

- Song 110 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Remember the Works of Jehovah”:** (10 min.)
Ps 74:16; 77:6, 11, 12—Meditate on Jehovah's works (w15 8/15 10 ¶3-4; w04 3/1 19-20; w03 7/1 10 ¶6-7)
Ps 75:4-7—Jehovah's works include appointing humble men to care for his congregation (w06 7/15 11 ¶2; it-1 1160 ¶7)
Ps 78:11-17—Remember how Jehovah has acted in behalf of his people (w04 4/1 21-22)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Ps 78:2—How did this verse apply prophetically to the Messiah? (w11 8/15 11 ¶14)

Ps 78:40, 41—According to these verses, how can our actions affect Jehovah? (w12 11/1 14 ¶5; w11 7/1 10)

What does this week's Bible reading teach me about Jehovah?

What points from this week's Bible reading can I use in the field ministry?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ps 78:1-21

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) wp16.4 16—Mention the donation arrangement.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) wp16.4 16
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) fg lesson 5 ¶6-7

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 15
- **Local needs:** (10 min.)
- **“Jehovah . . . Created All Things”:** (5 min.)
Discussion. Play the jw.org video. (Go to BIBLE TEACHINGS > CHILDREN.) Afterward, invite selected young children to the stage, and ask them questions about the video.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.)
ia chap. 20 ¶1-13
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 73 and Prayer

PSALMS 74-78 | Remember the Works of Jehovah

74:16; 77:6, 11, 12

Meditating on the good things that Jehovah has done is essential

- Meditation helps us to absorb what we read in God's Word and to develop heartfelt appreciation for spiritual food
- Thinking deeply about Jehovah helps us to remember his wonderful works and the hope he has set before us

74:16, 17; 75:6, 7; 78:11-17

Jehovah's works include the following:

- **Creation**—The more we learn about creation, the more our awe for Jehovah deepens
- **Appointed men in the congregation**—We should be submissive to those whom Jehovah appoints to take the lead
- **Acts of salvation**—Remembering Jehovah's saving acts strengthens our faith in his desire and ability to care for his servants



God's Wondrous Works

(Psalm 139)

D Em7 Dma7/F# G6 D/F# Em7 D/F# G6

O God, you know my rest and wak-ing, When I lie down and when I rise a -

Detailed description: This system contains the first two staves of music. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The bottom staff is in bass clef. The music consists of quarter and eighth notes, with some rests. Chord symbols are placed above the top staff. The lyrics are written below the staves.

A Asus4 A D/F# G6 Gma7 Gm D/F# Bm A6 D/A

new. You search my thought, my in-most in - cli - na - tion, The words I

Detailed description: This system contains the third and fourth staves of music. The notation continues from the previous system. Chord symbols are placed above the top staff. The lyrics are written below the staves.

G D/F# Em7 A F#m/A D Em7 Dma7/F# G6

speak, the ways I walk, you know them too. You saw when I was made in

Detailed description: This system contains the fifth and sixth staves of music. The notation continues from the previous system. Chord symbols are placed above the top staff. The lyrics are written below the staves.

D/F# Em7 D/F# G6 A Asus4 A D/F#

se - cret, My ve - ry bones not hid - den from your sight. You saw my

Detailed description: This system contains the seventh and eighth staves of music. The notation continues from the previous system. Chord symbols are placed above the top staff. The lyrics are written below the staves.

G6 Gma7 Gm D/F# Bm A6 D/A G D/F# Em7 G/A

form; its parts were down in writ-ing. I praise the won - der of your ways, ex - tol your

Detailed description: This system contains the ninth and tenth staves of music. The notation continues from the previous system. Chord symbols are placed above the top staff. The lyrics are written below the staves.

God's Wondrous Works

D A/C# D D/F# G D/F# G D/F# D A D A/C# D D/F#

might. Your knowl-edge, God, is won-drous, fear-in - spir - ing; Of this my

R.H.

G D/F# D Bm A A/C# D D/F# G D/F# G D/F# D

soul is ve - ry well a - ware. If I should fear that dark-ness might en -

A Bm Em Bm/F# G6 Gma7 G6 F# F#/E D Em7 Dma7/F# G6

fold me, Your spir-it, God, would find me, e - ven there. Where could I hide from you, Je-

D/F# Em7 D/F# G6 A Asus4 A D/F#

ho - vah, Or be con - cealed, be hid - den from your face? Not in the

R.H.

G6 Gma7 Gm D/F# Bm A6 D/A G D/F# Em7 G/A D

heights nor in the depth of She - ol, Not in the dark nor in the sea, there is no place.

R.H.

- They have exceeded the imaginations of the heart.
- 8** They scoff and say evil things.^a
They arrogantly threaten oppression.^b
- 9** They speak as if they were as high as heaven,
And their tongues swagger about in the earth.
- 10** So his people turn aside to them,
And they drink from their abundant water.
- 11** They say: "How does God know?^c
Does the Most High really have knowledge?"
- 12** Yes, these are the wicked,
who always have it easy.^d
They keep increasing their wealth.^e
- 13** Surely in vain I have kept my heart pure
And washed my hands in innocence.^f
- 14** And I was troubled all day long;^g
Every morning I was chastised.^h
- 15** But if I had said these things,
I would have betrayed your people.*
- 16** When I tried to understand it,
It was troubling to me
- 17** Until I entered the grand sanctuary of God,
And I discerned their future.
- 18** Surely you place them on slippery ground.ⁱ
You make them fall to their ruin.^j
- 19** How suddenly they are devastated!^k
How sudden is their finish as they come to a terrible end!
- 20** Like a dream when one wakes up, O Jehovah,

73:15 *Lit., "the generation of your sons."

CHAP. 73

- a Ps 53:1
b 1Ki 21:7
c Ps 10:4, 11
Ps 94:3, 7
Eze 8:12
Zep 1:12
d Ps 37:35
e Ps 17:14
f Job 34:7, 9
Job 35:3
g Ps 34:19
h Job 7:17, 18
i Ps 35:6, 7
Jer 23:11, 12
j Ps 37:10, 20
Ps 55:23
Pr 3:33
k Job 21:23
Ps 37:1, 2
Isa 30:13

Second Col.

- a Ps 73:3
b Ps 16:8
Ps 63:8
Isa 41:10
c Ps 25:9
Ps 32:8
Ps 37:23
Ps 143:10
Pr 3:6
d Ps 37:34
e Ps 42:2
Ps 84:2
Isa 26:9
f Ps 16:5
La 3:24
g Nu 15:39
Jas 4:4
h Ps 65:4
Jas 4:8
i Ps 118:17

CHAP. 74

- j 1Ch 25:1
2Ch 35:15
k La 5:20
l De 29:19, 20
Ps 100:3
m De 9:29

When you rouse yourself,
you will dismiss* their image.

- 21** But my heart was sour,^a
And deep inside* I felt sharp pain.
- 22** I was unreasoning and lacked understanding;
I was like a senseless beast before you.
- 23** But now I am continually with you;
You have taken hold of my right hand.^b
- 24** You guide me with your advice,^c
And afterward you will lead me to glory.^d
- 25** Whom do I have in the heavens?
And besides you I desire nothing on earth.^e
- 26** My body and my heart may fail,
But God is the rock of my heart and my portion forever.^f
- 27** Truly, those keeping far from you will perish.
You will put an end to* everyone who immorally^g leaves you.^g
- 28** But as for me, drawing near to God is good for me.^h
I have made the Sovereign Lord Jehovah my refuge,
To declare all your works.ⁱ
- A mas'kil.* Of A'saph.^j
- 74** Why, O God, have you rejected us forever?^k
Why does your anger burn* against the flock of your pasture?^l
- 2** Remember the people* you acquired long ago,^m

73:20 *Lit., "despise." 73:21 *Lit., "in my kidneys." 73:27 *Lit., "silence."
*Or "unfaithfully." 74:Sup *See Glossary. 74:1 *Lit., "smoke." 74:2 *Lit., "your assembly."

The tribe you redeemed as
your inheritance.^a

Remember Mount Zion,
where you have resided.^b

- 3** Direct your steps to the per-
petual ruins.^c

The enemy has devastated
everything in the holy
place.^d

- 4** Your foes roared inside your
meeting place.^e

They have set up their own
banners as signs there.

- 5** They were like men wielding
axes against a thick forest.

- 6** They broke up all its engrav-
ings^f with axes and iron
bars.

- 7** They set your sanctuary on
fire.^g

They profaned the taber-
nacle bearing your name,
casting it to the ground.

- 8** They and their offspring
have said in their hearts:
“All the meeting places of
God* in the land must be
burned.”

- 9** There are no signs for us to
see;

There is no longer any
prophet,

And no one among us knows
how long this will last.

- 10** How long, O God, will the
adversary keep taunting?^h

Will the enemy treat your
name with disrespect for-
ever?ⁱ

- 11** Why do you hold back your
hand, your right hand?^j

Draw it out of your bosom*
and put an end to them.

- 12** But God is my King from long
ago,

The one performing acts of
salvation on the earth.^k

74:4 *Or “your place of assembly.”

74:8 *Or “All places where God is wor-
shipped.” 74:11 *Or “from the folds of
your garment.”

CHAP. 74

a De 4:20
De 32:9

b Ps 48:2
Ps 132:13

c Da 9:17

d Ps 79:1

e La 2:7

f 1Ki 6:18, 35

g 2Ki 25:9
Isa 64:11

h Ps 13:2
Ps 79:4

i Eze 36:23

j Ps 44:23
Isa 64:12
La 2:3

k Ex 15:2
Isa 33:22

Second Col.

a Ex 14:21
Ne 9:10, 11

b Isa 48:21

c Jos 3:13

d Ge 1:3, 5
Ps 136:7, 8

e Ac 17:26

f Ge 8:22

g Isa 52:5

h Ps 12:5

i Eze 3:11

j Ps 89:50, 51
Isa 52:5

- 13** You stirred up the sea with
your strength;^a

You smashed the heads of
the sea monsters in the
waters.

- 14** You crushed the heads of
Le-vi'a-than;^{*}

You gave it as food to the
people, to those inhabiting
the deserts.

- 15** You cut openings for the
springs and the streams;^b

You dried up ever-flowing
rivers.^c

- 16** The day belongs to you, also
the night.

