

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

JANUARY 2014

WEEK STARTING JANUARY 13

Song 131 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

cl chap. 1 ¶10-17 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Genesis 6-10 (10 min.)

No. 1: Genesis 9:18–10:7 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: If Someone Says, ‘As Long as You Believe in Jesus, It Really Does Not Matter What Church You Belong To’—rs p. 332 ¶12 (5 min.)

No. 3: Aaron—Continue Faithful in Spite of Human Weaknesses—*it*-1 p. 10 ¶4–p. 11 ¶3 (5 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 69

10 min: The Value of Repetition in the Ministry. Talk based on the *Ministry School* book, pages 206-207. Briefly demonstrate at least one of the points from the material.

10 min: Men Who Minister in a Fine Manner. (1 Tim. 3:13) Interview two ministerial servants. What are their responsibilities in the congregation, and what does caring for these involve? Why did they reach out to be ministerial servants? Why do they enjoy serving the congregation and assisting the elders?

10 min: “Take as a Pattern the Prophets—Micah.” Questions and answers.

Song 35 and Prayer

Take as a Pattern the Prophets—Micah

¹ ‘When will the end of this corrupt system of things finally come?’ The prophet Micah may have pondered a similar question as he proclaimed Jehovah’s judgment messages against the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Yet, his preaching was not in vain. In 740 B.C.E., during Micah’s lifetime, Jehovah’s words

1. What question may Micah have pondered, but why was his preaching not in vain?

against Samaria were fulfilled. (Mic. 1:6, 7) Later, Jerusalem was destroyed in the year 607 B.C.E. (Mic. 3:12) How can we imitate Micah as we await the execution of Jehovah’s judgments in our day?

² **Be Patient:** Micah wrote: “As for me, I will keep on the lookout for Jehovah. I will show a waiting attitude for the God of my salvation.” (Mic. 7:7) Of course, Micah did not idly wait for the end to come. He remained busy as Jehovah’s prophet. As we await Jehovah’s day, we should also be engaged in “holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion.” (2 Pet. 3:11, 12) Jehovah’s patience allows individuals time to repent. (2 Pet. 3:9) Therefore, we take to heart the divine admonition to imitate the prophets in exercising patience.—Jas. 5:10.

³ **Rely on Jehovah’s Strength:** Although Micah had a challenging assignment, he looked to Jehovah for the strength to carry it out. (Mic. 3:8) It is no coincidence that Jehovah’s Word urges us to rely on God for strength. He generously gives power to the tired ones so that they can fulfill their theocratic responsibilities. (Ps. 84:5, 7; Isa. 40:28-31) Have you personally experienced this in your life of sacred service? Do you regularly petition Jehovah for the help of his powerful holy spirit?—Luke 11:13.

⁴ Throughout his life, Micah made the doing of God’s will his priority. He was determined to remain faithful although surrounded by moral corruption. Similarly, our integrity is tested on a daily basis. Let us therefore strengthen our resolve to “walk in the name of Jehovah our God forever and ever.”—Mic. 4:5.

2. How and why do we show patience as we await Jehovah’s day?

3. Why should we petition Jehovah for his holy spirit?

4. Micah’s life course provides what excellent example for us today?

131 *Jehovah Provides Escape* (2 Samuel 22:1-8)

1. The living God, Jehovah, you have proved to be;
 Your mighty works abound
 in earth and sky and sea.
No rival god can equal what you have done
 —there is none.
 Our foes will be consumed.

(CHORUS)

*Jehovah provides escape for the loyal.
His servants will see what a mighty Crag is he.
So with courage and faith in our God,
we spread the fame
Of Jehovah, our Source of escape,
and praise his name.*

2. Though ropes of death encircle me, I call to you,
 “Jehovah, give me strength,
 and give me courage too.”
From your own temple dwelling, you hear my plea,
 “Shelter me;
 Rescue me, O my God.”

(Chorus)

3. From heaven you will thunder
and give forth your voice.
Your enemies will quake;
your servants will rejoice.
You prove to be whatever you need to be;
all will see
How you provide escape.

(Chorus)

(See also Ps. 18:1, 2; 144:1, 2.)

⁹ What did that mean to the Israelites? No matter what obstacle loomed before them, no matter how difficult the predicament in which they might find themselves, Jehovah would become whatever was needed in order to deliver them from slavery and bring them into the Promised Land. Surely that name inspired confidence in God. It can do the same for us today. (Psalm 9:10) Why?

¹⁰ To illustrate: Parents know how versatile and adaptable they must be in caring for their children. In the course of a single day, a parent may be called upon to act as a nurse, a cook, a teacher, a disciplinarian, a judge, and much more. Many feel overwhelmed by the wide range of roles they are expected to fill. They remark upon the absolute faith put in them by their little ones, who never doubt that Daddy or Mommy can make the hurt better, settle all disputes, fix any broken toy, and answer whatever question pops into their endlessly inquisitive minds. Some parents are humbled and occasionally frustrated by their own limitations. They feel woefully inadequate to fill many of these roles.

¹¹ Jehovah too is a loving parent. Yet, within the framework of his own perfect standards, there is *nothing* he cannot become in order to care for his earthly children in the best possible way. So his name, Jehovah, invites us to think of him as the best Father imaginable. (James 1:17) Moses and all other faithful Israelites soon learned that Jehovah is true to his name. They watched in awe as he caused himself to become an unbeatable Military Commander, the Master of all natural elements, a peerless Lawgiver, Judge, Architect, Provider of food and water, Preserver of clothing and footgear—and more.

10, 11. How does Jehovah's name invite us to think of him as the most versatile and the best Father imaginable? Illustrate.

¹² So God has made his personal name known, he has revealed thrilling things about the person represented by that name, and he has even demonstrated that what he says about himself is true. Unquestionably, God wants us to know him. How do we respond? Moses wanted to know God. That intense desire shaped Moses' life course and led him to draw very close to his heavenly Father. (Numbers 12:6-8; Hebrews 11:27) Sadly, few of Moses' contemporaries had the same desire. When Moses mentioned Jehovah by name to Pharaoh, that haughty Egyptian monarch retorted: “Who is Jehovah?” (Exodus 5:2) Pharaoh did not want to learn more about Jehovah. Rather, he cynically dismissed the God of Israel as being unimportant or irrelevant. That outlook is all too common today. It blinds people to one of the most important of all truths—Jehovah is the Sovereign Lord.

