

- Song 80 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Jehovah Remembers That We Are Dust”:** (10 min.)
Ps 103:8-12—Jehovah mercifully forgives us when we repent (*w13 6/15 20 ¶14; w12 7/15 16 ¶17*)
Ps 103:13, 14—Jehovah is fully aware of our limitations (*w15 4/15 26 ¶8; w13 6/15 15 ¶16*)
Ps 103:19, 22—Appreciation for Jehovah’s mercy and compassion should move us to support his sovereignty (*w10 11/15 25 ¶5; w07 12/1 21 ¶1*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Ps 102:12, 27—When we are distressed, how does focusing on our relationship with Jehovah help us? (*w14 3/15 16 ¶19-21*)

Ps 103:13—Why does Jehovah not respond immediately to our every request? (*w15 4/15 25 ¶7*)

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 105:24-45

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) *g16.4 10-11*—Lay the groundwork for a return visit.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) *g16.4 10-11*—Lay the groundwork for the next visit.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *bh 164-166 ¶3-4*—Help the student to see how he can apply the material.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 91
- **Never Forget All That Jehovah Has Done for You (Ps 103:1-5):** (15 min.) Discussion. Start by playing the *jw.org* video *I Got Fed Up With My Lifestyle*. (Look under ABOUT US > ACTIVITIES.) Then consider the following questions: What reasons do we have to praise Jehovah? What future blessings do we anticipate as a result of Jehovah’s goodness?
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *ia* chap. 22 ¶1-13
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 131 and Prayer

PSALMS 102-105 | Jehovah Remembers That We Are Dust

David used figures of speech to illustrate Jehovah’s mercy.

103:11

Just as we cannot completely grasp the distance between the starry heavens and the earth, we cannot comprehend the magnitude of Jehovah’s loyal love

103:12

Jehovah puts our sins as far away from us as we can possibly imagine, as far off as the sunrise is from the sunset

103:13

Just as a father shows compassion to his son who may be hurt, Jehovah shows mercy to repentant ones who are crushed by their sins



1. Knowing goodness from Jehovah
Is a joy through all our days.
As our Father in the heavens,
He is good in all his ways.
Showing favor, granting mercy,
Far beyond what we deserve;
He is worthy of our worship
And the One we gladly serve.
2. In his likeness he has made us
So that we might cultivate
All the virtues he possesses
And his goodness imitate.
May we grow in godly goodness,
In his virtues may we share.
Let us pray for holy spirit,
That its fruitage we might bear.
3. Those to whom we are related
In the faith—our brotherhood—
We will show them special favor,
But to all may we do good.
As we share the Kingdom good news
And our hope with all we meet,
May we always be impartial;
May our goodness be complete.

- 5 For Jehovah is good;^a
His loyal love endures forever,
And his faithfulness through
all generations.^b

Of David. A melody.

101 I will sing about loyal
love and justice.
To you, O Jehovah, I will sing
praises.*

- 2 I will act with discretion and
blamelessness.*

When will you come to me?
I will walk with integrity of
heart^c inside my house.

- 3 I will not set anything worth-
less* before my eyes.

I hate the deeds of those who
deviate from what is right;^d
I will have nothing to do with
them.*

- 4 A crooked heart is far
from me;

I will not accept* what is bad.

- 5 Anyone slandering his neigh-
bor in secret,^e

I will silence.*
Anyone with haughty eyes
and an arrogant heart,
I will not tolerate.

- 6 I will look to the faithful ones
of the earth,
So that they may dwell
with me.

The one walking in
blamelessness* will minis-
ter to me.

- 7 No deceitful person will
dwell in my house,
And no liar will stand in my
presence.*

- 8 Every morning I will silence*
all the wicked of the earth,

101:1 *Or "make music." 101:2 *Or "integrity." 101:3 *Or "good-for-nothing." #Or "Their deeds do not cling to me." 101:4 *Lit., "know." 101:5, 8 *Or "do away with." 101:6 *Or "in integrity." 101:7 *Lit., "in front of my eyes."

CHAP. 100

a Ps 86:5
Lu 18:19

b Ex 34:6, 7
De 7:9
Ps 98:3

CHAP. 101

c 1KI 9:4
Ps 78:70, 72

d Ps 97:10

e Pr 20:19

Second Col.

a Pr 20:8

CHAP. 102

b Ps 61:2
Ps 142:2

c Ps 55:1
Da 9:17

d Ex 2:23

e Ps 27:9
La 1:20

f Ps 143:7
Isa 65:24

g La 1:13

h Ps 143:4

i Ps 6:6
Ps 38:8

j Job 19:20
Pr 17:22

k Ps 38:11

l Ps 31:11
Ps 74:10
Ps 79:4

m La 3:15

n Ps 80:5

o Ps 39:5

p Job 14:1, 2
Ps 102:4

To cut off all wrongdoers
from the city of Jehovah.^a

A prayer of the oppressed one when
he is in despair* and pours out his
concern before Jehovah.^b

102 O Jehovah, hear my
prayer;^c

Let my cry for help reach
you.^d

- 2 Do not hide your face from
me in my time of distress.^e

Incline your ear* to me;
Do answer me quickly when
I call.^f

- 3 For my days are vanishing
like smoke,
And my bones are charred
like a fireplace.^g

- 4 My heart has been struck
down like grass and has
withered,^h

For I forgot to eat my food.

- 5 Because of my loud groan-
ing,ⁱ

My bones cling to my flesh.^j

- 6 I resemble the pelican of the
wilderness;

I am like a little owl among
the ruins.

- 7 I lie awake;*^k

I am like a solitary bird on
a roof.^k

- 8 All day long my enemies
taunt me.^l

Those who mock me* use my
name as a curse.

- 9 For I eat ashes as my bread,^m
And my drink is mingled with
tears,ⁿ

- 10 Because of your anger and
your indignation,
For you lifted me up only
to cast me aside.

- 11 My days are like a fading
shadow,^o
And I am withering like
grass.^p

102:Sup *Or "he grows weak." 102:2 *Or "Bend down and listen." 102:7 *Or possibly, "I am emaciated." 102:8 *Or "make a fool of me." 102:11 *Or "a lengthening shadow."

- 12 But you remain forever,
O Jehovah,^a
And your fame* will endure
for all generations.^b
- 13 Surely you will rise up and
show mercy on Zion,^c
For it is time to show her
your favor;^d
The appointed time has
come.^e
- 14 For your servants find
pleasure in her stones^f
And have affection even for
her dust.^g
- 15 The nations will fear the
name of Jehovah,
And all the kings of the earth
your glory.^h
- 16 For Jehovah will rebuild
Zion;ⁱ
He will appear in his glory.^j
- 17 He will pay attention to the
prayer of the destitute;^k
He will not despise their
prayer.^l
- 18 This is written for the future
generation,^m
So that a people yet to be
brought forth* will praise
Jah.
- 19 For he looks down from his
holy height,ⁿ
From the heavens Jehovah
views the earth,
- 20 To hear the sighing of the
prisoner,^o
To release those sentenced
to death,^p
- 21 So that the name of Jehovah
will be declared in Zion^q
And his praise in Jerusalem,
- 22 When the peoples and
kingdoms
Gather together to serve
Jehovah.^r
- 23 He prematurely robbed me
of my strength;
He cut short my days.

102:12 *Or "name." Lit., "memorial."
102:18 *Lit., "be created."

