

A detailed painting of a busy harbor scene. In the foreground, a wooden boat is docked at a pier. Several men are on the boat, some looking towards the shore. One man is climbing a rope ladder. In the background, a city with a prominent classical building is visible. The sky is filled with seagulls. The overall scene is one of activity and commerce.

MID-WEEK MEETING FILE

JULY 15-19, 2013

WEEK STARTING JULY 15

Song 48 and Prayer "Daily Walking With Jehovah"

☐ Congregation Bible Study:

jr chap. 12 ¶1-7 (30 min.)

☐ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Acts 18-21 (10 min.)

No. 1: Acts 20:17-38 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Will Christ Appear Visibly on a Cloud and Then Take Away Faithful Christians Into the Heavens While the World Looks On?—*rs* p. 313 ¶1-3 (5 min.)

No. 3: How Can We Show That We Are Minding the Spirit?—Rom. 8:6 (5 min.)

☐ Service Meeting:

Song 92 "Preach The Word"

10 min: Reach Your Student's Heart. (Luke 24:32) Discussion based on these questions: (1) When conducting a Bible study, why is it important to emphasize (a) Jehovah's love and wisdom? (b) the value of applying Bible principles? (c) the need always to seek Jehovah's direction before making a decision? (2) How would asking your student the following questions help you discern if you are reaching his heart? (a) Does this sound reasonable to you? (b) Do you feel that this is consistent with God's love? (c) What benefit do you see in applying such counsel?

20 min: "Young Brothers, Are You Reaching Out?" Questions and answers. Briefly interview an elder or a ministerial servant who reached out as a young person. What assignments and training did he receive before he was appointed as a ministerial servant? How did others in the congregation help him make spiritual progress? What blessings has he enjoyed as a result of reaching out?

Song 85 and Prayer "A Full Reward From Jehovah"

Young Brothers, Are You Reaching Out?

¹ "If any man is reaching out . . . , he is desirous of a fine work." (1 Tim. 3:1) Those inspired words encourage brothers to reach out to qualify for service privileges in the congregation. Must you be an adult to do so? Actually, it is best to begin reaching out when you are still a youth. In this way you can receive training and demonstrate your fitness to be appointed as a ministerial servant when you are older. (1 Tim. 3:10) If you are a young baptized brother, how can you reach out?

² **Self-Sacrifice:** Remember that you are reaching out for a fine *work*, not a title. Therefore, cultivate a desire to help your brothers and sisters. One way to do this is by meditating on Jesus' fine example. (Matt. 20:28; John 4:6, 7; 13:4, 5) Ask Jehovah to help you to be interested in others. (1 Cor. 10:24) Could you give practical assistance to those in the congregation who are elderly or infirm? Do you make yourself available to cut the grass, shovel the snow, or care for other aspects of maintaining the Kingdom Hall? Could you volunteer to give a substitute talk on the Theocratic Ministry

1. When should a young brother begin to apply the direction found at 1 Timothy 3:1?

2. How can the spirit of self-sacrifice be cultivated and demonstrated?

With so many new ones coming into the truth, qualified spiritual men are needed to care for congregation responsibilities

School? You will find that giving of yourself in behalf of others will bring you joy.—Acts 20:35.

³ **Spirituality:** It is far more important for a servant in the congregation to have spirituality than to have special talents or natural abilities. A spiritual man tries to view things as Jehovah and Jesus do. (1 Cor. 2:15, 16) He displays “the fruitage of the spirit.” (Gal. 5:22, 23) He is a zealous evangelizer who puts Kingdom interests first. (Matt. 6:33) You can develop spiritual qualities by having a good routine of personal study. This would include reading the Bible every day, reading each issue of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, and preparing for and attending congregation meetings. (Ps. 1:1, 2; Heb. 10:24, 25) When encouraging young Timothy to make spiritual advancement, Paul wrote: “Pay constant attention to . . . your teaching.” (1 Tim. 4:15, 16) So work hard on your talk assignments in the Theocratic Ministry School. Prepare for the ministry, and share in it regularly. Set and work toward spiritual goals, such as pioneering, Bethel service, or attending the Bible School for Single Brothers. Spirituality will help you to “flee from the desires incidental to youth.”—2 Tim. 2:22.

⁴ **Reliability and Faithfulness:** Because the brothers who were assigned to distribute food to needy Christians in the first century were “certified,” evidently known for being reliable and faithful, the apostles did not have to worry about whether the work would be done. This allowed them to focus on other important matters. (Acts 6:1-4) Therefore, when you are given an assignment in the congregation, carry it out to the best of

3. How important is spirituality, and how can it be developed?

4. What is the value of reliability and faithfulness?

your ability. Imitate Noah, who carefully followed the instructions he was given to build the ark. (Gen. 6:22) Faithfulness is valued by Jehovah and demonstrates spiritual maturity.—1 Cor. 4:2; see the box “The Benefits of Training.”

⁵ As prophesied, Jehovah is speeding up the ingathering. (Isa. 60:22) On average, a quarter of a million people are getting baptized each year. With so many new ones coming into the truth, qualified spiritual men are needed to care for congregation responsibilities. Now more than ever, there is plenty of work to do in Jehovah’s service. (1 Cor. 15:58) Young brothers, are you reaching out? If so, you are desirous of a very fine work indeed!

5. Why should young brothers reach out?

The Benefits of Training

Qualified young brothers benefit when elders give them assignments and train them. A circuit overseer was sitting on the platform giving encouragement to a publisher after the meeting. He noticed a young boy standing nearby, so he asked if he was waiting to speak to him. The young brother replied that he was assigned to vacuum the platform after every meeting. His parents were ready to leave, but he did not want to go before he fulfilled his assignment. The circuit overseer gladly moved. He commented: “The elders in that congregation were alert to train qualified young brothers by giving them congregation assignments. As a result, it was not unusual for them to recommend a young brother as a ministerial servant when I served the congregation.”

Daily Walking With Jehovah

(Micah 6:8)

1. Hand in hand with our dear Father,
We would humbly walk with him each day.
Oh, how undeserved his kindness
That he grants to those who seek his way!
God for us has made provision
That we thus can take his hand.
So we make our dedication;
With Jehovah we take our stand.
2. In this day of mankind's judgment,
As the system's end is drawing near,
We are faced with opposition
That could make us turn away in fear.
But Jehovah gives protection;
Close to him we want to stay
That we might forever serve him.
Love him loyally, never stray.
3. Help for us God has provided
Through his spirit and his written Word,
Through the Christian congregation,
Through assurance that our prayer is heard.
As we're walking with Jehovah,
He will help us do what's right,
Help us imitate his kindness
And walk modestly in his sight.

“WAS NOT THAT A CASE OF KNOWING ME?”

KING JEHOIAKIM was building a house, and it was to be grand. Plans called for spacious rooms on at least two stories. Large windows would allow sunshine to pour through as well as a constant flow of fresh air to keep the king and his family comfortable. The walls were to be paneled in aromatic cedar from Lebanon. Vermilion, an imported paint, would give the interior the rich red finish that was much-sought-after by the high and mighty of other lands.—Jer. 22:13, 14.

² The cost of the project was considerable. About that time, the nation’s defense and the demands from Egypt for tribute had apparently depleted the treasury. (2 Ki. 23:33-35) But Jehoiakim found a way to pay for his new palace. He held back the wages of the construction workers! Jehoiakim treated them like slaves, using their sweat and toil as a contribution toward his monarchy.

³ Through Jeremiah, God condemned Jehoiakim for his selfishness.* He reminded the king that his father, King Josiah, had shown extraordinary kindness and gen-

* Regarding Jehoiakim’s tragic outcome, see Chapter 4, paragraph 12, of this book.

- 1, 2. Why was it unwise for Jehoiakim to undertake his building project?
3. What contrast was there between Jehoiakim and his father, and why?

erosity toward the working class and the poor. Josiah had even pleaded their legal cases in court. Calling Jehoiakim’s attention to Josiah’s consideration for the lowly, Jehovah asked: “Was not that a case of knowing me?”—**Read Jeremiah 22:15, 16.**

⁴ As conditions deteriorate in Satan’s world, we need the help and protection that Jehovah gives to those who know him intimately. Thus, we should draw ever closer to God. We also need to reflect his fine qualities to have success in preaching the good news. You might wonder, though, ‘How can a Christian get to know Jehovah as well as King Josiah did?’

WHAT KNOWING GOD MEANS

⁵ Think of the ways that a good father influences the lives of his children. For example, when they observe how he shares with others who are less fortunate, they are likely moved to be openhanded. Their seeing how he treats their mother with love and respect will probably help them become considerate toward those of the opposite sex. They hear that their father is known to be fair and honest in money matters, which ought to move them to be fair and honest. Yes, by their coming to know their father’s ways and qualities, such young ones will probably grow up wanting to treat others as their father does.

