1.

¹¹ Our Father not only listens to our prayers but also answers them. The apostle John assures us: “No matter what we ask according to [God’s] will, he hears us.” (1 John 5:14, 15) Of course, Jehovah may not answer our prayers in the way that we expect. He knows what is best for us, so sometimes his answer is no or he wants us to wait.—2 Cor. 12:7-9.

¹² *Jehovah provides for us.* He does what he requires all fathers to do. (1 Tim. 5:8) He cares for the material needs of his children. He does not want us to be anxious about our food, clothing, or shelter. (Matt. 6:32, 33; 7:11) As a loving parent, Jehovah has even arranged to satisfy all our future needs.

¹³ Most important, Jehovah provides for our spiritual needs. Through his Word, he has revealed the truth about himself, his purpose, the meaning of life, and the future. He showed us personal

11. How does Jehovah respond to our prayers?

12-13. In what ways does our heavenly Father provide for us?



1

2

3

4

Jehovah wants to be close to us, just as a caring father wants to be close to his children
(See paragraph 4)



A loving human father (1) listens to, (2) provides for, (3) trains, and (4) protects his children. Our loving heavenly Father cares for us in similar ways
(See paragraphs 10-15)

attention when we first learned the truth, using our parents or another teacher to help us come to know him. And we continue to receive kind assistance from loving congregation elders and other mature brothers and sisters. In addition, Jehovah instructs us through our congregation meetings, where we learn alongside our spiritual family. In these and other ways, Jehovah shows his fatherly interest in all of us.—Ps. 32:8.

¹⁴ *Jehovah trains us.* Unlike Jesus, we are imperfect. So as part of our training, our loving Father disciplines us when necessary. His Word reminds us: “Those whom Jehovah loves he disciplines.” (Heb. 12:6, 7) Jehovah disciplines us in many ways. For instance, something we read in his Word or hear at our meetings may correct us. Or perhaps the help we need comes from the elders. Regardless of the form it takes, Jehovah’s discipline is always motivated by love.—Jer. 30:11.

14. Why does Jehovah train us, and how does he do so?

¹⁵ *Jehovah supports us through trials.* Just as a caring human father supports his children during difficult times, our heavenly Father sustains us through trials. He uses his holy spirit to protect us from spiritual harm. (Luke 11:13) Jehovah also protects us emotionally. For example, he gives us a marvelous hope. That hope for the future helps us to endure difficulties. Consider this: No matter what bad things happen to us, our loving Father will undo any injury we suffer. Whatever trials we are facing, these are only temporary, but the blessings Jehovah gives are everlasting.—2 Cor. 4:16-18.

OUR FATHER WILL NEVER ABANDON US

¹⁶ We see proof of Jehovah's love for us in the way he responded to the problems that first arose within his earthly family. When Adam disobeyed his heavenly Father, he lost his place in Jehovah's happy family, both for himself and for his descendants. (Rom. 5:12; 7:14) Jehovah, however, stepped in to help.

¹⁷ Jehovah punished Adam, but he did not leave Adam's unborn offspring without hope. He imme-

15. In what ways does Jehovah protect us?

16. What happened when Adam disobeyed his loving Father?

17. After Adam's rebellion, what did Jehovah immediately do?

diately promised that obedient humans would be brought back into his family. (Gen. 3:15; Rom. 8:20, 21) Jehovah arranged for this on the basis of the ransom sacrifice of his beloved Son, Jesus. By giving his Son in our behalf, Jehovah proved how dearly he loves us.—John 3:16.

¹⁸ Though we are imperfect, Jehovah wants us in his family, and he never considers us to be a burden.

18. Why can we be sure that Jehovah wants us as his children, even if we have strayed from him?

If we have strayed from God but are repentant, our loving Father, Jehovah, is ready and willing to welcome us back
(See paragraph 18)



We may disappoint him or stray awhile, but Jehovah does not give up on us. Jesus illustrated the depth of Jehovah's fatherly care with the story of the son who was lost. (Luke 15:11-32) The father in that illustration never stopped hoping that his son would return. When the son made his way home, the father eagerly welcomed him back. If we have strayed from Jehovah but are repentant, we can be sure that our loving Father is ready and willing to welcome us back.

¹⁹ Our Father will repair all the damage caused by Adam. After Adam's rebellion, Jehovah purposed to adopt 144,000 individuals from among mankind who will serve as kings and priests in heaven with his Son. Jesus and those associate rulers will help obedient humans to come to perfection in the new world. After they pass a final test of obedience, God will grant them everlasting life. Our Father will then have the satisfaction of seeing the earth filled with his perfect sons and daughters. What a glorious time that will be!

²⁰ Jehovah has shown that he loves us dearly. He is the ideal Father. He hears our prayers and pro-

19. How will Jehovah repair the damage caused by Adam?

20. In what ways has Jehovah shown that he loves us dearly, and what will the next article discuss?

vides what we need, both materially and spiritually. He trains and supports us. He also has wonderful blessings in store for us. It warms our heart to know that our Father loves and cares for us! Our next article will discuss ways that we, as his children, can respond to his love.

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Page 8: Each of the four scenes depicts a father with his child: a father listening attentively to his son, a father providing for his daughter's needs, a father giving training to his son, and a father consoling his son. The drawing of the hand of Jehovah behind the four scenes reminds us that Jehovah cares for us in similar ways.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- Why do you feel that Jehovah is the best possible Father?
- In what ways does Jehovah show that he loves and cares for us?
- Why can we be certain that our Father will never abandon us?

We Love Jehovah, Our Father, Dearly

“We love, because he first loved us.”—1 JOHN 4:19.

SONG 3

Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

PREVIEW

We know that our Father, Jehovah, loves us dearly and has brought us into his family of worshippers. In response, we are moved to love him. How can we express our love to our caring Father? This article will consider some specific things we can do.

JEHOVAH has invited us to join his family of worshippers. What a marvelous invitation that is! Our family is made up of those who have dedicated themselves to God and who exercise faith in the ransom sacrifice of his Son. Ours is a happy family. We enjoy a meaningful life now, and we rejoice in the prospect of life without end—whether in heaven or in Paradise on earth.