CHAP. 102

a Ps 90:2
b Ex 3:15
c Isa 49:15
d Isa 60:10
e Ezr 1:1, 2
f Isa 40:2
g Da 9:2
h Ne 2:3
i Ps 137:5
j Ps 79:1
k Isa 60:3
l Zec 8:22
m Ps 147:2
n Jer 33:7
o Isa 60:1
p Da 9:20, 21
q Ps 22:24
r Ps 78:4
s Ro 15:4
t 2Ch 16:9
u Ex 3:7
v Isa 61:1
w 2Ch 33:12, 13
x Ps 79:11
y Ps 9:13, 14
z Ps 22:22
aa Isa 51:11
ab r Isa 11:10
ac Isa 49:22
ad Isa 60:3

Second Col.

a Ps 90:2
b Hab 1:12
c Re 1:8
d Ps 8:3
e Isa 48:13
f Heb 1:10-12
g Job 36:26
h Mal 3:6
i Jas 1:17
j d Isa 66:22

CHAP. 103

e De 8:2
f Ps 105:5
g 2Sa 12:13
h Isa 43:25
i Ex 15:26
j Ps 41:3
k Ps 147:3
l Isa 33:24
m Jas 5:15
n Re 21:4
o h Ps 56:13
p i Mic 7:18
q j Ps 23:5
r Ps 65:4
s k Ps 51:12
t Isa 40:31
u l Ps 9:8
v m Ps 12:5
w Pr 22:22, 23
x Jas 5:4
y n Ex 24:4
z Nu 12:8
aa o Ps 147:19

- 24 I said: "O my God,
Do not do away with me
in the middle of my life,
You whose years span all
generations."^a
- 25 Long ago you laid the founda-
tions of the earth,
And the heavens are the
work of your hands.^b
- 26 They will perish, but you will
remain;
Just like a garment they will
all wear out.
Just like clothing you will
replace them, and they will
pass away.
- 27 But you are the same, and
your years will never end.^c
- 28 The children of your ser-
vants will dwell securely,
And their offspring will be
firmly established before
you."^d

Of David.

103 Let me* praise
Jehovah;

- Let everything within me
praise his holy name.
- 2 Let me* praise Jehovah;
May I never forget all that
he has done.^e
- 3 He forgives all your errors^f
And heals all your ailments;^g
- 4 He reclaims your life from
the pit*^h
And crowns you with his
loyal love and mercy.ⁱ
- 5 He satisfies you with good
things^j all your life,
So that your youth is
renewed like that of an
eagle.^k
- 6 Jehovah acts with righteous-
ness^l and justice
For all who are oppressed.^m
- 7 He made known his ways
to Moses,ⁿ
His deeds to the sons of
Israel.^o

103:1, 2 *Or "my soul." 103:4 *Or
"grave."

- 8 Jehovah is merciful and compassionate,^{*a}
Slow to anger and abundant
in loyal love.^{#b}
- 9 He will not always find fault,^c
Nor will he stay resentful
forever.^d
- 10 He has not dealt with us
according to our sins,^e
Nor has he repaid us what
our errors deserve.^f
- 11 For as the heavens are
higher than the earth,
So great is his loyal love toward
those who fear him.^g
- 12 As far off as the sunrise is
from the sunset,
So far off from us he has put
our transgressions.^h
- 13 As a father shows mercy to
his sons,
Jehovah has shown mercy
to those who fear him.ⁱ
- 14 For he well knows how we
are formed,^j
Remembering that we are
dust.^k
- 15 As for mortal man, his days
are like those of grass;^l
He blooms like a blossom
of the field.^m
- 16 But when a wind blows, it is
no more,
As though it was never
there.^{*}
- 17 But the loyal love of Jehovah
is for all eternity^{*}
Toward those who fear him,ⁿ
And his righteousness
toward their children's
children.^o
- 18 Toward those who keep his
covenant^p
And those who are careful
to observe his orders.
- 19 Jehovah has firmly estab-
lished his throne in the
heavens;^q

103:8 *Or "gracious." #Or "loving-kindness." 103:16 *Lit., "And its place no longer knows it." 103:17 *Or "from eternity to eternity."

CHAP. 103

a Isa 55:7
Jas 5:11
b Ex 34:6
Joe 2:13
Jon 4:2
c Ps 30:5
d Isa 57:16
e Ne 9:31
f Ezr 9:13
Ps 130:3
Isa 55:7
g Ps 103:17
Isa 55:9
h Le 16:21, 22
Isa 43:25
Jer 31:34
i Ps 78:38
Isa 49:15
Mal 3:17
Jas 5:15
j Ps 78:39
k Ge 2:7
l Ps 90:5, 6
1Pe 1:24
m Job 14:1, 2
n Lu 1:50
o Ex 20:6
p Ex 19:5
De 7:9
Ps 25:10
q 2Ch 20:6
Isa 66:1

Second Col.

a Ps 47:2
Ps 145:13
Da 4:25
b Da 7:10
c 2Ki 19:35
Lu 1:19
d 1Ki 22:19
Ps 148:2
Lu 2:13, 14
e Mt 13:41
Heb 1:7

CHAP. 104

f Ps 103:1
g Ps 86:10
h 1Ch 16:27
Eze 1:27, 28
Da 7:9
i Jas 1:17
1Jo 1:5
j Isa 40:22
k Ps 18:11
Am 9:6
l De 33:26
Isa 19:1
m 2Sa 22:11
Job 38:1
n Eze 1:7, 14
Heb 1:7, 14
o Job 38:4, 6
Ps 24:1, 2
p Ec 1:4
q Ge 1:2
r Ge 1:9

And his kingship rules over
everything.^a

- 20 Praise Jehovah, all you his
angels,^b mighty in power,
Who carry out his word,^c
obeying his voice.^{*}

- 21 Praise Jehovah, all his
armies,^d
His ministers who do his
will.^e

- 22 Praise Jehovah, all his
works,
In all the places where he
rules.^{*}
Let my whole being[#] praise
Jehovah.

104 Let me[#] praise Jehovah.^f

O Jehovah my God, you are
very great.^g

With majesty^{*} and splendor
you are clothed.^h

- 2 You are wrapped in lightⁱ
as with a garment;
You stretch out the heavens
like a tent cloth.^j
- 3 He lays beams of his
upper rooms in the waters
above,^{*k}
Making the clouds his
chariot,^l
Moving on the wings of the
wind.^m

- 4 He makes his angels spirits,
His ministers a consuming
fire.ⁿ
- 5 He has established the earth
on its foundations;^o
It will not be moved from its
place^{*} forever and ever.^p
- 6 You covered it with deep
waters as with a garment.^q
The waters stood above the
mountains.
- 7 At your rebuke they fled;^r

103:20 *Lit., "hearing the voice (sound) of his word." 103:22 *Or "the places of his sovereignty." 103:22; 104:1 #Or "my soul." 104:1 *Or "dignity." 104:3 *Lit., "in the waters." 104:5 *Or "will not totter."