The Sovereign Lord Jehovah

¹³ Jehovah is so versatile, so adaptable, that he rightly bears a wide array of titles in Scripture. These do not compete with his personal name; rather, they teach us more about what his name represents. For example, he is called the “Sovereign Lord Jehovah.” (2 Samuel 7:22) That lofty title, which occurs hundreds of times in the Bible, tells us Jehovah's position. He alone has the right to be Ruler of all the universe. Consider why.

¹⁴ Jehovah is unique as the Creator. Revelation 4:11 says: “You are worthy, Jehovah, even our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because you created

12. How did Pharaoh's attitude toward Jehovah differ from that of Moses?

13, 14. (a) Why is Jehovah given many titles in the Bible, and what are some of them? (See box on page 14.) (b) Why is Jehovah uniquely qualified to be called the “Sovereign Lord”?

all things, and because of your will they existed and were created." These majestic words could apply to no other being. Everything in the universe owes its existence to Jehovah! Without question, Jehovah is worthy of the honor, power, and glory that come with being the Sovereign Lord and Creator of all things.

¹⁵ Another title applied exclusively to Jehovah is "King of eternity." (1 Timothy 1:17; Revelation 15:3) What does this mean? It is difficult for our limited minds to comprehend, but Jehovah is eternal in both directions—past and future. Psalm 90:2 says: "Even from time indefinite to time indefinite you are God." So Jehovah never began; he has always been. He is rightly called "the Ancient of Days"—he existed for an eternity before anyone or anything else in the universe came into being! (Daniel 7:9, 13, 22) Who can validly question his right to be the Sovereign Lord?

¹⁶ Yet, some do question that right, as did Pharaoh. Part of the problem is that imperfect men put too much stock in what they can see with their eyes. We cannot see the Sovereign Lord. He is a spirit being, invisible to human eyes. (John 4:24) Besides, if a flesh-and-blood human were to stand in the immediate presence of Jehovah God, the experience would prove fatal. Jehovah himself told Moses: "You are not able to see my face, because no man may see me and yet live."—Exodus 33:20; John 1:18.

¹⁷ That should not surprise us. Moses got to see just a part of Jehovah's glory, evidently through an angelic representative. With what effect? Moses' face "emitted rays" for some time afterward. The Israelites feared even to

15. Why is Jehovah called "King of eternity"?

16, 17. (a) Why can we not see Jehovah, and why should that not surprise us? (b) In what sense is Jehovah more real than anything we can see or touch?

look directly at Moses' face. (Exodus 33:21-23; 34:5-7, 29, 30) Surely, then, no mere human could look upon the Sovereign Lord himself in all his glory! Does this mean that he is any less real than what we can see and touch? No, we readily accept the reality of many things we cannot see—wind, radio waves, and thoughts, for example. Furthermore, Jehovah is permanent, unaffected by the passage of time, even untold billions of years! In that sense, he is far more real than anything we can touch or see, for the physical realm is subject to age and decay. (Matthew 6:19) Should we think of him, though, as merely some abstract, impersonal force or a vague First Cause? Let us see.

A God With Personality

¹⁸ Although we cannot see God, there are thrilling passages in the Bible that afford us glimpses into heaven itself. The first chapter of Ezekiel is one example. Ezekiel was given a vision of Jehovah's heavenly organization, which he saw as a vast celestial chariot. Especially impressive is the description of the mighty spirit creatures around Jehovah. (Ezekiel 1:4-10) These “living creatures” are closely associated with Jehovah, and their appearance tells us something important about the God they serve. Each one has four faces—that of a bull, a lion, an eagle, and a man. These evidently symbolize the four outstanding qualities of Jehovah's personality.—Revelation 4:6-8, 10.

¹⁹ In the Bible, a bull often represents power, and fittingly so, for it is an immensely strong animal. A lion, on the

18. What vision was Ezekiel given, and what do the four faces of the “living creatures” near Jehovah symbolize?

19. What quality is represented by (a) the bull's face? (b) the lion's face? (c) the eagle's face? (d) the man's face?

continued to walk with the true God* for 300 years. And he became father to sons and daughters. **23** So all the days of E'noch amounted to 365 years. **24** E'noch kept walking with the true God.^a Then he was no more, for God took him.^b

25 Me-thu'se-lah lived for 187 years and then became father to La'mech.^c **26** After becoming father to La'mech, Me-thu'se-lah lived for 782 years. And he became father to sons and daughters. **27** So all the days of Me-thu'se-lah amounted to 969 years, and then he died.

28 La'mech lived for 182 years and then became father to a son. **29** He named him Noah,^{*d} saying: "This one will bring us comfort^e from our labor and from the painful toil of our hands because of the ground that Jehovah has cursed."^e **30** After becoming father to Noah, La'mech lived for 595 years. And he became father to sons and daughters. **31** So all the days of La'mech amounted to 777 years, and then he died.

32 After Noah reached 500 years of age, he became father to Shem,^f Ham,^g and Ja'pheth.^h

6 Now when men started to grow in number on the surface of the ground and daughters were born to them, **2** the sons of the true God^{*i} began to notice that the daughters of men were beautiful. So they began taking as wives all whom they chose. **3** Then Jehovah said: "My spirit will not tolerate man indefinitely,^j because he is only flesh.* Accordingly, his days will amount to 120 years."^k

5:22 *Lit., "the God." See Glossary. 5:29 *Probably meaning "Rest; Consolation." #Or "relief." 6:2 *A Hebrew idiom that refers to angelic sons of God. 6:3 *Or possibly, "because he acts according to the flesh."

CHAP. 5

a Ge 6:9
De 8:6
De 13:4
3Jo 4
Jude 14, 15

b Joh 3:13
Heb 11:5

c Lu 3:23, 36

d Ge 7:1
Eze 14:14
Mt 24:37
Heb 11:7
1Pe 3:20
2Pe 2:5

e Ge 3:17

f Ge 10:21
Ge 11:10
Lu 3:23, 36

g Ge 6:10
Ge 10:6

h Ge 10:2

CHAP. 6

i Job 1:6
Job 38:7
2Pe 2:4
Jude 6

j Ge 7:4
1Pe 3:20

k 2Pe 3:9

Second Col.

a Ge 8:21
Jer 17:9
Mt 15:19

b Ps 78:40, 41

c Ge 7:1
Eze 14:14
Heb 11:7

d 2Pe 2:5

e Ge 5:32

f Re 11:18

g Mt 24:37-39
2Pe 2:5

h Ge 7:4

4 The Neph'i-lim* were on the earth in those days and afterward. During that time the sons of the true God continued to have relations with the daughters of men, and these bore sons to them. They were the mighty ones of old times, the men of fame.