² Moved by love and at great cost to himself, Jehovah opened the way for us to be part of his family. (John 3:16) We were “bought with a price.” (1 Cor. 6:20) By means of the ransom, Jehovah made it possible for us to have a warm relationship with him. We have the honor of addressing the greatest Person in the universe as Father. And, as we considered in the preceding article, Jehovah is the ideal Father.

³ Like one Bible writer, we might ask: “With what will I repay Jehovah for all the good he has done for me?” (Ps. 116:12) The answer is that we can never repay our heavenly Father. Still, we feel moved to love him. The apostle John wrote: “We love, because

1-2. Why and how did Jehovah open the way for us to be part of his family?

3. What questions might we ask? (See also the box “Does Jehovah Notice Me?”)



Does Jehovah Notice Me?

Have you ever asked yourself, ‘Of all the billions of people alive on earth, why would Jehovah take notice of me?’ If so, you are in good company. King David wrote: “O Jehovah, what is man that you should notice him, the son of mortal man that you should pay attention to him?” (Ps. 144:3) David was confident that Jehovah knew him well. (1 Chron. 17:16-18) And through his Word and his organization, Jehovah reassures you that he notices the love you show for him. Consider some statements in God’s Word that can help you be certain of that fact:

- Jehovah noticed you even before you were born.
—Ps. 139:16.
- Jehovah knows what is in your heart, and he knows what you are thinking.—1 Chron. 28:9.
- Jehovah personally listens to each one of your prayers.
—Ps. 65:2.

- Your actions affect Jehovah’s feelings.—**Prov. 27:11.**
- Jehovah has personally drawn you to him.—**John 6:44.**
- If you die, Jehovah knows you so well that he will be able to resurrect you. He will reconstruct your body and restore your mind along with your memories and other unique aspects of your personality.—**John 11:21-26, 39-44; Acts 24:15.**

he first loved us.” (1 John 4:19) In what ways can we show our heavenly Father that we love him?

STAY CLOSE TO JEHOVAH

⁴ Jehovah wants us to draw close to him and to communicate with him. (Read James 4:8.) He urges us to “persevere in prayer,” and he makes himself available at all times. (Rom. 12:12) He is never too busy or too tired to listen to us. In turn, we listen to him by reading his Word, the Bible, along with

4. According to James 4:8, why should we make the effort to draw close to Jehovah?

publications that help us to understand it. We also listen to him by paying close attention at Christian meetings. Just as good communication helps children stay close to their parents, regular communication with Jehovah helps us remain close to him.

⁵ Think about the quality of your communication with God. Jehovah wants us to pour out our hearts to him in prayer. (Ps. 62:8) We do well to ask ourselves this question: ‘Do my prayers tend to be like superficial, reprinted messages, or are they like heartfelt, handwritten letters?’ No doubt you love Jehovah deeply, and you want to keep your relationship with him strong. To do that, you must communicate with him regularly. Confide in him. Share your joys and your pains with him. Be confident that you can go to him for help.

⁶ To stay close to our heavenly Father, we must maintain a grateful attitude. We agree with the psalmist who wrote: “How many things you have done, O Jehovah my God, your wonderful works and your thoughts toward us. None can compare to you; if I were to try to tell and speak of them, they would be too numerous to recount!” (Ps. 40:5) We do more than *feel* appreciative; we *express* our ap-

5. How can we improve the quality of our prayers?

6. What must we do to stay close to our heavenly Father?

preciation to Jehovah by our words and actions. This makes us stand out as different from many today. We live in a world where people do not appreciate all that God does for them. In fact, one indication that we are living in “the last days” is that people are unthankful. (2 Tim. 3:1, 2) May we never adopt that attitude!

⁷ Parents do not want their children to squabble but to be friends. Similarly, Jehovah wants all his children to get along well with one another. In fact, the love we have for one another identifies us as being true Christians. (John 13:35) We agree with the psalmist who wrote: “How good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!” (Ps. 133:1) When we love our brothers and sisters, we prove to Jehovah that we love him. (1 John 4:20) How pleasant it is to be part of a family of brothers and sisters who are “kind to one another, tenderly compassionate”—Eph. 4:32.

SHOW YOUR LOVE BY BEING OBEDIENT

⁸ Jehovah expects children to obey their parents, and he expects us to obey him. (Eph. 6:1)

7. What does Jehovah want us to do, and why?

8. According to 1 John 5:3, what is the primary reason why we obey Jehovah?

He deserves our obedience because he is our Creator, the Sustainer of our life, and the wisest of all parents. However, the primary reason why we obey Jehovah is that we love him. (Read 1 John 5:3.) Although there are many reasons why we should obey Jehovah, he does not force us to do so. Jehovah gave us the gift of free will, so he is happy when we choose to obey him out of love for him.

⁹ Parents want their children to be safe. That is why they establish standards of behavior, which benefit their children. When children obey those guidelines, they show that they put trust in their parents

9-10. Why is it important to know God's standards and to live by them?



and respect them. How much more important it is, then, that we know our heavenly Father's standards and live by them. When we do, we show Jehovah that we love and respect him and we also benefit ourselves. (Isa. 48:17, 18) By contrast, those who reject Jehovah and his standards end up hurting themselves.—Gal. 6:7, 8.

¹⁰ When we live in a way that pleases Jehovah, we are protected from physical, emotional, and spiritual harm. Jehovah knows what is best for us. Aurora, who lives in the United States, says, “I know that obeying Jehovah always results in the best life possible.” That is true for all of us. How have you benefited from obeying Jehovah's loving direction?



We show how dearly we love our heavenly Father, Jehovah, by staying close to him in prayer, by obeying him, and by helping others to love him

(See paragraphs 4-14)

¹¹ Prayer helps us to be obedient, even when doing so is difficult. At times, we will struggle to obey Jehovah, but we must constantly fight our tendency to sin. The psalmist pleaded with God: “Stir within me a willingness to obey you.” (Ps. 51:12) Denise, who is a regular pioneer, says, “If I find it difficult to obey one of Jehovah’s commands, I pray for strength to do what is right.” We can be certain that Jehovah will always answer that type of request.—Luke 11:9-13.

