

- Song 86 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“The Bible Describes a Capable Wife”:** (10 min.)
Pr 31:10-12—She is trustworthy (*w15 1/15 20 ¶10; w00 2/1 31 ¶2; it-2 1183*)
Pr 31:13-27—She is industrious (*w00 2/1 31 ¶3-4*)
Pr 31:28-31—She is a spiritual person who is worthy of praise (*w15 1/15 20 ¶8; w00 2/1 31 ¶5, 8*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Pr 27:12—How may we show ourselves to be shrewd regarding entertainment? (*w15 7/1 8 ¶3*)

Pr 27:21—How is a person “tested by the praise he receives”? (*w11 8/1 29 ¶2; w06 9/15 19 ¶12*)

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) Pr 29:11-30:4

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Prepare This Month’s Presentations:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play each presentation video, and then discuss the highlights. Encourage publishers to build their own presentation.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 89
- **“Her Husband Is Well-Known in the City Gates”:** (5 min.) Talk by an elder.
- **Local Needs:** (10 min.) As an option, discuss the lessons learned from the *Yearbook*. (*yb16 40-41*)
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *kr* chap. 3 ¶13-22, chart on pp. 36-37, box on p. 38
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 108 and Prayer

“Her Husband Is Well-Known in the City Gates”

A capable wife reflects well on her husband. In King Lemuel’s day, a husband who had a capable wife was “well-known in the city gates.” (Pr 31:23) Today, respected men serve as elders and ministerial servants. If married, their ability to serve depends much on the good conduct and fine support of their wives. (1Ti 3:4, 11) Such capable wives are greatly appreciated, not just by their husbands but also by the congregation.



A capable wife helps her husband to serve by . . .

- encouraging him with kind words.—Pr 31:26
- sharing him willingly with the congregation.—1Th 2:7, 8
- living modestly.—1Ti 6:8
- not asking him about confidential congregation matters.—1Ti 2:11, 12; 1Pe 4:15

86 Faithful Women, Christian Sisters (Romans 16:2)

1. Sarah and Esther, Mary, Ruth, and others—
All these were capable women, loyal wives.
Godly devotion was foremost in their lives.
They were faithful women, ones we know by name.
There were others favored by Jehovah,
Nameless in the record,
their faith was just the same.
2. Loyalty, courage, goodness, loving-kindness,
Lovable qualities in all humankind,
Virtues these excellent women bring to mind.
They were fine examples all can imitate.
Christian sisters, walking in their footsteps,
Worthy is your service
and happy your estate.
3. Mothers and daughters, sisters, wives, and widows,
Willingly laboring, glad to do your part.
Modest your bearing, submissive is your heart,
Having God's approval, may you never fear.
Christian sisters, may Jehovah keep you
Firm in your conviction,
your prize is drawing near.

(See also Phil. 4:3; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10; 1 Pet. 3:4, 5.)

- 11** Like a dog that returns to its vomit,
The stupid one repeats his foolishness.^a
- 12** Have you seen a man who thinks he is wise?^b
There is more hope for someone stupid than for him.
- 13** The lazy one says: "There is a young lion in the road,
A lion in the public square!"^c
- 14** A door keeps turning on its hinges,^{*}
And the lazy one on his bed.^d
- 15** The lazy one buries his hand in the banquet bowl,
But he is too tired to bring it back to his mouth.^e
- 16** The lazy one thinks he is wiser
Than seven people who give a sensible reply.
- 17** Like someone grabbing hold of a dog's ears
Is the one passing by who becomes furious about
a quarrel that is not his.^f
- 18** Like a madman who shoots fiery missiles, arrows,
and death^{*}
- 19** Is the man who plays a trick on his neighbor and says,
"I was only joking!"^g
- 20** Where there is no wood,
the fire goes out,
And where there is no slanderer,
quarreling ceases.^h
- 21** As charcoal for the embers
and wood for the fire,
So a contentious man kindles a quarrel.ⁱ
- 22** The words of a slanderer are like tasty morsels;^{*}
They are gulped right down into the stomach.^j
- 23** Like a silver glazing over a piece of earthenware

26:14 *Or "pivot." **26:17** *Or possibly, "who meddles in." **26:18** *Or "deadly arrows." **26:22** *Or "like things to be swallowed greedily."

CHAP. 26

a 2Pe 2:22

b Pr 12:15

1Co 3:18

1Co 8:2

c Pr 22:13

d Pr 6:9

Pr 19:15

Pr 24:33, 34

e Pr 19:24

f 1Th 4:11

1Pe 4:15

g Pr 15:21

h Pr 22:10

Jas 3:6

i Pr 3:30

Pr 16:28

Pr 17:14

j Pr 18:8

Second Col.

a 2Sa 20:9,10

b Es 7:10

Ps 9:15

Pr 28:10

Ec 10:8

c Pr 29:5

CHAP. 27

d Lu 12:19, 20

Jas 4:13, 14

e Pr 25:27

Jer 9:23

2Co 10:18

f 1Sa 25:25

g Ge 37:9-11

Pr 14:30

Ac 17:5

h Le 19:17

Mt 18:15

i 2Sa 12:7, 9

Ps 141:5

Re 3:19

Are affectionate words from
an evil heart.^a

- 24** The one who hates others
disguises it with his lips,
But inside he harbors deceit.
- 25** Although he speaks graciously,
do not trust him,
For there are seven detestable things in his heart.^{*}
- 26** Though his hatred is concealed by deceit,
His evil will be exposed
in the congregation.
- 27** The one who digs a pit will fall into it,
And whoever rolls away a stone—it will come back on him.^b
- 28** A lying tongue hates those crushed by it,
And a flattering mouth causes ruin.^c

27 Do not boast about tomorrow,

For you do not know what a day will bring.^{*d}

- 2** Let someone else^{*} praise you,
and not your own mouth;
Others,[#] and not your own lips.^e
- 3** A stone is heavy and sand is weighty,
But the irritation caused by a fool is heavier than both.^f
- 4** There is the cruelty of rage and the flood of anger,
But who can withstand jealousy?^g
- 5** Open reproof is better than concealed love.^h
- 6** The wounds inflicted by a friend are faithful,ⁱ
But an enemy's kisses are plentiful.^{*}

26:23 *Lit., "fervent lips with." **26:25** *Or "For his heart is completely detestable." **27:1** *Lit., "will give birth to." **27:2** *Lit., "a stranger." #Lit., "A for-eigner." **27:6** *Or possibly, "insincere; forced."

- 7** One whose appetite* is satisfied turns down# honey from the comb, But to the hungry,[^] even what is bitter tastes sweet.
- 8** Like a bird that strays* from its nest Is a man who strays from his home.
- 9** Oil and incense make the heart rejoice; So does sweet friendship springing from sincere counsel.^{*a}
- 10** Do not forsake your friend or your father's friend, And do not enter your own brother's house on the day of your disaster; Better is a neighbor nearby than a brother far away.^b
- 11** Be wise, my son, and make my heart rejoice,^c So that I can make a reply to him who taunts me.^d
- 12** The shrewd person sees the danger and conceals himself,^e But the inexperienced keep right on going and suffer the consequences.*
- 13** Take a man's garment if he has given security for a stranger; Seize the pledge from him if he did so for a foreign woman.^{*f}
- 14** When someone blesses his fellow man with a loud voice early in the morning, It will be counted as a curse to him.
- 15** A quarrelsome* wife is like a constantly leaking roof on a rainy day.^g

27:7 *Or "A soul who." #Lit., "treads down." ^Or "the hungry soul." 27:8 *Or "is fleeing away." 27:9 *Or "from counsel of the soul." 27:12 *Or "penalty." 27:13 *Or "a foreigner." 27:15 *Or "nagging."