5 Consequently, Jehovah saw that man's wickedness was great on the earth and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only bad all the time.^a

6 Jehovah regretted* that he had made men on the earth, and his heart was saddened.^{#b} **7** So Jehovah said: "I am going to wipe men whom I have created off the surface of the ground, man together with domestic animals, creeping animals, and flying creatures of the heavens, for I regret that I have made them." **8** But Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah.

9 This is the history of Noah.

Noah was a righteous man.^c He proved himself faultless* among his contemporaries.[#] Noah walked with the true God.^d

10 In time Noah became father to three sons, Shem, Ham, and Ja'pheth.^e **11** But the earth had become ruined in the sight of the true God, and the earth was filled with violence. **12** Yes, God looked upon the earth, and it was ruined;^f all flesh* had ruined its way on the earth.^g

13 After that God said to Noah: "I have decided to put an end to all flesh, because the earth is full of violence on account of them, so I am bringing them to ruin together with the earth."^h **14** Make for yourself an

6:4 *Possibly meaning "The Fellers," that is, those who cause others to fall down. See Glossary. 6:6 *Or "was grieved." #Or "and he felt hurt at his heart." 6:9 *Or "blameless." #Lit., "his generations." 6:12 *Or "people."

ark* from resinous wood.^a You will make compartments in the ark and cover it with tar^{#b} inside and outside. **15** This is how you will make it: The ark should be 300 cubits* long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high. **16** You will make a window for light* for the ark, one cubit from the top. You should put the entrance of the ark in its side^c and make it with a lower deck, a second deck, and a third deck.

17 "As for me, I am going to bring floodwaters^d upon the earth to destroy from under the heavens all flesh that has the breath of life.* Everything on the earth will perish.^e **18** And I am establishing my covenant with you, and you must go into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you.^f **19** And bring into the ark two of every sort of living creature^g in order to preserve them alive with you, a male and a female;^h **20** of the flying creatures according to their kinds, the domestic animals according to their kinds, and all creeping animals of the ground according to their kinds, two of each will go in there to you to preserve them alive.ⁱ **21** For your part, you are to collect and take with you every kind of food to eat,^j to serve as food for you and for the animals."

22 And Noah did according to all that God had commanded him. He did just so.^k

7 After that Jehovah said to Noah: "Go into the ark, you and all your household, because you are the one I have found to

6:14 *Lit., "a chest"; a large vessel. #Or "pitch." **6:15** *A cubit equaled 44.5 cm (17.5 in.). See App. B14. **6:16** *Hebrew, *tso'har*. Another view is that the *tso'har* refers to a roof with a one-cubit pitch, or incline, rather than an opening for light or a window. **6:17** *Or "the spirit of life."

CHAP. 6

- a Heb 11:7
- b Ge 14:10
Ex 2:3
- c Ge 7:16
- d Ge 1:7
Ge 7:6, 11
- e Ge 7:21
Ps 104:29
Mt 24:39
2Pe 2:5
- f Ge 7:13
- g Ge 8:17
- h Ge 7:2
- i Ge 7:14, 15
- j Ge 1:29, 30
- k Ex 40:16
Heb 11:7

Second Col.

CHAP. 7

- a Ge 6:9
Heb 10:38
Heb 11:7
1Pe 3:12
2Pe 2:5, 9
- b Ge 8:20
- c Ge 7:23
Ge 8:19
- d Ge 2:5
- e Ge 7:11, 12
- f Ge 6:7, 17
- g Ge 8:13
- h Lu 17:27
Heb 11:7
- i Ge 6:19, 20
- j Ge 1:7
Ge 8:2
- k Ge 9:18
1Ch 1:4
- l Ge 6:18
1Pe 3:20
2Pe 2:5

be righteous before me among this generation.^a **2** You must take with you every kind of clean animal by sevens,^{#b} the male and its mate; and of every animal that is not clean just two, the male and its mate; **3** also of the flying creatures of the sky by sevens,* male and female, to preserve their offspring alive over all the earth.^c **4** For in just seven days, I will make it rain^d on the earth for 40 days and 40 nights,^e and I will wipe from the surface of the ground every living thing that I have made."^f **5** Then Noah did everything that Jehovah had commanded him.

6 Noah was 600 years old when the floodwaters came upon the earth.^g **7** So Noah, along with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, went into the ark ahead of the floodwaters.^h **8** Of every clean animal and of every animal that is not clean and of the flying creatures and of everything that moves on the ground,ⁱ **9** they went inside the ark to Noah by twos, male and female, just as God had commanded Noah. **10** And seven days later the floodwaters came upon the earth.

11 In the 600th year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the 17th day of the month, on that day all the springs of the vast watery deep burst open and the floodgates of the heavens were opened.^j **12** And the rain poured down on the earth for 40 days and 40 nights. **13** On that very day, Noah went into the ark along with his sons, Shem, Ham, and Ja'pheth,^k and his wife and the three wives of his sons.^l **14** They went in with every wild animal accord-

7:2 *Or possibly, "seven pairs of every clean animal." **7:3** *Or possibly, "seven pairs of the flying creatures of the sky."

ing to its kind, and every domestic animal according to its kind, and every creeping animal of the earth according to its kind, and every flying creature according to its kind, every bird, every winged creature. **15** They kept going to Noah inside the ark, two by two, of every sort of flesh that has the breath of life.* **16** So they went in, male and female of every sort of flesh, just as God had commanded him. After that Jehovah shut the door behind him.

17 The flooding continued* for 40 days on the earth, and the waters kept increasing and began carrying the ark, and it was floating high above the earth. **18** The waters became overwhelming and kept increasing greatly upon the earth, but the ark floated on the surface of the waters. **19** The waters overwhelmed the earth so greatly that all the tall mountains under the whole heavens were covered.^a **20** The waters rose up to 15 cubits* above the mountains.

21 So all living creatures* that were moving on the earth perished^b—the flying creatures, the domestic animals, the wild animals, the swarming creatures, and all mankind.^c **22** Everything on dry land that had the breath of life* in its nostrils died.^d **23** So He wiped every living thing from the surface of the earth, including man, animals, creeping animals, and the flying creatures of the sky. They were all wiped off the earth;^e only Noah and those with him in the ark survived.^f **24** And the wa-

7:15 *Or "the spirit of life." 7:17 *Or "kept coming." 7:20 *A cubit equaled 44.5 cm (17.5 in.). See App. B14. 7:21 *Lit., "all flesh." 7:22 *Or "the breath of the spirit of life."