HELP OTHERS TO LOVE OUR FATHER

¹² Read Ephesians 5:1. As Jehovah’s “beloved children,” we do our best to imitate him. We imitate his qualities by being loving, kind, and forgiving in our dealings with others. When those who do not know God see our fine conduct, they may be motivated to learn more about him. (1 Pet. 2:12) Christian parents have good reason to imitate Jehovah in the way they treat their children. When they do, their children may want to form their own friendship with our loving Father.

¹³ A young child is proud of his father and is hap-

11. How does prayer help us?

12. According to Ephesians 5:1, what should we do?

13. On what do we need to focus?

py to talk about him. Likewise, we are proud of our heavenly Father, Jehovah, and want others to come to know him. In our heart, we all feel as did King David, who wrote: “I will boast in Jehovah.” (Ps. 34:2) What, though, if we are timid? How can we become bold? We grow bold when we focus on how happy we can make Jehovah and how much others will benefit from learning about him. Jehovah will give us the courage we need. He helped our first-century brothers to become bold, and he will help us too.—1 Thess. 2:2.

¹⁴ Jehovah is not partial, and he is happy when he sees us show love to others, no matter what their background may be. (Acts 10:34, 35) One of the best ways we can show love to others is by sharing the good news with them. (Matt. 28:19, 20) What can this work accomplish? Those who listen to us can improve their lives now and gain the prospect of enjoying everlasting life in the future.—1 Tim. 4:16.

LOVE OUR FATHER AND BE HAPPY

¹⁵ Jehovah is a loving parent, so he wants his family to be happy. (Isa. 65:14) There are many reasons

14. What are some reasons why it is important to share in the disciple-making work?

15-16. What reasons do we have for being happy?

why we can be cheerful right now, even though we may be facing difficulties. For example, we are certain that our heavenly Father loves us dearly. We have an accurate knowledge of God's Word, the Bible. (Jer. 15:16) And we are part of a unique family made up of people who love Jehovah, love his high moral standards, and love one another.—Ps. 106: 4, 5.

¹⁶ We can remain happy because we have the sure hope that life will get even better in the future. We know that soon Jehovah will remove all the wicked and that under the direction of his Kingdom, the earth will be restored to Paradise. We also have the wonderful hope that those who have died will be raised to life and reunited with their loved ones. (John 5:28, 29) What a joy that will be! And most important, we are sure that soon everyone in heaven and on earth will give our loving Father the honor, praise, and devotion that he deserves.

WHY DO YOU FEEL THAT WE SHOULD . . .

■ pray often?

■ be obedient to Jehovah?

■ speak to others about our heavenly Father?

SONG 12

Great God, Jehovah

Pursue Peace by Fighting Envy

“Let us pursue the things making for peace and the things that build one another up.”—ROM. 14:19.

SONG 113

Our Possession of Peace

PREVIEW

Jehovah’s organization is peaceful. But this peace can be disturbed if we allow feelings of envy to grow. In this article, we will identify what causes envy. We will also discuss how to fight this harmful trait and how to promote peace.

JACOB loved all his sons, but he had special affection for 17-year-old Joseph. How did Joseph's brothers react? They became envious of him, and that envy made them bitter. Joseph had done nothing to deserve the hatred his brothers felt toward him. Even so, they sold Joseph into slavery and lied to their father, saying that a wild animal had killed his favorite son. Envy caused them to disrupt the peace of the family and to break their father's heart.—Gen. 37:3, 4, 27-34.

² In the Scriptures, envy* is listed among the death-dealing “works of the flesh” that can disqualify a person from inheriting God's Kingdom. (Read **Galatians 5:19-21**.) Envy is often the root cause of such poisonous fruits as hostility, strife, and fits of anger.

³ The example of Joseph's brothers shows how envy can damage relationships and disturb the peace that once existed in a family. Although we would never do what Joseph's brothers did, we all

* **EXPRESSION EXPLAINED:** As described in the Bible, **envy** can cause a person not only to want something others have but also to deprive them of what they have.

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1. How did envy affect Joseph's family?
 2. According to Galatians 5:19-21, why is envy so dangerous?
 3. What will we discuss in this article?

have an imperfect and treacherous heart. (Jer. 17:9) Little wonder, then, that we may at times struggle with feelings of envy. Let us review some warning examples in the Bible that help us identify reasons why feelings of envy may take root in our heart. We will then consider some practical ways to fight envy and promote peace.

WHAT CAN CAUSE ENVY?

⁴ *Material prosperity.* Isaac was a wealthy man, and the Philistines envied Isaac's prosperity. (Gen. 26:12-14) They even stopped up the wells that Isaac depended on in order to water his flocks and herds. (Gen. 26:15, 16, 27) Like the Philistines, some people today become envious of those who have more material possessions than they do. They not only want the things others have but also want to deprive them of what they have.

⁵ *Being appreciated.* The Jewish religious leaders envied Jesus because he was much appreciated by the common people. (Matt. 7:28, 29) Jesus was God's representative, and he was teaching the truth. Even so, these religious leaders spread wicked lies and slander to ruin Jesus' good name. (Mark

4. Why did the Philistines envy Isaac?

5. Why did the religious leaders envy Jesus?

15:10; John 11:47, 48; 12:12, 13, 19) What warning lesson can we learn from this account? We must fight any tendency to envy those who have qualities that endear them to the congregation. Instead, we should try to imitate their loving ways.—1 Cor. 11:1; 3 John 11.

⁶ *Theocratic privileges.* In the first century, Diotrephes envied those who took the lead in the Christian congregation. He wanted “to have the first place” among congregation members, so he spread malicious talk to discredit the apostle John and other responsible brothers. (3 John 9, 10) Although not going as far as Diotrephes, we too could begin to envy a fellow Christian who receives an assignment that we had hoped to get—especially if we feel that we are just as qualified as he is to care for that responsibility.