You made the light* and the
sun.^d

- 17** You set up all the boundaries
of the earth;^e

You made summer and win-
ter.^f

- 18** Remember the enemy's
taunts, O Jehovah,

How a foolish people
treats your name with dis-
respect.^g

- 19** Do not surrender the life* of
your turtledove to the wild
beasts.

Do not forget the life of your
afflicted people forever.

- 20** Remember the covenant,
For the dark places of the
earth have become full of
the haunts of violence.

- 21** May the crushed one not turn
away disappointed;^h

May the lowly and the poor
praise your name.ⁱ

- 22** Rise up, O God, and plead
your legal case.

Remember how the foolish
taunt you all day long.^j

- 23** Do not forget what your foes
are saying.

The uproar of those who
defy you is ascending
constantly.

74:14 *See Glossary. 74:16 *Or “the
luminary.” 74:19 *Or “soul.”

To the director. Set to the melody "Do Not Bring to Ruin." Of A'saph.^a A song.

75 We give thanks to you,
O God, we give thanks
to you;

Your name is near,^b
And people declare your
wondrous works.

2 You say: "When I set a time,
I judge with fairness.
3 When the earth and all its
inhabitants were dissolved,
It was I who kept its pillars
firm." (*Selah*)

4 I say to the boastful, "Do not
boast,"

And to the wicked, "Do not
exalt your strength.*

5 Do not exalt your strength*
up high
Or speak with arrogance.
6 For exaltation does not come
From the east or the west or
the south.

7 For God is Judge.^c
He puts one man down and
exalts another.^d

8 For there is a cup in
Jehovah's hand;^e
The wine is foaming and is
fully mixed.

He will surely pour it out,
And all the wicked of the
earth will drink it, down
to the dregs."^f

9 But as for me, I will proclaim
it forever;
I will sing praises* to the God
of Jacob.

10 For he says: "I will cut off
all the strength* of the
wicked,
But the strength* of the righ-
teous will be exalted."

To the director; to be accompanied
with stringed instruments.

A melody of A'saph.^g A song.

76 God is known in Judah;^h
In Israel his name is great.ⁱ

2 His shelter is in Sa'lem,^j
And his dwelling is in Zion.^k

CHAP. 75

a 2Ch 35:15

b Isa 40:27

c Ps 50:6
Ps 58:11

d 1Sa 2:7
Da 2:21
Da 4:17
Lu 1:52

e Ps 11:5, 6

f Job 21:19, 20
Jer 25:15, 28
Jer 49:12
Re 14:9, 10
Re 16:19
Re 18:6

CHAP. 76

g 2Ch 35:15

h Ps 48:1, 3

i 2Ch 2:5

j Ge 14:18

k Ps 74:2
Ps 132:13
Ps 135:21

Second Col.

a 2Ch 32:21
Ps 46:9

b Lu 1:51

c Isa 31:8
Isa 37:36

d Na 2:13

e Ps 89:7

f Jer 10:10
Na 1:6

g 1Ki 8:49

h 2Ch 20:29
Ps 2:4, 5

i Ps 147:6
Pr 3:34
Zep 2:3

j Pr 16:4
Da 3:19, 28

k Nu 30:2

l 2Ch 32:23
Ps 89:7

CHAP. 77

m 2Ch 35:15

n Ps 34:6
Pr 15:29

3 There he broke the flaming
arrows of the bow,
The shield and the sword
and the weapons of war.^a
(*Selah*)

4 You shine brightly;*
You are more majestic than
the mountains of prey.

5 The courageous of heart
have been plundered.^b
They have fallen asleep;
The warriors were all help-
less.^c

6 From your rebuke, O God
of Jacob,
Both the charioteer and
the horse have fallen fast
asleep.^d

7 You alone are awe-inspiring.^e
Who can withstand your in-
tense anger?^f

8 From heaven you pro-
nounced judgment;^g
The earth was afraid and was
silent^h

9 When God rose up to exe-
cute judgment,
To save all the meek of the
earth.ⁱ (*Selah*)

10 For the rage of man will
serve to your praise;^j
With the remnants of their
rage you will adorn your-
self.

11 Make your vows to Jehovah
your God and pay them,^k
Let all who are around him
bring their gift in fear.^l

12 He will humble the pride*
of leaders;
He inspires fear in the kings
of the earth.

To the director; on Je-du'thun.*
Of A'saph.^m A melody.

77 With my voice I will cry
out to God;
To God I will cry out, and
he will hear me.ⁿ

76:4 *Or "You are enveloped with light."
76:12 *Lit., "spirit." **77:Sup** *See Glos-
sary.

75:4, 5 *Lit., "horn." **75:9** *Or "make
music." **75:10** *Lit., "horns."

- 2** In the day of my distress
I search for Jehovah.^a
At night my hands are
stretched out to him with-
out ceasing.*
I[#] cannot be comforted.
- 3** When I remember God,
I groan;^b
I am troubled and my
strength fails.*^c (*Selah*)
- 4** You hold my eyelids open;
I am agitated and cannot
speak.
- 5** My thoughts turn to the days
of long ago,^d
The years of the distant past.
- 6** During the night I remember
my song;^{*e}
I ponder in my heart;^f
I make[#] a diligent search.
- 7** Will Jehovah cast us off for-
ever?^g
Will he never again show his
favor?^h
- 8** Has his loyal love ceased
forever?
Will his promise come to
nothing for all generations?
- 9** Has God forgotten to show
his favor;ⁱ
Or has his anger caused his
mercy to cease? (*Selah*)
- 10** Must I keep saying: "This is
what distresses me:^{*j}
The Most High has changed
his position[#] toward us?"
- 11** I will remember the works
of Jah;
I will remember your marvel-
ous deeds of long ago.
- 12** And I will meditate on all
your activity
And ponder over your deal-
ings.^k
- 13** O God, your ways are holy.
What god is as great as you,
O God?^l

77:2 *Lit., "growing numb." #Or "My soul." 77:3 *Lit., "my spirit faints." 77:6 *Or "string music." #Lit., "My spirit makes." 77:10 *Or "pierces me." #Lit., "right hand."

CHAP. 77

a Ps 18:6
Ps 50:15

b Ps 42:5

c Ps 143:4

d Ps 143:5
Isa 51:9

e Ps 42:8

f Ps 77:12

g Ps 74:1

h Ps 79:5

i Isa 49:14
Isa 63:15

j Ps 31:22

k 1Ch 16:9
Ps 143:5

l Ex 15:11
Ps 89:8

Second Col.

a Ps 72:18
Re 15:3

b Ex 9:16
Isa 52:10
Da 3:29
Da 6:26, 27

c Ex 6:6
De 9:29

d Ex 14:21
Jos 3:16
Ps 114:1-3

e 2Sa 22:15
Ps 144:6

f Ps 29:3

g Ps 97:4

h Ex 19:18
2Sa 22:8

i Ne 9:10, 11
Hab 3:15

j Ex 13:21
Ps 78:52

k Isa 63:11
Ac 7:35, 36

CHAP. 78

l 1Ch 25:1

m Pr 1:5, 6
Mt 13:34, 35

n Ex 13:8
Ps 44:1

- 14** You are the true God, who
does marvelous things.^a
You have revealed your
strength to the peoples.^b
- 15** With your power* you have
rescued[#] your people,^c
The sons of Jacob and of
Joseph. (*Selah*)
- 16** The waters saw you, O God;
The waters saw you and
were disturbed.^d
And the deep waters became
agitated.
- 17** The clouds poured down
water.
The cloudy skies thundered,
And your arrows flew here
and there.^e
- 18** The sound of your thunder^f
was like chariot wheels;
Flashes of lightning lit up
the inhabited earth;^{*g}
The earth trembled and
quaked.^h
- 19** Your way was through the
sea,ⁱ
Your path through many
waters;
But your footprints could
not be traced.
- 20** You led your people just like
a flock,^j
In the care* of Moses and
Aaron.^k

Mas'kil.* Of A'saph.^l

- 78** Listen, my people, to my
law;^{*m}
Incline your ear to the words
of my mouth.
- 2** I will open my mouth in a
proverb.
I will propound riddles of
long ago.^m
- 3** The things we have heard
and know,
Which our fathers have
related to us,ⁿ

77:15 *Lit., "arm." #Lit., "redeemed."

77:18 *Or "the productive land."

77:20 *Lit., "By the hand." 78:Sup

*See Glossary. 78:1 *Or "instruction."

- 4 We will not hide from their sons;
We will relate to the generation to come^a
The praiseworthy deeds of Jehovah and his strength,^b
The wonderful things he has done.^c
- 5 He established a reminder in Jacob
And set a law in Israel;
He commanded our forefathers
To make these things known to their children,^d
- 6 So that the next generation,
The children yet to be born,
might know them.^e
They in turn would relate them to their children.^f
- 7 Then these would put their confidence in God.
They would not forget God's works^g
But would observe his commandments.^h
- 8 Then they would not be like their forefathers,
A stubborn and rebellious generation,ⁱ
A generation whose heart was unsteady^{*j}
And whose spirit was not faithful to God.
- 9 The E'phra-im-ites were armed with the bow,
But they retreated in the day of battle.
- 10 They did not keep the covenant of God^k
And refused to walk in his law.^l
- 11 They also forgot what he had done,^m
His wonderful works that he showed them.ⁿ
- 12 He did marvelous things in the sight of their forefathers,^o
In the land of Egypt, the region of Zo'an.^p

78:8 *Lit., "unprepared."

CHAP. 78

- a De 4:9
De 6:6, 7
De 6:21
De 11:18, 19
Jos 4:6, 7
- b Isa 63:7
- c Ps 98:1
- d Ge 18:19
De 6:6, 7
- e Ps 71:17, 18
Ps 102:18
- f De 4:10
- g De 4:9
Ps 103:2
- h De 5:29
- i Ex 32:9
De 1:43
De 31:27
2Ki 17:13, 14
Eze 20:18
Ac 7:51
- j Ps 81:11, 12
Jer 7:24-26
- k De 31:16
- l 2Ch 13:8, 9
Ne 9:26
- m De 32:18
2Ch 13:12
Jer 2:32
- n Ps 106:21, 22
- o De 4:34
Ne 9:10
- p Nu 13:22

Second Col.