⁶ In like manner, a Christian who knows Jehovah as Josiah did does not simply recognize Him as Universal Sovereign. By reading the Bible, the Christian comes to know how God treats others, and then he wants to

4. Why should knowing Jehovah be important to you?

5, 6. (a) What influence does a good father have on his children?
(b) What should be our response to knowing Jehovah’s ways, in contrast with that of Jehoiakim?

imitate his heavenly Father. His love for Jehovah deepens as day by day he reflects God's likes and dislikes. In contrast, a person who ignores God's laws and reminders, thus rejecting any divine influence in his life, does not come to know the true God. He is similar to Jehoiakim, who threw into the fire Jehovah's word through Jeremiah.—**Read Jeremiah 36:21-24.**

⁷ Our success in sacred service and our prospects for life in the new world depend on our truly knowing Jehovah. (Jer. 9:24) Let us examine a few of God's qualities as revealed in Jeremiah's writings. During this consideration of God's personality, look for ways that you personally can both know him and imitate him as King Josiah did.

7. Why should you want to know Jehovah as King Josiah did?

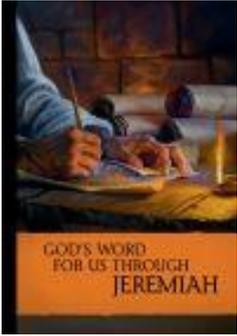
Why can we say that King Josiah knew Jehovah intimately? What is involved in your knowing Jehovah as Josiah did?

END

“TO TIME INDEFINITE IS HIS LOVING-KINDNESS!”

⁸ The facet of God's personality known as loving-kindness, or loyal love, defies concise definition in many languages. According to one Bible dictionary, the Hebrew term involved describes the interaction of strength, steadfastness, and love. That dictionary goes on to say: “Any understanding of the word that fails to suggest all three inevitably loses some of its richness.” Thus, someone showing loving-kindness is more than a nice person. With deep concern, he tries to help others satisfy their needs, especially their spiritual needs, as best he

8. What is loving-kindness?



Paragraph 1

(Jeremiah 22:13, 14) “Woe to the one building his house, but not with righteousness, and his upper chambers, but not with justice, by use of his fellowman who serves for nothing, and whose wages he does not give him; ¹⁴ the one saying, ‘I am going to build for myself a roomy house and commodious upper chambers; and my windows must be widened out for it, and the paneling will be with cedar and smeared with vermilion.’

Paragraph 2

(2 Kings 23:33-35) And Phar’aoh Ne’choh got to put him in bonds at Rib’lah in the land of Ha’math, to keep him from reigning in Jerusalem, and then imposed a fine upon the land of a hundred silver talents and a gold talent. ³⁴ Furthermore, Phar’aoh Ne’choh made E-li’a-kim the son of Jo-si’ah king in place of Jo-si’ah his father and changed his name to Je-hoi’a-kim; and Je-ho’a-haz he took and then brought to Egypt, where he eventually died. ³⁵ And the silver and the gold Je-hoi’a-kim gave to Phar’aoh. Only he taxed the land, to give the silver at the order of Phar’aoh. According to each one’s individual tax rate he exacted the silver and the gold from the people of the land, to give it to Phar’aoh Ne’choh.

Paragraph 3

(Jeremiah 22:15, 16) Will you continue reigning because you are competing by use of cedar? As for your father, did he not eat and drink and execute justice and righteousness? In that case it went well with him. ¹⁶ He pleaded the legal claim of the afflicted one and the poor one. In that case it went well. ‘Was not that a case of knowing me?’ is the utterance of Jehovah.

Paragraph 6

(Jeremiah 36:21-24) So the king sent Je-hu’di out to get the roll. Accordingly he got it out of the dining room of E-lish’a-ma the secretary. And Je-hu’di began to read it aloud in the ears of the king and in the ears of all the princes standing by the king. ²² And the king was sitting in the winter house, in the ninth month, with a brazier burning before him. ²³ Then it came about that as soon as Je-hu’di had read three or four page-columns, he proceeded to tear it apart with the secretary’s knife, pitching [it] also into the fire that was in the brazier until all the roll ended up in the fire that was in the brazier. ²⁴ And they felt no dread; neither did the king and all his servants, who were listening to all these words, rip their garments apart.

Paragraph 7

(Jeremiah 9:24) “But let the one bragging about himself brag about himself because of this very thing, the having of insight and the having of knowledge of me, that I am Jehovah, the One exercising loving-kindness, justice and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I do take delight,” is the utterance of Jehovah.

tain ones of both the Ep-i-cu-re/-an and the Sto'ic philosophers^a took to conversing with him controversially, and some would say: "What is it this chatterer would like to tell?"^b Others: "He seems to be a publisher of foreign deities." This was because he was declaring the good news of Jesus and the resurrection.^c **19** So they laid hold of him and led him to the Ar-e-op'a-gus, saying: "Can we get to know what this new teaching^d is which is spoken by you? **20** For you are introducing some things that are strange to our ears. Therefore we desire to get to know what these things purport to be."^e **21** In fact, all Athenians and the foreigners sojourning there would spend their leisure time at nothing but telling something or listening to something new. **22** Paul now stood in the midst of the Ar-e-op'a-gus^f and said:

"Men of Athens, I behold that in all things you seem to be more given to the fear of the deities^g than others are. **23** For instance, while passing along and carefully observing YOUR objects of veneration I also found an altar on which had been inscribed 'To an Unknown God.' Therefore what you are unknowingly giving godly devotion to, this I am publishing to you. **24** The God that made the world and all the things in it, being, as this One is, Lord of heaven and earth,^h does not dwell in handmade temples,ⁱ **25** neither is he attended to by human hands as if he needed anything,^j because he himself gives to all persons life^k and breath^l and all things. **26** And he made out of one man^m every nationⁿ of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth,^o and he decreed the appointed times^p and the set limits of the dwelling of men,^q **27** for them to seek God,^r if they might grope for him and really find him,^s al-

CHAP. 17

a 1Co 1:22
Col 2:8
b 1Co 4:13
c Joh 5:29
Joh 11:25
1Co 15:12
Re 20:6
d Mr 1:27
e Ac 2:12
f Ac 17:34
g Ac 17:16
h Ps 146:6
Isa 42:5
Ac 4:24
Ac 14:15
i 1Ki 8:27
Isa 66:1
Ac 7:48
j Ps 50:12
k Ge 2:7
l Isa 42:5
m Ge 5:2
n Ge 1:28
o De 32:8
p Ps 74:17
q De 2:5
De 2:19
De 32:8
Isa 34:17
r De 4:29
Isa 55:6
s Ps 145:18
Jer 23:23
Ro 1:20

Second Col.

a Isa 42:5
b Tit 1:12
c Ge 1:27
d Jos 22:22
Ps 50:1
Isa 46:9
e De 5:8
Isa 37:19
Isa 40:18
Isa 46:5
Ac 19:26
f Ac 14:16
Ro 3:25
Ro 5:13
Eph 4:18
g Lu 24:47
h Ps 96:13
Ps 98:9
Isa 2:4
Joh 5:22
Ac 10:42
i Joh 11:25
Ac 2:24
Ac 13:33
Ro 6:5
j 1Co 1:23
k Ac 17:19

CHAP. 18

l Ac 18:26
1Co 16:19
2Ti 4:19
m Heb 13:24
n Ac 11:28
o Ac 20:34
1Co 4:12
1Co 9:15
1Th 2:9
2Th 3:10
p Mt 4:23
Ac 13:14
Ac 17:2

though, in fact, he is not far off from each one of us. **28** For by him we have life and move and exist,^a even as certain ones of the poets^b among you have said, 'For we are also his progeny.'

29 "Seeing, therefore, that we are the progeny of God,^c we ought not to imagine that the Divine Being^d is like gold or silver or stone, like something sculptured by the art and contrivance of man.^e **30** True, God has overlooked the times of such ignorance,^f yet now he is telling mankind that they should all everywhere repent.^g **31** Because he has set a day in which he purposes to judge^h the inhabited earth in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and he has furnished a guarantee to all men in that he has resurrectedⁱ him from the dead."

32 Well, when they heard of a resurrection of the dead, some began to mock,^j while others said: "We will hear you about this even another time." **33** Thus Paul went out from their midst, **34** but some men joined themselves to him and became believers, among whom also were Di-o-nys'i-us, a judge of the court of the Ar-e-op'a-gus,^k and a woman named Dam'a-ris, and others besides them.

18 After these things he departed from Athens and came to Corinth. **2** And he found a certain Jew named Aq'-ui-la,^l a native of Pon'tus who had recently come from Italy,^m and Pris-cil'la his wife, because of the fact that Claudiusⁿ had ordered all the Jews to depart from Rome. So he went to them **3** and on account of being of the same trade he stayed at their home, and they worked,^o for they were tentmakers by trade. **4** However, he would give a talk in the synagogue^p every sabbath and would persuade Jews and Greeks.