⁷ Envy is like a poisonous weed. Once the seed of envy takes root in our heart, it can be difficult to destroy. Envy feeds on other negative feelings, such as improper jealousy, pride, and selfishness. Envy can choke the development of good qualities, such as love, compassion, and kindness. As soon as we

6. How did Diotrephes show envy?

7. What effect can envy have on us?

see envy starting to sprout, we need to uproot it from our heart. How can we fight envy?

CULTIVATE HUMILITY AND CONTENTMENT

⁸ We can fight envy by cultivating humility and contentment. When our heart is full of these good qualities, envy will have no room to grow. Humility will help us not to think too highly of ourselves. A humble person does not feel that he deserves more than everyone else. (Gal. 6:3, 4) Someone who is content is satisfied with what he has and does not compare himself with others. (1 Tim. 6:7, 8) When a person who is humble and content sees someone receive something good, he is happy for him.

⁹ We need the help of God's holy spirit if we are to avoid the fleshly trait of envy and instead cultivate humility and contentment. (Read Galatians 5:16; Philippians 2:3, 4.) Jehovah's holy spirit can help us to examine our innermost thoughts and motives. With God's help, we can replace harmful thoughts and feelings with upbuilding ones. (Ps. 26:2; 51:10) Consider the examples of Moses and Paul, men who successfully fought the tendency to envy.

8. What qualities can help us to fight envy?

9. According to Galatians 5:16 and Philippians 2:3, 4, what will holy spirit help us to do?

Our heart is like soil,
and our good qualities
are like beautiful
flowers. But envy is
like a poisonous weed.



Envy can choke the
development of good
qualities, such as love,
compassion, and kindness
(See paragraph 7)

How can we fight weedlike
envy? With the help of God's
holy spirit, we can uproot
envy and replace it with
humility and contentment
(See paragraphs 8-9)

¹⁰ *Moses* had a lot of authority over God's people, but he did not jealously guard that privilege. For example, on one occasion, Jehovah took away some of his holy spirit from Moses and gave it to a group of Israelite elders who were standing near the tent of meeting. Shortly thereafter, Moses heard that two elders who had not gone out to the tent of meeting had also received holy spirit and had begun to behave as prophets. How did he react when Joshua asked him to restrain the two elders? Moses did not become envious of the attention these two men were getting from Jehovah. Instead, he humbly rejoiced with them in their privilege. (Num. 11:24-29) What lesson can we learn from Moses?

¹¹ If you are an elder, have you ever been asked to train someone else to care for a privilege in the congregation that you truly love? For example, you might love the privilege of conducting the *Watchtower* Study each week. But if you are humble like Moses, you will not feel threatened if you are asked to train another brother so that, in time, he will be able to handle this privilege. Instead, you will be happy to help your brother.

10. What situation could have tested Moses? (See cover picture.)

11. How can elders imitate Moses?



How can Christian elders imitate the humble disposition of Moses?
(See paragraphs 11-12)

12 Consider another situation that many older brothers are facing. For several decades, they have served as coordinators of the bodies of elders. But when they turn 80, they willingly give up their assignment. Circuit overseers who reach 70 years of age humbly give up that privilege and accept their

12. How are many Christians today showing contentment and humility?

reassignment to a different form of service. And in recent years, many Bethel family members around the world have begun new assignments in the field. These faithful brothers and sisters do not resent those who may now care for the assignments that they once had.

¹³ *The apostle Paul* is another good example of someone who cultivated contentment and humility. Paul did not allow envy to develop. He worked hard in the ministry, but he humbly said: “I am the least of the apostles, and I am not worthy of being called an apostle.” (1 Cor. 15:9, 10) The 12 apostles followed Jesus during his earthly ministry, but Paul did not become a Christian until after Jesus’ death and resurrection. Although he was eventually appointed to be “an apostle to the nations,” Paul did not qualify for the special privilege of becoming one of the 12 apostles. (Rom. 11:13; Acts 1:21-26) Rather than envying those 12 men and the close association they had enjoyed with Jesus, Paul remained content with what he had.

¹⁴ If we are content and humble, we will be like Paul and show respect for the authority that

13. Why might Paul have been tempted to envy the 12 apostles?

14. What will we do if we are content and humble?

Jehovah has given to others. (Acts 21:20-26) He has arranged for appointed men to take the lead in the Christian congregation. Despite their imperfections, Jehovah considers them “gifts in men.” (Eph. 4:8, 11) When we respect these appointed men and humbly follow their direction, we stay close to Jehovah and enjoy peace with our fellow Christians.

“PURSUE THE THINGS MAKING FOR PEACE”

¹⁵ Peace cannot survive if envy is allowed to thrive. We need to weed out envy from our own heart and avoid planting feelings of envy in others. We must take these important steps if we are to obey Jehovah’s command to “pursue the things making for peace and the things that build one another up.” (Rom. 14:19) What specifically can we do to help others fight envy, and how can we promote peace?

¹⁶ Our attitude and actions can have a big influence on others. The world wants us to make a “showy display” of the things we own. (1 John 2:16) But that attitude promotes envy. We can avoid nurturing envy in others if we choose not to talk constantly about the things we own or plan to buy. An-

15. What do we need to do?

16. How can we help others to fight envy?

other way we can avoid promoting envy is by being modest about the privileges we have in the congregation. If we draw attention to the privileges that we have, we create fertile ground in which envy can grow. By contrast, when we show genuine personal interest in others and acknowledge the good that they do, we help them feel content and we promote unity and peace in the congregation.

¹⁷ We can win the battle against envy! Consider again the example of Joseph's brothers. Years after they had mistreated Joseph, they met him in Egypt. Before Joseph revealed his real identity to his brothers, he tested them to find out if they had changed. He arranged a meal at which he gave the youngest brother, Benjamin, significantly more attention than he gave the others. (Gen. 43:33, 34) Yet, there is no indication that his brothers became envious of Benjamin. Instead, they showed genuine concern for their brother and for their father, Jacob. (Gen. 44:30-34) Because Joseph's brothers had let go of envy, they were able to help restore peace in their family. (Gen. 45:4, 15) Similarly, if we uproot any feelings of envy, we will help to keep our family and our congregation peaceful.