- a Ex 14:21, 22
Ex 15:8
- b Ex 13:21
Ex 14:20, 24
- c Ex 17:6
Nu 20:11
Ps 105:41
Isa 48:21
1Co 10:4
- d De 8:14, 15
e De 9:21, 22
Ps 95:8
Heb 3:16
- f Ps 106:14
- g Ex 16:8
- h Ex 17:6
- i Ex 16:3
- j Nu 11:10
- k Heb 12:29
- l Nu 11:1
- m Ps 106:24
Heb 3:10
Jude 5

- 13 He split the sea to let them pass through,
And he made the waters stand up like a dam.^{*a}
- 14 He led them with a cloud by day
And the whole night with the light of a fire.^b
- 15 He split rocks in the wilderness,
He let them drink their fill as if from deep waters.^c
- 16 He brought streams out of a crag
And caused waters to flow down like rivers.^d
- 17 But they continued to sin against him
By rebelling against the Most High in the desert;^e
- 18 They challenged^{*} God in their heart^f
By demanding food that they craved.^g
- 19 So they spoke against God,
Saying: "Can God spread a table in the wilderness?"^g
- 20 Look! He struck a rock
So that waters flowed and streams flooded out.^h
"Can he also give us bread,
Or can he provide meat for his people?"ⁱ
- 21 When Jehovah heard them,
he became furious;^j
A fire^k blazed against Jacob,
And his anger flared up against Israel^l
- 22 Because they did not put faith in God;^m
They did not trust in his ability to save them.
- 23 So he commanded the cloudy skies above,
And he opened the doors of heaven.
- 24 He kept raining down manna for them to eat;

78:13 *Or "wall." 78:18 *Lit., "tested."
*Or "food for their soul."

- He gave them the grain of heaven.^a
- 25 Men ate the bread of mighty ones;^{*b}
He provided enough to satisfy them.^c
- 26 He stirred up the east wind in the heavens
And made a south wind blow by his power.^d
- 27 And he rained down meat on them like dust,
Birds like the sand of the seashore.
- 28 He made them fall in the midst of his camp,
All around his tents.
- 29 And they ate and gorged themselves;
He gave them what they desired.^e
- 30 But before they fully satisfied their craving,
While their food was yet in their mouth,
- 31 God's wrath flared up against them.^f
He put to death their strongest men;^g
He brought down the young men of Israel.
- 32 Despite this they sinned even more^h
And did not put faith in his wonderful works.ⁱ
- 33 So he brought their days to an end as if a mere breath,^j
And their years by sudden terrors.
- 34 But as often as he killed them, they would search for him;^k
They would return and look for God,
- 35 Remembering that God was their Rock^l
And that the Most High God was their Redeemer.^{*m}
- 36 But they tried to deceive him with their mouth

78:25 *Or "of angels." 78:35 *Or "Avenger."

CHAP. 78

- a Ex 16:14, 35
Ex 16:31, 32
Nu 11:7
De 8:3
Joh 6:31
1Co 10:2, 3
- b Ps 103:20
- c Ex 16:12
- d Nu 11:31-34
- e Nu 11:19, 20
- f Nu 11:10
- g Nu 11:34
- h Nu 14:2-4
Nu 25:3
1Co 10:8-10
- i Ex 16:15
De 8:14, 15
- j Nu 14:29, 35
De 2:14
- k Nu 21:7
Jg 4:3
- l De 32:4
- m Ex 6:6

Second Col.

- a Ps 95:10
Heb 3:10
- b De 31:20
Jer 31:32
- c Ex 34:6
Nu 14:18
Ne 9:31
- d Nu 14:19, 20
Jer 30:11
La 3:22
- e Ne 9:27
Isa 48:9
Eze 20:9
- f Ps 103:14
- g Nu 14:11
- h Isa 63:10
Eph 4:30
Heb 3:16
- i Nu 14:22
De 6:16
Ps 95:8, 9
- j Ex 14:30
- k De 4:34
Ne 9:10
Ps 105:27-36
- l Ex 7:19
- m Ex 8:24
- n Ex 8:6
- o Ex 10:14, 15

- And lied to him with their tongue.
- 37 Their heart was not steadfast toward him;^a
And they were not faithful to his covenant.^b
- 38 But he was merciful;^c
He would forgive* their error and not bring them to ruin.^d
He often held back his anger^e
Instead of stirring up all his wrath.
- 39 For he remembered that they were flesh,^f
A wind that blows past and does not return.*
- 40 How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness^g
And made him feel hurt in the desert!^h
- 41 Again and again they put God to the test,ⁱ
And they grieved* the Holy One of Israel.
- 42 They did not remember his power,^{*}
The day that he rescued[#] them from the adversary,^j
- 43 How he displayed his signs in Egypt^k
And his miracles in the region of Zo'an,
- 44 And how he turned the Nile canals into blood!
So that they could not drink from their streams.
- 45 He sent swarms of gadflies to devour them^m
And frogs to bring them to ruin.ⁿ
- 46 He gave their crops to the voracious locusts,
The fruit of their labor to the swarming locusts.^o

78:38 *Lit., "cover." 78:39 *Or possibly, "That the spirit is going forth and does not come back." 78:41 *Or "pained." 78:42 *Lit., "hand." #Lit., "redeemed."

- 47 He destroyed their vines with hail^a
And their sycamore trees with hailstones.
- 48 He gave their beasts of burden over to the hail^b
And their livestock to the lightning bolts.*
- 49 He inflicted his burning anger on them,
Fury and indignation and distress,
Companies of angels bringing calamity.
- 50 He cleared a pathway for his anger.
He did not spare them* from death;
And he gave them[#] over to pestilence.
- 51 Finally he struck down all the firstborn of Egypt,^c
The beginning of their procreative power in the tents of Ham.
- 52 Then he brought his people out like a flock^d
And guided them like a drove in the wilderness.
- 53 He led them in security,
And they felt no fear;^e
The sea covered their enemies.^f
- 54 And he brought them to his holy territory,^g
This mountainous region that his right hand acquired.^h
- 55 He drove out the nations from before them;ⁱ
He allotted to them an inheritance by the measuring line;^j
He settled the tribes of Israel in their homes.^k
- 56 But they kept challenging* God the Most High, and rebelling against him;^l
They did not pay attention to his reminders.^m

78:48 *Or possibly, "the burning fever."
78:50 *Or "their soul." #Lit., "their life."
78:56 *Or "testing."

CHAP. 78

- a Ex 9:23
b Ex 9:25
c Ex 12:29
Ps 105:36
d Ps 77:20
Ps 105:37
e Ex 14:20
Heb 11:29
f Ex 14:27
Ex 15:10
g Ex 15:17
h Ps 44:3
i Jos 24:12
Ps 44:2
j Jos 13:7
k Ne 9:24, 25
l De 31:16
De 32:15
Jg 2:11
2Sa 20:1
Ne 9:26
m 2Ki 17:15
Jer 44:23

Second Col.

- a De 9:7
Jg 3:6
b Ho 7:16
c De 12:2
Jg 2:2
Eze 20:28
d Jg 2:12
1Sa 7:3
e Jg 2:20
f Jos 18:1
1Sa 4:11
g Jer 7:12
h 1Sa 4:21
1Sa 5:1
i 1Sa 4:2, 10
j 1Sa 2:33, 34
1Sa 4:11
k 1Sa 4:19
l Ps 44:23
m 1Sa 42:13
n 1Sa 5:6
o Ge 49:10
p Ps 87:2
Ps 132:13
Ps 135:21
q Ps 76:2

- 57 They also turned away and were as treacherous as their forefathers,^a
They were as unreliable as a loose bow.^b
- 58 They kept offending him with their high places,^c
And they incited him to fury* with their carved images.^d
- 59 God heard and became furious,^e
So he utterly rejected Israel.
- 60 He finally forsook the tabernacle of Shi'loh,^f
The tent where he had resided among men.^g
- 61 He let the symbol of his strength go into captivity;
His splendor into the hand of the adversary.^h
- 62 He handed his people over to the swordⁱ
And became furious with his inheritance.
- 63 Fire consumed his young men,
And to his virgins no wedding songs were sung.*
- 64 His priests fell by the sword,^j
And their own widows did not weep.^k
- 65 Then Jehovah woke up as from sleep,^l
Like a mighty man^m waking up from wine.
- 66 And he drove his adversaries back;ⁿ
He put them to lasting disgrace.
- 67 He rejected the tent of Joseph;
He did not choose the tribe of E'phra-im.
- 68 But he chose the tribe of Judah,^o
Mount Zion, which he loves.^p
- 69 He made his sanctuary as enduring as the heavens,^{*q}

78:58 *Or "to jealousy." 78:63 *Lit., "And his virgins were not praised."
78:69 *Lit., "He built his sanctuary like the heights."

Like the earth that he has established forever.^a

70 He chose David^b his servant
And took him from the sheep pens,^c

71 From tending the nursing ewes;
He made him the shepherd over Jacob, his people,^d
And over Israel, his inheritance.^e

72 He shepherded them with integrity of heart,^f
And with skillful hands he led them.^g

A melody of A'saph.^h

79 O God, the nations have invaded your inheritance;ⁱ

They have defiled your holy temple;^j

They have turned Jerusalem into a heap of ruins.^k

2 They have given the dead bodies of your servants as food to the birds of the heavens

And the flesh of your loyal ones to the wild beasts of the earth.^l

3 They have poured out their blood like water around Jerusalem,
And no one is left to bury them.^m

4 We have become an object of reproach to our neighbors;ⁿ
Those around us ridicule and jeer us.

5 How long, O Jehovah, will you be furious? Forever?^o
How long will your indignation burn just like fire?^p

6 Pour out your wrath on the nations that do not know you
And on the kingdoms that do not call on your name.^q

7 For they have devoured Jacob

CHAP. 78

a Ps 104:5
Ps 119:90
Ec 1:4
b 1Sa 16:12, 13
c 1Sa 17:15
d 2Sa 7:8
e 2Sa 6:21
f 2Sa 8:15
1Ki 3:6
1Ki 9:4
1Ki 15:5
g 1Sa 18:14

CHAP. 79

h 1Ch 25:1
i Ex 15:17
j 2Ki 24:12, 13
Ps 74:3, 7
La 1:10
k 2Ki 25:9, 10
2Ch 36:17-19
Jer 52:13
l Jer 7:33
Jer 15:3
Jer 34:20
m Jer 14:16
Jer 16:4
n De 28:37
Eze 36:4
o Ps 74:1
Ps 85:5
Isa 64:9
p Zep 1:18
q Jer 10:25

Second Col.

a 2Ch 36:20, 21
b Ne 9:34
c Ps 69:17
La 3:22
d 1Ch 16:35
e Jos 7:9
1Sa 12:22
2Ch 14:11
Ps 115:1, 2
Isa 48:9
Jer 14:7
f Joe 2:17
g Jer 51:35
Eze 36:23
h Ex 2:23
Isa 42:6, 7
i Ps 102:19, 20
j Jer 12:14
k Ps 74:18
l Ps 74:1
Ps 95:7
Ps 100:3
m Ps 145:4
Isa 43:21

CHAP. 80

n 1Ch 25:1
o Ps 77:20
Isa 40:11
Jer 31:10
Eze 34:12
1Pe 2:25
p Ex 25:20, 22
1Sa 4:4

And have desolated his homeland.^a

8 Do not hold us accountable for the errors of our ancestors.^b

Quickly show us your mercy,^c
For we have been brought very low.