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5 When, now, both Silas^a and Timothy^b came down from Mac-e-do'ni-a, Paul began to be intensely occupied with the word, witnessing to the Jews to prove that Jesus is the Christ.^c 6 But after they kept on opposing and speaking abusively,^d he shook out his garments^e and said to them: "Let YOUR blood^f be upon YOUR own heads. I am clean.^g From now on I will go to people of the nations."^h 7 Accordingly he transferred from there and went into the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God, whose house was adjoining the synagogue. 8 But Cris'pusⁱ the presiding officer of the synagogue became a believer in the Lord, and so did all his household. And many of the Corinthians that heard began to believe and be baptized. 9 Moreover, by night the Lord said to Paul^j through a vision: "Have no fear, but keep on speaking and do not keep silent, 10 because I am with you^k and no man will assault you so as to do you injury; for I have many people in this city." 11 So he stayed set there a year and six months, teaching among them the word of God.

12 Now while Gal'li-o was pro-consul^l of A-cha'ia, the Jews rose up with one accord against Paul and led him to the judgment seat,^m 13 saying: "Contrary to the law this person leadsⁿ men to another persuasion in worshipping God." 14 But as Paul was going to open his mouth, Gal'li-o said to the Jews: "If it were, indeed, some wrong or a wicked act of villainy, O Jews, I would with reason put up patiently with you. 15 But if it is controversies over speech and names^o and the law^p among you, YOU yourselves must see to it. I do not wish to be a judge of these things." 16 With that he drove them away from the judgment seat. 17 So they all laid hold of Sos'the-nes^q the pre-

CHAP. 18

- a Ac 15:27
Ac 17:14
- b Ac 16:1
1Th 3:6
- c Ac 17:3
Ac 28:23
- d 1Pe 4:4
- e Mt 10:14
Ac 13:51
- f 1Ki 2:37
Eze 18:13
Eze 33:4
- g Eze 3:18
Ac 20:26
- h Ac 13:46
Ac 28:28
Ro 1:16
- i 1Co 1:14
- j Lu 22:43
Ac 23:11
- k Jer 1:19
Mt 28:20
- l Ac 13:7
Ac 19:38
- m Ac 16:19
- n Ac 24:5
- o 1Ti 6:4
- p Ac 23:29
Ac 25:19
- q 1Co 1:1

Second Col.

- a Nu 6:18
Ac 21:23
- b Ro 16:1
- c Ac 13:14
Ac 17:2
- d Ac 21:6
- e Ro 1:10
1Co 4:19
Jas 4:15
- f Ga 1:2
- g Ac 16:6
- h Ac 14:22
Ac 15:32
- i Ac 19:1
1Co 1:12
1Co 3:6
- j 1Co 4:6
- k Ro 12:11
- l Ac 19:3
- m Ro 16:3
1Co 16:19

siding officer of the synagogue and went to beating him in front of the judgment seat. But Gal'li-o would not concern himself at all with these things.

18 However, after staying quite some days longer, Paul said good-bye to the brothers and proceeded to sail away for Syria, and with him Pris-cil'la and Aq'-ui-la, as he had the hair of his head clipped short^a in Cen'chre-ae,^b for he had a vow. 19 So they arrived at Eph'e-sus, and he left them there; but he himself entered into the synagogue^c and reasoned with the Jews. 20 Although they kept requesting him to remain for a longer time, he would not consent 21 but said good-bye^d and told them: "I will return to you again, if Jehovah is willing."^e And he put out to sea from Eph'e-sus 22 and came down to Caes-a-re'a. And he went up and greeted the congregation, and went down to Antioch.

23 And when he had passed some time there he departed and went from place to place through the country of Ga-la'ti-a^f and Phryg'i-a,^g strengthening^h all the disciples.

24 Now a certain Jew named A-pol'los,ⁱ a native of Alexandria, an eloquent man, arrived in Eph'e-sus; and he was well versed in the Scriptures.^j 25 This man had been orally instructed in the way of Jehovah and, as he was aglow with the spirit,^k he went speaking and teaching with correctness the things about Jesus, but being acquainted with only the baptism^l of John. 26 And this man started to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Pris-cil'la and Aq'-ui-la^m heard him, they took him into their company and expounded the way of God more correctly to him. 27 Further, because he was desiring to go across into A-cha'ia, the brothers wrote the disciples, exhort-

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ing them to receive him kindly. So when he got there, he greatly helped^a those who had believed on account of God's undeserved kindness;^b **28** for with intensity he thoroughly proved the Jews to be wrong publicly, while he demonstrated by the Scriptures^c that Jesus was the Christ.^d

19 In the course of events, while A-pol'los^e was in Corinth, Paul went through the inland parts and came down to Eph'e-sus,^f and found some disciples; **2** and he said to them: "Did you receive holy spirit^g when you became believers?" They said to him: "Why, we have never heard whether there is a holy spirit."^h **3** And he said: "In what, then, were you baptized?" They said: "In John's baptism."ⁱ **4** Paul said: "John baptized with the baptism in symbol of repentance,^j telling the people to believe in the one coming after him,^k that is, in Jesus." **5** On hearing this, they got baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.^l **6** And when Paul laid his hands^m upon them, the holy spirit came upon them, and they began speaking with tongues and prophesying.ⁿ **7** All together, there were about twelve men.

8 Entering into the synagogue,^o he spoke with boldness for three months, giving talks and using persuasion concerning the kingdom^p of God. **9** But when some went on hardening themselves and not believing,^q speaking injuriously about The Way^r before the multitude, he withdrew from them^s and separated the disciples from them,^t daily giving talks in the school auditorium of Ty-ran'-nus. **10** This took place for two years,^u so that all those inhabiting the district of Asia^v heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.

CHAP. 18

a 1Co 3:6
b Eph 2:8
c Lu 24:27
1Co 15:3
2Ti 3:16
d Ge 49:10
De 18:15
Ps 16:10
Isa 7:14
Mic 5:2
Mal 3:1
Ac 9:22

CHAP. 19

e Ac 18:24
1Co 3:5
f 1Co 16:8
g Ac 2:38
h Ac 8:16
i Ac 18:25
j Mt 3:11
Mr 1:4
Ac 1:5
k Joh 1:15
Joh 1:30
l Ac 8:16
m Ac 8:17
n Ac 2:4
Ac 10:46
1Co 12:10
o Lu 4:16
Ac 13:5
Ac 17:2
p Ac 1:3
Ac 28:23
Ac 28:31
q 2Th 3:2
r Ac 9:2
Ac 22:4
s Mt 10:14
Ro 16:17
t Tit 3:10
2Jo 10
u Ac 20:31
v Ac 20:18
2Ti 1:15

Second Col.

a Ac 14:3
b Mr 6:56
Ac 5:15
c Mt 10:1
d Mt 12:27
e Mr 9:38
Lu 9:49
f Ac 16:18
g Mt 8:29
Mr 1:24
Lu 4:34
h Ac 16:17
i Mt 8:28
j Ac 2:43
Ac 5:5
k 2Th 1:12
l Mt 3:6
Jas 5:16
m De 18:10
Da 2:2
Ac 8:9
n Ac 6:7
Ac 12:24
Col 1:6
o 1Co 16:5
p Ac 20:22
Ro 15:25
q Ac 23:11
Ro 1:15

11 And God kept performing extraordinary works of power through the hands of Paul,^a **12** so that even cloths and aprons were borne from his body to the ailing people,^b and the diseases left them, and the wicked spirits came out.^c **13** But certain ones of the roving Jews who practiced the casting out of demons^d also undertook to name the name of the Lord Jesus^e over those having the wicked spirits, saying: "I solemnly charge^f you by Jesus whom Paul preaches." **14** Now there were seven sons of a certain Sce'va, a Jewish chief priest, doing this. **15** But in answer the wicked spirit said to them: "I know Jesus^g and I am acquainted with Paul;^h but who are you?" **16** With that the man in whom the wicked spirit was leaped upon them,ⁱ got the mastery of one after the other, and prevailed against them, so that they fled naked and wounded out of that house. **17** This became known to all, both the Jews and the Greeks that dwelt in Eph'e-sus; and a fear^j fell upon them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus went on being magnified.^k **18** And many of those who had become believers would come and confess^l and report their practices openly. **19** Indeed, quite a number of those who practiced magical^m arts brought their books together and burned them up before everybody. And they calculated together the prices of them and found them worth fifty thousand pieces of silver. **20** Thus in a mighty way the word of Jehovah kept growing and prevailing.ⁿ

21 Now when these things had been completed, Paul purposed in his spirit that, after going through Mac'e-do'ni-a^o and A-cha'ia, he would journey to Jerusalem,^p saying: "After I get there I must also see Rome."^q **22** So he dispatched

to Mac·e·do'ni·a two of those who ministered to him, Timothy^a and Eras'tus,^b but he himself delayed for some time in the district of Asia.