17. What were Joseph's brothers able to do, and why?

¹⁸ Jehovah wants us to fight envy and to pursue peace. We must work hard to do both of those things. As discussed in this article, we have a tendency to envy. (Jas. 4:5) And we are surrounded by a world that promotes envy. But if we cultivate humility, contentment, and appreciation, we will leave no room for envy. Instead, we will help to create a peaceful environment in which righteous fruit can grow.—Read James 3:17, 18.

18. According to James 3:17, 18, what will happen if we help to create a peaceful environment?

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Page 32: During a meeting of the body of elders, an older brother who conducts the *Watchtower* Study in the congregation is asked to train a younger elder to care for this privilege. Though the older brother loves his assignment, he wholeheartedly supports the elders' decision by giving the younger brother practical suggestions and heartfelt commendation.

TO FIGHT ENVY, . . .

- how can holy spirit help us?
- how can contentment and humility help us?
- how can our having the right attitude help others?

Let Jehovah Soothe You

“When anxieties overwhelmed me, you comforted and soothed me.”—PS. 94:19.

SONG 44

A Prayer of the Lowly One

PREVIEW

At times, all of us feel anxious about the problems we face. This article considers the examples of three servants of Jehovah in Bible times who struggled with anxiety. It also discusses how Jehovah comforted and soothed each one of them.

HAVE you ever been plagued by anxiety?* Perhaps you feel anxious because you have been hurt by what others have said or done. Or you may be anxious about what you have said or done. For example, you may have made a mistake, and you worry that Jehovah will never forgive you. To make matters worse, you may believe that because you are overwhelmed by anxiety, you must lack faith—you must be a bad person. But is that true?

² Consider a few Scriptural examples. Hannah, who became the mother of the prophet Samuel, was a woman of great faith. Yet, she was overcome by anxiety when a member of her household treated her badly. (1 Sam. 1:7) The apostle Paul had strong faith, but he was overwhelmed with “anxiety for all the congregations.” (2 Cor. 11:28) King David had such strong faith that Jehovah developed a special fondness for him. (Acts 13:22) Even so, David made mistakes that caused him to suffer bouts of crushing

* **EXPRESSION EXPLAINED:** Anxiety is a feeling of nervousness or worry. This can be caused by financial concerns, health issues, family problems, or personal difficulties. We may also feel anxiety about our past mistakes or about future challenges we think we may experience.

1. What may cause anxiety, and how can it affect us?
2. What Scriptural examples show that being anxious does not mean that we lack faith?

anxiety. (Ps. 38:4) Jehovah comforted and soothed each one of them. Let us examine what we can learn from their examples.

WHAT WE LEARN FROM FAITHFUL HANNAH

³ When others speak harshly or act unkindly, we may feel anxious. That is especially true if the one who hurt us is a close friend or relative. We may worry that our relationship with that individual is ruined. At times, the person who hurts us may speak thoughtlessly, and we may feel as if we were stabbed with a sword! (Prov. 12:18) Or someone may even deliberately choose to use words as a weapon. A young sister had to deal with this challenge. “A few years ago,” she says, “somebody I thought was a good friend started spreading rumors about me on-line. I felt hurt and anxious. I just could not understand why she would stab me in the back like that.” If you have been hurt by a close friend or relative, you can learn much from Hannah.

⁴ Hannah had to deal with some difficult problems. For many years she was unable to have children. (1 Sam. 1:2) In Israelite culture, a woman who was barren was believed to be cursed. This left her

-
3. How can the speech of others cause us to feel anxious?
 4. What difficult problems did Hannah have to deal with?

feeling humiliated. (Gen. 30:1, 2) To make matters worse for Hannah, her husband had another wife, Peninnah, who bore him children. Peninnah viewed Hannah as a rival and “taunted her relentlessly in order to upset her.” (1 Sam. 1:6) At first, Hannah did not cope well with these difficult challenges. She was so upset that “she would weep and not eat.” She became “extremely bitter” at heart. (1 Sam. 1:7, 10) How did Hannah find comfort?

⁵ Hannah poured out her feelings to Jehovah in prayer. After she prayed, she explained her situation to High Priest Eli. He then told her: “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant your petition.” What was the result? Hannah “went on her way and ate, and her face was no longer downcast.” (1 Sam. 1:17, 18) Prayer helped Hannah to regain peace.

⁶ *We can regain our peace if we persevere in prayer.* Hannah spent a long time talking to her heavenly Father. (1 Sam. 1:12) We too can talk at length to Jehovah about our anxieties, our fears, and our shortcomings. Our prayers do not have to be poetic or perfectly structured. We may even find ourselves expressing bitter words that are interrupted by sobs of

5. How did prayer help Hannah?

6. What lessons about prayer can we learn from Hannah and from Philippians 4:6, 7?

grief. Even so, Jehovah will never get tired of listening to us. In addition to praying about our problems, we need to remember the advice recorded at **Philippians 4:6, 7. (Read.) Paul specifically mentioned that we should offer prayers of thanksgiving, or gratitude. We have so many reasons to thank Jehovah. For example, we can thank him for the gift of life, for his creative works, for his loyal love, and for the wonderful hope that he has given us. What else can we learn from Hannah?**

⁷ Despite her problems, Hannah regularly went with her husband to Jehovah's place of worship in Shiloh. (1 Sam. 1:1-5) It was while Hannah was at the tabernacle that High Priest Eli encouraged her by saying that he hoped that Jehovah would respond to her prayer.—1 Sam. 1:9, 17.

⁸ *We can regain our peace if we continue attending congregation meetings.* The opening prayer at our meetings often includes a request for God's spirit to be with us. Peace is part of the fruitage of that spirit. (Gal. 5:22) When we attend our meetings even though we are under stress, we give Jehovah and our brothers and sisters the opportunity to encourage us and to help us regain peace of mind and heart.

7. What did Hannah and her husband regularly do?

8. What can meetings do for us? Explain.



Like Hannah in the past, how can we today regain and maintain our inner peace?

(See paragraphs 6-10)

Prayer and meetings are key ways that Jehovah uses to soothe us. (Heb. 10:24, 25) Note another lesson we can learn from Hannah's experience.