CHAP. 7
a 2Pe 3:5, 6

b Ge 6:7,17

c Lu 17:27

d Ge 2:7
Ge 7:15
Ec 3:19
Isa 42:5

e Ge 6:7
2Pe 3:5, 6

f Mt 24:37-39
1Pe 3:20
2Pe 2:5, 9

Second Col.

a Ge 8:3

CHAP. 8
b Ge 6:19, 20
Heb 11:7

c Ge 7:11, 12

d Ge 7:20

e Ge 6:16

f Ge 7:19

ters continued overwhelming the earth for 150 days.^a

8 But God gave attention to* Noah and to all the wild animals and domestic animals that were with him in the ark,^b and God caused a wind to blow over the earth, and the waters began to subside. **2** The springs of the watery deep and the floodgates of the heavens were stopped up, so the rain from the heavens stopped falling.*^c **3** Then the waters began to recede progressively from the earth. By the end of 150 days, the waters had subsided. **4** In the seventh month, on the 17th day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ar'a-rat. **5** And the waters were steadily decreasing until the tenth month. In the tenth month, on the first of the month, the tops of the mountains appeared.^d

6 So at the end of 40 days, Noah opened the window^e that he had made in the ark **7** and sent out a raven; it continued flying outside and returning, until the waters dried off the earth.

8 Later he sent out a dove to see whether the waters had receded from the surface of the ground. **9** The dove did not find any resting-place to perch,* so it returned to him into the ark because the waters were still covering the surface of the whole earth.^f So he reached his hand out and brought it inside the ark. **10** He waited seven more days, and once again he sent out the dove from the ark. **11** When the dove came to him toward evening, he saw that there was a freshly plucked olive leaf in its bill! So Noah knew that the waters had receded

8:1 *Lit., "remembered." 8:2 *Or "was restrained." 8:9 *Or "for the sole of its foot."

from the earth.^a **12** He waited still another seven days. Then he sent out the dove, but it did not return to him anymore.

13 Now in the 601st year,^b in the first month, on the first day of the month, the waters had drained from the earth; and Noah removed the covering of the ark and saw that the surface of the ground was drying. **14** In the second month, on the 27th day of the month, the earth had dried off.

15 God now said to Noah: **16** "Go out of the ark, you, your wife, your sons, and your sons' wives.^c **17** Bring out with you all the living creatures of every sort of flesh,^d of the flying creatures and of the animals and of all the creeping animals of the earth, that they may multiply* on the earth and be fruitful and become many on the earth."^e

18 So Noah went out, together with his sons,^f his wife, and his sons' wives. **19** Every living creature, every creeping animal and every flying creature, everything that moves on the earth, went out of the ark by families.^g **20** Then Noah built an altar^h to Jehovah and took some of all the clean animals and of all the clean flying creaturesⁱ and offered burnt offerings on the altar.^j **21** And Jehovah began to smell a pleasing* aroma. So Jehovah said in his heart: "Never again will I curse^k the ground^k on man's account, for the inclination of the heart of man is bad from his youth up;^l and never again will I strike down every living thing as I have done.^m **22** From now on, the earth will never cease to have seed-sowing and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night."ⁿ

8:17 *Or "swarm." 8:21 *Or "appeasing; soothing." Lit., "restful." ^aOr "call down evil upon."

CHAP. 8

- a Ge 7:20
- Ge 8:3
- b Ge 7:6, 11
- c Ge 7:7
- 1Pe 3:20
- 2Pe 2:5
- d Ge 6:19, 20
- Ge 7:14, 15
- e Ge 1:22
- f Ge 6:10
- g Ge 7:13, 14
- h Ge 12:7
- i Ge 7:2
- Le 20:25
- j De 27:6
- k Ge 3:17
- Ge 5:29
- l Ge 6:5
- Ec 7:20
- Mt 15:19
- m Ge 6:7, 17
- Ge 9:11
- Isa 54:9
- n Ge 1:14
- Ps 74:17
- Ec 1:4

Second Col.

CHAP. 9

- a Ge 1:28
- b Ge 1:26
- Jas 3:7
- c 1Ti 4:3
- d Ge 1:29
- e Le 17:11, 14
- f Le 3:17
- Le 7:26
- Le 17:10, 13
- De 12:16, 23
- Ac 15:20, 29
- Ac 21:25
- g Ge 4:8, 10
- Ex 21:12
- h Ex 20:13
- Nu 35:30
- Mt 26:52
- i Ge 1:27
- j Ge 1:28
- Ge 10:32
- k Ge 9:15
- Isa 54:9
- l Ge 8:17
- m Ge 8:21

9 God went on to bless Noah and his sons and to say to them: "Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth.^a **2** A fear of you and a terror of you will continue upon every living creature of the earth and upon every flying creature of the heavens, upon everything that moves on the ground and upon all the fish of the sea. They are now given into your hand.^b **3** Every moving animal that is alive may serve as food for you.^c Just as I gave you the green vegetation, I give them all to you.^d **4** Only flesh with its life*—its blood^e—you must not eat.^f **5** Besides that, I will demand an accounting for your lifeblood.* I will demand an accounting from every living creature; and from each man I will demand an accounting for the life of his brother.^g **6** Anyone shedding man's blood, by man will his own blood be shed,^h for in God's image He made man.ⁱ **7** As for you, be fruitful and become many, and increase abundantly on the earth and multiply."^j

8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: **9** "I am now establishing my covenant with you^k and with your offspring after you, **10** and with every living creature* that is with you, the birds, the animals, and all the living creatures of the earth with you, all those that came out of the ark—every living creature of the earth.^l **11** Yes, I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all flesh* be destroyed by the waters of a flood, and never again will a flood bring the earth to ruin."^m

12 And God added: "This is the sign of the covenant that I

9:2 *Or "given under your authority." 9:4, 10 *Or "soul." 9:5 *Or "the blood of your souls." 9:11 *Or "living things."

am making between me and you and every living creature* that is with you, for all future generations. **13** I put my rainbow in the cloud, and it will serve as a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. **14** Whenever I bring a cloud over the earth, then the rainbow will certainly appear in the cloud. **15** And I will certainly remember my covenant that I made between me and you and every living creature of every kind;* and never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all flesh.^a **16** And the rainbow will occur in the cloud, and I will certainly see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of every kind* on the earth.”

17 God repeated to Noah: “This is the sign of the covenant that I establish between me and all flesh that is on the earth.”^b

18 Noah's sons who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Ja'pheth.^c Ham later became the father of Ca'naan.^d **19** These three were Noah's sons, and all the earth's population came from them and spread abroad.^e

20 Now Noah started off as a farmer, and he planted a vineyard. **21** When he drank of the wine, he became intoxicated, and he uncovered himself inside his tent. **22** Ham, the father of Ca'naan, saw his father's nakedness, and he told his two brothers outside. **23** So Shem and Ja'pheth took a garment and put it upon both their shoulders and walked in backward. Thus they covered their father's nakedness while their faces were turned away, and they did not see their father's nakedness.