- At the sound of your thunder
they ran away in panic
- 8** —Mountains ascended^a and
valleys descended—
To the place you established
for them.
- 9** You set a boundary that they
should not pass,^b
That they should never again
cover the earth.
- 10** He sends springs into the
valleys;^{*}
Between the mountains they
flow.
- 11** They provide water for all
the wild beasts of the field;
The wild donkeys quench
their thirst.
- 12** Above them roost the birds
of the sky;
They sing among the thick
foliage.
- 13** He is watering the mountains
from his upper rooms.^c
With the fruitage of your
works the earth is satis-
fied.^d
- 14** He is making grass grow for
the cattle
And vegetation for man-
kind's use,^e
To grow food from the land
- 15** And wine that makes man's
heart rejoice,^f
Oil that makes the face
shine,
And bread that sustains the
heart of mortal man.^g
- 16** The trees of Jehovah are
satisfied,
The cedars of Leb'a-non that
he planted,
- 17** Where the birds make nests.
The home of the stork^h is in
the juniper trees.
- 18** The high mountains are for
the mountain goats;ⁱ
The crags are a refuge for
the rock badgers.^j
- 19** He has made the moon to
mark the appointed times;

104:10 *Or "wadis."

CHAP. 104

- a Pr 8:25
b Job 38:8-10
Ps 33:7
Pr 8:29
Jer 5:22
c Job 38:37
Ps 147:8
Jer 10:13
Am 9:6
Mt 5:45
d Ps 65:9
Ac 14:17
e Ge 1:29, 30
Ge 9:3
f Ec 9:7
g Ec 10:19
h Jer 8:7
i Job 39:1
j Pr 30:26

Second Col.

- a Ge 1:16
Ps 19:6
Jer 31:35
b Ge 1:5
Ps 74:16
Isa 45:7
c Am 3:4
d Ps 147:9
e Ne 9:6
f Pr 3:19
Jer 10:12
g Ge 1:21
h Job 41:1
i Ps 136:25
Ps 145:15
Ps 147:9
Mt 6:26
j Lu 12:24
k Ps 107:9
Ps 145:16
l Ge 3:19
Job 34:14, 15
Ps 146:3, 4
Ec 3:19, 20
Ec 12:7
m Job 33:4
Ac 17:28
n Ge 1:31

- The sun well knows when to
set.^a
- 20** You bring darkness, and
night falls,^b
When all the wild animals
of the forest roam about.
- 21** The young lions* roar for
their prey^c
And seek their food from
God.^d
- 22** When the sun rises,
They withdraw and lie down
in their dens.
- 23** Man goes to his work,
And he labors until evening.
- 24** How many your works are,
O Jehovah!^e
You have made all of them
in wisdom.^f
The earth is full of what you
have made.
- 25** There is the sea, so great
and wide,
Teeming with countless liv-
ing things, both small and
great.^g
- 26** There the ships travel,
And Le-vi'a-than,^h which you
formed to play in it.
- 27** All of them wait for you
To give them their food in
its season.ⁱ
- 28** What you give them, they
gather.^j
When you open your hand,
they are satisfied with
good things.^k
- 29** When you hide your face,
they are disturbed.
If you take away their spirit,
they die and return to the
dust.^l
- 30** If you send out your spirit,
they are created,^m
And you renew the surface
of the ground.
- 31** The glory of Jehovah will
last forever.
Jehovah will rejoice in his
works.ⁿ

104:21 *Or "maned young lions."

104:26 *See Glossary.

- 32 He looks at the earth, and it trembles;
He touches the mountains, and they smoke.^a
- 33 I will sing to Jehovah^b throughout my life;
I will sing praises* to my God as long as I live.^c
- 34 Let my thoughts be pleasing to him.*
I will rejoice in Jehovah.
- 35 The sinners will vanish from the earth,
And the wicked will no longer exist.^d
Let me* praise Jehovah.
Praise Jah!^e

- 105** Give thanks to Jehovah,^e call on his name,
Make his deeds known among the peoples!^f
- 2 Sing to him, sing praises* to him,
Ponder over^g all his wonderful works.^g
- 3 Boast about his holy name.^h
Let the hearts of those seeking Jehovah rejoice.ⁱ
- 4 Search for Jehovahⁱ and his strength.
Seek his face* constantly.
- 5 Remember the wonderful works he has performed,
His miracles and the judgments he has pronounced,^k
- 6 You offspring* of Abraham his servant,^j
You sons of Jacob, his chosen ones.^m
- 7 He is Jehovah our God.ⁿ
His judgments are throughout the earth.^o
- 8 He remembers his covenant forever,^p

104:33; 105:2 *Or "make music."
104:34 *Or possibly, "Let my meditation about him be pleasurable."
104:35 *Or "my soul." #Or "Hallelujah!" "Jah" is a shortened form of the name Jehovah. 105:2 #Or possibly, "Speak about." 105:4 *Or "presence."
105:6 *Or "descendants." Lit., "seed."

CHAP. 104
a Ex 19:18
b Ps 13:6
c Ps 146:2
d Ps 37:10, 38
Pr 2:22

CHAP. 105
e Ps 136:1
f 1Ch 16:8-13
Ps 96:3
Ps 145:11, 12
Isa 12:4
g Ps 77:12
Ps 119:27
h Jer 9:24
i Ps 119:2
j Am 5:4
Zep 2:3
k De 7:18, 19
l Ex 3:6
m Ex 19:5, 6
Isa 41:8
n Ex 20:2
Ps 100:3
o 1Ch 16:14-18
Isa 26:9
Re 15:4
p Ne 1:5

Second Col.
a De 7:9
Lu 1:72, 73
b Ge 17:1, 2
Ge 22:15-18
c Ge 26:3
d Ge 12:7
Ge 13:14, 15
Ge 15:18
Ge 26:3
Ge 28:13
e Ps 78:55
f Ge 34:30
g Ge 17:8
Ge 23:4
1Ch 16:19-22
Ac 7:4, 5
h Ge 20:1
Ge 46:6
i Ge 31:7, 42
j Ge 12:17
Ge 20:2, 3
k Ge 26:9, 11
l Ge 41:30, 54
Ge 42:5
Ac 7:11

m Ge 37:28, 36
Ge 45:4, 5
Ge 50:20
n Ge 39:20
o Ac 7:10
p Ge 41:14

- The promise he made,* to a thousand generations,^a
- 9 The covenant he made with Abraham,^b
And the oath he swore to Isaac,^c
- 10 Which he established as a decree to Jacob
And as a lasting covenant to Israel,
- 11 Saying, "I will give you the land of Ca'naan^d
As your allotted inheritance."^e
- 12 This was when they were few in number,^f
Yes, very few, and they were foreigners in the land.^g
- 13 They walked about from nation to nation,
From one kingdom to another people.^h
- 14 He did not allow any man to oppress them,ⁱ
But on their account he reprov'd kings,^j
- 15 Saying, "Do not touch my anointed ones,
And to my prophets do nothing bad."^k
- 16 He called down a famine on the land;^l
He cut off their supply of bread.*
- 17 He sent ahead of them a man Who was sold to be a slave,
Joseph.^m
- 18 With fetters they bound* his feet;ⁿ
His neck was put in irons[#]
- 19 Until the time that his word proved true,^o
The saying of Jehovah is what refined him.
- 20 The king sent to release him,^p
The ruler of the peoples set him free.

105:8 *Lit., "The word he commanded." 105:16 *Lit., "broke every bread rod." Possibly referring to rods used for storing bread. 105:18 *Lit., "afflicted."
#Or "His soul came into iron."