9 Help us, O God of our salvation,^d

For the sake of your glorious name;

Rescue us and forgive* our sins for the sake of your name.^e

10 Why should the nations say: "Where is their God?"^f

Before our eyes may it become known among the nations

That the shed blood of your servants has been avenged.^g

11 May you hear the sighing of the prisoner.^h

Use your great power* to preserve[#] those sentenced to death.^{Δi}

12 Repay our neighbors sevenfold^j

For the taunts they have leveled at you, O Jehovah.^k

13 Then we, your people and the flock of your pasture,^l
Will give thanks to you forever;

And we will declare your praise from generation to generation.^m

To the director; set to "The Lilies."
A reminder. Of A'saph.ⁿ A melody.

80 O Shepherd of Israel, listen,

You who are guiding Joseph just like a flock.^o

You who sit enthroned above* the cherubs,^p

Shine forth.^q

79:9 *Lit., "cover." **79:11** *Lit., "arm."
#Or possibly, "set free." ΔLit., "the sons of death." **80:1** *Or possibly, "between." #Or "Reveal your radiance."

- Song 110 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Remember the Works of Jehovah”:** (10 min.)
Ps 74:16; 77:6, 11, 12—Meditate on Jehovah’s works (w15 8/15 10 ¶3-4; w04 3/1 19-20; w03 7/1 10 ¶6-7)
Ps 75:4-7—Jehovah’s works include appointing humble men to care for his congregation (w06 7/15 11 ¶2; it-1 1160 ¶7)
Ps 78:11-17—Remember how Jehovah has acted in behalf of his people (w04 4/1 21-22)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Ps 78:2—How did this verse apply prophetically to the Messiah? (w11 8/15 11 ¶14)

Ps 78:40, 41—According to these verses, how can our actions affect Jehovah? (w12 11/1 14 ¶5; w11 7/1 10)

What does this week’s Bible reading teach me about Jehovah?

What points from this week’s Bible reading can I use in the field ministry?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ps 78:1-21

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) wp16.4 16—Mention the donation arrangement.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) wp16.4 16
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) fg lesson 5 ¶6-7

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 15
- **Local needs:** (10 min.)
- **“Jehovah . . . Created All Things”:** (5 min.)
Discussion. Play the jw.org video. (Go to BIBLE TEACHINGS > CHILDREN.) Afterward, invite selected young children to the stage, and ask them questions about the video.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.)
ia chap. 20 ¶1-13
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 73 and Prayer

PSALMS 74-78 | Remember the Works of Jehovah

74:16; 77:6, 11, 12

Meditating on the good things that Jehovah has done is essential

- Meditation helps us to absorb what we read in God’s Word and to develop heartfelt appreciation for spiritual food
- Thinking deeply about Jehovah helps us to remember his wonderful works and the hope he has set before us

74:16, 17; 75:6, 7; 78:11-17

Jehovah’s works include the following:

- **Creation**—The more we learn about creation, the more our awe for Jehovah deepens
- **Appointed men in the congregation**—We should be submissive to those whom Jehovah appoints to take the lead
- **Acts of salvation**—Remembering Jehovah’s saving acts strengthens our faith in his desire and ability to care for his servants



(w15 8/15 10 ¶3-4) ³ The individuals quoted earlier were certain that God was with them in trying times. We too can have the conviction that he is on our side. (Ps. 118:6, 7) This article focuses on how God’s love is evident in connection with (1) his creative works, (2) his inspired Word, (3) prayer, and (4) the ransom. Meditating on the good things Jehovah has done will very likely increase our gratitude for his enduring love.—**Read Psalm 77:11, 12.**

MEDITATE ON JEHOVAH’S CREATIVE WORKS

⁴ Can we see Jehovah’s enduring love for us in what he has created? Yes, we can because the very act of creation was a manifestation of God’s love. (Rom. 1:20) He designed the earth with an ecosystem in which we can safely exist and thrive. However, he wants us to do more than merely exist. We need to eat to keep on living. Jehovah made sure that the earth could produce a seemingly endless variety of plants that can be prepared as wholesome food. Why, he even made eating a delightful and satisfying experience! (Eccl. 9:7) A sister named Catherine finds great pleasure in observing creation, especially during the invigorating spring season in Canada. She remarks: “It is truly amazing how everything comes to life—flowers that are programmed to pop out of the ground and birds that return from their migration, including the tiny hummingbird that finds its way to the bird feeder outside my kitchen window. Jehovah must love us to give us so much delight.” Our loving heavenly Father takes pleasure in his creative works, and he wants us to enjoy them as well.—Acts 14:16, 17.

(w04 3/1 19-20) How We Show Our Love for God

CULTIVATING love for God is not an academic exercise. As God’s servants around the world can testify, true love for God grows as one becomes acquainted with his personality, and it becomes even stronger as one gets familiar with what he loves, what he hates, and what his preferences and his requirements are.

Lovingly, Jehovah has given us his Word, the Bible, in which he reveals himself. From it, we learn how Jehovah dealt with different situations. Just as a letter from a loved one gives us much pleasure, so the Bible brings us delight as we see new aspects of Jehovah’s personality revealed.

However, as we at times notice in our public ministry, learning about God does not always cause a person to love him. Jesus said to certain unappreciative Jews of his day: “You are searching the Scriptures, because you think that by means of them you will have everlasting life; . . . but I well know that you do not have the love of God in you.” (John 5:39, 42) Some spend years learning about Jehovah’s loving deeds and yet have little love for him. Why? They fail to contemplate the implications of what they learn. In contrast, millions of sincere people with whom we study the Bible experience that their love for God continues to grow. Why? Because, as we ourselves did, they follow Asaph’s example. In what way?

Meditate Appreciatively

Asaph resolved to cultivate love for Jehovah in his heart. He wrote: “With my heart I will show concern . . . I shall remember the practices of Jah; for I will remember your marvelous doing of long ago. And I shall certainly meditate on all your activity, and with

your dealings I will concern myself.” (Psalm 77:6, 11, 12) Love for God will grow in the heart of one who ponders Jehovah’s ways as the psalmist did.

In addition, recalling experiences that we have enjoyed while serving Jehovah strengthens our relationship with him. The apostle Paul said that we are God’s “fellow workers,” and the friendship that may grow between fellow workers is very special. (1 Corinthians 3:9) When we express our love for Jehovah, he appreciates it, and it makes his heart glad. (Proverbs 27:11) Then, when we ask for Jehovah’s help and he guides us through some difficulty, we know that he is with us, and our love for him deepens.

Friendship between two people develops as they express their feelings to each other. Similarly, when we tell Jehovah why we are devoted to him, we are strengthened in our love for him. We will find ourselves reflecting on Jesus’ words: “You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength.” (Mark 12:30) What can we do to make sure that we will continue to love Jehovah with our whole heart, our whole soul, our whole mind, and our whole strength?

Loving Jehovah With Our Whole Heart

The Scriptures refer to the figurative heart, which is the inner person—our desires, attitudes, and feelings. So loving Jehovah with our whole heart means that more than anything else, we desire to please God. (Psalm 86:11) We show that we have such love by making our personality acceptable to him. We strive to imitate God by ‘abhorring what is wicked and clinging to what is good.’—Romans 12:9.

Our love for God affects our feelings about everything. For example, we may find our employment to be challenging or absorbing, but is this where our heart is? No. Since we love Jehovah with our whole heart, we are first of all ministers of God. Likewise, we want to please our parents, our marriage mate, and our boss, but we prove our wholehearted love for Jehovah by seeking above all to please him. After all, he deserves first place in our heart.—Matthew 6:24; 10:37.

(w03 7/1 10 ¶6-7)⁶ When you stand outside on a bright summer day, what do you feel on your skin? The warmth of the sun. Really, though, you are feeling the results of Jehovah’s creative power. How powerful is the sun? At its core, its temperature is about 27 million degrees Fahrenheit **[15 million degrees Celsius]**. If you could take a pinhead-sized piece of the sun’s core and put it here on the earth, you could not safely stand within 90 miles **[140 km]** of that tiny heat source! Every second, the sun emits energy equivalent to the explosion of many hundreds of millions of nuclear bombs. Yet, the earth orbits at just the right distance from that awesome thermonuclear furnace. Too close, and earth’s water would vaporize; too far, and it would all freeze. Either extreme would render our planet lifeless.

⁷ Although their very lives depend upon the sun, many people take it for granted. Thus, they miss what the sun can teach us. Psalm 74:16 says of Jehovah: “You . . . prepared the luminary, even the sun.” Yes, the sun glorifies Jehovah, “the Maker of heaven and earth.” (Psalm 146:6) Even so, it is just one of the numerous creations that teach us about Jehovah’s immense power. The more we learn about Jehovah’s creative power, the more profound our awe becomes.

(w06 7/15 11 ¶2) **75:4, 5, 10—What is signified by the term “horn”?** The horns of an animal are a powerful weapon. Hence, the term “horn” figuratively denotes power, or strength. Jehovah raises up the horns of his people, causing them to be exalted, whereas he ‘cuts down the horns of the wicked ones.’ We are warned against ‘exalting our horn on high’ in that we should not take on a proud or arrogant attitude. Since Jehovah does the exalting, assignments of responsibility in the congregation are to be viewed as coming from him.—Psalm 75:7.