24 When Noah woke up from his wine and learned what his

9:12 *Or “soul.” 9:15, 16 *Or “every living soul of all flesh.”

CHAP. 9

a Ge 8:21

b Ge 9:12, 13

c Ge 5:32

Ge 7:7

Ge 10:1

d Ge 10:6

e Ge 10:32

Second Col.

a De 7:1

b Jos 17:13

c Jg 1:28

d Ge 7:6

CHAP. 10

e Lu 3:23, 36

f Ge 9:18, 19

g Eze 38:6

h Eze 38:2

i Isa 66:19

Eze 27:13

j Ps 120:5

Eze 32:26

k 1Ch 1:5-7

l Jer 51:27

m Eze 27:14

Eze 38:6

n Eze 27:7

o Jon 1:3

p Isa 23:1

q Ge 50:11

r Jer 46:9

Na 3:9

s Nu 34:2

1Ch 1:8-10

t Ps 72:10

u Eze 27:22

youngest son had done to him, **25** he said:

“Cursed be Ca'naan.^a

Let him become the lowest slave to his brothers.”^b

26 And he added:

“Praised be Jehovah, the God of Shem,
And let Ca'naan become a slave to him.^c

27 Let God grant ample space to Ja'pheth,
And let him reside in the tents of Shem.
Let Ca'naan become a slave to him also.”

28 Noah continued to live for 350 years after the Flood.^d **29** So all the days of Noah amounted to 950 years, and he died.

10 This is the history of Noah's sons, Shem,^e Ham, and Ja'pheth.

Sons were born to them after the Flood.^f **2** The sons of Ja'pheth were Go'mer,^g Ma'gog,^h Ma'da-i, Ja'van, Tu'bal,ⁱ Me'shech,^j and Ti'ras.^k

3 The sons of Go'mer were Ash'ke-naz,^l Ri'phath, and To-gar'mah.^m

4 The sons of Ja'van were E-li'shah,ⁿ Tar'shish,^o Kit'tim,^p and Do'da-nim.

5 From these the inhabitants of the islands spread into their lands, according to their languages and their families and by their nations.

6 The sons of Ham were Cush, Miz'ra-im,^q Put,^r and Ca'naan.^s

7 The sons of Cush were Se'ba,^t Hav'i-lah, Sab'tah, Ra'a-mah,^u and Sab'te-ca.

The sons of Ra'a-mah were She'ba and De'dan.

8 Cush became father to Nim'rod. He was the first to become a mighty one on the

earth. **9** He became a mighty hunter in opposition to Jehovah. That is why there is a saying: "Just like Nim'rod, a mighty hunter in opposition to Jehovah." **10** The beginning of his kingdom was* Ba'bel,^a E'rech,^b Ac'cad, and Cal'neh, in the land of Shi'nar.^c **11** From that land he went into As-syr'i-a^d and built Nin'e-veh,^e Re-ho'both-Ir, Ca'lah, **12** and Re'sen, between Nin'e-veh and Ca'lah: This is the great city.*

13 Miz'ra-im became father to Lu'dim,^f An'a-mim, Le-ha'bim, Naph-tu'him,^g **14** Path-ru'sim,^h Cas-lu'him (from whom the Phi-lis'tinesⁱ came), and Caph-to-rim.^j

15 Ca'naan became father to Si'don,^k his firstborn, and Heth,^l **16** as well as the Jeb'u-site,^m the Am'or-ite,ⁿ the Gir-ga-shite, **17** the Hi'vite,^o the Ark'ite, the Si'nite, **18** the Ar'vad-ite,^p the Zem'a-rite, and the Ha'math-ite.^q Afterward, the families of the Ca'naan-ites were scattered. **19** So the boundary of the Ca'naan-ites was from Si'don as far as Ge'rar,^r near Gaz'a,^s as far as Sod'om, Go-mor'rah,^t Ad'mah, and Ze-boi'im,^u near La'sha. **20** These were the sons of Ham according to their families and their languages, by their lands and their nations.

21 Children were also born to Shem, the forefather of all the sons of E'ber^v and the brother of Ja'pheth the oldest.* **22** The sons of Shem were E'lam,^w As'shur,^x Ar-pach'shad,^y Lud, and A'ram.^z

23 The sons of A'ram were Uz, Hul, Ge'ther, and Mash.

10:10 *Or "The first cities of his kingdom were." **10:12** *Or possibly, "They form the great city." **10:21** *Or possibly, "and the older brother of Japheth."

CHAP. 10

- a Ge 11:9
- b Eze 4:9
- c Da 1:2
- d Mic 5:6
- e Jon 3:3
- Mt 12:41
- f Jer 46:9
- g 1Ch 1:11, 12
- h Eze 29:14
- i Jos 13:2, 3
- Jer 47:4
- j De 2:23
- k Jos 13:6
- Mr 7:24
- l Ge 25:10
- Ge 27:46
- 1Ch 1:13-16
- m Jg 1:21
- n Ge 15:16
- De 3:8
- o Jos 11:3
- p Eze 27:11
- q 1Ki 8:65
- r Ge 20:1
- s Jos 15:20, 47
- Ac 8:26
- t Ge 13:10
- Ge 19:24
- Jude 7
- u De 29:23
- v Ge 11:17
- w Eze 4:9
- Ac 2:8, 9
- x Eze 27:23
- y Ge 11:10
- z 1Ch 1:17

Second Col.

- a Ge 11:12
- Lu 3:23, 35
- b Ge 11:16
- c 1Ch 1:19
- d 1Ch 1:20-23
- e 1Ki 9:28
- 1Ki 10:11
- f Ge 10:5
- g Ge 9:7
- Ge 9:19
- Ac 17:26

CHAP. 11

- h Ge 10:9, 10
- Da 1:2
- i Ge 9:1

24 Ar-pach'shad became father to She'lah,^a and She'lah became father to E'ber.

25 Two sons were born to E'ber. The name of the one was Pe'leg,^b because in his lifetime the earth[#] was divided. The name of his brother was Jok'tan.^c

26 Jok'tan became father to Al-mo'dad, She'leph, Ha-zar-ma'veth, Je'rah,^d **27** Ha-do-ram, U'zal, Dik'lah, **28** O'bal, A-bim'a-el, She'ba, **29** O'phir,^e Hav'i-lah, and Jo'bab; all of these were the sons of Jok'tan.