⁹ The cause of Hannah's anxiety did not go away immediately. When Hannah returned home from worshipping at the tabernacle, she still had to live in the same household as Peninnah did. And the Bible does not indicate that Peninnah's attitude changed. So Hannah likely had to continue enduring her rival's stabbing words. But Hannah was able to regain and maintain her inner peace. Recall that after leav-

9. What did not change in Hannah's situation, but what did?

ing the matter in Jehovah’s hands, Hannah was no longer overwhelmed by worry. She allowed Jehovah to comfort and soothe her. Sometime later, Hannah was even blessed with children of her own!—1 Sam. 1:19, 20; 2:21.

¹⁰ *We can regain our peace even if the cause of our anxiety remains.* Even though we pray intensely and attend meetings regularly, some problems may persist. But from Hannah’s example, we learn that nothing can stop Jehovah from soothing our troubled heart. Jehovah will never forget us, and sooner or later he will reward our faithfulness.—Heb. 11:6.

WHAT WE LEARN FROM THE APOSTLE PAUL

¹¹ Paul had many reasons for feeling anxious. For instance, because he loved his brothers and sisters, the problems they faced weighed heavily on his mind. (2 Cor. 2:4; 11:28) In his assignment as an apostle, Paul had to deal with opposers who beat him and threw him in prison. He also had to endure hardships that caused anxiety, such as being “low on provisions.” (Phil. 4:12) And considering that he had been shipwrecked at least three times at that point in his life, we can only imagine the anxiety he

10. What do we learn from Hannah’s example?

11. What reasons did Paul have for feeling anxious?

experienced when traveling by boat. (2 Cor. 11:23-27) How did Paul deal with the anxiety?

¹² Paul felt anxious for his brothers and sisters when they faced challenges, but he did not try to fix all their problems by himself. Paul was modest. He arranged for others to help in caring for the congregation. For example, he delegated authority to such trustworthy men as Timothy and Titus. The work those brothers did no doubt helped to reduce Paul's anxiety.—Phil. 2:19, 20; Titus 1:1, 4, 5.

¹³ *Ask others to help you.* Like Paul, many empathetic elders today feel anxious for those in the congregation who are facing trials. But an elder can only do so much. Modesty will move him to share the load with other qualified men and to train young men to help him care for God's flock.—2 Tim. 2:2.

¹⁴ *Acknowledge your need to be comforted.* Paul was humble, so he sought and received encouragement from his friends. He obviously did not worry about being viewed as a weak person if he acknowledged that he had been comforted by others. In writing to Philemon, Paul said: "I received much joy and com-

12. What helped to reduce Paul's anxiety?

13. How can elders imitate Paul?

14. What did Paul not worry about, and what can we learn from his example?



As we learn from the example of the apostle Paul,
what can we do to avoid being overwhelmed by anxiety?
(See paragraphs 13-15)

fort on hearing of your love.” (Philem. 7) Paul mentioned several other fellow workers who had greatly encouraged him during times of distress. (Col. 4:7-11) When we humbly acknowledge that we need encouragement, our brothers and sisters will gladly give us the support we need.

¹⁵ ***Rely on God’s Word.*** Paul knew that the Scriptures would comfort him. (Rom. 15:4) They would also give him wisdom to face any trial. (2 Tim. 3:15, 16) When imprisoned in Rome for the second time,

15. How did Paul find relief when confronted with distressing circumstances?

Paul felt that his death was near. In the face of that distressing situation, what did Paul do? He asked Timothy to come to him quickly and bring “the scrolls.” (2 Tim. 4:6, 7, 9, 13) Why? Because those scrolls were likely portions of the Hebrew Scriptures that Paul could use in his personal Bible study. When we imitate Paul by regularly studying God’s Word, Jehovah will use the Scriptures to soothe us—no matter what trials we face.

WHAT WE LEARN FROM KING DAVID

¹⁶ David had reason to be troubled by a guilty conscience. He had committed adultery with Bathsheba, arranged for the murder of her husband, and for a time tried to cover up the crimes. (2 Sam. 12:9) At first, David ignored his conscience. As a result, he suffered not only spiritually but also mentally and physically. (Ps. 32:3, 4) What helped David to deal with the anxiety he had brought on himself, and what can help us if we make a serious mistake?

¹⁷ *Pray for forgiveness.* David eventually turned to Jehovah in prayer. With heartfelt repentance, he confessed his sins. (Read Psalm 51:1-4.) And what

16. What anxiety did David bring on himself?

17. How is David’s heartfelt repentance revealed in the words found at Psalm 51:1-4?



As in the case of King David, what can help us
if we make a serious mistake?
(See paragraphs 16-19)

relief that finally brought him! (Ps. 32:1, 2, 4, 5) If you commit a serious sin, do not try to cover the error. Instead, openly confess your sin to Jehovah in prayer. You will then begin to feel some relief from the anxiety caused by a guilty conscience. But if you want to restore your friendship with Jehovah, you need to do more than pray.

¹⁸ ***Accept discipline.*** When Jehovah sent the prophet Nathan to expose David's sin, David did not justify himself or try to minimize the sin. He

18. How did David respond to discipline?

immediately acknowledged that he had sinned not only against Bath-sheba's husband but, above all, against Jehovah. David accepted the discipline from Jehovah, and Jehovah forgave him. (2 Sam. 12:10-14) If we have committed a serious sin, we need to talk to those whom Jehovah has appointed to shepherd us. (Jas. 5:14, 15) And we must avoid the urge to justify ourselves. The sooner we accept and apply whatever discipline we receive, the sooner we will regain our peace and joy.

¹⁹ *Be determined to avoid repeating the same mistakes.* King David knew that if he was going to avoid repeating the same sins, he needed Jehovah's help. (Ps. 51:7, 10, 12) After receiving Jehovah's forgiveness, David was determined to avoid harmful thinking. As a result, he regained his inner peace.

²⁰ We show that we appreciate Jehovah's forgiveness when we pray for it, accept discipline, and work hard to avoid repeating our mistakes. When we take these steps, we will regain our inner peace. James, a brother who committed a serious sin, found this to be true. He says: "When I confessed my sin to the elders, I felt that a heavy weight had been lifted off my shoulders. I began to regain my peace of mind."