(it-1 1160 ¶7) All, men and women, should be submissive to those taking the lead and should wait on Jehovah for any appointments or assignments to responsibility, for it is from him that promotion comes. (Ps 75:6, 7) As some of the Levite sons of Korah said: “I have chosen to stand at the threshold in the house of my God rather than to move around in the tents of wickedness.” (Ps 84:10) Such true humility takes time to develop. The Scriptures, in setting forth the qualifications for one who would be appointed to the office of overseer, specify that a newly converted man should not be appointed, “for fear that he might get puffed up with pride and fall into the judgment passed upon the Devil.”—1Ti 3:6.

(w04 4/1 21-22) Knowing how Jehovah feels toward his people gives us hope—a quality of equal importance to faith. (1 Corinthians 13:13) The Greek word translated “hope” in the Bible carries the idea of an eager “expectation of good.” With such hope in mind, the apostle Paul wrote: “We desire each one of you to show the same industriousness so as to have the full assurance of the hope down to the end, in order that you may not become sluggish, but be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.” (Hebrews 6:11, 12) Notice that if we continue to serve Jehovah faithfully, we can be *assured* of realizing our hope. Unlike many worldly aspirations, this hope “does not lead to disappointment.” (Romans 5:5) So how can we keep our hope bright and in sharp focus?

How to Sharpen Our Spiritual Focus

Our physical eyes cannot focus on two things at the same time. The same is true of our spiritual vision. Focusing on things of the present system will surely put God’s promised new world somewhat out of focus in our minds. In time, this blurred, peripheral image may lose its appeal and simply disappear from view. What a tragedy that would be! (Luke 21:34) How important, therefore, that we keep a ‘simple eye’—one that stays focused on God’s Kingdom and the reward of everlasting life!—Matthew 6:22.

Keeping a simple eye is not always easy. Day-to-day problems demand our attention, and distractions—even temptations—may lie in our path. Under these circumstances, how can we stay focused on the Kingdom and God’s promised new world without neglecting other necessary activities? Let us consider three ways.

Study God’s Word daily. Regular reading of the Bible and study of Bible-based publications help us to keep our minds centered on spiritual matters. True, we may have been studying God’s Word for years, but we must continue to study it, just as we need to keep eating physical food in order to sustain our lives. We do not stop eating simply because we have eaten thousands of meals in the past. So regardless of how familiar we are with the Bible, we need an ongoing, regular intake of spiritual nourishment from it in order to keep our hope bright and our faith and love strong.—Psalm 1:1-3.

Meditate appreciatively on God's Word. Why is meditation essential? For two reasons. First, meditation enables us to assimilate what we read and to develop heart appreciation for it. Second, meditation prevents us from forgetting Jehovah, his wonderful works, and the hope he has set before us. To illustrate: The Israelites who left Egypt with Moses saw with their own eyes displays of Jehovah's awesome power. They also felt his loving protection as he led them toward their inheritance. Yet, no sooner did the Israelites reach the wilderness en route to the Promised Land than they began to complain, revealing a serious lack of faith. (Psalm 78:11-17) What was their problem?

The people shifted their focus from Jehovah and the wonderful hope he set before them to their immediate comforts and fleshly concerns. Despite the miraculous signs and wonders they had personally witnessed, many Israelites became faithless complainers. "Quickly they *forgot* [Jehovah's] works," says Psalm 106:13. Such inexcusable negligence cost that generation entry into the Promised Land.

Thus, when reading the Scriptures or Bible study aids, take time to meditate on what you read. Such reflection is vital to your spiritual health and growth. For example, when reading Psalm 106, quoted above in part, meditate on Jehovah's qualities. Observe how patient and merciful he was with the Israelites. See how he did all he possibly could to help them reach the Promised Land. Note how they continually rebelled against him. Feel Jehovah's anguish and pain as his mercy and patience were stretched to the very limit by a people who were callously unappreciative. Further, by meditating on verses 30 and 31, which describe Phinehas' firm, courageous stand for righteousness, we are assured that Jehovah does not forget his loyal ones and that he rewards them abundantly.

Apply Bible principles in your life. As we follow Bible principles, we see for ourselves that Jehovah's counsel works. Proverbs 3:5, 6 says: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight." Think about how the immoral ways of many people have caused a backlash of mental, emotional, and physical problems. By indulging in momentary pleasures, such people reap years—even a lifetime—of woe. In sharp contrast, those who walk the 'cramped road' get a foretaste of new system living, and this encourages them to continue on the path to life.—Matthew 7:13, 14; Psalm 34:8.

(w11 8/15 11 ¶14) ¹⁴ *The Messiah would speak in parables, or illustrations.* The psalmist Asaph sang: "In a proverbial saying I will open my mouth." (Ps. 78:2) How do we know that this prophetically applied to Jesus? Matthew tells us so. After relating illustrations in which Jesus likened the Kingdom to a developing mustard grain and to leaven, Matthew states: "Without an illustration [Jesus] would not speak to them; that there might be fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet who said: 'I will open my mouth with illustrations, I will publish things hidden since the founding.'" (Matt. 13:31-35) Proverbial sayings, or parables, were among Jesus' effective means of teaching.

(w12 11/1 14 ¶5) As I studied the Bible, my view of God changed completely. I learned that he is not the cause of wickedness and suffering and that he himself is hurt when people do bad things. (Genesis 6:6; Psalm 78:40, 41) I became quite determined to try never to cause Jehovah any hurt. I wanted to make his heart rejoice. (Proverbs 27:11) I

stopped overdrinking and using tobacco, and I quit engaging in immorality. In March 1994, I was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

(w11 7/1 10) Draw Close to God—Does Jehovah Have Feelings?

IF THE answer is yes, then another question arises: Does our conduct affect God's feelings? That is, can we by our actions cause God to feel happy or hurt? Some ancient philosophers said no. They argued that no one can influence God and that God must therefore be incapable of feeling. But the Bible gives a different picture, namely, that Jehovah has tender feelings and deeply cares about what we do. Consider the words found at Psalm 78:40, 41.

Psalm 78 recounts God's dealings with ancient Israel. After delivering the nation from slavery in Egypt, Jehovah offered to enter into a special relationship with them. He promised that if they would remain obedient to his laws, they would become his "special property" and be used in an extraordinary way to fulfill his purpose. The people agreed and entered into the Law covenant. Did they live up to their end of the agreement?—Exodus 19:3-8.

The psalmist says: "How often they would rebel against him in the wilderness!" (Verse 40) The next verse adds: "Again and again they would put God to the test." (Verse 41) Notice that the writer describes a pattern of rebellion. This ugly spirit surfaced early—in the wilderness shortly after their deliverance from Egypt. The people began to murmur against God, questioning whether he was able and willing to care for them. (Numbers 14:1-4) A reference work for Bible translators says that the words "they would rebel against him" might be "rendered idiomatically as 'they made their hearts hard against God' or 'they said "No" to God.'" Yet, in his mercy, Jehovah would forgive his people when they demonstrated repentance. But then they would return to their old ways and rebel again, and the pattern continued.—Psalm 78:10-19, 38.

How did Jehovah feel each time his fickle people rebelled? "They would make him feel hurt," says verse 40. Another translation says that they would "give him cause for grief." One Bible reference work explains: "The meaning here is that the conduct of the Hebrews was such as was fitted to cause pain,—as the conduct of a disobedient and rebellious child is." Just as an unruly child can cause his parents much pain of heart, the rebellious Israelites "pained even the Holy One of Israel."—Verse 41.

What can we learn from this psalm? It is reassuring to see that Jehovah has a strong attachment to his worshippers and is not quick to give up on them. At the same time, it is sobering to consider that Jehovah has feelings and that our conduct can affect his feelings. How does knowing that affect you? Does it move you to want to do what is right?

Rather than pursue a sinful course and bring pain to Jehovah's heart, we can choose to follow an upright course and make his heart glad. And that is exactly what he asks of his worshippers: "Be wise, my son, and make my heart rejoice." (Proverbs 27:11) There is nothing more precious that we could give to Jehovah than to live in a way that brings joy to his heart.

- Song 110 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

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Ps 74:16; 77:6, 11, 12—Meditate on Jehovah's works (w15 8/15 10 ¶3-4; w04 3/1 19-20; w03 7/1 10 ¶6-7)
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What points from this week's Bible reading can I use in the field ministry?

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PSALMS 74-78 | Remember the Works of Jehovah

74:16; 77:6, 11, 12

Meditating on the good things that Jehovah has done is essential

- Meditation helps us to absorb what we read in God's Word and to develop heartfelt appreciation for spiritual food
- Thinking deeply about Jehovah helps us to remember his wonderful works and the hope he has set before us

74:16, 17; 75:6, 7; 78:11-17

Jehovah's works include the following:

- **Creation**—The more we learn about creation, the more our awe for Jehovah deepens
- **Appointed men in the congregation**—We should be submissive to those whom Jehovah appoints to take the lead
- **Acts of salvation**—Remembering Jehovah's saving acts strengthens our faith in his desire and ability to care for his servants



WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?



Is religion man-made?

SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE that religion is a human invention; others think that God uses religion to help people draw close to him. What do you think?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

There is a “religion that is clean and undefiled from the standpoint of our God and Father.” (James 1:27, footnote) Pure, or true, religion comes from God.

WHAT ELSE WE LEARN FROM THE BIBLE

- To please God, a religion must be based on Bible truth.—John 4:23, 24.
- Religions based on human ideas are futile.—Mark 7:7, 8.

Is it necessary to belong to a religion?

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

- Yes
- No
- It depends

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

“Let us consider one another so as to incite to love and fine works, not forsaking our meeting together.” (Hebrews 10:24, 25) God wants his worshippers to gather as an organized group.

WHAT ELSE WE LEARN FROM THE BIBLE

- Those who worship God together should be united in belief.—1 Corinthians 1:10, 11.
- Members of the religion that God approves form a worldwide brotherhood.—1 Peter 2:17.



Please send me a copy of *What Does the Bible Really Teach?*

For more information, see chapter 15 of this book, published by Jehovah’s Witnesses

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wp.16.4-E
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God's angels and destroy all who oppose God. Then Jesus will imprison Satan for 1,000 years. God's people will survive the destruction because Jesus will guide and protect them. They will enjoy everlasting life in Paradise on earth.