CHAP. 27

a 1Sa 23:16
Pr 15:23
Pr 16:24

b Pr 17:17
Pr 18:24

c Pr 10:1
Pr 23:15
2Jo 4

d Job 1:8, 9

e Pr 18:10
Isa 26:20
Heb 11:7

f Pr 20:16

g Pr 21:9, 19

Second Col.

a 1Sa 23:16
Heb 10:24,
25

b Pr 13:4

c Ge 39:2
Pr 17:2

d Pr 30:15, 16

e Pr 17:3

f Col 3:23

g Pr 23:4, 5
1Ti 6:17

- 16** Whoever can restrain her can restrain the wind And can grip oil with his right hand.
- 17** As iron sharpens iron, So one man sharpens his friend.^{*a}
- 18** The one who cares for a fig tree will eat its fruit,^b And the one who takes care of his master will be honored.^c
- 19** As water reflects one's face, So the heart of one man reflects another's.
- 20** The Grave and the place of destruction* are never satisfied,^d Nor are a man's eyes ever satisfied.
- 21** As the refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold,^e So a person is tested by the praise he receives.*
- 22** Even if you pound a fool with a pestle Like crushed grain in a mortar, His foolishness will not leave him.
- 23** You should know well the appearance of your flock. Take good care of* your sheep,^f
- 24** For wealth does not last forever,^g Nor a crown* for all generations.
- 25** The green grass disappears, new grass appears, And the vegetation of the mountains is gathered in.
- 26** The young rams provide your clothing, And the male goats provide the price of a field.

27:17 *Lit., "the face of his friend." 27:20 *Or "Sheol and Abaddon." 27:21 *Or "So a man is according to his praise." 27:23 *Or "Set your heart on; Pay attention to." 27:24 *Or "diadem."

27 And there will be enough goat's milk to feed you,
To feed your household, and
to sustain your servant
girls.

28 The wicked flee when no
one pursues them,
But the righteous are as
confident as a lion.*^a

2 When there is transgression*
in the land, it will have one
prince after another,^b
But with the help of a man
of discernment and knowl-
edge, a prince[#] will long
endure.^c

3 A poor man who defrauds
the lowly^d
Is like a rain that sweeps
away all the food.

4 Those who abandon the law
praise the wicked one,
But those who observe the
law are indignant with
them.^e

5 Evil men cannot understand
justice,
But those who seek Jehovah
can understand every-
thing.^f

6 Better is a poor man who
walks in his integrity
Than a rich man whose ways
are corrupt.^g

7 An understanding son
observes the law,
But a companion of gluttons
disgraces his father.^h

8 The one who increases his
wealth by interestⁱ and
usury
Amasses it for the one who
shows favor to the poor.^j

9 The one refusing to listen
to the law
—Even his prayer is detest-
able.^k

10 The one misleading the up-
right into an evil course
will fall into his own pit,^l

28:1 *Or "a young lion." 28:2 *Or "re-
volt." [#]Lit., "he."

CHAP. 28

- a Da 3:16, 17
Ac 4:13
b 1Ki 16:8, 15
1Ki 16:22
c Da 4:27
d Pr 14:31
e Nu 25:6-8
1Sa 15:22, 23
Eph 5:11
f Ps 25:14
Mr 4:11, 12
Jas 1:5
g Pr 16:8
Pr 19:1
h Pr 23:20
1Co 15:33
i De 23:19
j Pr 13:22
Pr 19:17
k Ps 66:18
Pr 15:29
Isa 1:15
l Ps 7:14-16

Second Col.

- a De 7:12
Ps 37:11, 18
Ps 84:11
b Pr 18:11
c Mr 10:21
d 1Ki 17:1-3
Pr 29:2
e 1Sa 15:13-15
f 2Sa 12:13
2Ch 33:12, 13
Ps 32:3, 5
Ps 51:1
g Ex 7:22
Ne 9:29
Pr 29:1
Jer 16:12, 13
h Zep 3:3
Mt 2:16
i Ne 5:15
Am 4:1
j Isa 33:15, 16
k Ge 9:6
1Ki 21:19
Mt 27:3-5
l Ps 25:21
m Ps 73:12, 18
1Th 5:3
Re 3:3
n Pr 23:21
Lu 15:13, 14
o 1Sa 18:5
Ne 7:2
Ps 101:6

But the blameless will inherit
what is good.^a

11 A rich man is wise in his own
eyes,^b

But a poor man with discern-
ment can see through him.^c

12 When the righteous triumph,
there is great glory,
But when the wicked rise
to power, people go into
hiding.^d

13 The one covering over
his transgressions will not
succeed,^e

But whoever confesses and
abandons them will be
shown mercy.^f

14 Happy is the man who is
always on guard,^{*}
But whoever hardens
his heart will fall into
calamity.^g

15 Like a growling lion and
a charging bear
Is a wicked ruler over a
helpless people.^h

16 A leader without discern-
ment abuses his power,ⁱ
But the one hating dishonest
profit will prolong his life.^j

17 A man burdened with blood-
guilt for taking someone's
life* will keep fleeing until
the grave.^{#k}

Let no one support him.

18 The one walking faultlessly
will be saved,^l
But the one whose ways
are crooked will suddenly
fall.^m

19 The one cultivating his
ground will have plenty
of bread,
But the one taking up worth-
less pursuits will have his
fill of poverty.ⁿ

20 A faithful man will receive
many blessings,^o

28:14 *Or "who is never without fear."
28:17 *Or "with the blood of a soul."
[#]Or "pit."

But the one hastening to get rich will not remain innocent.^a

21 It is not good to show partiality,^b

But a man might do wrong for a piece of bread.

22 An envious* man is eager for wealth,

Not knowing that poverty will overtake him.

23 Whoever reproves a man^c will afterward find more favor^d

Than someone who flatters with his tongue.

24 Whoever robs his father and mother and says, "It is not wrong,"^e

Is a partner of the man who causes ruin.^f

25 The greedy person* stirs up dissension,

But whoever relies on Jehovah will prosper.^g

26 Whoever trusts in his own heart is stupid,^h

But the one who walks in wisdom will escape.ⁱ

27 Whoever gives to the poor will lack nothing,^j

But the one who closes his eyes to them will receive many curses.

28 When the wicked rise to power, a man hides himself,

But when they perish, the righteous increase.^k

29 A man who stiffens his neck* after much reproof^l

Will suddenly be broken beyond healing.^m

2 When the righteous are many, the people rejoice, But when the wicked one rules, the people groan.ⁿ

28:22 *Or "greedy." **28:25** *Or possibly, "The arrogant soul." #Lit., "will be made fat." **29:1** *Or "who remains stubborn."

CHAP. 28

a 2Ki 5:20-22

Jer 17:11

1Ti 6:9

b Le 19:15

Pr 18:5

Jas 2:1

c 2Sa 12:7, 9

Ga 2:11

d Ps 141:5

Pr 27:6

e Mr 7:10, 11

f Pr 19:26

g 1Ki 3:11-13

h Pr 3:5

Jer 17:9

i Job 28:28

j De 15:7, 10

Ps 41:1

Pr 19:17

Heb 13:16

k Es 8:17

CHAP. 29

l Ex 11:10

2Ch 36:11-13

m 1Sa 2:22-25

2Ch 36:15, 16

n Es 3:13, 15

Second Col.

a Pr 27:11

b Pr 5:8-10

Pr 6:26

Lu 15:13, 14

c 2Sa 8:15

Ps 89:14

Isa 9:7

d Pr 26:28

Ro 16:18

e Pr 5:22

f Ps 97:11

g Ps 41:1

h Jer 5:28

i Jas 3:6

j Ac 19:29, 35

k Pr 26:4

l Ge 27:41

1Sa 20:31

1Jo 3:11, 12

m Pr 12:16

Pr 25:28

n Pr 14:29

o 1Ki 21:8-11

Jer 38:4, 5

3 A man who loves wisdom makes his father rejoice,^a

But the one who keeps company with prostitutes squanders his wealth.^b

4 By justice a king brings stability to a land,^c

But a man seeking bribes brings it to ruin.