- 21 He made him master of his household,
Ruler over all his property,^a
- 22 To have authority over* his princes as he pleased[#]
And to teach his elders wisdom.^b
- 23 Then Israel came into Egypt,^c
And Jacob lived as a foreigner in the land of Ham.
- 24 God made his people very fruitful;^d
He made them mightier than their adversaries,^e
- 25 Whose hearts he let change to hate his people,
To plot against his servants.^f
- 26 He sent his servant Moses,^g
And Aaron,^h whom he had chosen.
- 27 They performed his signs among them,
His miracles in the land of Ham.ⁱ
- 28 He sent darkness and the land became dark;^j
They did not rebel against his words.
- 29 He changed their waters into blood
And killed their fish.^k
- 30 Their land swarmed with frogs,^l
Even in the royal chambers.
- 31 He ordered the gadflies to invade
And gnats in all their territories.^m
- 32 He turned their rain to hail
And sent lightning* on their land.ⁿ
- 33 He struck their vines and their fig trees
And shattered the trees of their territory.
- 34 He said that the locusts should invade,
Young locusts without number.^o

105:22 *Lit., "To bind." [#]Or "agreeably to his soul." 105:32 *Or "flames of fire."

CHAP. 105

- a Ge 41:39-41
Ge 41:48
Ge 45:8
- b Ge 41:33, 38
- c Ge 46:4, 6
- d Ex 1:7
Ac 7:17
- e Ex 1:8, 9
- f Ex 1:10
Ac 7:18, 19
- g Ex 3:10
Ex 4:12
Ex 6:11
- h Ex 4:14
Ex 7:1
- i Ne 9:10
Ps 78:43-51
- j Ex 10:22, 23
- k Ex 7:20, 21
- l Ex 8:6
- m Ex 8:17, 24
- n Ex 9:23-26
- o Ex 10:13-15

Second Col.

- a Ex 12:29
- b Ge 15:13, 14
Ex 3:22
Ex 12:35, 36
- c Ex 12:33
- d Ex 14:19, 20
- e Ex 13:21
- f Ps 78:27
- g Ex 16:12-15
Ps 78:24
- h Ex 17:6
1Co 10:1, 4
- i Ps 78:15, 16
- j Ge 12:7
Ge 15:13, 14
Ex 2:24
De 9:5
- k Nu 33:3
- l Jos 11:23
Jos 21:43
Ne 9:22
Ps 78:55
Ac 13:19
- m De 6:10, 11
Jos 5:11, 12
- n De 4:40

CHAP. 106

- o Lu 18:19
- p 1Ch 16:34
Ezr 3:11
Ps 103:17
Ps 107:1

- 35 They devoured all the vegetation in the land,
And they devoured the produce of the ground.
- 36 Then he struck down every firstborn in their land,^a
The beginning of their procreative power.
- 37 He brought his people out with silver and gold;^b
And no one among his tribes stumbled.
- 38 Egypt rejoiced when they left,
For the dread of Israel* had fallen on them.^c
- 39 He spread a cloud to screen them off^d
And fire to give light by night.^e
- 40 They asked, and he brought quail;^f
He kept satisfying them with bread from heaven.^g
- 41 He opened a rock, and waters flowed out;^h
These flowed through the desert like a river.ⁱ
- 42 For he remembered the holy promise he had made to Abraham his servant.^j
- 43 So he brought out his people with exultation,^k
His chosen ones with a joyful cry.
- 44 He gave them the lands of nations;^l
They inherited what other peoples had worked hard to produce,^m
- 45 So that they would keep his decreesⁿ
And observe his laws.
Praise Jah![#]
- 106** Praise Jah![#]
Give thanks to Jehovah,
for he is good;^o
His loyal love endures forever.^p

105:38 *Lit., "them." 105:45; 106:1 *Or "Hallelujah!" "Jah" is a shortened form of the name Jehovah.

Treasures From God's Word

Jehovah mercifully forgives us when we repent

Reference: w13 6/15 20 paragraph 14.

We can gain comfort from meditating on Jehovah's forgiveness. Consider an example. Many years ago, a sister whom we will call Elaine was disfellowshipped. Several years later, she was reinstated. "Although I told myself and others that I believed that I was forgiven by Jehovah," admits Elaine, "I always felt that somehow he was at a distance or that others were closer to him and that he was more real to them." However, Elaine drew comfort from reading and meditating on some of the word pictures that the Bible uses to describe Jehovah's forgiveness. "I felt Jehovah's love and tenderness toward me in a way that I had never realized before," Elaine adds. She was especially moved by this thought: "When Jehovah forgives our sins, we need not feel that we bear the stain of such sins for the rest of our life." Elaine says: "I realized that I had not believed that Jehovah could fully forgive me, and I thought that I would carry this burden for the rest of my life. I know that it will take time, but I am starting to feel that I really can draw closer to Jehovah, and I feel that a weight has been lifted off me." What a loving and forgiving God we serve!—Psalm 103:9.

Reference: w12 7/15 16 paragraph 17.

At times, of course, we all make mistakes. (Ecclesiastes 7:20) When that occurs, do not feel worthless or overly discouraged. If you stumble, so to speak, get up and move forward—even if that means asking the local elders for help. Their “prayer of faith,” wrote James, “will make the indisposed one well, and Jehovah will raise him up. Also, if he has committed sins, it will be forgiven him.” (James 5:15) Yes, never forget that God is truly merciful and that *he drew you* into the congregation because he saw your potential. **(Read Psalm 103:8, 9.)** So as long as you maintain a complete heart toward Jehovah, he will never give up on you.—1 Chronicles 28:9.

Jehovah is fully aware of our limitations

Reference: w15 4/15 26 paragraph 8.

Another factor is that Jehovah is fully aware of our limitations. (Psalm 103:14) Therefore, he does not expect us to endure in our own strength but offers us his fatherly help. Of course, at times, we might feel that we cannot go on anymore. But Jehovah assures us that he will never allow his servants to suffer beyond their limit of endurance. Yes, he will “make the way out.” (Read 1 Corinthians 10:13.) Therefore, we have good reason to trust that Jehovah’s assessment of what we can bear is right.

Reference: w13 6/15 15 paragraph 16.

Well, imagine that you are an Israelite and quite poor. As you arrive at the tabernacle with a little flour to offer as a sacrifice, you notice wealthier Israelites bringing livestock. You might feel embarrassed about your seemingly insignificant sacrifice of flour. Then you remember that in Jehovah's eyes, your offering is significant. Why? For one thing, Jehovah required that the flour be of high quality. In effect, Jehovah was saying to poorer Israelites: 'I realize that you cannot offer as much as others can, but I also know that what you are giving me is your best.' Truly, Jehovah displays reasonableness by taking into account his servants' limitations and their circumstances.—Psalm 103:14.

Appreciation for Jehovah's mercy and compassion
should move us to support his sovereignty

Reference: w10 11/15 25 paragraph 5.

As the Creator, Jehovah God is the Sovereign of the earth and the entire universe. (*Read Revelation 4:11.*) Jehovah is also our Judge, Statute-Giver, and King, for within himself he combines the judicial, legislative, and executive branches of universal government. (Isaiah 33:22) Since we owe our very existence to God and are dependent on him, we should view him as our Sovereign Lord. We will be motivated to

uphold his lofty position if we always bear in mind that “Jehovah himself has firmly established his throne in the very heavens; and over everything his own kingship has held domination.”—Psalm 103:19; Acts 4:24.

Reference: *w07* 12/1 21 paragraph 1.

“Jehovah himself has firmly established his throne in the very heavens; and over everything his own kingship has held domination.” (Psalm 103:19) With those words, the psalmist pointed to the fundamental concept of rulership. Jehovah God, being the Creator, is rightfully the Sovereign Ruler of the universe.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

When we are distressed, how does focusing on our relationship with Jehovah help us?

Reference: *w14* 3/15 16 paragraphs 19-21.