23 At that particular time there arose no little disturbance^c concerning The Way.^d **24** For a certain man named De·me'trius, a silversmith, by making silver shrines of Ar'te·mis furnished the craftsmen no little gain;^e **25** and he gathered them and those who worked at such things^f and said: "Men, you well know that from this business we have our prosperity.^g **26** Also, you behold and hear how not only in Eph'e·sus^h but in nearly all the district of Asia this Paul has persuaded a considerable crowd and turned them to another opinion, saying that the ones that are made by handsⁱ are not gods. **27** Moreover, the danger exists not only that this occupation of ours will come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Ar'te·mis^j will be esteemed as nothing and even her magnificence which the whole district of Asia and the inhabited earth worships is about to be brought down to nothing." **28** Hearing this and becoming full of anger, the men began crying out, saying: "Great is Ar'te·mis of the E·phe'sians!"

29 So the city became filled with confusion, and with one accord they rushed into the theater, taking forcibly along with them Ga'ius and Ar·is·tar'chus,^k Mac·e·do'ni·ans, traveling companions of Paul. **30** For his part, Paul was willing to go inside to the people, but the disciples would not permit him. **31** Even some of the commissioners of festivals and games, who were friendly to him, sent to him and began pleading for him not to risk himself in the theater. **32** The fact is, some were crying out one thing and others another;

CHAP. 19

- a Ac 16:1
- b 2Ti 4:20
- c 2Co 1:8
- d Ac 9:2
Ac 19:9
Ac 22:4
- e Ac 16:16
- f Ps 115:4
- g Re 18:15
- h Eph 1:1
- i De 4:28
1Ch 16:26
Isa 44:10
Jer 10:3
Ac 17:29
1Co 8:4
- j Ac 19:34
- k Ac 20:4
Col 4:10
Phm 24

Second Col.

- a Ac 21:34
- b Ac 19:28
- c Pr 15:18
- d Pr 14:29
- e Ac 19:24
- f Ac 17:34
- g Ac 13:7
Ac 18:12
- h Ec 9:17
- i Ac 19:32

CHAP. 20

- j 2Co 2:13
- k 1Co 16:5
1Ti 1:3

er;^a for the assembly was in confusion, and the majority of them did not know the reason why they had come together. **33** So together they brought Alexander out of the crowd, the Jews thrusting him up front; and Alexander motioned with his hand and was wanting to make his defense to the people. **34** But when they recognized that he was a Jew, one cry arose from them all as they shouted for about two hours: "Great^b is Ar'te·mis of the E·phe'sians!"

35 When, finally, the city recorder had quieted^c the crowd, he said: "Men of Eph'e·sus, who really is there of mankind that does not know that the city of the E·phe'sians is the temple keeper of the great Ar'te·mis and of the image that fell from heaven? **36** Therefore since these things are indisputable, it is becoming for you to keep calm and not act rashly.^d **37** For you have brought these men who are neither robbers of temples nor blasphemers of our goddess. **38** Therefore if De·me'trius^e and the craftsmen with him do have a case against someone, court^f days are held and there are proconsuls;^g let them bring charges against one another. **39** If, though, you are searching for anything beyond that, it must be decided in a regular assembly. **40** For we are really in danger of being charged with sedition over today's affair, no single cause existing that will permit us to render a reason for this disorderly mob." **41** And when he had said these things,^h he dismissed the assembly.ⁱ

20 Now after the uproar had subsided, Paul sent for the disciples, and when he had encouraged them and bidden them farewell,^j he went forth to journey into Mac·e·do'ni·a.^k **2** After going through those parts and

encouraging the ones there with many a word,^a he came into Greece. **3** And when he had spent three months there, because a plot^b was hatched against him by the Jews as he was about to set sail for Syria, he made up his mind to return through Mac·e·do·ni·a. **4** There were accompanying him Sop'a-ter^c the son of Pyr'rh-us of Ber-oe'a, Ar-is-tar'ch-us^d and Se-cun'dus of the Thes-sa-lo'ni-ans, and Ga'ius of Der'be, and Timothy,^e and from the district of Asia Tych'i-cus^f and Troph'i-mus.^g **5** These went on and were waiting for us in Tro'as;^h **6** but we put out to sea from Phi-lip'pi after the days of the unfermented cakes,ⁱ and we came to them in Tro'as^j within five days; and there we spent seven days.

7 On the first day^k of the week, when we were gathered together to have a meal, Paul began discoursing to them, as he was going to depart the next day; and he prolonged his speech until midnight. **8** So there were quite a few lamps in the upper chamber^l where we were gathered together. **9** Seated at the window, a certain young man named Eu'ty-chus fell into a deep sleep while Paul kept talking on, and, collapsing in sleep, he fell down from the third story and was picked up dead. **10** But Paul went downstairs, threw himself upon him^m and embraced him and said: "STOP raising a clamor, for his soul is in him."ⁿ **11** He now went upstairs and began the meal and took food, and after conversing for quite a while, until daybreak, he at length departed. **12** So they took the boy away alive and were comforted beyond measure.

13 We now went ahead to the boat and set sail to As'sos, where we were intending to take Paul aboard, for, after giving instructions to this effect, he him-

CHAP. 20

- a Ro 12:8
- b Ac 23:16
Ac 25:3
2Co 11:26
- c Ro 16:21
- d Ac 27:2
- e Ac 16:1
- f Eph 6:21
Col 4:7
2Ti 4:12
- g Ac 21:29
2Ti 4:20
- h Ac 16:11
- i Ex 12:14
Ex 23:15
- j 2Ti 4:13
- k 1Co 16:2
- l Ac 1:13
- m 1Ki 17:21
2Ki 4:34
- n Mt 9:24
Mr 5:39
Joh 11:40
Ac 9:40

Second Col.

- a Ac 18:21
- b Ac 21:4
Ac 24:17
- c Ac 11:30
- d Ac 16:6
- e Ac 19:10
- f 2Co 11:27
- g 1Co 15:9
1Th 2:6
1Pe 5:3
- h Ac 9:24
Ac 20:3
- i Mt 28:20
Ac 20:27
2Ti 4:2
- j Ac 5:42
- k Ac 18:5
- l Mr 1:15
Lu 24:47
Ac 2:38
- m Ac 19:21
- n Ac 21:4
Ac 21:11
- o Ac 9:16
- p Ro 8:35
2Co 4:16
- q 2Ti 4:7
- r 2Co 4:1
2Co 5:18
- s Ga 1:1
- t 2Co 6:1

self was intending to go on foot. **14** So when he caught up with us in As'sos, we took him aboard and went to Mit-y-le'ne; **15** and, sailing away from there the succeeding day, we arrived opposite Chi'os, but the next day we touched at Sa'mos, and on the following day we arrived at Mi-le'tus. **16** For Paul had decided to sail past Eph'e-sus,^a in order that he might not spend any time in the district of Asia; for he was hastening to get to Jerusalem^b on the day of the festival of Pentecost if he possibly could.

17 However, from Mi-le'tus he sent to Eph'e-sus and called for the older men^c of the congregation. **18** When they got to him he said to them: "You well know how from the first day that I stepped into the district of Asia^d I was with you the whole time,^e **19** slaving^f for the Lord with the greatest lowliness of mind^g and tears and trials that befell me by the plots^h of the Jews; **20** while I did not hold back from telling you any of the things that were profitable nor from teachingⁱ you publicly and from house^j to house. **21** But I thoroughly bore witness^k both to Jews and to Greeks about repentance^l toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus. **22** And now, look! bound in the spirit,^m I am journeying to Jerusalem, although not knowing the things that will happen to me in it, **23** except that from city to city the holy spiritⁿ repeatedly bears witness to me as it says that bonds and tribulations are waiting for me.^o **24** Nevertheless, I do not make my soul of any account as dear to me,^p if only I may finish my course^q and the ministry^r that I received^s of the Lord Jesus, to bear thorough witness to the good news of the undeserved kindness of God.^t

25 "And now, look! I know that all of you among whom I

went preaching the kingdom will see my face no more. **26** Hence I call you to witness this very day that I am clean from the blood^a of all men, **27** for I have not held back from telling you all the counsel^b of God. **28** Pay attention^c to yourselves^d and to all the flock,^e among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers,^f to shepherd the congregation of God,^g which he purchased with the blood^h of his own Son. **29** I know that after my going away oppressive wolvesⁱ will enter in among you and will not treat the flock with tenderness, **30** and from among you yourselves men will rise and speak twisted things^j to draw away the disciples after themselves.^k

31 “Therefore keep awake, and bear in mind that for three years,^l night and day, I did not quit admonishing^m each one with tears. **32** And now I commit you to Godⁿ and to the word of his undeserved kindness, which word can build you up^o and give you the inheritance among all the sanctified ones.^p **33** I have coveted no man’s silver or gold or apparel.^q **34** You yourselves know that these hands have attended to the needs of me^r and of those with me. **35** I have exhibited to you in all things that by thus laboring^s you must assist those who are weak,^t and must bear in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, when he himself said, “There is more happiness in giving^u than there is in receiving.”