5 A man who flatters his neighbor

Spreads out a net for his feet.^d

6 A bad man's transgression ensnares him,^e

But the righteous one cries out joyfully and rejoices.^f

7 The righteous one is concerned about the legal rights of the poor,^g

But the wicked one has no such concern.^h

8 Boastful men inflame a town,ⁱ

But those who are wise turn away anger.^j

9 When a wise man enters into a controversy with a fool,

There will be ranting and ridicule, but no satisfaction.^k

10 Bloodthirsty men hate anyone innocent,^l

And they seek to take the life[#] of the upright.^Δ

11 A stupid person gives vent to all his feelings,^m

But the wise one calmly keeps them in check.ⁿ

12 When a ruler pays attention to lies,

All his servants will be wicked.^o

13 The poor man and the oppressor have this in common:^{*}

Jehovah gives light to the eyes of both.[#]

29:10 *Or "blameless." #Or "soul."

ΔOr possibly, "But the upright seeks to protect his life." **29:11** *Lit., "spirit."

29:13 *Lit., "meet together." #That is, He gives them life.

- 14 When a king judges the poor fairly,^a
His throne will always be secure.^b
- 15 The rod* and reproof impart wisdom,^c
But a child left unrestrained brings shame on his mother.
- 16 When the wicked increase, transgression increases,
But the righteous will see their downfall.^d
- 17 Discipline your son and he will bring you rest;
And he will give you* great pleasure.^e
- 18 Where there is no vision,* the people go unrestrained,^f
But happy are those who observe the law.^g
- 19 A servant will not let himself be corrected by words,
For though he understands, he does not obey.^h
- 20 Have you seen a man hasty with his words?ⁱ
There is more hope for a fool than for him.^j
- 21 If a servant is pampered from his youth,
He will become thankless later on.
- 22 A man prone to anger stirs up strife;^k
Anyone disposed to rage commits many transgressions.^l
- 23 The haughtiness of a man will humble him,^m
But whoever is humble in spirit will obtain glory.ⁿ
- 24 The partner of a thief hates himself.*
He may hear the call to testify,^o but he reports nothing.^o

29:15 *Or "discipline; punishment."
29:17 *Or "your soul." 29:18 *Or "prophetic vision; revelation." 29:24 *Or "his own soul." #Or "an oath involving a curse."

CHAP. 29

- a Ps 72:1, 2
b Pr 20:28
Pr 25:5
Isa 9:7
c Pr 22:6
Pr 22:15
Pr 23:13
Eph 6:4
d Ps 37:34
Re 18:20
e Heb 12:11
f Ho 4:6
g Pr 19:16
Joh 13:17
Jas 1:25
h Pr 26:3
i Ec 5:2
Jas 1:19
j Pr 14:29
Pr 21:5
k Pr 15:18
l 1Sa 18:8, 9
Jas 3:16
m Es 6:6, 10
Jas 4:6
n Pr 18:12
Mt 18:4
Php 2:8, 9
o Le 5:1

Second Col.

- a Mt 10:28
Mt 26:75
b 2Ch 14:11
Pr 18:10
c Ps 62:12
Lu 18:6, 7
d Ps 119:115
Ps 139:21
e Joh 7:7
1Jo 3:13

CHAP. 30

- f Job 42:3
g Joh 3:13
h Isa 40:12
i Job 38:4
j Ps 12:6
k Ge 15:1
2Sa 22:31
Ps 84:11
l De 4:2
Re 22:18

- 25 Trembling at* men is#
a snare,^a
But the one trusting
in Jehovah will be protected.^b
- 26 Many seek an audience with*
a ruler,
But it is from Jehovah that
a man gets justice.^c
- 27 An unjust man is detestable
to the righteous,^d
But the one whose way is
upright is detestable to the
wicked one.^e
- 30** The weighty message contained in the words of A'gur son of Ja'keh, which he spoke to Ith'i-el, to Ith'i-el and U'cal.
- 2 I am more ignorant than anyone else,^f
And I lack the understanding a man should have.
- 3 I have not learned wisdom,
And I do not possess the knowledge of the Most Holy One.
- 4 Who has ascended to heaven and then descended?^g
Who has gathered the wind in the palms of both hands?
Who has wrapped up the waters in his garment?^h
Who has established* all the ends of the earth?ⁱ
What is his name and the name of his son—if you know?
- 5 Every saying of God is refined,^j
He is a shield to those taking refuge in him.^k
- 6 Add nothing to his words,^l
Or he will reprove you,
And you will be proved a liar.
- 7 Two things I ask of you.
Do not withhold them from me before I die.

29:25 *Or "Fear of." #Or "lays."
29:26 *Or possibly, "seek the favor of." Lit., "seek the face of." 30:4 *Lit., "raised."

- 8** Remove untruth and lies far from me.^a
Give me neither poverty nor riches.
Just let me consume my portion of food,^b
- 9** So that I do not become satisfied and deny you and say, "Who is Jehovah?"^c
Nor let me become poor and steal and dishonor* the name of my God.
- 10** Do not slander a servant to his master,
Or he may curse you and you will be found guilty.^d
- 11** There is a generation that curses its father
And does not bless its mother.^e
- 12** There is a generation that is pure in its own eyes^f
But has not been cleansed from its filth.*
- 13** There is a generation whose eyes are so haughty
And whose eyes look so arrogantly!^g
- 14** There is a generation whose teeth are swords
And whose jaws are slaughtering knives;
They devour the lowly ones of the earth
And the poor from among mankind.^h
- 15** The leeches have two daughters that cry, "Give! Give!"
There are three things that do not get satisfied,
Four that never say, "Enough!"
- 16** —The Grave*ⁱ and a barren womb,
A land that is deprived of water,

30:9 *Or "assail." **30:12** *Lit., "excrement." **30:16** *Or "Sheol," that is, the common grave of mankind. See Glossary.

CHAP. 30

a Pr 12:22

b Mt 6:11
1Ti 6:8

c De 6:10-12

d Da 6:24

e Le 20:9
Pr 19:26
Mr 7:10, 11

f Ps 36:1, 2
Isa 65:5
1Jo 1:8

g Ps 101:5
Pr 6:16, 17

h Ps 14:4
Pr 22:16
Isa 32:7

i Pr 27:20

Second Col.

a Pr 23:22

b Le 20:9
De 21:18, 21
Pr 20:20

c Pr 7:10, 11

d Pr 19:10
Ec 10:7
Isa 3:4

e Ge 16:5

f Job 35:11

And fire that never says, "Enough!"

- 17** The eye that mocks a father and despises obedience to a mother^a
—The ravens of the valley* will peck it out,
And the young eagles will eat it up.^b
- 18** There are three things that are beyond my comprehension,*
And four that I do not understand:
- 19** The way of an eagle in the heavens,
The way of a serpent on a rock,
The way of a ship in the open sea,
And the way of a man with a young woman.
- 20** This is the way of an adulterous woman:
She eats, she wipes her mouth;
Then she says, "I have done nothing wrong."^c
- 21** There are three things that make the earth shudder
And four things it cannot endure:
- 22** When a slave rules as king,^d
When a fool is glutted with food,
- 23** When a hated* woman is taken as a wife,
And when a servant girl takes the place of^e her mistress.^e
- 24** Four things on earth are among the smallest,
But they are instinctively wise:*^f
- 25** The ants are not strong creatures,*

30:17 *Or "wadi." **30:18** *Or "are too wonderful for me." **30:23** *Or "an unloved." ^eOr "supplants." **30:24** *Or "exceedingly wise." **30:25** *Lit., "a people not strong."

- Yet they prepare their food
in the summer.^a
- 26** The rock badgers^{*b} are not
mighty creatures,[#]
Yet they make their house
in the crags.^c
- 27** The locusts^d have no king,
Yet they all go forward in
formation.^{*e}
- 28** The gecko lizard^f clings with
its feet,
And it goes into the palace
of a king.
- 29** There are three things that
have an impressive stride,
Four that are impressive as
they move:
- 30** The lion, the mightiest
among beasts,
Which does not retreat from
anyone;^g
- 31** The greyhound; the male
goat;
And a king whose army is
with him.
- 32** If you have foolishly exalted
yourself^h
Or if you have schemed to
do so,
Put your hand over your
mouth.ⁱ
- 33** For as the churning of milk
produces butter
And the squeezing of the
nose produces blood,
So the stirring up of anger
produces quarrels.^j
- 31** The words of King Lem'-
u-el, the weighty message
his mother gave to instruct him;^k
- 2** What should I tell you, O my
son,
What, O son of my womb,
And what, O son of my
vows?^l
- 3** Do not give your vigor to
women,^m
Nor follow ways that destroy
kings.ⁿ

30:26 *Or "The hyraxes." #Lit., "a people not mighty." **30:27** *Or "divided in groups."