 Read Revelation 20:1-3; 21:3, 4.


4. When will suffering end?

When will God bring an end to evil on earth? Jesus gave a "sign" to indicate when the end would be near. Present world conditions threaten man's survival and show that we now live in "the conclusion of the system of things."

 Read Matthew 24:3, 7-14, 21, 22.

During Jesus' 1,000-year rule from heaven over the earth, he will bring all suffering to an end. (Isaiah 9:6, 7; 11:9) Besides serving as King, Jesus will act as High Priest and will cancel the sins of those who love God. Thus, by means of Jesus, God will eliminate sickness, aging, and death.  Read Isaiah 25:8; 33:24.

5. Who will live in the future Paradise?

People who obey God will live in Paradise. (1 John 2:17) Jesus sent his followers to search for meek people and to teach them how to become acceptable to God. Today, Jehovah is preparing millions of people for life in the future Paradise on earth. (Zephaniah 2:3) At Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's Witnesses, people learn to be better husbands and fathers and to be better wives and mothers. Children and parents worship together and learn how to benefit from the good news.  Read Micah 4:1-4.



At the Kingdom Hall, you will meet people who love God and want to learn how to please him



Creation Reveals Jehovah's Glory

(Psalm 19)

G13sus4 G7 C C#°

Je - ho - vah God, my soul is well a -
 For you have made the sun and moon and
 Your laws are pure, and your com - mands are

Dm G7

ware.
 stars.
 true.

A host of stars, your
 Great o - ceans stop where
 Day af - ter day, re -

C G13sus4 G7

glo - ry does de - declare.
 you have set their bars.
 mind - ers come from you.

From day to
 We lift our
 They make us

C E+5 F

day and night to night they speak
 eyes and see your heav - ens grand.
 wise, are bet - ter than fine gold.

Creation Reveals Jehovah's Glory

F#° C/G Fm/D C/G F/G G7

And with - out words bring knowl - edge to the
 We stand in awe that you re - mem - ber
 Oh, may we keep them, al - ways to them

Am Em/G Fma7 Em Dm11 C

meek. From day to day and
 man. We lift our eyes and
 hold. They make us wise, are

E+5 F F#°

night to night they speak And with - out
 see your heav - ens grand. We stand in
 bet - ter than fine gold. Oh, may we

C/G Fm/D C/G F/G G7 C

words bring knowl - edge to the meek.
 awe that you re - mem - ber man.
 keep them, al - ways to them hold.

- Song 110 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Remember the Works of Jehovah”:** (10 min.)
Ps 74:16; 77:6, 11, 12—Meditate on Jehovah's works (w15 8/15 10 ¶3-4; w04 3/1 19-20; w03 7/1 10 ¶6-7)
Ps 75:4-7—Jehovah's works include appointing humble men to care for his congregation (w06 7/15 11 ¶2; it-1 1160 ¶7)
Ps 78:11-17—Remember how Jehovah has acted in behalf of his people (w04 4/1 21-22)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Ps 78:2—How did this verse apply prophetically to the Messiah? (w11 8/15 11 ¶14)

Ps 78:40, 41—According to these verses, how can our actions affect Jehovah? (w12 11/1 14 ¶5; w11 7/1 10)

What does this week's Bible reading teach me about Jehovah?

What points from this week's Bible reading can I use in the field ministry?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ps 78:1-21

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) wp16.4 16—Mention the donation arrangement.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) wp16.4 16
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) fg lesson 5 ¶6-7

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 15
- **Local needs:** (10 min.)
- **“Jehovah . . . Created All Things”:** (5 min.) Discussion. Play the jw.org video. (Go to BIBLE TEACHINGS > CHILDREN.) Afterward, invite selected young children to the stage, and ask them questions about the video.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.)
ia chap. 20 ¶1-13
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 73 and Prayer

PSALMS 74-78 | Remember the Works of Jehovah

74:16; 77:6, 11, 12

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“I Have Believed”

MARTHA could see it in her mind’s eye—her brother’s tomb, a cave sealed with a stone against the entrance. Her grief was a burden as cold and heavy as that rock. She could barely believe that her beloved Lazarus was gone. The four days since he had taken his last breath seemed like one long blur of mourning, visitors, and condolences.

² And now, standing before Martha was the man who had meant the most to Lazarus. Seeing Jesus likely brought her grief into sharp focus, for he was the one person in all the world who could have saved her brother. Still, Martha found some comfort in being with Jesus here outside the little hillside town of Bethany. In her few moments with him, she again felt warmed by the kindness in his eyes, the keen empathy that was always so encouraging. He asked her questions that helped her to focus on her faith and on her beliefs about the resurrection. The conversation led Martha to make one of the most important statements that would ever pass her lips: “I have believed that you are the Christ the Son of God, the One coming into the world.”—John 11:27.

³ As those words show, Martha was a woman of remarkable faith. What little the Bible tells us of her imparts profound lessons that can help us strengthen our own faith. To see how that is so, let us consider the first account about Martha in the Bible.

“Anxious and Disturbed”

⁴ It was months earlier. Lazarus was alive and well. His home in Bethany was about to receive the most important of visitors,

1. Describe Martha’s grief and its cause.
- 2, 3. (a) Seeing Jesus likely had what effect on Martha? (b) What did Martha’s important statement show about her?
4. In what way was Martha’s family unusual, and what was the family’s relationship with Jesus?

Jesus Christ. Lazarus, Martha, and Mary were an unusual family—three grown siblings who evidently shared a home. Some researchers suggest that Martha may have been the eldest of the three, since she seems to have acted as hostess and at times is mentioned first. (John 11:5) There is no way of knowing whether any of the three were ever married. At any rate, they became close friends of Jesus. During his ministry in Judea, where he met so much opposition and hostility, Jesus made their home his base. No doubt, he greatly appreciated that haven of peace and support.

⁵ Martha had much to do with the comfort and hospitality of the home. A busy, industrious soul, she often seems to have been in a flurry of activity. The present occasion of Jesus’ visit was no exception. She soon planned a special meal with many dishes for her distinguished guest and, perhaps, some of his traveling companions. Back then, hospitality was very important. When a guest arrived, he was welcomed with a kiss, his sandals were removed, his feet were washed, and his head was greased with refreshing perfumed oil. (*Read Luke 7:44-47.*) As to his accommodations and nourishment, every care was to be taken.

⁶ Martha and Mary had their work cut out for them. Mary, who is sometimes thought of as the more sensitive and contemplative of the two, surely helped her sister out at first. But after Jesus arrived, things changed. He viewed the occasion as a time to teach—and teach he did! Unlike the religious leaders of the day, Jesus respected women and readily taught them about God’s Kingdom, the theme of his ministry. Mary, thrilled at this opportunity, sat at his feet and took in every word.

⁷ We can just imagine the tension rising within Martha’s heart. With all the dishes she had to prepare and all the duties she had to carry out for her guests, she became more and more anxious and distracted. As she passed to and fro on her busy way and saw her sister sitting there doing nothing to help her, did she color slightly, sigh audibly, or frown? It would not be surprising if she did. She could not do all this work on her own!

5, 6. (a) Why was Martha particularly busy during Jesus’ present visit?
 (b) How did Mary respond to the opportunity afforded by Jesus’ presence at their home?

7, 8. Why did tension rise within Martha’s heart, and how did she finally express it?

⁸ Finally, Martha could no longer suppress her frustration. She interrupted Jesus, blurting out: “Lord, does it not matter to you that my sister has left me alone to attend to things? Tell her, therefore, to join in helping me.” (Luke 10:40) These were strong words. A number of translations render her question to this effect: “Lord, do you not care . . . ?” Then she asked Jesus to correct Mary, to order her back to work.

⁹ Jesus’ reply may have surprised Martha, as it has many Bible readers since. He gently said: “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and disturbed about many things. A few things, though, are needed, or just one. For her part, Mary chose the good portion, and it will not be taken away from her.” (Luke 10:41, 42) What did Jesus mean? Was he calling Martha a materialist? Was he dismissing her hard work in preparing a fine meal?

¹⁰ No. Jesus clearly saw that Martha’s motives were loving and pure. Further, he did not feel that even bounteous hospitality was necessarily wrong. He had willingly attended Matthew’s “big reception feast” for him sometime earlier. (Luke 5:29) Martha’s meal was not the key issue here; rather, it was her priorities. So focused was she on her elaborate meal that she lost sight of what mattered most. What was that?

¹¹ Jesus, the only-begotten Son of Jehovah God, was in Martha’s home to teach the truth. Nothing, including her lovely meal and preparations, could be more important. Jesus was no doubt saddened that Martha was missing out on a unique opportunity to deepen her faith, but he let her make her own choice.* It was quite another thing, though, for Martha to ask Jesus to coerce Mary into missing out as well.

¹² So he gently corrected Martha, repeating her name soothingly to calm her agitated nerves, and he assured her that there was no need to be “anxious and disturbed about many things.” A simple meal of one or two dishes would be sufficient,

* In first-century Jewish society, women were generally excluded from academic activities. Their training tended to focus on duties in the home. Martha may thus have seen it as highly unusual for a woman to sit at the feet of a scholar to learn.

9, 10. (a) How did Jesus reply to Martha? (b) How do we know that Jesus was not dismissing Martha’s hard work?

11, 12. How did Jesus gently correct Martha?

Jesus appreciated
Martha’s hospitality, and
he knew that her motives
were loving and pure

especially when a spiritual feast was available. By no means, then, would he take away from Mary “the good portion” she had chosen—that of learning from Jesus!

¹³ This little domestic scene is rich in lessons for Christ’s followers today. We must never allow anything to crowd out the filling of our “spiritual need.” (Matt. 5:3) While we want to imitate Martha’s generous, industrious spirit, we never want to become so “anxious and disturbed” about the less essential part of hospitality that we miss out on what matters most. We associate with fellow believers, not primarily for the sake of serving or receiving sumptuous food, but mainly for an interchange

13. What lessons can we learn from the way that Jesus corrected Martha?

Though “anxious and disturbed about many things,” Martha humbly accepted correction



of encouragement and the imparting of spiritual gifts. (*Read Romans 1:11, 12.*) Even the simplest meal may make such an up-building occasion possible.