36 And when he had said these things, he kneeled^v down with all of them and prayed. **37** Indeed, quite a bit of weeping broke out among them all, and they fell upon Paul’s neck^w and tenderly kissed^x him, **38** because they were especially pained at the word he had spoken that they were going to behold his face^y no more. So they pro-

CHAP. 20

- a Eze 33:8
- Ac 18:6
- 2Co 7:2
- b Mt 28:20
- Joh 15:15
- c Col 4:17
- 1Ti 4:16
- d 1Ti 3:2
- e Pr 27:23
- f 1Ti 3:1
- Tit 1:5
- Heb 13:17
- g Joh 21:15
- Eph 4:11
- 1Pe 5:2
- h Mt 26:28
- Joh 6:54
- 1Jo 1:7
- i Isa 56:11
- Mt 7:15
- 2Th 2:3
- 2Pe 2:1
- j 2Ti 4:3
- k Ga 4:17
- 1Ti 4:1
- 1Jo 2:19
- l Ac 19:10
- m 2Co 2:4
- 1Th 2:11
- n Ac 14:23
- o Ro 16:25
- p De 33:3
- Eph 1:18
- Col 1:12
- q 1Sa 12:3
- Mt 10:8
- 1Co 9:12
- 2Co 7:2
- Tit 1:7
- r Ac 18:3
- 1Co 4:12
- 1Th 2:9
- s Eph 4:28
- 1Th 4:11
- 2Th 3:8
- t Ro 15:1
- u Pr 19:17
- Mt 10:8
- Lu 6:38
- v Ac 21:5
- w Ge 45:14
- x Ro 16:16
- y Ac 20:25

Second Col.

- a Ac 15:3

CHAP. 21

- b Ac 15:39
- c Ac 20:3
- d Ac 27:10
- e Ac 21:11
- Ac 21:12
- f Ezr 9:5
- Ac 9:40
- Ac 20:36
- g Ac 18:21
- h Ac 18:22
- i Ac 6:5
- j Joe 2:28
- Ac 2:17
- 1Co 11:5
- k Ac 11:28
- l Ac 20:23
- Ac 21:33
- m Ac 9:16

ceeded to conduct^a him to the boat.

21 Now when we had torn ourselves away from them and put out to sea, we ran with a straight course and came to Cos, but on the next day to Rhodes, and from there to Pat’a-ra. **2** And when we had found a boat that was crossing to Phoe-ni’cia, we went aboard and sailed away. **3** After coming in sight of the island of Cy’prus^b we left it behind on the left side and sailed on to Syria,^c and landed at Tyre, for there the boat was to unload its cargo.^d **4** By a search we found the disciples and remained here seven days. But through the spirit^e they repeatedly told Paul not to set foot in Jerusalem. **5** So when we had completed the days, we went forth and started on our way; but they all, together with the women and children, conducted us as far as outside the city. And kneeling^f down on the beach we had prayer **6** and said good-bye^g to one another, and we went up into the boat but they returned to their homes.

7 We then completed the voyage from Tyre and arrived at Ptol-e-ma’is, and we greeted the brothers and stayed one day with them. **8** The next day we set out and arrived in Caes-a-re’a,^h and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelizer, who was one of the seven men,ⁱ and we stayed with him. **9** This man had four daughters, virgins, that prophesied.^j **10** But while we were remaining quite a number of days, a certain prophet named Ag’a-bus^k came down from Jude’a, **11** and he came to us and took up the girdle of Paul, bound his own feet and hands and said: “Thus says the holy spirit, “The man to whom this girdle belongs the Jews will bind^l in this manner in Jerusalem and deliver^m into the hands of people of

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the nations.’” **12** Now when we heard this, both we and those of that place began entreating him not to go^a up to Jerusalem. **13** Then Paul answered: “What are you doing by weeping^b and making me weak at heart?^c Rest assured, I am ready not only to be bound but also to die^d at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” **14** When he would not be dissuaded, we acquiesced with the words: “Let the will^e of Jehovah take place.”

15 Now after these days we prepared for the journey and began going up to Jerusalem.^f **16** But some of the disciples from Caes-a-re’a^g also went with us, to bring us to the man at whose home we were to be entertained, a certain Mna’-son of Cy’prus, an early disciple. **17** When we got into Jerusalem,^h the brothers received us gladly.ⁱ **18** But on the following day Paul went in with us to James;^j and all the older men were present. **19** And he greeted them and began giving in detail an account^k of the things God did among the nations through his ministry.^l

20 After hearing this they began to glorify God, and they said to him: “You behold, brother, how many thousands of believers there are among the Jews; and they are all zealous for the Law.^m **21** But they have heard it rumored about you that you have been teaching all the Jews among the nations an apostasy from Moses,ⁿ telling them neither to circumcise^o their children nor to walk in the solemn customs. **22** What, then, is to be done about it? In any case they are going to hear you have arrived. **23** Therefore do this which we tell you: We have four men with a vow upon themselves. **24** Take these men along^p and cleanse yourself ceremonially with them and take care of their expenses,^q that they may

CHAP. 21

a Mt 16:22
b Ac 20:24
c De 20:8
d 2Co 4:10
2Ti 4:6
e 1Sa 3:18
Mt 26:42
f Ro 15:25
g Ac 18:22
h Ac 24:11
i Ac 15:4
j Ac 12:17
Ac 15:13
Ga 1:19
Ga 2:9
Jas 1:1
k Ac 11:4
Ac 14:27
l Ac 15:12
Ro 15:18
m Ac 15:1
Ac 22:3
Ro 10:2
Ga 1:14
n Ac 6:14
Ga 5:1
o Ro 2:28
1Co 7:19
p Nu 6:2
q Nu 6:14
Nu 6:15
Nu 6:17

Second Col.

a Nu 6:18
Ac 18:18
b 1Co 9:20
c Ge 35:2
Ex 34:15
Ac 15:29
d Ge 9:4
Le 3:17
Le 17:10
De 12:23
1Sa 14:32
e Le 17:13
f 1Co 6:9
Col 3:5
1Th 4:3
1Pe 4:3
g Ac 24:18
1Co 9:20
h Nu 6:5
i Nu 6:19
j Nu 6:21
k Nu 6:9
l Ac 19:29
m Ac 24:5
n Ac 24:6
o Ac 20:4
2Ti 4:20
p Ac 17:5
q Ac 26:21
r Ac 21:27
s Ac 23:27
t Ac 23:26

have their heads shaved.^a And so everybody will know that there is nothing to the rumors they were told about you, but that you are walking orderly, you yourself also keeping the Law.^b **25** As for the believers from among the nations, we have sent out, rendering our decision that they should keep themselves from what is sacrificed to idols^c as well as from blood^d and what is strangled^e and from fornication.”^f

26 Then Paul took the men along the next day and cleansed himself ceremonially with them^g and went into the temple, to give notice of the days to be fulfilled^h for the ceremonial cleansing, until the offeringⁱ should be presented for each one of them.^j

27 Now when the seven^k days were about to be concluded, the Jews from Asia on beholding him in the temple began to throw all the crowd into confusion,^l and they laid their hands upon him, **28** crying out: “Men of Israel, help! This is the man that teaches everybody everywhere against the people^m and the Law and this place and, what is more, he even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.”ⁿ

29 For they had previously seen Troph’i-mus^o the E-phe’sian in the city with him, but they were imagining Paul had brought him into the temple. **30** And the whole city was set in an uproar,^p and a running together of the people occurred; and they laid hold of Paul and dragged him outside the temple.^q And immediately the doors were closed. **31** And while they were seeking to kill him, information came up to the commander of the band that all Jerusalem was in confusion;^r **32** and he at once took soldiers and army officers and ran down to them.^s When they caught sight of the military commander^t and the soldiers, they quit beating Paul.