CHAP. 30

a Pr 6:6-8

b Le 11:5

c Ps 104:18

d Ex 10:14
Joe 1:4

e Joe 2:7

f Le 11:29, 30

g Nu 23:24
Isa 31:4

h Pr 26:12

i Pr 27:2

j Pr 26:21

CHAP. 31

k Pr 1:8
2Ti 1:5

l 1Sa 1:11, 28

m Ho 4:11

n De 17:15, 17
1Ki 11:1-3
Ne 13:26

Second Col.

a Ec 10:17
Isa 28:7b Ps 104:15
Mt 27:34

c Jer 16:7

d Ps 82:4

e De 1:16, 17
2Sa 8:15
Ps 72:1, 2
Isa 11:4f Ru 3:10, 11
Pr 12:4
Pr 19:14g 1Sa 2:18, 19
Tit 2:3-5

h 2Ch 9:21

- 4** It is not for kings,
O Lem'u-el,
It is not for kings to drink
wine
Nor for rulers to say, "Where
is my drink?"^a
- 5** So that they do not drink and
forget what is decreed
And pervert the rights of the
lowly ones.
- 6** Give alcohol to those who
are perishing^b
And wine to those in bitter
distress.^{*c}
- 7** Let them drink and forget
their poverty;
Let them remember their
trouble no more.
- 8** Speak up in behalf of the
speechless;
Defend the rights of all
who are perishing.^d
- 9** Speak up and judge
righteously;
Defend the rights^{*} of the
lowly and the poor.^e
 ⌘ [Aleph]
- 10** Who can find a capable^{*}
wife?^f
Her value is far more than
that of corals.[#]
 ⌘ [Beth]
- 11** Her husband trusts her from
his heart,
And he lacks nothing of
value.
 ⌘ [Gimel]
- 12** She rewards him with good,
not bad,
All the days of her life.
 ⌘ [Daleth]
- 13** She obtains wool and linen;
She delights to work with
her hands.^g
 ⌘ [He]
- 14** She is like the ships of
a merchant,^h

31:6 *Or "those bitter of soul." **31:9** *Or "Plead the cause." **31:10** *Or "an excellent." #See Glossary.

Bringing her food in from afar.

† [Waw]

15 She also rises while it is still night,
Providing food for her household
And portions for her female servants.^a

† [Zayin]

16 She sets her mind on a field and buys it;
She plants a vineyard from her own labors.*

† [Heth]

17 She prepares herself for hard work,*^b
And she strengthens her arms.

‡ [Teth]

18 She sees that her trading is profitable;
Her lamp does not go out at night.

* [Yod]

19 Her hands seize the distaff, And her hands take hold of the spindle.*^c

‡ [Kaph]

20 She extends her palm to the lowly one,
And she opens her hands to the poor.^d

↳ [Lamed]

21 She does not worry about her household because of the snow,
For her whole household is clothed in warm* garments.

‡ [Mem]

22 She makes her own bed covers.
Her clothing is of linen and purple wool.

31:16 *Or "with her earnings." Lit., "from the fruitage of her hands." 31:17 *Lit., "girds her hips with strength." 31:19 *The distaff and the spindle were sticks used to spin or make thread and yarn. 31:21 *Lit., "double."

CHAP. 31

a 1Ti 5:9, 10

b Ge 24:15, 20

c Ex 35:25

d 1Sa 25:18

Pr 19:17

1Ti 2:10

Heb 13:16

Second Col.

a Ru 4:1

Job 29:7, 8

b Jg 13:22, 23

1Sa 25:30, 31

Es 5:8

Tit 2:3

c Pr 14:1

1Ti 5:9, 10

Tit 2:3-5

d 2Kj 9:30

Es 1:10-12

Pr 6:25, 26

e Ge 24:60

Jg 5:7

1Pe 3:3, 4

f Ru 3:10, 11

g Ro 16:1, 2

‡ [Nun]

23 Her husband is well-known in the city gates,^a
Where he sits among the elders of the land.

‡ [Samekh]

24 She makes and sells linen garments*
And supplies belts to the merchants.

‡ [Ayin]

25 She is clothed with strength and splendor,
And she looks to the future with confidence.*

‡ [Pe]

26 She opens her mouth in wisdom;^b
The law of kindness* is on her tongue.

‡ [Tsade]

27 She watches over the activity of her household,
And the bread of laziness she does not eat.^c

‡ [Qoph]

28 Her children rise up and declare her happy;
Her husband rises up and praises her.

† [Resh]

29 There are many capable* women,
But you—you surpass them all.

‡ [Shin]

30 Charm may be false, and beauty may be fleeting,*^d
But the woman who fears Jehovah will be praised.^e

† [Taw]

31 Give her the reward for what she does,*^f
And let her works praise her in the city gates.^g

31:24 *Or "undergarments." 31:25 *Or "laughs at a future day." 31:26 *Or "Loving instruction; The law of loyal love." 31:29 *Or "excellent." 31:30 *Or "empty." 31:31 *Lit., "Give her from the fruit of her hands."

- Song 86 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“The Bible Describes a Capable Wife”:** (10 min.)
Pr 31:10-12—She is trustworthy (*w15 1/15 20 ¶10; w00 2/1 31 ¶2; it-2 1183*)
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- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
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“Her Husband Is Well-Known in the City Gates”

A capable wife reflects well on her husband. In King Lemuel’s day, a husband who had a capable wife was “well-known in the city gates.” (Pr 31:23) Today, respected men serve as elders and ministerial servants. If married, their ability to serve depends much on the good conduct and fine support of their wives. (1Ti 3:4, 11) Such capable wives are greatly appreciated, not just by their husbands but also by the congregation.



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- sharing him willingly with the congregation.—1Th 2:7, 8
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November 7-13

Treasures From God's Word

The Bible Describes a Capable Wife

Proverbs 31:10-12—She is trustworthy

Reference: w15 1/15 20 paragraph 10.

A wife has an honorable place as her husband's "partner." (Malachi 2:14) She provides valuable input concerning family decisions by respectfully expressing her thoughts and feelings yet remaining submissive. A wise husband will listen carefully to his wife's expressions. (Proverbs 31:10-31) Loving submission, in turn, promotes joy, peace, and harmony within the family, and gives husbands and wives the satisfaction that comes from knowing that they are pleasing God. —Ephesians 5:22.

Reference: w00 2/1 31 paragraph 2.

Regarding a capable wife, Lemuel is told: "In her the heart of her owner has put trust." (Verse 11) In other words, he should not insist that his wife obtain his approval in every matter. Of course, marriage mates should consult with each other before making major decisions, such as those involving expensive purchases or the upbringing of their children. Communication in these areas contributes to a close bond between them.

Reference: *it-2* 1183.

Description of a Good Wife. The happy state and activities of the faithful wife are described at Proverbs 31. She is said to be of more value to her husband than corals. He is able to

put trust in her. She is industrious —weaving, making clothing for her family, attending to the buying of household needs, working in the vineyard, managing a household with the servants, aiding others who need help, clothing her family attractively, even bringing in some income by her handiwork, equipping her family against future emergencies, expressing herself in wisdom and loving-kindness, and, through fear of Jehovah and good works, receiving praise from her husband and from her sons, thereby honoring her husband and her family in the land. Truly he who has found a good wife has found a good thing and gets goodwill from Jehovah. —**Proverbs 18:22**.

Proverbs 31:13-27—She is industrious

Reference: w00 2/1 31 **paragraphs 3-4**.