30 Their place of dwelling extended from Me'sha as far as Se'phar, the mountainous region of the East.

31 These were the sons of Shem according to their families and their languages, by their lands and their nations.^f

32 These were the families of the sons of Noah according to their family lines and by their nations. From these the nations were spread abroad in the earth after the Flood.^g

11 Now all the earth continued to be of one language and of one set of words.* **2** As they traveled eastward, they discovered a valley plain in the land of Shi'nar,^h and they began dwelling there. **3** Then they said to one another: "Come! Let us make bricks and bake them with fire." So they used bricks instead of stone, and bitumen as mortar. **4** They now said: "Come! Let us build a city for ourselves and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a celebrated name for ourselves, so that we will not be scattered over the entire face of the earth."ⁱ

10:25 *Meaning "Division." [#]Or "earth's population." **11:1** *Or "of one vocabulary."

provides, and that is why you have a religion, is that not right?' **Then perhaps add:** 'Here at Matthew 7:13, 14 the Bible provides us some very valuable guidance in the words of Jesus. (Read it.) . . . Why might that be so?'

See also pages 322, 323.

'As long as you believe in Jesus, it really does not matter what church you belong to'

You might reply: 'There is no question about it, belief in Jesus is vital. And I assume that by that you mean accepting everything that he taught. No doubt you have observed, as I have, that many who say they are Christians really do not live up to what that name represents.' **Then perhaps add:** (1) 'Notice what Jesus said here at Matthew 7:21-23.' (2) 'There is a wonderful future for those who care enough to find out what God's will is and then do it. (Ps. 37:10, 11; Rev. 21:4)'

'What makes you think there is only one religion that is right?'

You might reply: 'Without doubt, there are sincere people in almost every religion. But what really counts is what God's Word says. How many true faiths does it refer to? Notice what is written here at Ephesians 4:4, 5.' **Then perhaps add:** (1) 'That agrees with what other texts state. (Matt. 7:13, 14, 21; John 10:16; 17:20, 21)' (2) 'So, the challenge that we must face is identifying that religion. How can we do it? (Perhaps use material on pages 328-330.)' (3) (See also what is on pages 199, 200, under the heading "Jehovah's Witnesses.")

'I just read my Bible at home and pray to God for understanding'

You might reply: 'Have you succeeded in reading the entire Bible as yet?' **Then perhaps add:** 'As you work on that, you will find something very interesting at Matthew 28:19, 20. . . . This is significant because it shows that Christ uses other humans to help us to understand

and supervising the work of the thousands of Levites engaged in its service. (Nu 3:5-10) On the annual Day of Atonement he presented sin offerings for the priesthood and Levites and for the people of Israel, and he alone was permitted to enter the Most Holy of the tabernacle with the sacrificial blood of the animals. (Le 16) The daily offering up of incense, the presentation of the firstfruits of the grain harvest, and many other features of the worship were exclusive prerogatives of Aaron and his sons as priests. (Ex 30:7, 8; Lu 1:8-11; Le 23:4-11) His anointing, however, sanctified him to perform not only sacrificial duties for the nation but other duties as well. He was responsible to teach the nation the Word of God. (Le 10:8-11; De 24:8; Mal 2:7) He, as well as his successors, served as the chief officer under Jehovah the King. On high state occasions he wore the costly garments and the "shining plate" of gold on his linen turban. He also wore the breastpiece that contained the Urim and Thummim, enabling him to receive Jehovah's "Yes" or "No" to national problems; although, for the duration of Moses' life and mediatorship, this feature appears to have received little use.—Ex 28:4, 29, 30, 36; see HIGH PRIEST.

Aaron's devotion to pure worship was early put to the test by the death of his sons Nadab and Abihu, who suffered destruction by God for making profane use of their priestly positions. The record says: "And Aaron kept silent." When he and his two surviving sons were instructed not to mourn over the dead transgressors, "they did according to Moses' word."—Le 10:1-11.

During nearly 40 years Aaron represented the 12 tribes before Jehovah in his capacity as high priest. While in the wilderness, a serious rebellion broke out against the authority of Moses and Aaron. It was led by a Levite named Korah, together with the Reubenites Dathan, Abiram, and On, who complained against their leadership. Jehovah caused the earth to open beneath the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, swallowing them up along with their households, while Korah himself and 250 of his coconspirators were destroyed by fire. (Nu 16:1-35) Murmuring broke out now on the part of the congregation against Moses and Aaron; and in the divine plague that ensued, Aaron showed great faith and courage in obediently going out with his fire holder and making atonement for the people while "standing between the dead and the living," until the scourge was stopped.—Nu 16:46-50.

God now directed that 12 rods, each representing one of the 12 tribes, be placed in the taberna-

cle, and the rod for the tribe of Levi was inscribed with Aaron's name. (Nu 17:1-4) On the following day Moses entered the tent of the Testimony and found that Aaron's rod had budded, blossomed with flowers, and bore ripe almonds. (Nu 17:8) This established beyond dispute Jehovah's choice of the Levite sons of Aaron for priestly service and His authorization of Aaron as high priest. Thereafter, the right of Aaron's house to the priesthood was never seriously challenged. The budded rod of Aaron was placed in the ark of the covenant as "a sign to the sons of rebelliousness," though it appears that after the death of these rebellious ones and the entry of the nation into the Land of Promise the rod was removed, having served its purpose.—Nu 17:10; Heb 9:4; 2Ch 5:10; 1Ki 8:9.

Why was Aaron not punished for making the golden calf?

Despite his privileged position, Aaron had his shortcomings. During Moses' first 40-day stay on Mount Sinai, "the people congregated themselves about Aaron and said to him: 'Get up, make for us a god who will go ahead of us, because as regards this Moses, the man who led us up out of the land of Egypt, we certainly do not know what has happened to him.'" (Ex 32:1) Aaron acceded and cooperated with these rebellious ones in making a golden calf statue. (Ex 32:2-6) When later confronted by Moses, he gave a weak excuse. (Ex 32:22-24) However, Jehovah did not single him out as the prime wrongdoer but told Moses: "So now let me be, that my anger may blaze against *them* and I may exterminate *them*." (Ex 32:10) Moses brought the matter to a showdown by crying: "Who is on Jehovah's side? To me!" (Ex 32:26) All the sons of Levi responded, and this undoubtedly included Aaron. Three thousand idolaters, probably the prime movers of the rebellion, were slain by them. (Ex 32:28) Nevertheless, Moses later reminded the rest of the people that they, too, bore guilt. (Ex 32:30) Aaron, therefore, was not alone in receiving God's mercy. His subsequent actions indicated that he was not in heart harmony with the idolatrous movement but simply gave in to the pressure of the rebels. (Ex 32:35) Jehovah showed that Aaron had received his forgiveness by maintaining as valid Aaron's appointment to become high priest.—Ex 40:12, 13.