19. What should we be determined to do?

20. How can we show that we appreciate Jehovah's forgiveness?

How encouraging it is to know that “Jehovah is close to the brokenhearted; he saves those who are crushed in spirit”—Ps. 34:18.

²¹ As these last days come to a close, the causes of anxiety are likely to increase. When you have anxious thoughts, do not delay in seeking Jehovah’s help. Study the Bible diligently. Learn from the examples set by Hannah, Paul, and David. Ask your heavenly Father to help you identify the cause of your anxiety. (Ps. 139:23) Let him carry your burdens, especially those over which you have little or no control. If you do, you can be like the psalmist who sang to Jehovah: “When anxieties overwhelmed me, you comforted and soothed me.”—Ps. 94:19.

21. How can we let Jehovah soothe us?

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM THE WAY THAT JEHOVAH COMFORTED AND SOOTHED . . .

■ Hannah?

■ Paul?

■ David?

SONG 4

“Jehovah Is My Shepherd”

Learning From Good Examples Led Me to Rich Blessings

AS TOLD BY LÉONCE CRÉPEAULT



WHEN I was young, I struggled with the ministry. As I got older, assignments that I did not feel qualified to care for came my way. So let me tell you about some of the good examples that helped me to get past my fears and enjoy wonderful blessings during my 58 years of full-time service.

I was born in Quebec City, in the French-speaking Canadian province of Quebec. My parents, Louis and Zélia, raised me in a loving home. My father was reserved by nature and loved to read. I enjoyed writing and hoped to become a journalist someday.

When I was about 12 years old, Rodolphe Soucy, who was one of my father's coworkers, visited our home with his friend. They were Jehovah's Witnesses. I didn't know much about the Witnesses and wasn't particularly interested in their religion. Yet, I admired their reasonable way of answering questions using the Bible. My parents were also impressed, so we accepted a Bible study.

At that time, I was attending a Catholic school. Once in a while, I had conversations with my classmates about what I was learning from my Bible study. Eventually, the teachers, who were priests, found out. Instead of using the Scriptures to disprove what I was saying, one of them accused me in front of the whole class of being a revolutionary! Although stressful, that confrontation turned out to be a blessing because it helped me to see that the school's religious teachings did not agree with what the Bible says. I realized that I did not belong there. With my parents' permission, I switched to another school.

LEARNING TO LOVE THE MINISTRY

I continued to study the Bible, but my spiritual progress was slow because I was afraid of the door-to-door ministry. The Catholic Church was very influential and fiercely opposed to our preaching work. Maurice Duplessis, the premier of Quebec, was a close political ally of the church. With his support, mobs harassed and even attacked the Witnesses. It took real courage to preach back then.

A brother who helped me overcome my fear was John Rae, a graduate of the ninth class of Gilead School. John, who was very experienced, was mild, unassuming, and approachable. He rarely counseled me directly, but his good example spoke volumes. John struggled to speak French, so I often accompanied him in the ministry and helped him with the language. Spending time with John helped me finally take a bold stand for the truth. Ten years after my first contact with the Witnesses, I got baptized, on May 26, 1951.

Our small congregation in Quebec City consisted mostly of pioneers. Their good influence motivated me to pioneer. Back then, we preached from door to door using only the Bible. Without literature, we had to use the Scriptures more effectively. Therefore, I worked at becoming familiar with Bible verses to de-

fend the truth. However, many refused to read even the Bible if it did not bear the imprimatur, or official approval, of the Catholic Church.

In 1952, I married Simone Patry, a faithful local sister. We moved to Montreal, and within a year, we were blessed with our daughter, Lise. Although I had stopped pioneering shortly before we got married, Simone and I tried to keep our life simple so that we could have a full share in congregation activities as a family.

The good example of John Rae (A) helped me (B) to overcome my fear of the door-to-door ministry



Ten years passed before I again thought seriously about expanding my ministry. In 1962, while attending the month-long Kingdom Ministry School for elders at Canada Bethel, I was assigned to room with a brother named Camille Ouellette. Camille's zeal for the ministry really impressed me—especially since he was a family man. Back then, it was practically unheard of in Quebec for a parent to pioneer while raising a child; yet, that was Camille's goal. During our time together, he encouraged me to think about my situation. After just a few months, I realized that I could serve as a regular pioneer once again. Some questioned the wisdom of my decision, but I moved ahead, confident that Jehovah would bless my efforts to have a greater share in the ministry.

BACK TO QUEBEC CITY AS SPECIAL PIONEERS

In 1964, Simone and I were appointed to serve as special pioneers in Quebec City, our hometown, where we served for the next several years. By this time, preaching conditions had improved, but we still faced opposition.

One Saturday afternoon, I was arrested in Sainte-Marie, a small town not far from Quebec City. An officer took me to the police station and put me in jail because I was preaching from house to house with-



I served in various cities in the eastern part of Canada

out a permit. Later, I was brought before a judge named Baillargeon, an imposing man. He asked me who would represent me in court. When I mentioned the name Glen How,* a well-known Witness lawyer, he nervously exclaimed: “Oh, no! Not him!” Glen How had quite a reputation for legally defending the Witnesses back then. The court soon informed me that the charges had been dropped.

* See W. Glen How’s life story, “The Battle Is Not Yours, but God’s,” in *Awake!*, April 22, 2000.

The opposition to our work in Quebec also made it difficult to rent suitable meeting places. Our small congregation could find only an old unheated garage. To provide some warmth during the frigid winters, the brothers used an oil heater. We often gathered around it for a few hours before the meetings to share encouraging experiences.

It is wonderful to see how the preaching work has flourished over the years. Back in the 1960's, there were just a few small congregations in the Quebec City area, the Côte-Nord region, and the Gaspé Peninsula combined. Today, there are more than two circuits in these areas, and the brothers meet in beautiful Kingdom Halls.