33 Then the military commander came near and took hold of him and gave command for him to be bound with two chains;^a and he proceeded to inquire who he might be and what he had done. **34** But some in the crowd began shouting out one thing, and others another.^b So, being unable himself to learn anything certain because of the tumult, he commanded him to be brought to the soldiers' quarters.^c **35** But when he got upon the stairs, the situation became such that he was being carried along by the soldiers because of the violence of the crowd; **36** for the multitude of the people kept following, crying out: "Take him away!"^d

37 And as he was about to be led into the soldiers' quarters, Paul said to the military commander: "Am I allowed to say something to you?" He said: "Can you speak Greek? **38** Are you not really the Egyptian who before these days stirred up a sedition^e and led the four thousand dagger men out into the wilderness?" **39** Then Paul said: "I am, in fact, a Jew,^f of Tarsus^g in Ci-li'cia, a citizen of no obscure city. So I beg you, permit me to speak to the people." **40** After he gave permission, Paul, standing on the stairs, motioned^h with his hand to the people. When a great silence fell, he addressed them in the Hebrewⁱ language, saying:

22 "Men, brothers^j and fathers, hear my defense^k to you now." **2** (Well, when they heard he was addressing them in the Hebrew language,^l they kept all the more silent, and he said:) **3** "I am a Jew,^m born in Tarsus of Ci-li'cia,ⁿ but educated in this city at the feet of Ga·ma'li-el,^o instructed according to the strictness^p of the ancestral Law, being zealous^q for God just as all of you

CHAP. 21

a Ac 20:23
Ac 21:11
Eph 6:20
b Ac 19:32
c Ac 22:24
d Lu 23:18
Joh 19:15
Ac 22:22
e Ac 5:36
f Php 3:5
g Ac 9:11
Ac 22:3
h Ac 13:16
Ac 19:33
i Ac 26:14

CHAP. 22

j Ac 7:2
k Php 1:7
1Pe 3:15
l Ac 21:40
m Ac 26:5
Ro 11:1
n Ac 21:39
Ac 23:34
o Ac 5:34
p Ac 26:5
q Ga 1:14
Php 3:6

Second Col.

a Ac 8:3
Ac 9:2
1Ti 1:13
b Ac 26:10
c Ac 4:23
d Ac 9:2
e Ac 9:3
Ac 26:13
f Ac 9:4
Ac 26:14
g Joh 18:5
Ac 9:5
Ac 26:15
h Da 10:7
i Ac 9:7
j Lu 3:10
Ac 16:30
k Ac 26:16
l Ac 9:8
m Ac 10:22
1Ti 3:7
n Ac 9:17
o Ac 3:13
Ac 5:30
p Ac 9:15
Ga 1:15
q 1Co 9:1
1Co 15:8
r Ac 3:14
Heb 7:26
s 1Co 11:23
Ga 1:12
t Ac 4:20
Ac 23:11
Ac 26:16
u Ac 9:18
v Isa 1:16
1Co 6:11
Tit 3:5
Heb 10:22
1Jo 1:7
Re 1:5

are this day. **4** And I persecuted this Way to the death,^a binding and handing over to prisons^b both men and women, **5** as both the high priest and all the assembly of older men^c can bear me witness. From them I also procured letters^d to the brothers in Damascus, and I was on my way to bring also those who were there bound to Jerusalem to be punished.

6 "But as I was journeying and drawing close to Damascus, about midday, suddenly out of heaven a great light flashed all around me,^e **7** and I fell to the ground and heard a voice say to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?'^f **8** I answered, 'Who are you, Lord?' And he said to me, 'I am Jesus the Nazarene', whom you are persecuting.'^g **9** Now the men that were with me^h beheld, indeed, the light but did not hear the voice of the one speaking to me.ⁱ **10** At that I said, 'What shall I do,^j Lord?' The Lord said to me, 'Rise, go your way into Damascus, and there you will be told about everything it is appointed for you to do.'^k **11** But as I could not see anything for the glory of that light, I arrived in Damascus, being led by the hand of those who were with me.^l

12 "Now An-a-ni'as, a certain man reverent according to the Law, well reported^m on by all the Jews dwelling there, **13** came to me and, standing by me, he said to me, 'Saul, brother, have your sight again!'ⁿ And I looked up at him that very hour. **14** He said, 'The God of our forefathers^o has chosen you^p to come to know his will and to see^q the righteous One^r and to hear the voice of his mouth,^s **15** because you are to be a witness for him to all men of things you have seen and heard.^t **16** And now why are you delaying? Rise, get baptized^u and wash^v your sins

END

*** w08 5/15 p. 30-p. 31 Highlights From the Book of Acts *** Jehovah's Word Is Alive

Timothy and Luke join Paul along the way. Luke stays in Philippi as Paul continues on to Athens and then to Corinth, where he meets Aquila and Priscilla and spends a year and six months. (Acts 18:11) Leaving Timothy and Silas in Corinth, Paul takes Aquila and Priscilla with him and sails away for Syria early in 52 C.E. (Acts 18:18) Aquila and Priscilla accompanied him as far as Ephesus, where they remained.

After spending some time in Syrian Antioch, Paul embarks upon his third tour, in 52 C.E. (Acts 18:23) In Ephesus, "the word of Jehovah [keeps] growing and prevailing." (Acts 19:20) Paul spends about three years there. (Acts 20:31) By Pentecost of 56 C.E., Paul is in Jerusalem. After being arrested, he gives a fearless witness before the authorities. In Rome, the apostle is placed under house arrest for two years (c. 59-61 C.E.), and from there he finds ways to preach about the Kingdom and teach "the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ."—Acts 28:30, 31.

Scriptural Questions Answered:

18:12-17—Why did Proconsul Gallio not interfere when onlookers began beating Sosthenes? Gallio perhaps thought that the man who seemed to be the leader of the mob action against Paul was getting what he deserved. However, this incident apparently had a good outcome in that it led to Sosthenes' conversion to Christianity. Later, Paul speaks of Sosthenes as "our brother."—1 Cor. 1:1.

18:18—What vow did Paul make? Some scholars suggest that Paul had taken a Nazirite vow. (Num. 6:1-21) However, the Bible does not state what Paul's vow was. Moreover, the Scriptures are silent as to whether the vow was made before or after Paul's conversion or if he was starting or ending the vow. Whatever was the case, the taking of such a vow was not sinful.

Lessons for Us:

20:20, 21. House-to-house witnessing is an essential aspect of our ministry.

20:24; 21:13. Maintaining integrity to God is more important than preserving our life.

21:21-26. We should be willing and eager to accept good advice.

*** w12 5/1 p. 23 Did You Know? ***



What was the "judgment seat" to which the apostle Paul was led?

▪ The account at Acts 18:12, 13 states that Jews in Corinth accused Paul of proselytizing illegally and that they led him to "the judgment seat," or *be'ma* (a Greek word meaning "step"). Ancient Corinth had an elevated outdoor platform, or stand, near the center of the agora, or marketplace, which may have been just a few steps from the synagogue. The position of this stand allowed it to be used to address the populace. Built of blue and white marble and lavishly decorated with delicate carvings, the speakers' stand was furnished with two waiting rooms that had marble benches and mosaic floors.

That speakers' stand seems to be the judgment seat where the apostle Paul stood before the proconsul Gallio, Roman governor of Achaia. From this spot, seated officials would hear cases and announce their judicial decisions to the assembled crowd.

In Greek city states, it was normal for the assembly to meet in front of such a *be'ma*, from which all civic business was conducted. In their accounts of Jesus' trial, the Greek texts of both Matthew 27:19 and John 19:13 refer to Pontius Pilate's addressing the crowd from his *be'ma*.—Acts 12:21.

*** w11 1/15 pp. 14-15 pars. 11-12 Respect Marriage as a Gift From God ***



Working together helps couples to stay united

¹¹ When the apostle Paul spoke about his close friends Aquila and Priscilla, he did not mention one without the other. This united couple is a good example of what God meant when he said that a husband and a wife should become “one flesh.” (Gen. 2:24) They constantly worked together in their home, in their secular work, and in the Christian ministry. For example, when Paul first arrived in Corinth, Aquila and Priscilla kindly invited him to stay in their home, which he apparently used for a time thereafter as a base for his activities. Later, in Ephesus, they used their home for holding congregation meetings and worked together to help new ones, such as Apollos, to grow spiritually. (Acts 18:2, 18-26) This zealous couple then went to Rome, where they again opened their home for congregation meetings. Later, they returned to Ephesus,

strengthening the brothers.—Rom. 16:3-5.

¹² For a time, Aquila and Priscilla also worked with Paul in their common trade, tentmaking. Again, we find the couple together, cooperating without competition or strife. (Acts 18:3) Surely, though, it was the time they spent together in Christian activities that kept their marriage on a high spiritual plane. Whether in Corinth, Ephesus, or Rome, they became widely known as “fellow workers in Christ Jesus.” (Rom. 16:3) They worked side by side to further the Kingdom-preaching work wherever they served.

*** w10 2/15 p. 9 par. 14 ‘Speak the Word of God With Boldness’ ***

¹⁴ Living in a way that allows holy spirit to direct our lives can also motivate us to carry out our ministry courageously. The combined benefits of constantly praying for the spirit, diligently engaging in meaningful personal study, prayerfully meditating on what we read, and regularly attending Christian meetings can help us to be “aglow with the spirit.” (Rom. 12:11) Concerning “a certain Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, an eloquent man, [who] arrived in Ephesus,” the Bible says: “As he was aglow with the spirit, he went speaking and teaching with correctness the things about Jesus.” (Acts 18:24, 25) By being “on fire with the Spirit,” we can demonstrate increased boldness in our house-to-house ministry and when witnessing informally.—Rom. 12:11, *The Bible—An American Translation*.

*** w10 2/15 p. 27 par. 13 Welcome to the Best Way of Life! ***

¹³ The spiritual paradise that we enjoy stands in stark contrast with the deplorable conditions in the world today. (*Read Isaiah 65:13, 14.*) By proclaiming the Kingdom message, we have the privilege of extending to others an invitation to enter the spiritual paradise. It is also a blessing to assist those who have recently become associated with the congregation and would benefit from training in the ministry. As directed by the elders, we may be blessed with the privilege of helping certain new ones, even as Aquila and Priscilla “expounded the way of God more correctly” to Apollos.—Acts 18:24-26.