The “Prayer Of The Oppressed One”

19 The writer of Psalm 102 was desperate. He was “oppressed,” suffering great physical or emotional distress, and he lacked the strength to deal with his problems. (Psalms 102, superscription) We find in his words an indication that he was absorbed in his pain, loneliness, and personal feelings. (Psalm 102:3, 4, 6, 11) He believed that

Jehovah wanted to cast him aside.—Psalm 102:10.

20 Yet, the psalmist could still use his life to praise Jehovah. **(Read Psalm 102:19-21.)** As we see from Psalm 102, even those who are in the faith can be in pain and be struggling to focus on anything else. The psalmist felt “like a solitary bird on a roof,” as if he had only his troubles for company. (Psalm 102:7) If you ever feel that way, pour out your heart to Jehovah as the psalmist did. The prayers of the oppressed one—your prayers—can help you as you battle negative thoughts. Jehovah promises that “he will pay attention to the prayer of the destitute; he will not despise their prayer.” (Psalm 102:17) Trust that promise.

21 Psalm 102 also shows how you might gain a more positive viewpoint. The psalmist did so by shifting attention to his relationship with Jehovah. (Psalm 102:12, 27) He found comfort in knowing that Jehovah would always be there to sustain His people through trials. So if negative feelings temporarily keep you from doing as much as you want to in God’s service, pray about it. Ask God to hear your prayer not only so that you may experience some relief from your distress but also “so that the name of Jehovah will be declared.”—Psalm 102:20, 21.

Why does Jehovah not respond immediately to our every request?

Reference: w15 4/15 25 paragraph 7.

Why does Jehovah not give us an immediate response to our every request? Recall that he likens our relationship with him to that of children with a father. (Psalm 103:13) A child cannot rightly expect a parent to grant every request or to do so right away. Some of a child's requests may be mere passing whims. Others must wait till the time is right. Still others may not be in the child's best interests or in the best interests of others involved. Furthermore, to concede immediately to a child's every request would change the relationship to one of master and slave, the child being the master. Similarly, Jehovah may in our best interests allow time to pass before his response to our prayers becomes evident. That is his prerogative as our wise Creator, loving Master, and heavenly Father. Fulfilling all our requests right away would distort the proper relationship between us and him.—Compare Isaiah 29:16; 45:9.

- Song 80 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Jehovah Remembers That We Are Dust”:** (10 min.)
Ps 103:8-12—Jehovah mercifully forgives us when we repent (*w13 6/15 20 ¶14; w12 7/15 16 ¶17*)
Ps 103:13, 14—Jehovah is fully aware of our limitations (*w15 4/15 26 ¶8; w13 6/15 15 ¶16*)
Ps 103:19, 22—Appreciation for Jehovah’s mercy and compassion should move us to support his sovereignty (*w10 11/15 25 ¶5; w07 12/1 21 ¶1*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Ps 102:12, 27—When we are distressed, how does focusing on our relationship with Jehovah help us? (*w14 3/15 16 ¶19-21*)

Ps 103:13—Why does Jehovah not respond immediately to our every request? (*w15 4/15 25 ¶7*)

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 105:24-45

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) *g16.4 10-11*—Lay the groundwork for a return visit.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) *g16.4 10-11*—Lay the groundwork for the next visit.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *bh 164-166 ¶3-4*—Help the student to see how he can apply the material.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 91
- **Never Forget All That Jehovah Has Done for You (Ps 103:1-5):** (15 min.) Discussion. Start by playing the *jw.org* video *I Got Fed Up With My Lifestyle*. (Look under ABOUT US > ACTIVITIES.) Then consider the following questions: What reasons do we have to praise Jehovah? What future blessings do we anticipate as a result of Jehovah’s goodness?
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *ia* chap. 22 ¶1-13
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 131 and Prayer

PSALMS 102-105 | Jehovah Remembers That We Are Dust

David used figures of speech to illustrate Jehovah’s mercy.

103:11

Just as we cannot completely grasp the distance between the starry heavens and the earth, we cannot comprehend the magnitude of Jehovah’s loyal love

103:12

Jehovah puts our sins as far away from us as we can possibly imagine, as far off as the sunrise is from the sunset

103:13

Just as a father shows compassion to his son who may be hurt, Jehovah shows mercy to repentant ones who are crushed by their sins





How to Deal With Change



THE CHALLENGE

- Your dad's job requires that your family relocate.
- Your best friend is moving far away.
- Your older sibling is leaving home to get married.

How well would *you* adapt to such changes?

A tree that can bend with the wind is more likely to survive a storm. Like that tree, you can learn to “bend” with changes over which you have little or no control. Before discussing how you can do that, though, consider a few things you should know about change.



WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Change is inevitable. The Bible states a fundamental truth about humans: “Unexpected events overtake them all.” (Ecclesiastes 9:11) Sooner or later, you will be confronted with the reality of those words. Of course, not all unexpected events are bad. And some changes that at first *seem* to be bad might turn out to be advantageous. Nevertheless, most people thrive on routine, while change—whether good or bad—rattles their comfort zone.

Change can be particularly stressful for adolescents. Why? “You’re already going through *internal* changes,” explains a young man named Alex.* “*External* changes just add to the stress.”

Here is another reason: When adults face a change, they can refer to their personal ‘book of experience’ to see how they dealt with similar situations in the past. But young people have less history on which to draw.

You can learn to adapt. Resilience is the ability to recover from misfortune or adjust to change. A resilient person can not only *endure* a new circumstance but also look at a seeming obstacle and see an opportunity in it. Resilient teens are less likely to turn to drugs or alcohol when they feel overwhelmed.

* Some names in this article have been changed.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

Accept reality. No doubt you would like to have total control of your life, but that is simply not possible. Friends will move away or marry; siblings will grow up and leave home; circumstances may force your family to move, leaving behind friends and all that is familiar. It is better to accept reality than to let negative thoughts overwhelm you.—*Bible principle: Ecclesiastes 7:10.*

Look ahead. Focusing on the past is like driving on a highway with your eyes fixed on the rearview mirror. An occasional glance is beneficial, but you really need to concentrate on the road ahead. The same is true when you are confronted with change. Try to keep your eyes fixed on the future. (Proverbs 4:25) For example, what goal could you set for the next month, or six months?

Focus on the positive. “Resilience is about attitude,” says a young woman named Laura. “Find positive aspects of the circumstance you are in.” Can you list at least one advantage that your new circumstance offers? —*Bible principle: Ecclesiastes 6:9.*

A young woman named Victoria recalls that in her teen years, all her close friends moved away. “I felt so lonely, and I wished that everything could have stayed the way it was,” she says. “But looking back, that’s when I really started to grow. I came to realize that growth *requires* change. That’s also when I started seeing possibilities for new friendships that were all around me.”—*Bible principle: Proverbs 27:10.*

Focusing on the past is like driving on a highway with your eyes fixed on the rearview mirror

Do things for others. The Bible says: “Look out not only for your own interests, but also for the interests of others.” (Philippians 2:4) A good antidote to your own challenge is helping others with theirs. Anna, 17, says: “As I grew older, I came to realize that when I could help someone else who might be going through a similar situation—or a worse one—it was rewarding!” ■

KEY SCRIPTURES

“Do not say, ‘Why were the former days better than these?’”
—Ecclesiastes 7:10.

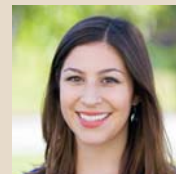
“Better to enjoy what the eyes see than to wander after one’s desires.”—Ecclesiastes 6:9.