A Beloved Brother Lost—And Restored

¹⁴ Did Martha accept Jesus' gentle reproof and learn from it? We need not wonder. The apostle John, in introducing a thrilling account about Martha's brother, reminds us: "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus." (John 11:5) Months had passed since Jesus' visit to Bethany described above. Clearly, Martha had not indulged in sulking; she was not nursing a grudge against Jesus for his loving counsel. She had taken it to heart. In this matter too, she set an excellent example of faith for us, for who of us does not need a little correction at times?

¹⁵ When her brother took ill, Martha surely busied herself with his care. She did everything in her power to soothe his discomfort and help him get better. Nonetheless, Lazarus sank still deeper into his illness. Hour after hour, his sisters stayed by his side to care for him. How often Martha must have gazed into her brother's haggard face, remembering their many years together and the joys and sorrows they had shared!

¹⁶ When it looked as if Lazarus was beyond their help, Martha and Mary sent a message to Jesus. He was preaching some two days' journey away. Their message was simple: "Lord, see! the one for whom you have affection is sick." (John 11:1, 3) They knew that Jesus loved their brother, and they had faith that he would do whatever he could to help his friend. Did they cling to the hope that Jesus might arrive before it was too late? If so, their hopes were dashed. Lazarus died.

¹⁷ Together, Martha and Mary mourned their brother, taking care of the preparations for his burial and receiving the many guests from Bethany and its environs. Still, no news of Jesus. Martha may have grown more puzzled as the time passed. Finally, four days after Lazarus' death, Martha heard that Jesus was nearing the town. Ever the woman of action, even in this grim

14. Why can we be sure that Martha set a good example in accepting correction?

15, 16. (a) How did Martha surely respond when her brother took ill?
 (b) Why were Martha's and Mary's hopes dashed?

17. What puzzled Martha, and how did she react when she heard that Jesus was nearing the town?

Love Intensely From the Heart

(1 Peter 1:22)

C G/B Gm/Bb A7b5 A7 Gm/A A7

Love must come from deep in our hearts, There is the place af - fec - tion starts;
When our love is pure and in - tense, We will be slow to take of - fense;

Fma7/A Fm6 G7b5 G7 F/G G7 Dm7 G9/F Em7 Eb6 Dm11 G7

Real fel - low feel - ing it im - parts For all our broth - ers dear.
Rea - son we have for con - fi - dence In all our broth - ers true.

C G/B Gm/Bb A7b5 A7 Gm/A A7

We will find the way to ex - press Lov - ing in - ten - tions we pos - sess,
Loy - al friend - ships, we cul - ti - vate; Each oth - er we ap - pre - ci - ate.

Fma7/A Fm6 G7b5 G7 F/G G7 Dm/F Fm/G G7b9

Prac - tic - ing God's large heart - ed - ness, Prov - ing our love sin -
Plea - sur - a - bly we con - gre - gate, Gain - ing our strength a -

C Dm7/G C Dbma7 Dbma7b5 Dbma7 Dbm(ma7) Db°

cere. Let us love in word and deed,
new. Day by day we all trans - gress;

Love Intensely From the Heart

Ab/C B° Bbm11 Eb7sus4 Eb7 Dbma7 Dbma7b5 Dbma7

Be - ing gen - er - ous to those in need, Let - ting good - ness
Thought - less words can of - ten cause dis - tress. So we must show

Bbm9/G C7b5/E C7/E Fm9 Fm Fm/D G7sus4 G7

take the lead With each op - por - tu - ni - ty.
ten - der - ness To those whom our God does love.

C G/B Gm/Bb

Hon - or and re - spect we dis - play; Kind - ly con - cern will
True com - pan - ions we'll ev - er be, Strength - en - ing bonds with

A7b5 A7 Gm/A A7 Fma7/A Fm6/Ab C/G Cma7/G Am C/G

be our way. Our broth - ers' faults we won't be - tray.
con - stan - cy. Let love be your i - den - ti - ty.

G/F F Dm/B Bb7b5 G/A Cm/A A7 Dm9 Dm F/G Fm/G G7b5 C Dm7/G C

Ev - er loy - al we will be, Guard - ing pre - cious u - ni - ty.
Mag - ni - fy - ing God a - bove, Im - i - tate Je - ho - vah's love.

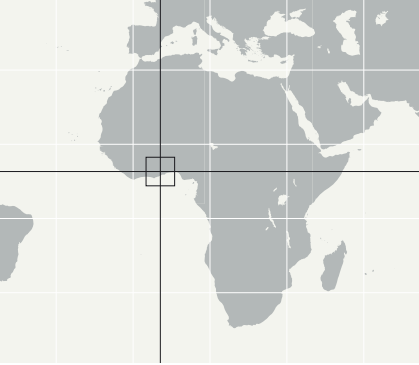
MAY 2016

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
JUNE 27–JULY 31, 2016



COVER IMAGE:
GHANA

A resourceful Kingdom proclaimer uses one of our tracts to witness to fellow students. She lives in the town of Ho in the Volta region of Ghana

PUBLISHERS
125,443

BIBLE STUDIES
382,408

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE
(2014)
347,725

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3 WEEK OF JUNE 27–JULY 3 Settle Differences in a Spirit of Love

Because of our inherited imperfection, we are sure to face situations that cause ill feelings. This article shows how Bible principles can be applied in order to settle differences with others.

8 WEEK OF JULY 4-10 “Go, . . . and Make Disciples of People of All the Nations”

This article discusses evidence that Jehovah’s Witnesses are the only people on earth today who are fulfilling Jesus’ prophetic words found at Matthew 24:14. It also explains what is involved in becoming “fishers of men.”—Matt. 4:19.

13 WEEK OF JULY 11-17 How Do You Make Personal Decisions?

When you make personal decisions, do you simply do what feels right to you? Or do you ask others what they would do? This article explains why the best decisions are made when we allow Jehovah God’s thinking to be the determining factor.

18 WEEK OF JULY 18-24 Is the Bible Still Changing Your Life?

Do you find the refining of your Christian qualities now harder than the larger changes you made before baptism? This article explains why this challenge exists and how we can continue to cultivate godly qualities with the help of God’s Word.

23 WEEK OF JULY 25-31 Benefit Fully From Jehovah’s Provisions

This article alerts us to a trap that could cause us to miss out on beneficial spiritual provisions. We will consider how we can avoid falling into that trap, and we will learn how to benefit from all the spiritual food available to us.

28 FROM OUR ARCHIVES

30 QUESTIONS FROM READERS

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Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

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Vol. 137, No. 8 ENGLISH

What Sort of Person I Should Be

(2 Peter 3:11)

Db Ab/C Db Ab7/Eb Db/F Gb Bb7b9b13 Ebm

How can I re - pay you, what gift can I give To
 Help me to ex - am - ine, and help me to see Just

Gb/Ab Ab/Gb Db/F F7b9b13 Bbm7 Eb13sus4 Eb7

thank you, Je - ho - vah, for the life that I live? I
 what sort of per - son you de - sire me to be. Those

Ebm Ab7/Eb Db/F Gb Ab Bbm9/11 Bbm Gb Db/F

look in my heart with your Word as my mir - ror; The per - son I see, may you
 loy - al to you, you will loy - al - ly trea - sure; May I be a - mong those who

Ebm11 Gb/Ab Ab7 Dbsus4 Db *Fine* Gbma7 Ab/Gb Gbma7 Ab/Gb

help me see clear - er. My life I have prom - ised in
 bring your heart plea - sure. (End)

What Sort of Person I Should Be

Fm7 Cb/D \flat G \flat ma7 Ab/G \flat G \flat ma7

ser - vice to you, But not from mere du - ty will I

B \flat m/G C7sus4 C7 Fm D $^{\circ}$ E \flat m11 E \flat m

do what I do. Whole - souled and whole - heart - ed I

G \flat m/A D \flat sus4/A \flat D \flat /A \flat B \flat m/G

serve you by choice; May I be one

G \flat /A \flat Fm/A \flat E \flat m7/A \flat A \flat 7 *D.C. al Fine*

more who makes you re - joice.



Is the Bible *Still* Changing Your Life?

“Be transformed by making your mind over.”—ROM. 12:2.

SONGS: 61, 52

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

After baptism, why should we keep making changes?

Why does God expect us to put forth effort to overcome our weaknesses?

What can we do to let God’s Word keep on changing our life?

UPON learning the truth, Kevin^[1] wanted nothing more than a close relationship with Jehovah. For many years, however, he had been involved in gambling, smoking, heavy drinking, and drug abuse. In order to have God’s approval, Kevin would have to give up these unscriptural practices. This he did by relying on Jehovah and on the transforming power of His written Word.—Heb. 4:12.

² After his baptism, did Kevin stop making changes in his life? No, for he still had work to do in cultivating and refining his Christian qualities. (Eph. 4:31, 32) For example, he found that controlling his quick temper was surprisingly difficult. Kevin admitted, “Learning to control my temper was actually harder than quitting my old vices!” Kevin made needed changes through earnest prayer and intense Bible study.

1-3. (a) What changes may it be hard for us to make after our baptism? (b) When making progress is harder than we expected, what questions might we ask? (See opening pictures.)

³ Like Kevin, many of us had to make significant changes prior to our baptism in order to bring our life into harmony with the Bible's basic requirements. After baptism, we discerned the need to continue making changes—more subtle ones—so as to imitate God and Christ more closely. (Eph. 5:1, 2; 1 Pet. 2:21) For instance, we may have noted in ourselves a critical spirit, a fear of man, a tendency toward harmful gossip, or some other weakness. Has making progress in this regard proved to be harder than we expected? If so, you may wonder: 'Having made big changes already, why is it so hard for me to keep making smaller adjustments? How can I make further progress in allowing the Bible to change my life?'

HAVE REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

⁴ We who have come to know and love Jehovah desire with all our heart to do what pleases him. Regardless of how fervent that desire may be, however, our imperfect state renders us incapable of pleasing God at all times. We find ourselves in a situation like that of the apostle Paul, who wrote: "I have the *desire* to do what is fine but *not the ability* to carry it out."—Rom. 7:18; Jas. 3:2.

⁵ We have put away sinful practices that would disqualify us as members of the Christian congregation. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) Nevertheless, we are still imperfect. (Col. 3:9, 10) It is therefore unrealistic to expect that after baptism—or even after many years in the truth—we will no

longer make mistakes, experience setbacks, or be troubled with wrong motives and inclinations. Certain tendencies might persist for years.