*** w12 3/1 p. 22 What Is Wrong With Spiritism? ***

After learning what the Scriptures teach about spiritism, some inhabitants of ancient Ephesus saw the need to destroy their books on magical arts, costly though they were. They “burned them up before everybody.” (Acts 19:19, 20) Today objects related to the occult include not only books, amulets, Ouija boards, and the like but also material from electronic sources. Turn away from anything that seems like a [gateway to spiritism](#).

*** w12 3/15 pp. 16-17 par. 9 Maintain Your Sense of Urgency ***

⁹ We can gain insight into Paul’s urgency by noting what he told the elders from Ephesus about his preaching the good news in the district of Asia. (*Read Acts 20:18-21.*) Apparently from the first day he arrived, he got busy visiting people from house to house with the good news. In addition, for two years he followed a regular schedule of “daily giving talks in the school auditorium of Tyrannus.” (Acts 19:1, 8-10) Clearly, Paul’s sense of urgency influenced his routine. The call to “be at our ministry urgently” is not intended to *overwhelm* us with our commission. Nevertheless, the preaching work should take priority in our lives.

*** km 8/09 pp. 3-4 pars. 2-5 Meet the Challenge of Witnessing to Men ***



² Search for Men:

When a family head accepts the truth, he often influences others in the family to join him in pure worship. For example, while in prison for their preaching, Paul and Silas witnessed to a jailer. The man and his entire household were baptized. (Acts 16:25-34) As a result of Paul's preaching

in Corinth, "Crispus the presiding officer of the synagogue became a believer in the Lord, and so did all his household." (Acts 18:8) Peter was used by Jehovah to witness to Cornelius, an army officer described as "a devout man and one fearing God." Cornelius, together with his relatives and intimate friends, was baptized.—Acts 10:1-48.

³ Witnessing to men "in high station" may have far-reaching effects. (1 Tim. 2:1, 2) For example, Jehovah's angel advised Philip to speak to "a man in power" who was over all the treasure of the queen of the Ethiopians. Philip heard the man "reading aloud the prophet Isaiah" and explained to him the good news about Jesus. This Ethiopian became a disciple and likely spread the good news en route to his homeland. He also may have witnessed to the queen and those in her court, persons who otherwise would have had limited opportunities to hear the good news.—Acts 8:26-39.

⁴ **Contact More Men:** Since men are often at their jobs during the day, could you arrange your schedule to spend more time in the ministry in the evenings, on weekends, or during holidays? Regularly working business territory will give you additional opportunities to witness to men who are seldom at home. Brothers can also make a special effort to witness informally to their male workmates. In the house-to-house ministry, especially in territory that is worked frequently, brothers might on occasion ask to speak with the man of the house.

⁵ A sister who receives a favorable response to the truth from a man should not call back alone. She may take along her husband or another publisher. As the interested person makes progress, it is generally best to turn the call over to a qualified brother.

*** w11 2/15 pp. 29-30 par. 8 Do You Hate Lawlessness? ***



⁸ The Bible clearly warns of the dangers connected with spiritism. (**Read Deuteronomy 18:10-12.**) Today, Satan and the demons influence people's thinking through movies, books, and electronic games that promote occult practices. When selecting entertainment, therefore, each of us should ask himself: 'Over the past months, have I chosen to be entertained by films, TV programs, electronic games, books, or comics that feature uncanny practices? Do I understand the importance of rejecting occult influences, or do I downplay these dangers? Have I even considered how Jehovah might feel about my choice of entertainment? If I have opened the door to such satanic

influences, will my love for Jehovah and his righteous principles impel me to act decisively and slam that door shut?'—Acts 19:19, 20.

***** w12 5/15 pp. 10-11 par. 12 Take a Positive View of a Strained Marriage *****

¹² If you face marital problems, do not hesitate to seek the spiritual assistance of mature Christians. The elders serve as shepherds of the flock and will gladly direct attention to the inspired counsel found in the Scriptures. (Acts 20:28; Jas. 5:14, 15) Do not conclude that you and your mate will lose the respect of the elders if you seek spiritual assistance and discuss a serious marital problem with them. Their loving regard for you will increase as they see that you earnestly desire to please God.

***** w12 6/1 p. 23 How to Survive on a Reduced Income *****

True happiness does not come from amassing everything that we might want or from living a life of ease and affluence. It was Jesus himself who said: “There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.” Yes, happiness and satisfaction come from expending what we have to help others and to be a source of encouragement to them.—Acts 20:35.

***** w12 9/1 p. 20 Kindness—Essential in the Sight of God *****

Consider the example of Aki, a young Japanese housewife with two sons. After suddenly losing her mother, she became seriously depressed. At times, she felt so bad that she had to see a doctor. Then, a family moved into her neighborhood. They had recently lost their father in an accident, and the mother was left with five minor children. Aki felt very sorry for the family and extended herself to become friends with the mother and her children. Doing everything she could to help the family—sharing food, outgrown clothing, and so on—Aki regained her own emotional stability. She felt the truthfulness of what the Bible says: “There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.” (Acts 20:35) Yes, showing kindness to others can be the best thing you can do for yourself when you feel down.

***** w09 6/15 p. 27 How to Find Joy in the Gift of Singleness *****

The Bible refers to Philip the evangelizer who had four unmarried daughters who prophesied. (Acts 21:8, 9) They must have had a zealous spirit like that of their father. Might they have used their gift of prophesying for the benefit of fellow Christians in Caesarea? (1 Cor. 14:1, 3) Today, many single sisters likewise build up others by their regular attendance and participation at Christian meetings.

***** w06 10/1 pp. 22-23 pars. 9-10 Courage Strengthened by Love *****

⁹ Paul was such a caring and courageous person that many early Christians grew to love him deeply. Recall what took place at a meeting that Paul held with the elders from Ephesus, where he had spent three years and experienced much opposition. (Acts 20:17-31) After encouraging them to shepherd the flock of God entrusted to them, Paul knelt down with them and prayed. Then, “quite a bit of weeping broke out among them all, and they fell upon Paul’s neck and tenderly kissed him, because they were especially pained at the word he had spoken that they were going to behold his face no more.” What love these brothers had for Paul! Indeed, when the time came to part, Paul and his traveling companions had to ‘tear themselves away,’ so reluctant were the local elders to let them go.—Acts 20:36–21:1.

¹⁰ Today, traveling overseers, congregation elders, and many others are deeply loved because of the courage they show in behalf of Jehovah’s sheep. For example, in countries racked by civil war or where the preaching work is banned, traveling overseers and their wives have risked their life and freedom in order to visit congregations. Likewise, many Witnesses have suffered at the hands of hostile rulers and their minions because of not betraying their fellow Witnesses nor revealing from where they obtained spiritual food. Thousands of others have been persecuted, tortured, and even killed because they would not stop preaching the good news or cease associating with fellow believers at Christian meetings. (Acts 5:28, 29; Hebrews 10:24, 25) May we imitate the faith and love of such courageous brothers and sisters!—1 Thessalonians 1:6.



TEACH YOUR CHILDREN

READ ACTS 20:7-12

When We Should Stay Awake

YOU may agree that staying awake when you are at school is important. Many get sleepy during their class periods, but to learn, you must stay awake. Perhaps you also go to meetings where you study the Bible.

What do you think you can do to help you stay awake?—* One idea is to go to bed earlier at night. Maybe a nap in the afternoon will also help. Let's see what we can learn from what happened to a youth who fell asleep late one night during a talk by the apostle Paul. Look in the Bible at **Acts chapter 20, verses 7 to 12**, and see what happened.

Paul had been visiting the congregation located in the seaport city of Troas. The Bible says that Paul "was going to depart the next day" by boat. So "he prolonged his speech until midnight." We read: "Seated at the window, a certain young man named Eutychus fell into a deep sleep while Paul kept talking on." **What happened next?—**

Eutychus fell out of the window and "down from the third story." Paul and the others ran down the stairs as fast as they could. Eutychus was on the ground—dead! **Can you imagine how sad they all felt?—** The Bible says that Paul took Eutychus into his arms and hugged him. Soon Paul cried out with joy: 'Don't worry, he's all right!' God had brought Eutychus back to life!

* If you are reading with a child, the dash provides a reminder to pause and encourage the child to express himself.

What can we learn about God from what happened to Eutychus?— One thing is that Jehovah, our heavenly Father, can bring the dead back to life, including young ones. Jehovah understands and loves you, yes, even more than your parents do. When Jesus was on earth, he showed what the Father is like by taking little ones into his arms and blessing them. He also resurrected young people, including a 12-year-old girl.

How does knowing that your heavenly Father loves you make you feel?— Yes, it makes us love Jehovah in return and want to obey what He says. **Do you know how we can show that we love Him?**— One way is by saying that we do. Jesus said: “I love the Father.” But Jesus did more than just say that he loved God. He showed it by what he did.