A capable wife, of course, has many things to do. In verses 13 to 27 are listed counsel and principles that wives in any age can use for the benefit of their families. For example, with the rising cost of clothing and furnishings, a capable wife learns to be handy and thrifty so that her family is comfortably dressed and presentable. (**Verses 13, 19, 21, 22**) To reduce the family food bill, she grows what she can and shops carefully. —**Verses 14, 16**.

Obviously, this woman does not eat “the bread of laziness.” She works hard, and she efficiently coordinates her household’s activities. (Verse 27) She girds up “her hips with strength,” which means that she prepares to engage in physically demanding tasks. (Verse 17) She rises before the sun to begin her workday, and she works industriously into the night. It is as if the lamp that illuminates her work were

always burning. —**Verses 15, 18.**

Proverbs 31:28-31—She is a spiritual person who is worthy of praise

Reference: *w15 1/15 20* **paragraph 8.**

Christian husbands do not need to demand repeatedly that their wives show them respect. Rather, they “continue dwelling with them according to knowledge [showing them consideration; understanding them, **footnote**].” They “assign them honor as to a weaker vessel, the feminine one.” (**1 Peter 3:7**) In public and in private, husbands show by their respectful words and compassionate actions that their wives are precious to them. (**Proverbs 31:28**) Such loving headship wins a wife’s love and respect and brings God’s blessing on the marriage.

Reference: *w00 2/1 31* **paragraph 5.**

Above all, the capable wife is a spiritual person. She fears God and worships him with deep respect and reverential awe. (Verse 30) She likewise assists her husband in training their children to do the same. Verse 26 says: “In wisdom,” she instructs her children, and “the law of loving-kindness is upon her tongue.”

Reference: *w00 2/1 31* **paragraph 8.**

No doubt speaking from personal experience, Lemuel’s mother reminds her son about the importance of showing appreciation for his prospective wife. No one on earth would be dearer to him. So imagine the deep emotion in his voice when he confesses before all: “There are many daughters that have shown capableness, but you—you have ascended

above them all.” —Proverbs 31:29.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Proverbs 27:12—How may we show ourselves to be shrewd regarding entertainment?

Reference: w15 7/1 8 **paragraph 3**.

Knowing that bad things happen, “the shrewd person sees the danger and conceals himself.” (Proverbs 27:12) And just as we try to protect our physical well-being, we can take steps to shield our mental and emotional health. Violent entertainment and even news reports filled with horrific images add to our own and our children’s anxiety. To avoid unnecessary exposure to these things is not hiding our head in the sand. God did not design our minds to dwell on evil. Instead, we should fill them with “whatever things are true, . . . righteous, . . . chaste, . . . lovable.” If we do, “the God of peace” will give us peace of mind and heart. —**Philippians 4:8, 9**.

Proverbs 27:21—How is a person “tested by the praise he receives”?

Reference: w11 8/1 29 **paragraph 2**.

Second, Brother Morris read Proverbs 27:21: “The refining pot is for silver, and the furnace is for gold; and an individual is according to his praise.” He explained that as gold and silver need to be refined, or purified, we may be refined by praise. How so? Praise can be a test of character. It may lead to pride and a spiritual downfall, or it may move us to acknowledge that we are indebted to Jehovah and to

become more determined never to fall short of his standards. Thus, Brother Morris urged the students to take any praise they might receive in the right way —as an opportunity to prove that they have the proper “dread of Jehovah.”

Reference: w06 9/15 19 **paragraph 12**.

Praise can show us up for who we are. Humility is revealed if the praise moves us to acknowledge our indebtedness to Jehovah and encourages us to continue to serve him. A lack of humility is disclosed when praise fosters a feeling of superiority.

- Song 86 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Presentations



THE WATCHTOWER

Question: If someone asked you what heaven is like, how would you answer?

Scripture: Joh 8:23

Offer: This issue of *The Watchtower* discusses what Jesus and his Father have revealed about heaven.



TEACH THE TRUTH

Question: Would you agree that this Bible prophecy describes what we see today?

Scripture: 2Ti 3:1-5

Truth: Since the Bible's prophecy about the last days is being fulfilled now, we can also trust that the prophecy about a better future will be fulfilled.



WHY STUDY THE BIBLE? (Video)

Introduction: We're showing people a short video that explains where we can find satisfying answers to life's big questions.
[Play the video.]

Offer: This book shows what the Bible says about how God will fix the world's problems.
[Offer the *Bible Teach* or *Teach Us* book.]

BUILD YOUR OWN PRESENTATION

Question:

Scripture:

Offer:

Jehovah's Warm Appeal:
"Be Wise, My Son"
(Proverbs 27:11)

1. Young man and young woman,
do give your heart to me.
My foe who now taunts me
will then be made to see.
Your youth and devotion
to me you freely give;
You show all the world
that for me you really live.

(CHORUS)

*Beloved son and precious daughter,
Be wise and make my heart rejoice.
That out of your own heart you serve me,
And furnish praise by your own choice.*

2. Rejoice and take pleasure
in giving me your all,
And though you may stumble,
I'll raise you if you fall.
No matter who fails you
or proves to be untrue,
Take comfort in knowing
I'll always cherish you.

(Chorus)

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South Korea: The 2014 international convention in Seoul

South Korea. The more than 56,000 in attendance enjoyed the program. The manager of the stadium expressed his appreciation for the good conduct and cooperation of the Witnesses during the event. He said: “Everyone conducted themselves with good manners. I was amazed to see them cleaning the stadium better than our professional cleaning personnel. I wish our personnel had the same attitude when doing their work. If we are to practice religion properly, we need to become like Jehovah’s Witnesses.”

Jehovah Gave the Needed Training

In May 2012, the government of **Sweden** rejected an application by Jehovah’s Witnesses to receive the

economic benefits granted to other religious organizations. The Governing Body gave the approval for the decision to be appealed to the country's Supreme Administrative Court.

The Court decided to hold an oral hearing before reaching a decision. Several brothers from various countries met to consider how to answer questions that might be asked at the hearing. The practice session took place at a Kingdom Hall in Stockholm.

During the practice session, the doorbell rang at the hall. A brother opened the door, and two girls, aged 13 and 14, introduced themselves. They said that they wanted to ask some questions about Jehovah's Witnesses. The brother recalls, "I wanted to tell them to come back another day, since we were busy and did not have time for this sort of interruption."

Nevertheless, the brother decided to talk to them. The girls had many questions, some of which were quite specific regarding social issues and voting in elections. Afterward, the brother returned to the rest of the brothers and told them what questions the girls had asked and how he had answered them.

The next day, the brothers were surprised during the hearing because the Court asked many of the same questions that the girls had asked. A brother representing the organization says: "I felt very calm, although I could have been quite nervous because I was standing before the country's most distinguished lawyers. But I felt that Jehovah had already shown that he was with us by giving us the training we needed the day before."

The Court ruled in our favor, and the case was referred back to the government for a new decision.

example, after being given a vision involving the establishment of God's Kingdom, Daniel was told to seal up the prophecy until the time appointed by Jehovah. At that future time, true knowledge would "become abundant."—Dan. 12:4.

Jesus Sheds Light on God's Purpose

¹³ Jehovah clearly identified Jesus as the promised offspring, the descendant of David who would rule as King. (Luke 1:30-33; 3:21, 22) When Jesus began his ministry, it was as if the sun rose on mankind's knowledge about God's purpose. (Matt. 4:13-17) For instance, Jesus removed any doubt about the identity of "the serpent" mentioned at Genesis 3:14, 15, calling the Devil "a murderer" and "the father of the lie." (John 8:44) In the revelation that he gave to John, Jesus identified "the original serpent" as "the one called Devil and Satan."^{*[3]} **(Read Revelation 1:1;**

^{*[3]} The term "Satan," when used to identify an individual, appears 18 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. However, "Satan" appears more than 30 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. Appropriately, the Hebrew Scriptures did not give undue emphasis to Satan but focused on identifying the Messiah. When the Messiah arrived, he exposed Satan fully, a fact recorded in the Christian Greek Scriptures.