INVITATION TO THE TRAVELING WORK

Simone and I were invited to serve in the circuit work in 1970. Then, in 1973, we were assigned to the district work. During those years, I learned a lot from such capable brothers as Laurier Saumur* and David Splane,# both of whom served in the traveling work. After every assembly, David and I would offer each

* See Laurier Saumur's life story, "I Found Something Worth Fighting For," in the November 15, 1976, issue of *The Watchtower*.

David Splane serves as a member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses.

other suggestions on how to improve in our teaching. I remember one time when David told me: “Léonce, I enjoyed your final talk. It was good, but I would have made three talks out of all that material!” I tended to pack too much information into my talks. I needed to learn to be more concise.

District overseers were assigned to encourage the circuit overseers. However, many publishers in Quebec knew me well. They often wanted to work with me in service when I visited the circuits. Although

In 1977, I attended a meeting for traveling overseers in Toronto, Canada



sharing in the ministry with them was enjoyable, I wasn't spending enough time with the circuit overseer. On one occasion, a loving circuit overseer reminded me: "It's nice that you give time to the brothers, but don't forget that this is my week. I need encouragement too!" This kind counsel helped me to be more balanced.

Sadly, 1976 brought an unexpected and tragic event. Simone, my dear wife, became seriously ill and fell asleep in death. Her self-sacrificing spirit and love for Jehovah made her a wonderful companion. Keeping busy in the ministry really helped me to cope with losing her, and I thank Jehovah for his loving support during that difficult time. Later, I married Carolyn Elliott, a zealous English-speaking pioneer sister who had come to Quebec to serve where the need was great. Carolyn is approachable and genuinely interested in others, especially those who are shy or lonely. She proved to be a real blessing when she joined me in the traveling work.

A LANDMARK YEAR

In January 1978, I was asked to teach the first Pioneer Service School in Quebec. I felt very nervous, since the curriculum was as new to me as it was to the students. Thankfully, the first class that I taught

included many experienced pioneers. Even though I was the instructor, I learned much from the students!

Later, in 1978, the “Victorious Faith” International Convention was held in Montreal’s Olympic Stadium. It was our largest convention ever in Quebec, with over 80,000 in attendance. I was assigned to work with the convention News Service Department. I spoke to many journalists and was thrilled to see all the positive media coverage. More than 20 hours of television and radio interviews were aired, and hundreds of articles appeared in print. A tremendous witness was given!

MOVING TO A DIFFERENT TERRITORY

A big change for me came in 1996. After having served in French-speaking Quebec since my baptism, I was assigned to serve an English-language district in the Toronto area. I didn’t feel qualified and dreaded the thought of having to give talks in my broken English. I needed to pray more frequently and rely more fully on Jehovah.

In hindsight, I can truly say that I enjoyed two wonderful years serving in the Toronto area. Carolyn patiently helped me to become more comfortable with speaking English, and the brothers were very



With Carolyn, my wife

supportive and encouraging. We quickly made many new friends.

In addition to the extra activities and preparations for a weekend assembly, I often spent about an hour on Friday evenings working in the door-to-door ministry. Some may have thought, ‘Why go out in service just before a busy assembly weekend?’ Yet, I found that having good conversations in the ministry was refreshing. Even now, sharing in field service always lifts my spirits.

In 1998, Carolyn and I were reassigned to Montreal as special pioneers. For a number of years, my assignment included organizing special public witnessing and working with the news media to break down prejudice against Jehovah's Witnesses. Carolyn and I now enjoy preaching to foreigners who have recently moved to Canada and who are often eager to learn more about the Bible.

As I reflect on my past 68 years as a baptized servant of Jehovah, I feel truly blessed. Learning to enjoy the ministry and helping many come to know the truth has been most rewarding. After my daughter, Lise, and her husband raised a family, they began to serve as regular pioneers. Seeing her continued zeal in the ministry warms my heart. I am especially thankful for fellow Christians whose good example and wise counsel helped me to grow spiritually and care for various theocratic assignments. I've found that remaining faithful in an assignment is possible only when we rely on Jehovah's powerful holy spirit. (Ps. 51:11) I continue to thank Jehovah for allowing me the precious privilege of praising his name!—Ps. 54:6.

DID YOU KNOW?

How does archaeology confirm the role of Belshazzar of Babylon?

FOR many years, Bible critics claimed that King Belshazzar, who is mentioned in the book of Daniel, never existed. (Dan. 5:1) They held that view because archaeologists could find no evidence that he had actually lived. However, that changed in 1854. Why?

In that year, a British consul named J. G. Taylor explored some ruins in the ancient city of Ur, in what is now southern Iraq. There, located in a large tower, the explorer found several clay cylinders. The cylinders, each about four inches (10 cm) long, are engraved with cuneiform writing. The writing on one of the cylinders includes a prayer for the long life of Babylonian King Nabonidus and his oldest son, Belshazzar. Even critics had to agree: This finding proves that Belshazzar did exist.

However, the Bible states not only that Belshazzar existed but also that he was a king. Again, critics were skeptical. For example, the 19th-century English scientist William Talbot wrote that some state that “Bel-sar-ussur [Belshazzar] was co-regent with Nabo-

nidus his father. But of this there is not the slightest evidence.”

That controversy was settled, however, when the writings on other clay cylinders revealed that Belshazzar’s father, King Nabonidus, was away from the capital city for years at a time. What happened during his absence? “When Nabonidus went into exile,” states the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, “he entrusted Belshazzar with the throne and the major part of his army.” So Belshazzar served, in effect, as a coruler in Babylon during that time. Thus, archaeologist and language scholar Alan Millard stated that it was appropriate for “the Book of Daniel to call Belshazzar ‘king.’”

Of course, for God’s servants, the principal evidence that the book of Daniel is trustworthy and inspired by God is found within the Bible itself.—2 Tim. 3:16.



Clay cylinder
containing the
name Belshazzar
(Shown actual size)

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COVER PICTURE:

A young Israelite runs to Moses and Joshua to report that two men in the camp are behaving like prophets. Joshua asks Moses to restrain the men, but Moses refuses. Instead, he tells Joshua that he is happy that Jehovah put His spirit on the two men (See study article 8, paragraph 10)

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