⁶ Our inherited imperfection does not need to prevent us from enjoying Jehovah's friendship or continuing to serve him. Consider this: When Jehovah drew us into a relationship with him, he knew that we would err at times. (John 6:44) Since God knows our traits and what is in our heart, he surely was aware of what sort of imperfect tendencies would be particularly troublesome for us. And he knew that we would occasionally transgress. Yet, this did not prevent Jehovah from wanting us as his friends.

⁷ Love moved God to offer us a precious gift—the ransom sacrifice of his beloved Son. (John 3:16) If on the basis of this priceless provision we repentantly seek Jehovah's forgiveness when we err, we can have the confidence that our friendship with him is still intact. (Rom. 7:24, 25; 1 John 2:1, 2) Should we hesitate to avail ourselves of the benefits of the ransom because we feel unclean or sinful? Of course not! That would be like refusing to use water to wash our hands when they are dirty. After all, the ransom is provided for repentant sinners. Thanks to the ransom, then, we can enjoy a friendship with Jehovah even though we are in an imperfect state. —**Read 1 Timothy 1:15.**

⁸ Of course, we do not simply ignore our weaknesses. Cultivating our friendship with Jehovah involves striving to

4. Why are we unable to please Jehovah in everything we do?

5. What changes did we make before we got baptized, but what weaknesses may we still struggle with?

6, 7. (a) What makes it possible for us to be Jehovah's friends even though we are imperfect? (b) Why should we not hold back from asking Jehovah for forgiveness?

8. Why should we not ignore our weaknesses?

imitate God and Christ more closely and being the sort of people they want us to be. (Ps. 15:1-5) It also involves endeavoring to control our imperfect tendencies, even eliminating them where possible. Whether we got baptized recently or have been in the truth for many years, we must “continue . . . to be readjusted.” —2 Cor. 13:11.

⁹ Continued effort is required in order “to be readjusted” and manifest “the new personality.” Paul reminded fellow believers: “You were taught to put away the old personality that conforms to your former course of conduct and that is being corrupted according to its deceptive desires. And you should continue to be made new in your dominant mental attitude, and should put on the new personality that was created according to God’s will in true righteousness and loyalty.” (Eph. 4:22-24) The expression “continue to be made new” indicates that putting on the new personality is an ongoing process. This is encouraging, for it assures us that regardless of how long we have been serving Jehovah, we can keep making progress in cultivating and refining the Christian qualities that make up the new personality. Yes, the Bible can continue to change our life.

WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT?

¹⁰ We must exert ourselves if we are to allow God’s Word to continue changing us. But why is intense effort necessary on our part? If Jehovah is blessing our

9. How do we know that we can keep putting on the new personality?

10. What must we do to keep making changes with the help of the Bible, and what questions might we ask?

endeavors, should not spiritual progress come more easily? Could not Jehovah simply override our wrong inclinations to the point that we could display godly qualities with minimal effort?

¹¹ When we contemplate the physical universe, we realize that Jehovah has great power. For example, the sun changes five million tons of its matter into energy every second. Although only a small amount passes through our globe’s atmosphere, it is enough to provide adequate heat and light to sustain life on earth. (Ps. 74:16; Isa. 40:26) Jehovah is pleased to give an appropriate measure of power to his human servants when needed. (Isa. 40:29) Yes, God could even give us the strength to conquer every weakness without having to struggle with or learn from our mistakes. Why does he not do so?

¹² Jehovah has given us the peerless gift of free will. By choosing to do God’s will and by working hard to do so, we show our depth of love for Jehovah and our desire to please him. We also demonstrate our support of his sovereignty. Satan has challenged the rightfulness of Jehovah’s sovereignty, so our voluntary and vigorous efforts to uphold it are undoubtedly of special value to our benevolent and appreciative heavenly Father. (Job 2:3-5; Prov. 27:11) However, if Jehovah completely relieved us of the need to exert ourselves to fight our imperfect tendencies so as to please him, any claim of loyalty and support of his sovereignty would be meaningless.

¹³ Thus, Jehovah tells us to put forth “earnest effort” in developing godly qualities. **(Read 2 Peter 1:5-7; Col. 3:**

11-13. Why does Jehovah expect us to put forth effort to overcome our weaknesses?



It may be helpful to collect and review scriptures and articles that deal with your weaknesses
(See paragraph 15)

12) He expects us to work hard to control our thoughts and feelings. (Rom. 8:5; 12:9) Having made a genuine effort in this regard, we feel all the more satisfied when we realize that the Bible is still changing our life.

LET GOD'S WORD KEEP ON CHANGING YOU

¹⁴ What might we do to cultivate godly qualities and please Jehovah? We must do more than embark on a program of self-improvement. We need to keep exerting ourselves and following God's instructions, for Romans 12:2 states: "Stop being molded by this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over, so that you may prove

14, 15. What can we do to develop qualities that Jehovah loves? (See the box "The Bible and Prayer Changed Their Lives.")

to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." By means of his Word and holy spirit, Jehovah helps us to discern his will, to do it, and to change our life to the extent necessary in order to meet his requirements. Our efforts should include such activities as daily Bible reading, meditation on the Scriptures, and prayer for holy spirit. (Luke 11:13; Gal. 5:22, 23) As we yield to the guidance of God's holy spirit and align our thinking with Jehovah's viewpoint as revealed in his Word, we will become more godly in our thoughts, words, and actions. Even then, we will need to remain on guard against succumbing to our particular weaknesses.—Prov. 4:23.

¹⁵ In addition to daily Bible reading, we need to study God's Word along with our Christian publications with a view to imitating Jehovah's wonderful qualities. Some have found it practical to collect and occasionally review certain scriptures and *Watchtower* or *Awake!* articles that are especially helpful in cultivating Christian qualities or in overcoming particular weaknesses.

¹⁶ If your spiritual progress seems slow, remember that such growth takes time. The cultivating of spiritual qualities is an ongoing process. We must be patient as we endeavor to let the Bible continue to produce positive changes in our life. At first, we may need to discipline ourselves to do what is Scripturally right. In time, though, thinking and acting in a godly way will likely become easier and more natural for us as our thoughts and actions progressively line up with those of Jehovah God.—Ps. 37:31; Prov. 23:12; Gal. 5:16, 17.

16. Why should we not be discouraged if we are not able to make changes quickly?

The Bible and Prayer Changed Their Lives

Russell was critical and demanding of his fellow worshippers. Maria Victoria loved to gossip. Linda experienced an intense fear of man whenever she engaged in the ministry. All three of these baptized Christians felt that it would be nearly impossible to change because their imperfect leanings were so strong. However, all of them have made significant progress in overcoming their weaknesses. Note what helped them.

Russell: “Supplicating Jehovah in prayer and a daily dose of Bible reading helped me. Meditating on 2 Peter 2:11 and on personal counsel from the elders made a big difference.”

Maria Victoria: “I fervently prayed to Jehovah to help me control my tongue. I also saw the need to stop having close association with people who loved to gossip. Psalm 64:1-4 made me realize that I did not want to be one from whom others pray to be safeguarded! I also came to appreciate that continuing to gossip would make me a poor example and bring reproach on Jehovah’s name.”

Linda: “I familiarized myself with our tracts so as to be prepared to offer them. Associating with those who enjoy various avenues of service has been a great help. And I continue to rely on Jehovah through prayer.”

BEAR IN MIND OUR GRAND PROSPECTS

¹⁷ Loyal worshippers of Jehovah will eventually have the privilege of serving him forever in perfection. At that time, manifesting godly qualities will no longer be a struggle but will always be an exquisite delight. Meanwhile, thanks to the ransom, we are permitted to worship our loving God. We can do so even in our present imperfect state if we continue striving to submit to the transforming power of his Word.

¹⁸ Kevin, who was mentioned earlier, worked earnestly to bring his temper under control. He meditated on and applied Bible principles, and he accepted the help and counsel offered by fellow Christians. Over the course of a few years, Kevin made significant improvement. Eventually, he qualified to be appointed as a ministerial servant, and for the past 20 years, he has been serving as a congregation elder. Even so, he sees the need to remain on guard against any spiritual relapse.

¹⁹ Kevin’s experience shows that the Bible helps God’s people to continue making positive changes in their life. Therefore, let us never give up in allowing God’s Word to keep transforming us and bringing us into a closer relationship with Jehovah. (Ps. 25:14) As we see Jehovah’s blessing on our efforts, we will have clear evidence that the Bible can keep changing our life.—Ps. 34:8.

17. If we are loyal to Jehovah, what delightful future can we look forward to?

18, 19. How can we be sure that the Bible has power to continue changing our life?

ENDNOTE:

[1] (paragraph 1) The name has been changed.

Guard Your Heart

(Proverbs 4:23)

E_b *E_bma7* *E_b* *F#^o* *B7/F#* *E_b/G*

Oh, guard your heart, it means your life;
Pre - pare your heart, to search for God
Pro - tect your heart from harm - ful thoughts;

F#^o *B^b7/F*

A - void the path of sin.
By means of ear what - nest prayer.
Con - sid - er what is true.

Fm *A^b/B^b* *B^b7* *B^b7/D* *Fm7* *B^b7*

God reads the heart, and there he finds
With con - stan - cy, and give to praise and thanks;
Al - low God's Word to reach your heart,

E_b/G *B7/F#* *Fm7* *B^b7* *E_b*

The per - son deep with - in.
Con - fide each need and care.
To strength - en and re - new.

Guard Your Heart

Eb
Ebma7
Eb
F#°
B7/F#
Eb/G

Some - times the heart is des - per - ate
 The things Je - ho - vah teach - es - us
 Je - ho - vah loves his loy - al ones;

Eb
Eb/G
Bb7/F
Eb7
Ab
C7/G
Fm

And could things be - gin to stray.
 Are things we should o - bey.
 On this we can de - pend.

Fm/Ab
A°
Eb6/Bb
Eb/G
Bbm/G
Bbm6/Db
C7

So use your mind to guide your heart,
 So cul - ti - vate a loy - al heart,
 So wor - ship him whole - heart - ed - ly

Fm
Fm7
Gm/Bb
Bb7
Eb

And keep Je - ho - vah's way.
 And please him ev - 'ry day.
 For - ev - er as his friend.