13. (a) Who was the promised offspring? (b) How did Jesus shed light on the prophecy recorded at Genesis 3:15?

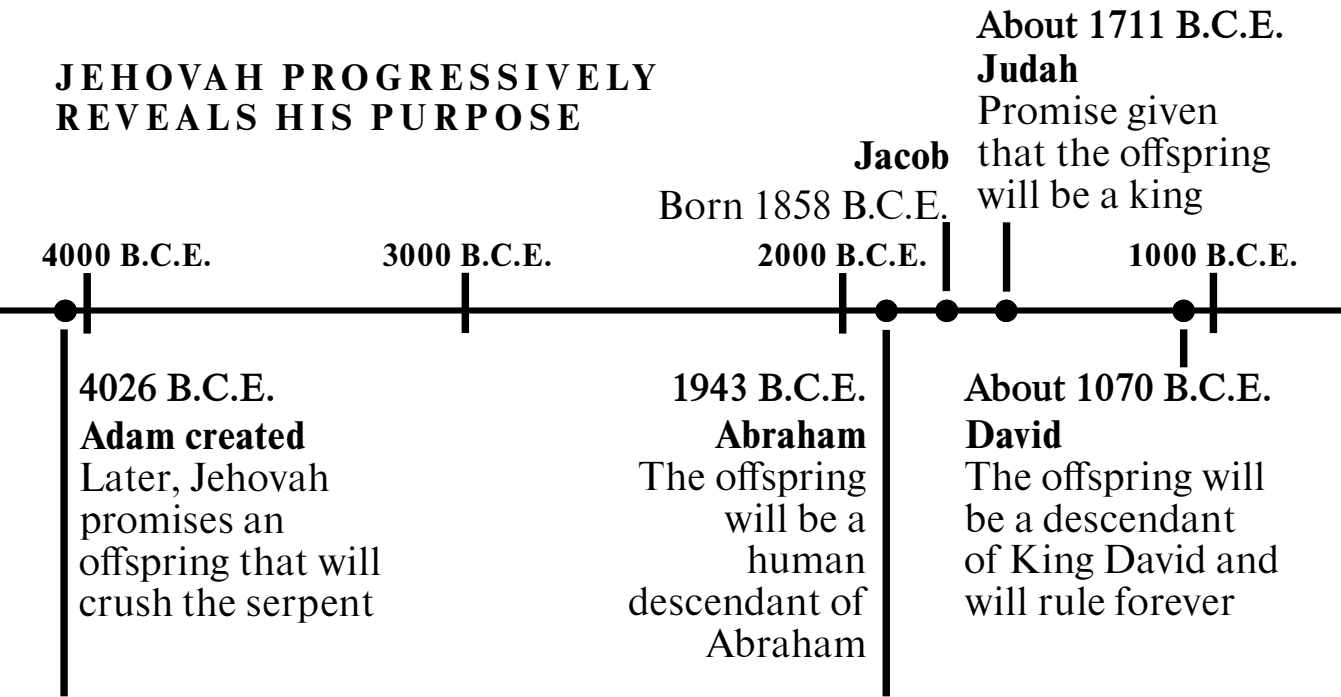
12:9.) In that same revelation, Jesus showed how he—the promised offspring—will finally fulfill the prophecy given in Eden and crush Satan out of existence.—Rev. 20:7-10.

¹⁴ As we saw in Chapter 1 of this book, Jesus spoke extensively about the Kingdom. However, he did not always disclose all the details his disciples wanted to know. Even when he provided specific details, it was not until later—sometimes many centuries later—that followers of Christ began to discern the full significance of the truths their Master had revealed. Consider some examples.

¹⁵ In 33 C.E., Jesus made it clearly known that the rulers who would assist the King of God’s Kingdom would be taken from the earth and raised to life as spirit creatures in heaven. His disciples, though, did not immediately understand this revelation. (Dan. 7:18; John 14:2-5) In that same year, Jesus indicated by means of illustrations that the Kingdom would not be established until a long time after he ascended to heaven. (Matt. 25:14, 19; Luke 19:11, **14-16.** **Did the first-century disciples always discern the full significance of the truths Jesus revealed? Explain.**

12) The disciples did not comprehend this vital point and later asked the resurrected Jesus: “Are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?” Jesus, however, chose not to reveal any more details at that time. (Acts 1:6, 7) Jesus also taught that there would be “other sheep,” who would not be part of the “little flock” of his followers. (John 10:16; Luke 12:32) Followers of Christ did not properly understand the identity of those two groups until well after the Kingdom was established in 1914.

**JEHOVAH PROGRESSIVELY
REVEALS HIS PURPOSE**

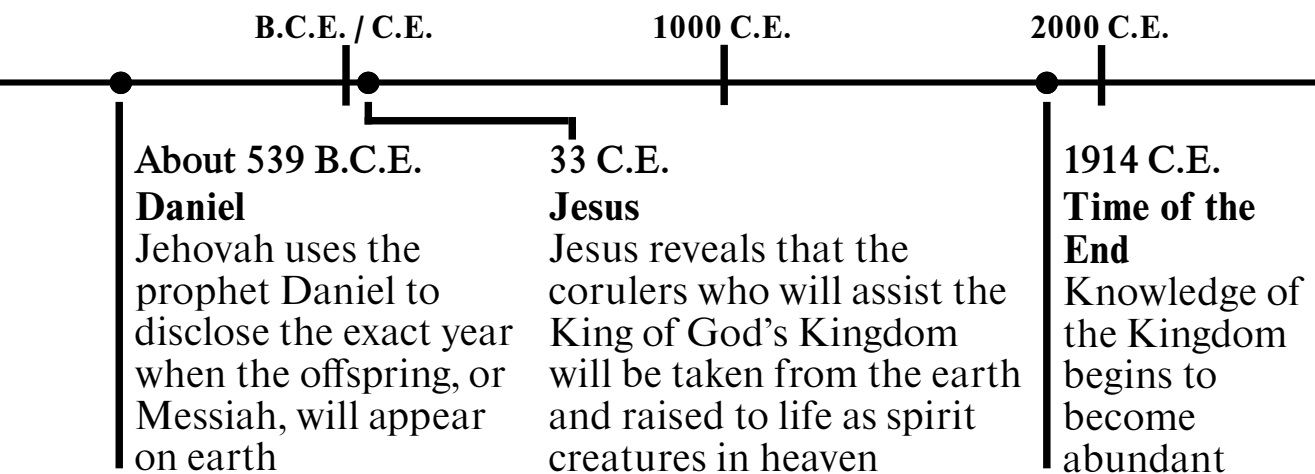


16 Jesus could have told his disciples many things while with them on earth, but he knew that they were not able to bear them. (John 16:12) Without a doubt, much knowledge about the Kingdom was revealed in the first century. However, that was not yet the time for such knowledge to become abundant.

True Knowledge Becomes Abundant in “the Time of the End”

17 Jehovah promised Daniel that during “the time of the end,” many would “rove about, and the true knowledge” of God’s purpose would become abundant. (Dan. 12:4) Those who want that knowledge

17. What must we do to understand truths about the Kingdom, but what is also needed?



must work hard to gain it. One reference work says that a form of the Hebrew verb “rove about” conveys the idea of someone examining a book very carefully and thoroughly. No matter how thoroughly we examine the Bible, though, we cannot properly understand truths about the Kingdom unless Jehovah grants us that privilege.—**Read Matthew 13:11.**

¹⁸ Just as Jehovah progressively revealed truths about the Kingdom in the period leading up to 1914, he continues to do so during the time of the end. As Chapters 4 and 5 of this book will show, over the past 100 years, God’s people have had to adjust their understanding on a number of occasions. Does that fact mean that they do not have Jehovah’s backing? On the contrary! He supports them. Why? Because those who fear Jehovah have displayed two qualities that he loves—faith and humility. (Heb. 11:6; Jas. 4:6) Jehovah’s servants have faith that all the promises in God’s Word will come true. They show humility when they admit that they misunderstood exactly how those promises would be fulfilled. That humble

18. How have those who fear Jehovah displayed faith and humility?

attitude is reflected in the March 1, 1925, issue of *The Watch Tower*, which said: “We know that the Lord is his own interpreter, that he will interpret his Word to his people in his own good way and in his own due time.”