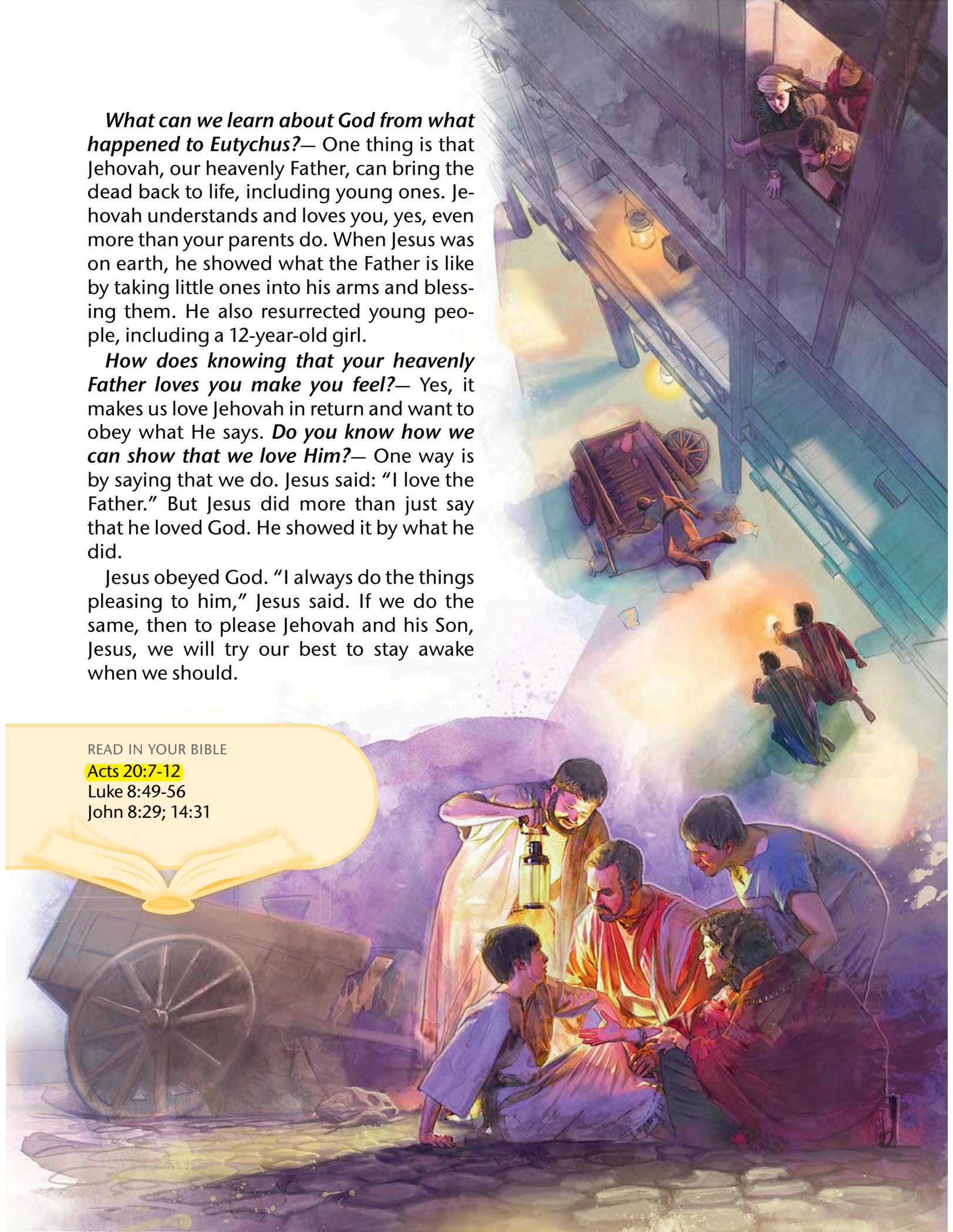
Jesus obeyed God. “I always do the things pleasing to him,” Jesus said. If we do the same, then to please Jehovah and his Son, Jesus, we will try our best to stay awake when we should.

READ IN YOUR BIBLE

Acts 20:7-12

Luke 8:49-56

John 8:29; 14:31



1 Corinthians 15:35, 36, 44 (quoted on pages 314, 315), they must die before they can gain heavenly life. But there is no need for them to remain in the death state awaiting Christ's return. They will instantly be "caught up," "in the twinkling of an eye," to be with the Lord.—1 Cor. 15:51, 52, *RS*; also Revelation 14:13.

No. 2: Will Christ appear visibly on a cloud and then take away faithful Christians into the heavens while the world looks on? [rs p. 313 pars. 1-3](#)

Did Jesus say whether the world would see him again with their physical eyes?

John 14:19, *RS*: "Yet a little while, and *the world will see me no more*, but you [his faithful disciples] will see me; because I live, you will live also." (Italics added.) (Compare 1 Timothy 6:16.)

What is the meaning of the Lord's 'descending from heaven'?

Could the Lord "descend from heaven," as stated at 1 Thessalonians 4:16, without being visible to physical eyes? In the days of ancient Sodom and Gomorrah, Jehovah said that he was going to "go down to see" what the people were doing. (Gen. 18:21, *RS*) But when Jehovah made that inspection, no human saw him, although they did see the angelic representatives that he sent. (John 1:18) Similarly, without having to return in the flesh, Jesus could turn his attention to his faithful followers on earth to reward them.

In what sense, then, will humans "see" the Lord "coming in a cloud"?

Jesus foretold: "Then they will see the Son of man [Jesus Christ] coming in a cloud with power and great glory." (Luke 21:27, *RS*) In no way does this statement or similar ones in other texts contradict what Jesus said as recorded at John 14:19. Consider: At Mount Sinai, what occurred when God 'came to the people *in a thick cloud*,' as stated at Exodus 19:9? (*RS*) God was invisibly present; the people of Israel saw visible evidence of his presence, but none of them actually saw God with their eyes. So, too, when

Jesus said that he would come “in a cloud,” he must have meant that he would be *invisible* to human eyes but that humans would be aware of his presence. They would “see” him with their mental eyes, discerning the fact that he was present. (For further comments, see the main heading “Return of Christ.”)

END

Is it possible for Christians to be taken to heaven with their physical bodies?

1 Cor. 15:50, *RS*: “I tell you this, brethren: flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.”

Does the experience of the prophet Elijah contradict this? Not at all. It must be understood in the light of Jesus’ clear statement centuries later: “No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man.” (John 3:13, *RS*) Although Elijah was seen as he “went up by a whirlwind into heaven,” this does not mean that he went into the spirit realm. Why not? Because he is later reported as sending a letter of reproof to the king of Judah. (2 Ki. 2:11, *RS*; 2 Chron. 21:1, 12-15) Before humans invented airplanes, Jehovah there used his own means (a fiery chariot and a whirlwind) to lift Elijah off the ground into the heaven where the birds fly and to transport him to another place.—Compare Genesis 1:6-8, 20.

Will faithful Christians perhaps be taken to heaven secretly, simply disappearing from the earth without dying?

Rom. 6:3-5, *RS*: “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? . . . For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.” (What occurred in the case of Jesus set the pattern. His disciples as well as others knew he had died. He was not restored to heavenly life until after his death and resurrection.)

1 Cor. 15:35, 36, 44, *RS*: “Some one will ask, ‘How are the dead

“Preach the Word”

(2 Timothy 4:2)

1. God has commanded us this day;
He has given us a charge to obey.
At all times, be ready to impart
The reason for the hope within your heart.

(CHORUS)

*So preach the Word,
Oh, how vital that all hear!
Preach the Word,
As this system's end draws near.
Preach the Word,
Help the meek to understand.
Preach the Word,
Throughout the land!*

2. Seasons of trouble we will face;
Opposition may bring shame and disgrace.
Though preaching may out of season seem,
Our trust is in our God, who is supreme.

(Chorus)

3. Seasons of favor we will see,
And the need for us to teach, there will be.
The way to salvation we proclaim
And help to sanctify Jehovah's name.

(Chorus)

A Full Reward From Jehovah

(Matthew 19:29)

1. Jehovah is faithful and fully aware
Of all those who serve him whole-souled.
He knows there are times their devotion and zeal
Result in their loss as foretold.
If you have left houses or fam'ly or friends,
Be sure that our God knows the sum.
He makes it up now with our dear brotherhood
And life in the new world to come.

(CHORUS)

*May Jehovah, the God of comfort, see;
May he provide a full reward for you.
May you find refuge beneath his wings.
Jehovah is faithful; Jehovah is true.*

2. It may be by choice or by their lot in life;
There are some who single remain.
By seeking the Kingdom of God to the full,
In godly devotion they gain.
By making the room for their unwedded state,
At times they are lonely, we know.
As brothers and sisters to these faithful ones,
Support and approval we show.

(Chorus)