“Better is a neighbor nearby than a brother far away.”—Proverbs 27:10.



JUAN

“Young people can develop resilience by analyzing the situation they are coping with and realizing that change is a part of life. The quicker a person accepts that reality, the easier it will be to move on with life. Things do get better.”



CARISSA

“Once a difficulty has passed, I try not to relive it over and over in my mind. I just move on to the next challenge in life. Part of being resilient, I believe, is looking ahead rather than looking behind.”

My Father, My God and Friend

(Hebrews 6:10)

C Fma7/C G7/C C Am Em/G

Life in this world can be hard. Life in this world can bring
Gone are the days of my youth; Days of ca - lam - i - ty

F Dm Dm/C Dm/B E7

tears and pain. Still ev - 'ry day I will say, "My
now are here. Still through the eyes of my faith, My

Am7 D9 F/G Chorus G7 C

life is not in vain." For God is not un -
hope is bright and clear.

Em F Am

right - teous, And he re - mem - bers the love I've shown. So

My Father, My God and Friend

Dm7 Em F

he is ev - er near me; With Je - ho - vah, I'm not a -

Detailed description: This system contains the first two lines of the hymn. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (Bb). The bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are: "he is ev - er near me; With Je - ho - vah, I'm not a -". Chord symbols Dm7, Em, and F are placed above the treble staff.

G7 C Em

lone. Yes, God is my pro - vid - er and my pro -

Detailed description: This system contains the third and fourth lines of the hymn. The top staff is in treble clef. The bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are: "lone. Yes, God is my pro - vid - er and my pro -". Chord symbols G7, C, and Em are placed above the treble staff.

F Fm/D

tec - tor down to the end. Yes, Je -

Detailed description: This system contains the fifth and sixth lines of the hymn. The top staff is in treble clef. The bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are: "tec - tor down to the end. Yes, Je -". Chord symbols F and Fm/D are placed above the treble staff.

C/G G7sus4 G7 G7/C C

ho - vah is my Fa - ther, My God and Friend.

Detailed description: This system contains the seventh and eighth lines of the hymn. The top staff is in treble clef. The bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are: "ho - vah is my Fa - ther, My God and Friend.". Chord symbols C/G, G7sus4, G7, G7/C, and C are placed above the treble staff.

- Song 80 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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PSALMS 102-105 | Jehovah Remembers That We Are Dust

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He Was Loyal in the Face of Tests

PETER gazed anxiously around at the faces of Jesus' audience. The setting was the synagogue in Capernaum. Peter's home was in this town; his fishing business was here, on the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee; many of his friends, relatives, and business acquaintances lived here. No doubt Peter was hoping that his townsmen would see Jesus as he did and that they would share the thrill of learning about God's Kingdom from the greatest of all teachers. No such outcome seemed likely that day.

² Many had stopped listening. Some were murmuring audibly, objecting to the thrust of Jesus' message. Most troubling to Peter, though, was the reaction of some of Jesus' own disciples. Their faces no longer bore that happy expression of enlightenment, the thrill of discovery, the joy of learning the truth. Now, they looked upset, even bitter. Some

1, 2. What was Peter likely hoping for as Jesus spoke in Capernaum, yet what happened instead?

spoke up, calling Jesus' speech shocking. Refusing to listen anymore, they left the synagogue—and quit following Jesus as well.—*Read John 6:60, 66.*

³ It was a difficult time for Peter and for his fellow apostles. Peter did not fully grasp what Jesus said that day. No doubt he could see why Jesus' words might seem offensive if taken at face value. What would Peter do? It was not the first time that his loyalty to his Master was tested; nor would it be the last. Let us see how Peter's faith helped him to rise to such challenges and remain loyal.

Loyal When Others Turned Disloyal

⁴ Peter often found himself surprised by Jesus. Again and again, his Master acted and spoke in a way that was contrary to what people expected of Him. Just a day earlier, Jesus had miraculously fed a crowd of thousands. In response, they had attempted to make him king. Yet, he surprised many by withdrawing from them, directing his disciples to board a boat and sail toward Capernaum. As the dis-

3. What did Peter's faith help him to do a number of times?

4, 5. How had Jesus acted in ways that were contrary to what people expected of him?

ciples made their way over water during the night, Jesus surprised them again by walking across the stormy Sea of Galilee, giving Peter an important lesson in faith.

⁵ In the morning, they soon found that those crowds had followed them around the lake. Evidently, though, the people were driven by a desire to see Jesus produce more food miraculously, not by any hunger for spiritual truths. Jesus rebuked them for their materialistic spirit. (John 6:25-27) That discussion continued at the synagogue in Capernaum, where Jesus again went against expectations in an effort to teach a vital but difficult truth.

⁶ Jesus wanted those people to see him, not as a source of mere physical food, but as a spiritual provision from God, as the one whose life and death as a man would make eternal life possible for others. So he gave an illustration comparing himself to manna, the bread that came down from heaven in Moses' day. When some objected, he used a vivid illustration, explaining that it was necessary to partake

6. What illustration did Jesus give, and how did his listeners react?

of his flesh and his blood in order to attain life. It was at this point that the objections became insistent. Some said: “This speech is shocking; who can listen to it?” Many of Jesus’ own disciples decided to quit following him.*—John 6:48-60, 66.

⁷ What would Peter do? He too must have been baffled by Jesus’ speech. He did not yet grasp that Jesus must die in order to carry out God’s will. Was Peter tempted to slink off like those fickle disciples who left Jesus that day? No; something important set Peter apart from those men. What was it?

⁸ Jesus turned to his apostles and said: “You do not want to go also, do you?” (John 6:67) He addressed the 12, but it was Peter who spoke up. It was often so. Peter may have been the oldest of them. In any case, he was certainly the most outspoken of the group; rarely, it seems, did Peter hesitate to say what was on his mind. In this case, what was on his mind

* We can see the inconstancy of the crowd at the synagogue if we compare their reactions to Jesus’ speech here with their expressions just the day before when they enthusiastically proclaimed him a prophet of God.—John 6:14.

7, 8. (a) What did Peter not yet grasp about Jesus’ role? (b) How did Peter answer Jesus’ question to the apostles?

was this beautiful and memorable statement: “Lord, whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life.”—John 6:68.

⁹ Do not those words touch your heart? Peter’s faith in Jesus had helped him to build a priceless quality—loyalty. Peter saw clearly that Jesus was the only Savior Jehovah had provided and that Jesus saved by means of his sayings—his teachings about the Kingdom of God. Peter knew that even if there were some things that puzzled him, there was nowhere else to go if he wanted God’s favor and the blessing of everlasting life.

¹⁰ Is that how you feel? Sadly, many in today’s world claim to love Jesus but fail the test of loyalty. Genuine loyalty to Christ requires that we share Peter’s view of Jesus’ teachings. We need to learn them, to grasp their meaning, and to live by them—even when they surprise us by running contrary to our expectations or personal preferences. Only by proving loyal can we hope to attain to the everlasting life that Jesus wants for us.—*Read Psalm 97:10.*

9. How did Peter show loyalty to Jesus?

10. How can we today imitate Peter’s loyalty?

Loyal When Corrected

¹¹ Not long after that busy time, Jesus led his apostles and some disciples on a long trek northward. The snowcapped peak of Mount Hermon, at the northernmost limit of the Promised Land, was at times visible even from the blue waters of the Sea of Galilee. Gradually, that mountain loomed higher as the group approached, following the rising terrain up to the villages near Caesarea Philippi.* In this lovely setting, with a perspective over much of the Promised Land to the south, Jesus asked his followers an important question.