¹⁹ When the Kingdom was established in 1914, God’s people had only partial knowledge of how prophecies relating to the Kingdom would be carried out. (1 Cor. 13:9, 10, 12) In our zeal to see God’s promises fulfilled, we have on occasion drawn wrong conclusions. Over the years, the wisdom of another statement made in *The Watch Tower* quoted in the preceding paragraph has become apparent. The article stated: “It seems to be a safe rule to follow, that prophecy can not be understood by us until it is fulfilled or in the course of fulfillment.” Now that we are deep into the time of the end, many Kingdom prophecies have been and are being fulfilled. Because God’s people are humble and willing to be corrected, Jehovah has allowed our understanding of his purpose to become more complete. True knowledge has become abundant!

19. What has Jehovah now allowed us to understand, and why?

Refinements in Understanding Sift God's People

²⁰ When Jehovah refines our understanding of truth, our heart condition is tested. Will faith and humility move us to accept the changes? Christians living in the middle of the first century faced such a test. For example, imagine that you were a Jewish Christian living at that time. You deeply respect the Mosaic Law and take pride in your national heritage. Now you receive inspired letters from the apostle Paul stating that the Law is no longer binding and that Jehovah has rejected natural Israel in favor of gathering a spiritual Israel made up of both Jews and Gentiles. (Rom. 10:12; 11:17-24; Gal. 6:15, 16; Col. 2:13, 14) How would you have responded?

²¹ Humble Christians accepted Paul's inspired explanation and were blessed by Jehovah. (Acts 13:48) Others resented the refinements and wanted to cling to their own understanding. (Gal. 5:7-12) If they would not change their viewpoint, those individuals would lose the opportunity to be corulers with Christ.—2 Pet. 2:1.

20, 21. How did refinements in understanding affect first-century Christians?

²² In recent decades, Jehovah has refined our understanding of the Kingdom. For example, he has helped us to see more clearly when those who will be subjects of the Kingdom are to be separated from unresponsive ones as sheep are separated from goats. He has also taught us when the full number of the 144,000 will be filled, what the Kingdom illustrations given by Jesus mean, and when the last of the anointed will be raised to heavenly life.*^[4] How do you respond to such clarifications? Is your faith strengthened? Do you see them as evidence that Jehovah continues to educate his humble people? The following material in this book will reinforce your conviction that Jehovah is progressively revealing his purpose to those who fear him.

*^[4] For a discussion of some of these refinements in understanding, see the following issues of *The Watchtower*: October 15, 1995, pages 23-28; January 15, 2008, pages 20-24; July 15, 2008, pages 17-21; July 15, 2013, pages 9-14.

22. How do you feel about clarifications in our understanding of God's purpose?

How Real Is the Kingdom to You?

- Was the Messianic Kingdom part of God's original purpose? Explain.
- How did Jesus shed light on the Kingdom?
- What qualities must we cultivate if the Kingdom is to remain real to us?

108 Praise Jehovah for His Kingdom (Revelation 21:2)

1. Jehovah anointed his Son

To rule over ev'ryone.

His throne is established on justice,

That God's will on earth may be done.

(CHORUS)

Praise Jah for his holy Anointed.

Hail Jesus, O you faithful sheep,

Who loyally follow day after day

and all his commandments keep.

Praise Jah for his holy Anointed,

the Ruler of heavenly fame,

Anointed with exultation and might

to honor God's holy name.

2. Christ's brothers are chosen and called.

God gives them their own new birth.

This bride class will share in the Kingdom

And bring Paradise to this earth.

(Chorus)

SEPTEMBER 2016

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
OCTOBER 24–NOVEMBER 27, 2016



COVER IMAGE:

FIJI

Brothers and sisters in rural areas outside of Suva, the capital of Fiji, happily share the good news with all whom they encounter

POPULATION
887,027

PUBLISHERS
3,097

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE
(2015)
11,845

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Living Up to Our Name (Isaiah 43:10-12)

1. Glorious Jehovah, almighty, eternal,
Perfect in justice, in power, in love.
Source of all truth and of infinite wisdom,
You rule as Sov'reign in heaven above.
We as your people delight in your service;
Your Kingdom truth we delight to proclaim.

(CHORUS)

*Being your Witnesses, great is our priv'lege.
Oh, may we ever live up to our name!*

2. Working together in your sacred service
Binds us as brothers in love and in peace.
Teaching the truth and reflecting your glory
Fill us with joy as your praises increase.
Known by your name, O Jehovah, our Father,
We have the honor to add to your fame.

(Chorus)

Does Your Style of Dress Glorify God?

“Do all things for God’s glory.”—1 COR. 10:31.

SONGS: 34, 61

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

How does the Mosaic Law help us when we have to make decisions about dress and grooming?

How do 1 Corinthians 10:31 and Philippians 2:4 have a bearing on what we wear?

Why is modesty a key to making good decisions about dress and grooming?

“YOU saw a lot of casual clothing, especially when it was hot,” reported a Dutch newspaper regarding a meeting of church leaders. “That is not the case at the convention of Jehovah’s Witnesses. . . . Boys and men wear a jacket and tie, while the girls’ and women’s skirt length is . . . in good taste, yet modern.” Indeed, Jehovah’s Witnesses are often commended for adorning “themselves in respectable dress, with modesty and good judgment . . . in the way that is proper for [those] professing devotion to God.” (1 Tim. 2:

1, 2. Why do Jehovah’s Witnesses maintain high standards of dress? (See opening picture of the standard edition.)



Does Your Style of Dress Glorify God?

“Do all things for God’s glory.”—1 COR. 10:31.

Will your style of dress generate respect for the God you represent?
(See paragraphs 7, 8)



9, 10, ftn.) The apostle Paul was speaking about women, but the same basic standard applies to Christian men.

2 Appropriate standards of dress are important to us as Jehovah's people, and they are important to the God we worship. (Gen. 3:21) What the Scriptures say about dress and grooming leaves no doubt that the Sovereign of the universe has wholesome standards of attire for his true worshippers. Therefore, our choice of dress and grooming should not be determined only by what is pleasing to us. It should also take into account what is pleasing to the Sovereign Lord Jehovah.

3 For example, in God's Law to the Israelites there were rules that protected them against the openly immoral way of life of the nations around them. The Law showed Jehovah's strong feelings against clothing that does not make clear the distinction between male and female—what has been described in our day as unisex fashion. (Read Deuteronomy 22:5.) From God's stated direction about clothing, we clearly see that God is not pleased with styles of dress that feminize men, that make women look like men, or that make it hard to see the difference between men and women.

3. What can we learn about clothing from God's Law to the Israelites?

4 God’s Word contains principles that help Christians make good decisions about how to dress. That is so no matter where they live, what their culture is, or what the climate is. We do not need detailed lists saying which styles of dress are acceptable and which are objectionable. Rather, we are guided by Scriptural principles that allow room for personal preferences. Let us consider some Bible principles that can help us determine “the good and acceptable and perfect will of God” when we are deciding what to wear.—Rom. 12:1, 2.

“WE RECOMMEND OURSELVES AS GOD’S MINISTERS”

5 The apostle Paul was inspired to emphasize the important principle found at 2 Corinthians 6:4. (Read.) Our personal appearance says much about us. Many people form impressions and opinions of us by “what appears to the eyes.” (1 Sam. 16:7) As God’s ministers, therefore, we understand that our getting dressed is not just a matter of putting on something comfortable that we like. The principles that we glean from God’s Word should move us to avoid wearing clothing that is tight-fitting, revealing, or sexually provocative. That would rule out wearing clothing that

4. What can help Christians to make good decisions about how to dress?
- 5, 6. What effect should our dress have on others?

exposes or accentuates private parts of our anatomy. Nobody should feel uncomfortable or forced to look the other way when seeing how we are dressed.