After having loyally supported his younger brother through many difficult experiences and having recently been installed as high priest by

Moses as God's representative, Aaron foolishly associated himself with his sister Miriam in criticizing Moses for his marriage to a Cushite woman and in challenging Moses' unique relationship and position with Jehovah God, saying: "Is it just by Moses alone that Jehovah has spoken? Is it not by us also that he has spoken?" (Nu 12:1, 2) Jehovah swiftly took action, brought the three before him in front of the tent of meeting, and strongly castigated Aaron and Miriam for disrespecting God's appointment. The fact that only Miriam was stricken with leprosy may mark her as the instigator of the action and may indicate that Aaron again had shown weakness by being induced to join her. However, if Aaron had been similarly struck with leprosy, it would have invalidated his appointment as high priest, according to God's law. (Le 21:21-23) His right heart attitude manifested itself by his immediate confession and apology for the foolishness of their act and by his agonized plea for Moses' intercession on leprous Miriam's behalf.—Nu 12:10-13.

Aaron again shared responsibility for wrong when he, along with Moses, failed to sanctify and honor God before the congregation in the incident involving the providing of water at Meribah in Kadesh. For this action God decreed that neither of them would enjoy the privilege of bringing the nation into the Land of Promise.—Nu 20:9-13.

On the first day of the month Ab, in the 40th year following the Exodus, the nation of Israel lay encamped on the frontier of Edom before Mount Hor. Within a matter of months they would be crossing over the Jordan; but not the 123-year-old Aaron. At Jehovah's instruction, and with all the camp watching, Aaron, his son Eleazar, and Moses went climbing to the top of Mount Hor. There Aaron let his brother remove his priestly garments from him and put them on his son and successor to the high priesthood, Eleazar. Then Aaron died. He was probably buried there by his brother and his son, and for 30 days Israel mourned his death.—Nu 20:24-29.

It is noteworthy that in each of his three deflections, Aaron does not appear as the principal initiator of the wrong action but, rather, seems to have allowed the pressure of the circumstances or the influence of others to sway him from a course of rectitude. Particularly in his first trespass, he could have applied the principle underlying the command: "You must not follow after the crowd for evil ends." (Ex 23:2) Nevertheless, his name is thereafter used in the Scriptures in an honorable way, and God's Son, during his earthly lifetime, recognized the legitimacy of the Aaronic priest-

hood.—Ps 115:10, 12; 118:3; 133:1, 2; 135:19; Mt 5:17-19; 8:4.

Aaron's Priestly Descendants. The expression "Aaronites" appears in the *King James Version* and *Moffatt* at 1 Chronicles 12:27; 27:17. (The Masoretic text in Hebrew simply uses the name Aaron. LXX [Lagardian edition, at 1Ch 12:27] says "of the sons of Aaron.") It is evident that the word "Aaron" is here used in a collective sense, much as is the name Israel, and stands for the house of Aaron or his male descendants in David's time who were of the tribe of Levi and were serving as priests. (1Ch 6:48-53) The *New World Translation* reads: "And Jehoiada was the leader [of the sons] of Aaron, and with him were three thousand seven hundred" (1Ch 12:27), bracketing the words "of the sons" to denote that they are supplied.

AB. The postexilic name of the 5th lunar month of the Jewish sacred calendar, but the 11th of the secular calendar. It corresponds to part of July and part of August.

The meaning of the name Ab is uncertain. In the Bible it is mentioned, not directly by name, but only as "the fifth month." The name does appear, however, in the Mishnah (*Ta'anit* 4:6) and other postexilic Jewish writings.

Ab was a month of summer heat, a time when the harvesting of grapes began in Israel.—See CALENDAR.

It was on the first day of Ab that Aaron died on Mount Hor. (Nu 33:38) Second Kings 25:8 says that it was on the seventh day of this month that Nebuzaradan, the servant of the king of Babylon, "came to Jerusalem." However, Jeremiah 52:12 tells us that it was on the tenth day of this month that Nebuzaradan "came into Jerusalem." The *Soncino Books of the Bible* comments on this, saying: "The interval of three days may be accounted for as representing the date of Nebuzaradan's arrival on the scene and the commencement of operations." (Edited by A. Cohen, London, 1949) It would appear, then, that Nebuzaradan arrived at Jerusalem on the seventh day, made his survey from his camp outside the city walls, and gave directions for the demolition of the city fortifications and the plundering of its treasures; finally, on the tenth day of the month, he entered the city and its holy temple. According to Josephus (*The Jewish War*, VI, 250, 268 [iv, 5, 8]), Herod's temple was burned by the Romans on the tenth day of the fifth month (70 C.E.), and Josephus makes note of the precise correspondency of this date with the burning of the first temple on the same day by the Babylonians.

69 *Make Me Know Your Ways*

(Psalm 25:4)

1. We're gathered together Jehovah, our God,
 Accepting your warm invitation.
Your Word is a lamp that lights up our roadway,
 The source of divine education.

(CHORUS)

*Teach me your ways, and make me understand;
Incline my ear to hear your wise command.
Cause me to walk in ways of truth and right,
And make your law my principal delight.*

2. Unreachably high is your wisdom, O God;
 Your judgments we find reassuring.
Your Word is a source of unending wonder;
 Your sayings of truth are enduring.

(Chorus)

What do you need to do?

State more than once the points that you especially want your audience to remember.

EFFECTIVE teaching includes the use of repetition. When an important point is stated more than once, those in attendance are more likely to remember it. If the idea is restated in a slightly different way, they may even be able to understand it more clearly.

If your listeners do not remember what you say, your words will not influence what they believe or how they live. They will probably continue thinking about points to which you give special emphasis.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

In addition to being a memory aid, repetition can be used effectively to highlight principal ideas and help your audience to understand them clearly.