¹² “Who are the crowds saying that I am?” he wanted to know. We can just imagine Peter looking into Jesus’ keen eyes, sensing again his Master’s kindness and his powerful, clear intelligence. Jesus was interested in the conclusions his audiences were drawing from what they saw and heard. Jesus’ disciples an-

* From the shores of the Sea of Galilee, that 30-mile journey took the group from about 700 feet below sea level to 1,150 feet above, through regions of great natural beauty.

11. Jesus led his followers on what trek? (See also footnote.)

12, 13. (a) Why did Jesus ask about the crowds and their view of him?

(b) In his words to Jesus, how did Peter show genuine faith?

swered the question, repeating some of the popular misconceptions surrounding Jesus' identity. But Jesus wanted to know more. Were his closest followers making the same mistakes? "You, though, who do you say I am?" he asked.—Luke 9:18-20.

¹³ Again, Peter was quick to respond. He put into clear, bold words the conclusion that had formed in the hearts of many there. "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God," he said. We can imagine Jesus giving Peter a smile of approval as He commended him warmly. Jesus reminded Peter that it was Jehovah God—not any man—who had made this vital truth so plain to those with genuine faith. Peter had been enabled to discern one of the greatest truths Jehovah had yet revealed—the identity of the long-promised Messiah, or Christ!—*Read Matthew 16:16, 17.*

¹⁴ This Christ was the one called in ancient prophecy a stone that the builders would reject. (Ps. 118:22; Luke 20:17) With such prophecies in mind, Jesus revealed that Jehovah would establish a congregation on the very stone, or rock-mass, that Peter had

14. Jesus bestowed on Peter what important privileges?

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)

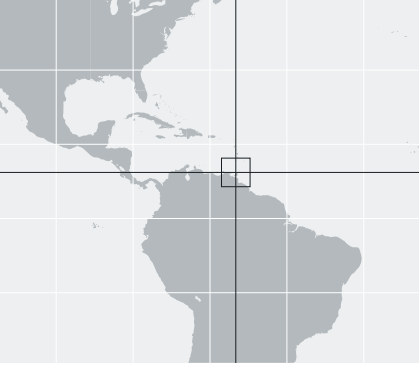
JUNE 2016

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
AUGUST 1-28, 2016



COVER IMAGE:
TRINIDAD

There are many fishing villages along the coasts of Trinidad and Tobago. Jehovah's Witnesses often take the opportunity to speak with fishermen they meet

PUBLISHERS
9,679

BIBLE STUDIES
11,331

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE
(2015)
24,103

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16 QUESTIONS FROM READERS

18 WEEK OF AUGUST 15-21 "Jehovah Our God Is One Jehovah"

In what ways is Jehovah our God "one Jehovah"? How does that affect our relationship with him and with fellow worshippers? In today's diversified and multicultural world, we must understand what Jehovah requires of us so that we can have him as "our God."

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1. The living and true God—
 The God of all creation
 In ev'ry generation—
 Jehovah is your name.
 We're honored and we're proud
 To be your congregation.
 In ev'ry tribe and nation,
 Your glory we proclaim.

(CHORUS)

*Jehovah, Jehovah,
 There is no God like you.
 There's no other in the heavens
 Or on the earth below.
 You alone are God Almighty,
 And this all men must know.
 Jehovah, Jehovah,
 We have no other God but you.*

2. You cause us to become
 Whatever you desire,
 To do as you require—
 Jehovah is your name.
 And Witnesses for you
 Is what you've kindly named us.
 We're honored you have claimed us—
 A people for your name.

(Chorus)

“Jehovah Our God Is One Jehovah”

“Listen, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.”
—DEUT. 6:4.

SONGS: 138, 112

CAN YOU EXPLAIN?

In what sense is Jehovah our God “one Jehovah”?

**How can we show that we worship Jehovah as
“one Jehovah”?**

What can we do to maintain our peace and unity?

FOR centuries, the six words of the Hebrew text of Deuteronomy 6:4 have been used by people of the Jewish faith as part of a devotional prayer. They say it daily, morning and evening. This prayer is called the Shema, which is the first word of the verse. With this prayer, devout Jews declare their exclusive devotion to God.

1, 2. (a) Why are the words of Deuteronomy 6:4 well-known? (b) Why did Moses speak those words?

2 Those words are part of Moses' parting speech to the nation of Israel gathered on the plains of Moab in the year 1473 B.C.E. The nation was about to cross the river Jordan to take possession of the Promised Land. (Deut. 6:1) Moses, their leader for the past 40 years, wanted the people to be courageous when facing the challenges ahead. They needed to trust in Jehovah and be faithful to him as their God. Moses' final words would understandably have a profound effect on the people. After mentioning the Ten Commandments and other regulations that Jehovah had given the nation, Moses made the powerful declaration found at Deuteronomy 6: 4, 5. (Read.)

3 Did the Israelites gathered there with Moses not know that Jehovah their God is "one Jehovah"? Of course, they did. Faithful Israelites

3. What questions will we consider in this article?

knew and worshipped only one God—the God of their forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. That being so, why did Moses call to their attention that Jehovah their God is “one Jehovah”? Does the oneness of Jehovah relate to loving him with one’s whole heart, whole soul, and whole strength, as stated in verse 5? And what meaning do the words of Deuteronomy 6:4, 5 have for us today?

THE ONENESS OF JEHOVAH

4 Unique. The word “one” in Hebrew and many other languages can mean much more than a simple number. It can imply being unique, the one and only. It does not appear that Moses was here refuting the false religious teachings of a triune god. Jehovah is the Maker of

4, 5. (a) What is one meaning of the phrase “one Jehovah”? **(b)** How is Jehovah different from the gods of the nations?

heaven and earth, the Sovereign of the universe. There is no real or true God but him; no other god is like him. (2 Sam. 7:22) Thus, Moses was reminding the Israelites that their worship of Jehovah must be exclusive. They were not to follow the peoples around them, who worshipped various gods and goddesses. Some of those false gods were viewed as ruling over certain parts of nature. Others were separate forms of a particular deity.

5 For example, the Egyptians worshipped the sun-god Ra, the sky-goddess Nut, the earth-god Geb, the Nile-god Hapi, and numerous sacred animals. Many of these false gods were dealt devastating blows by Jehovah through the Ten Plagues. The prominent Canaanite god was Baal, the god of fertility, who also appeared as the god of the sky, rain, and storm. In many places, Baal was the local patron deity as well.

(Num. 25:3) The Israelites were to remember that their God, the “true God,” is “one Jehovah.”—Deut. 4:35, 39.

6 Consistent and Loyal. The word “one” also suggests unity and oneness of purpose and activity. Jehovah God is not divided or unpredictable. Rather, he is always faithful, consistent, loyal, and true. He promised Abraham that his descendants would inherit the Promised Land, and Jehovah performed mighty deeds to fulfill that promise. The passing of 430 years did not diminish Jehovah’s determination to do so.—Gen. 12:1, 2, 7; Ex. 12:40, 41.

7 Centuries later, when identifying the Israelites as his witnesses, Jehovah told them: “I am the same One. Before me no God was formed, and after me there has been none.” Emphasizing

6, 7. What is another meaning of “one,” and how did Jehovah prove to be “one”?

his unchanging purpose, Jehovah added: “I am always the same One.” (Isa. 43:10, 13; 44:6; 48:12) What an extraordinary privilege for the Israelites—and for us—to be servants of Jehovah, the God who is consistent and loyal in all his ways!—Mal. 3:6; Jas. 1:17.