6 When we are neat, clean, modestly dressed, and well-groomed, people are more likely to respect us as ministers of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. And they may be attracted to the God we worship. Furthermore, our appropriate attire will reflect well on the organization we represent. As a result, others may be more likely to pay attention to our life-saving message.

7 We owe it to our holy God, to our spiritual brothers and sisters, as well as to the people in our territory to wear clothing that dignifies the message we bear and that brings glory to Jehovah. (Rom. 13:8-10) This is especially so when we are engaging in Christian activities, such as when we attend meetings or when we share in the preaching work. We should dress “in the way that is proper for [people] professing devotion to God.” (1 Tim. 2:10) Of course, some clothing that is appropriate in one place may not be appropriate in another. Hence, Jehovah’s people throughout the world take local customs into account so as not to cause offense.

8 **Read 1 Corinthians 10:31.** When we attend assemblies and conventions, our dress needs to be appropriate and

7, 8. When especially do we need to wear appropriate clothing?

modest rather than reflect the extreme styles that may be common in the world. Even as we check in and out of a hotel, as well as when we enjoy leisure time before and after convention sessions, we want to avoid an appearance that is overly casual or slovenly. Thus we will be proud to identify ourselves as Jehovah's Witnesses. Yes, and we will feel free to give a witness as we have an opportunity.

9 Read Philippians 2:4. Why do Christians need to consider how their attire affects fellow worshippers? One reason is that God's people work hard to apply the Bible's admonition: "Deaden, therefore, your body members that are on the earth as respects sexual immorality, uncleanness, uncontrolled sexual passion." (Col. 3:2, 5) We would not want to make it difficult for fellow believers to heed that counsel. Brothers and sisters who have given up a sexually loose lifestyle may still be fighting sinful leanings. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) We would not want to make their fight harder, would we?

10 When we are around our spiritual brothers and sisters, our manner of dress should help to make the congregation a haven of moral chastity. That is so whether we are together at a meeting or in an informal setting. We have the freedom to choose what to wear. Still, all of us have a

9, 10. Why should Philippians 2:4 have a bearing on what we wear?

responsibility to wear clothes that make it easier for others to remain chaste and to maintain God’s standards of holiness in thought, word, and conduct. (1 Pet. 1:15, 16) True love “does not behave indecently, does not look for its own interests.”—1 Cor. 13:4, 5.

THE RIGHT CLOTHING FOR THE RIGHT TIME AND PLACE

11 When making decisions about what to wear, God’s servants take into account that “there is a time for every activity and every action.” (Eccl. 3:1, 17) It is understandable that different climates and the change of seasons influence what we wear. So do varying circumstances and living conditions. Jehovah’s standards, however, do not fluctuate with the weather.—Mal. 3:6.

12 In warmer climates, it can be particularly challenging to make sure that our style of dress is respectable and sensible and that it shows good judgment. Hence, our brothers and sisters appreciate it when we refrain from wearing clothes that are so tight or so loose that they are revealing. (Job 31:1) Also, when relaxing at the beach or at a swimming pool, the style of swimwear we use should be modest. (Prov. 11:2, 20) Even if many in the world wear reveal-

11, 12. What is a reasonable consideration as we think about what to wear?

ing swimwear, we who serve Jehovah are concerned about being a credit to the holy God we love.

13 There is another important principle that helps us to select appropriate clothing. That is our concern for the conscience of others—whether fellow worshippers or not. (Read 1 Corinthians 10:32, 33.) We should take seriously our responsibility to avoid clothes that may offend others. “Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up,” wrote Paul. Then he added this reason: “For even the Christ did not please himself.” (Rom. 15:2, 3) Yes, Jesus put helping others ahead of personal convenience—helping them was key to his doing God’s will. Hence, we will forgo items or styles of clothing that we like but that could close the minds of people to whom we want to witness.

14 Christian parents have a responsibility to teach their families to apply Bible principles. This includes making sure that they and their children strive to make God’s heart rejoice by their modest style of dress and grooming. (Prov. 22:6; 27:11) Parents can instill in their children a healthy respect for the holy God whom they worship by

13. Why should the counsel found at 1 Corinthians 10:32, 33 influence our choice of clothing?

14. How can parents train their children to glorify God by their manner of dress?

setting the right example for their children and by giving loving and practical instruction. How good it is when parents teach their youngsters where and how to find suitable clothes! This means not just what they like but also what will enable them to carry out their privilege of representing Jehovah God.

USE YOUR FREE WILL WISELY

15 God's Word provides practical guidance that can help us to make wise choices that will bring glory to God. Still, what we wear involves some personal preference. Our individual tastes vary, as do our financial resources. But our clothes should always be neat, clean, modest, appropriate to the occasion, and acceptable locally.

16 We must admit that it is not always easy to make a decision that shows good judgment, that is sensible, and that takes all factors into account. Many stores cater to popular fashions, so it may take more time and effort to find modest skirts, dresses, and blouses or suits and slacks that are not too tight. Yet, fellow believers will likely note and appreciate the results of our sincere efforts to find attractive and appropriate clothing. And the satisfaction we have of bringing glory to our loving heavenly Father more

15. What should guide our personal choice as to our dress?

16. Why is it worth making the effort to be appropriately dressed?

than makes up for any inconveniences that we may face to dress so as to glorify him.

17 What about the propriety of brothers wearing a beard? The Mosaic Law required men to wear a beard. However, Christians are not under the Mosaic Law, nor are they obliged to observe it. (Lev. 19:27; 21:5; Gal. 3:24, 25) In some cultures, a neatly trimmed beard may be acceptable and respectable, and it may not detract at all from the Kingdom message. In fact, some appointed brothers have beards. Even so, some brothers might decide not to wear a beard. (1 Cor. 8:9, 13; 10:32) In other cultures or localities, beards are not the custom and are not considered acceptable for Christian ministers. In fact, having one may hinder a brother from bringing glory to God by his dress and grooming and his being irreprehensible.—Rom. 15:1-3; 1 Tim. 3:2, 7.

18 How grateful we are that Jehovah does not burden us with detailed lists of regulations about our dress and grooming. Instead, he has permitted us to exercise our free will and make sensible personal decisions, which should be guided by sound Scriptural principles. Thus, even in our

17. What are some factors that may affect whether a brother wears a beard?

18, 19. How does Micah 6:8 help us as we strive to let our style of dress be pleasing to God?

dress and grooming, we can show that we want to ‘walk in modesty with our God.’—Mic. 6:8.

19 Our modesty includes making a humble evaluation of ourselves when compared with Jehovah’s purity and holiness, for we are completely dependent on him for the best guidance. Also, modesty includes showing respect for the feelings and opinions of others. Therefore, we ‘walk in modesty with God’ by conforming our lives to his elevated standards and showing respect for other people’s sensitivities.

20 Our choice of clothing should not make people conclude anything other than that we are worshippers of Jehovah. Our brothers and sisters as well as people in general should be able to see that we fittingly represent our righteous God. He has high standards, and we happily strive to reflect those standards. Commendation is in order for brothers and sisters whose appearance and fine conduct attract honesthearted people to the Bible’s lifesaving message and bring glory and joy to Jehovah. Making wise decisions about what to wear will surely continue to bring glory to the One who clothes himself “with majesty and splendor.”—Ps. 104:1, 2.

20. What effect should our dress and grooming have on others?

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61 *What Sort of Person I Should Be*

(2 Peter 3:11)

- 1. How can I repay you, what gift can I give
To thank you, Jehovah, for the life that I live?
I look in my heart with your Word as my mirror;
The person I see, may you help me see clearer.
My life I have promised in service to you,
But not from mere duty will I do what I do.
Whole-souled and wholehearted I serve you by
choice;
May I be one more who makes you rejoice.**
- 2. Help me to examine, and help me to see
Just what sort of person you desire me to be.
Those loyal to you, you will loyally treasure;
May I be among those who bring your heart
pleasure.**