Jehovah, our Grand Instructor, sets the pattern for us in his use of repetition. He gave the Ten Commandments to the nation of Israel. Through an angelic spokesman, he caused the nation to hear those commandments at Mount Sinai. Later he gave them to Moses in written form. (Ex. 20:1-17; 31:18; Deut. 5:22) At Jehovah's direction, Moses restated those commandments to the nation

before they entered the Promised Land, and by means of holy spirit, Moses made a record of that, as found at Deuteronomy 5:6-21. Among the commandments given to Israel was the requirement that they love and serve Jehovah with their whole heart, soul, and vital force. This too was stated again and again. (Deut. 6:5; 10:12; 11:13; 30:6) Why? Because, as Jesus said, it was "the greatest and first commandment." (Matt. 22:34-38) Through the prophet Jeremiah, Jehovah reminded the people of Judah more than 20 times about the seriousness of obeying him in all the things that he commanded them. (Jer. 7:23; 11:4; 12:17; 19:15) And through Ezekiel, God stated more than 60 times that the nations "will have to know that I am Jehovah."—Ezek. 6:10; 38:23.

In the record of the ministry of Jesus, we also observe effective use of repetition. There are, for example, the four Gospels—each one covering important events that are reported in one or more of the other Gospels but viewing these events from slightly different angles.

In his own teaching, Jesus covered the same basic point of instruction on more than one occasion but in different ways. (Mark 9:34-37; 10:35-45; John 13:2-17) And while on the Mount of Olives a few days before his death, Jesus used repetition to emphasize this vital counsel: “Keep on the watch, . . . because you do not know on what day your Lord is coming.”—Matt. 24:42; 25:13.

In the Field Ministry. When you witness to people, you hope that they will remember what you say. Effective use of repetition can help to achieve that goal.

Frequently, repetition at the time a matter is being discussed will help impress it on a person’s mind. Thus, after reading a scripture, you could emphasize it by pointing to a key portion of it and asking, “Did you notice how that text is worded?”

The final sentences in a conversation can also be used effectively. For example, you might say: “The main point that I hope you will remember from our conversation is . . .” Then restate it simply. It might be something like this: “God’s purpose is that the earth be transformed into a paradise. That purpose is sure to be realized.” Or possibly: “The Bible clearly shows that we are living in the last days of this system of things. If we are going to survive its end, we need to learn what God requires of us.” Or it could be: “As we have seen, the Bible offers practical counsel on how to cope with problems of family life.” In some cases you may simply repeat a quotation from the Bible as the point to be remembered. Of course, doing this effectively requires forethought.

On return visits, including Bible studies, your use of repetition may involve review questions.

When a person finds it difficult to understand or to apply Bible counsel, you may need to bring the subject up on more than one occasion. Endeavor to approach it from various angles. The discussions do not have to be lengthy but should encourage the student to keep thinking about the matter. Remember, Jesus used this sort of repetition in helping his disciples overcome the desire to be in first place.—Matt. 18:1-6; 20:20-28; Luke 22:24-27.

WHEN TO DO IT

Immediately after stating an important point or after fully developing a main idea.

At the conclusion of your conversation or your discourse.

When you discern that your listeners are finding it difficult to grasp some key point.

More than once, possibly days or weeks apart in the case of return visits and Bible studies.

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

JANUARY 2014

WEEK STARTING JANUARY 13

Song 131 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

cl chap. 1 ¶10-17 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Genesis 6-10 (10 min.)

No. 1: Genesis 9:18–10:7 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: If Someone Says, ‘As Long as You Believe in Jesus, It Really Does Not Matter What Church You Belong To’—rs p. 332 ¶12 (5 min.)

No. 3: Aaron—Continue Faithful in Spite of Human Weaknesses—*it-1* p. 10 ¶4–p. 11 ¶3 (5 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 69

10 min: The Value of Repetition in the Ministry. Talk based on the *Ministry School* book, pages 206-207. Briefly demonstrate at least one of the points from the material.

10 min: Men Who Minister in a Fine Manner. (1 Tim. 3:13) Interview two ministerial servants. What are their responsibilities in the congregation, and what does caring for these involve? Why did they reach out to be ministerial servants? Why do they enjoy serving the congregation and assisting the elders?

10 min: “Take as a Pattern the Prophets—Micah.” Questions and answers.

Song 35 and Prayer

Take as a Pattern the Prophets—Micah

¹ ‘When will the end of this corrupt system of things finally come?’ The prophet Micah may have pondered a similar question as he proclaimed Jehovah’s judgment messages against the kingdoms of Israel and Judah. Yet, his preaching was not in vain. In 740 B.C.E., during Micah’s lifetime, Jehovah’s words

1. What question may Micah have pondered, but why was his preaching not in vain?

against Samaria were fulfilled. (Mic. 1:6, 7) Later, Jerusalem was destroyed in the year 607 B.C.E. (Mic. 3:12) How can we imitate Micah as we await the execution of Jehovah’s judgments in our day?

² **Be Patient:** Micah wrote: “As for me, I will keep on the lookout for Jehovah. I will show a waiting attitude for the God of my salvation.” (Mic. 7:7) Of course, Micah did not idly wait for the end to come. He remained busy as Jehovah’s prophet. As we await Jehovah’s day, we should also be engaged in “holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion.” (2 Pet. 3:11, 12) Jehovah’s patience allows individuals time to repent. (2 Pet. 3:9) Therefore, we take to heart the divine admonition to imitate the prophets in exercising patience.—Jas. 5:10.

³ **Rely on Jehovah’s Strength:** Although Micah had a challenging assignment, he looked to Jehovah for the strength to carry it out. (Mic. 3:8) It is no coincidence that Jehovah’s Word urges us to rely on God for strength. He generously gives power to the tired ones so that they can fulfill their theocratic responsibilities. (Ps. 84:5, 7; Isa. 40:28-31) Have you personally experienced this in your life of sacred service? Do you regularly petition Jehovah for the help of his powerful holy spirit?—Luke 11:13.

⁴ Throughout his life, Micah made the doing of God’s will his priority. He was determined to remain faithful although surrounded by moral corruption. Similarly, our integrity is tested on a daily basis. Let us therefore strengthen our resolve to “walk in the name of Jehovah our God forever and ever.”—Mic. 4:5.

2. How and why do we show patience as we await Jehovah’s day?

3. Why should we petition Jehovah for his holy spirit?

4. Micah’s life course provides what excellent example for us today?

35 *Gratitude for Divine Patience* (2 Peter 3:15)

1. Great God, Jehovah, boundless in might,
 You have made known your love of right.
Wickedness rules on earth below,
 Causing you pain, as we well know.
You are not slow, as men may contend;
 Your time is near for badness to end.
We look to you in hope and trust,
 Grateful that you are patient and just.
2. One thousand years, from your point of view,
 Are like a day when they are through.
Time now proceeds to your great day;
 It will arrive without delay.
Though all transgression you do resent,
 Your heart is glad when sinners repent.
We look ahead with hope renewed,
 Praising your name in deep gratitude.