8 Yes, Moses reminded the people that Jehovah was constant and unchanging in his love and care for them. That being so, it logically followed that they were to render him exclusive devotion, loving him unreservedly with all their heart, soul, and strength. Young ones too were to follow this way of complete devotion because the parents were to teach the children at every opportunity.—Deut. 6:6-9.

9 Because Jehovah is unchanging and constant regarding his will and purpose, it is clear

8, 9. (a) What does Jehovah require of his worshippers? (b) How did Jesus emphasize the import of Moses' words?

that his fundamental requirements for true worshippers remain the same today. For our worship to be acceptable to him, we too must give him exclusive devotion and love him with our complete heart, mind, and strength. In fact, that is exactly what Jesus Christ told an inquirer. (Read Mark 12:28-31.) Let us, therefore, see how we can show by our actions that we truly understand that “Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.”

GIVE JEHOVAH EXCLUSIVE DEVOTION

10 To have Jehovah as our one and only God, we should give him our exclusive devotion. Our worship of him cannot be divided or shared with any other gods nor tinged with ideas or practices from other forms of worship. We must bear

10, 11. (a) In what sense is our worship of Jehovah exclusive? (b) How did Hebrew youths in Babylon demonstrate their exclusive devotion to Jehovah?

in mind that Jehovah is not just one among many gods; nor is he even the highest and most powerful among them. Only Jehovah is to be worshipped.—Read Revelation 4:11.

11 In the book of Daniel, we read about the Hebrew youths Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. They demonstrated their exclusive devotion to Jehovah not only by abstaining from eating foods that were unclean but also by refusing to bow down to Nebuchadnezzar's golden image. Their priorities were clear; there was no room in their worship for compromise.—Dan. 1:1–3:30.

12 To give Jehovah exclusive devotion, we must be careful not to allow anything to take, or even to share, the place in our life that Jehovah alone should occupy. What might such things

12. In giving Jehovah exclusive devotion, against what must we be on guard?

be? In the Ten Commandments, Jehovah made clear that his people must have no other gods besides him and that they must not practice any form of idolatry. (Deut. 5:6-10) Today, idolatry can take many forms, some of which might be hard to recognize. But Jehovah's requirements have not changed—he is still “one Jehovah.” Let us see what meaning that should have for us.

13 At **Colossians 3:5** (read), we find strong counsel to Christians regarding what might break their exclusive relationship with Jehovah. Note that greediness is linked to idolatry. That is because the object of one's desire, such as riches or luxuries, can become so controlling in life that it takes on the role of a powerful god. But when we look at the entire verse, it is not hard to see that all the other sinful practices mentioned are in some way connected with greediness and

13. What could we begin to love more than Jehovah?

thus with idolatry. The craving for such things can easily take the place of our love for God. Can we take the risk of allowing any of these things to control us, so that Jehovah is no longer “one Jehovah” to us? No, we cannot.

14 The apostle John made much the same point when he warned that if anyone loves the things in the world—“the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one’s means of life”—then “the love of the Father is not in him.” (1 John 2:15, 16) This means that we need to examine our heart constantly to see if it is being enticed by worldly entertainment, associations, and styles of dress and grooming. Or the love of the world might involve efforts to attain “great things,” such as through the pursuit of higher education. (Jer. 45:4, 5) We stand at the threshold of the promised new

14. What warning did the apostle John give?

world. Thus, how important it is that we keep well in mind Moses' powerful words! If we clearly understand and firmly believe that "Jehovah our God is one Jehovah," we will do all we can to give him exclusive devotion, serving him as he approves.—Heb. 12:28, 29.

MAINTAIN CHRISTIAN ONENESS

15 The oneness of Jehovah also implies unity and oneness of purpose, characteristics that we as his worshippers must have as we serve him. The first-century Christian congregation was made up of Jews, Greeks, Romans, and people of other nationalities. They had different religious backgrounds, customs, and sensibilities. Because of that, some had difficulty accepting the new way of worship or fully relinquishing their former ways. The apostle Paul found it

15. Why did Paul remind Christians that God is "one Jehovah"?

fitting to remind them that Christians have one God, Jehovah.—Read 1 Corinthians 8:5, 6.

16 What about the situation in the Christian congregation today? The prophet Isaiah foretold that “in the final part of the days,” people of all nations would flock to Jehovah’s elevated place of true worship. They would say: “[Jehovah] will instruct us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths.” (Isa. 2:2, 3) How happy we are to see this prophecy undergoing fulfillment before our eyes! The result is that many congregations have become multiracial, multicultural, and multilingual, giving praise to Jehovah. This diversity, however, can present issues that merit our serious consideration.

17 For example, how do you feel about fellow

16, 17. (a) What prophecy is being fulfilled in our day, and with what result? (b) What could undermine our unity?

Christians who are from cultures very different from your own? Their first language, style of clothing, manners, and food may not be what you are accustomed to. Do you tend to shy away from them and associate mainly with those who have a background similar to yours? Or what if those appointed as overseers in your congregation—or in your circuit or branch—are younger or are culturally or racially different from you? Do you allow such matters to undermine the unity and oneness of purpose that should exist among Jehovah’s people?

18 What can help us to avoid such pitfalls? To the Christians in Ephesus, a prosperous and diversified city, Paul offered some practical counsel. (Read Ephesians 4:1-3.) Note that Paul first

18, 19. (a) What counsel is mentioned at Ephesians 4:1-3? (b) What can we do to help the congregation stay united?

mentioned such qualities as humility, mildness, patience, and love. These might be likened to the pillars of a house that keep it standing. But besides having strong pillars, a house needs maintenance, which must be done regularly; otherwise, deterioration could set in. Paul appealed to the Ephesian Christians that they earnestly endeavor to “maintain the oneness of the spirit.”

19 Each of us should accept it as his or her personal responsibility to contribute to maintaining the oneness in the congregation. What can we do? First, cultivate and display the qualities that Paul mentioned—humility, mildness, patience, and love. Then, put forth earnest effort to promote “the uniting bond of peace.” We should work to repair, as it were, any fissurelike weaknesses that may appear. Doing so, we contribute to the maintenance of our precious peace and unity.

20 “Jehovah our God is one Jehovah.” What a powerful statement! That reminder fortified the Israelites to confront the challenges facing them as they entered and took possession of the Promised Land. Our taking those words to heart will empower us to face the great tribulation just ahead and contribute to the Paradise to follow. Let us go on rendering exclusive devotion to Jehovah by loving and serving him whole-souled and putting forth earnest effort to maintain oneness in the Christian brotherhood. If we continue to do so, we can look forward with confidence to seeing fulfilled what Jesus said about those whom he will judge as sheep: “Come, you who have been blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the founding of the world.”—Matt. 25:34.

20. How can we demonstrate that we understand that “Jehovah our God is one Jehovah”?

1. Great God, Jehovah, you are deserving,
Worthy of the highest praise,
Good and just in all your ways.
Your throne is founded firmly on justice;
You are God to endless days.

2. Pardoning error, sin, and transgression,
Merciful to those like you,
Those who practice mercy too.
Your kingly justice, your loving-kindness,
You have shown in all you do.

3. Let men and angels join in your praises;
Let your name be sanctified,
Never more to be denied.
Soon may your Kingdom, ruling in heaven,
Make your will be done earth wide.