

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

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Humans Can Have Success Only With Jehovah’s Guidance”:** (10 min.)
 Jer 10:2-5, 14, 15—The gods of the nations are false gods (*it-1* 555)
 Jer 10:6, 7, 10-13—Unlike the gods of the nations, Jehovah is the only true God (*w04* 10/1 11 ¶10)
 Jer 10:21-23—Humans cannot have success without Jehovah’s guidance (*w15* 9/1 15 ¶1)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Jer 9:24—What type of boasting and pride are good? (*w13* 1/15 20 ¶16)

 Jer 11:10—Why did Jeremiah include the northern ten-tribe kingdom in his pronouncements, even though Samaria had fallen in 740 B.C.E.? (*w07* 3/15 9 ¶2)

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) Jer 11:6-16

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Memorial invitation and *wp17.2* cover—Lay the groundwork for a return visit.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) Memorial invitation and *wp17.2* cover—Lay the groundwork for the next visit.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *Id* pp. 4-5 (Student may select which pictures to consider.)—Invite the person to the Memorial.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 72
- **“Listen to God—How to Use It”:** (15 min.) Begin with a five-minute discussion of the article. Afterward, play and discuss the video that shows a portion of a Bible study being conducted using pages 8 and 9 of the brochure. The student is using *Listen to God* while the teacher is using *Listen to God and Live Forever*. Encourage the audience to follow along in their copy of *Listen to God and Live Forever*.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *kr* pp. 98-99, chap. 10 ¶1-7
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 115 and Prayer

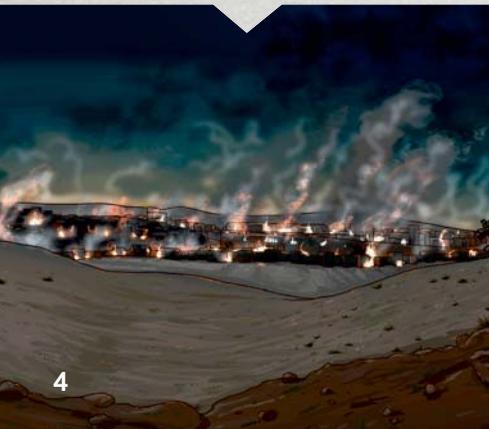
JEREMIAH 8-11 | Humans Can Have Success Only With Jehovah’s Guidance



10:21-23

Humans have neither the ability nor the right to govern themselves

- ◀ Because Israel’s spiritual shepherds did not inquire of Jehovah, the people were scattered
- ▶ Those who followed Jehovah’s direction had peace, happiness, and prosperity



We Must Be Taught

(Isaiah 50:4; 54:13)

C G/B Am7 Em/G Fma7 F6 Dm9 G13sus4 G7

Come with re - joic - ing, and learn a - bout Je - ho - vah.
 Nev - er for - sak - ing our gath - er - ing to - geth - er,
 Lips that sing praise, how en - cour - ag - ing to hear them!

C D/C G/B Em7 Am11 Am7 D7 Gsus4 G

"Come drink life's wa - ter," the spir - it has said.
 We must be taught; we must learn what is right.
 Tongues of the taught ones, how sweet is their sound!

G#° E/G# G#° Am9 Am C#° Bbm/C# C#° Dm9 Dm

Health - ful in - struc - tion, God has pro - vid - ed.
 Here with God's spir - it, here with our broth - ers,
 Oh, may we al - ways meet with God's peo - ple!

D#° B/D# D#° C/E Am Am7 Dm Dm7 G7 C

All those who hun - ger for truth will be fed.
 Here we are strength - ened to walk in the light.
 Oh, may we al - ways a - mong them be found!

hurting?"* declares Jehovah. 'Is it not they themselves, to their own shame?'^a **20** Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says, 'Look! My anger and my wrath will be poured out on this place,^b on man and beast, on the trees of the field and the fruitage of the ground; it will burn and will not be extinguished.'^c

21 "This is what Jehovah of armies, the God of Israel, says, 'Go ahead, add your whole burnt offerings to your other sacrifices, and eat the flesh yourselves.'^d **22** For on the day I brought your forefathers out of the land of Egypt, I did not speak with them or command them concerning whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.^e **23** But I did give them this command: "Obey my voice, and I will become your God, and you will become my people.^f You must walk in all the way that I command, so that it may go well with you."^g

24 But they did not listen or incline their ear;^h instead, they walked in their own schemes,* stubbornly following their wicked heart,ⁱ and they went backward, not forward, **25** from the day your forefathers came out of the land of Egypt until this day.^j So I kept sending all my servants the prophets to you, sending them each day, again and again.^k **26** But they refused to listen to me, and they did not incline their ear.^l Instead, they were stubborn,* and they acted worse than their forefathers!

27 "You will speak all these words to them,^m but they will not listen to you; you will call to them, but they will not answer you. **28** And you will say

7:19 *Or "offending; provoking." 7:24 *Or "advice." 7:25 *Lit., "daily rising up early and sending." 7:26 *Lit., "they hardened their neck."

CHAP. 7

- a Da 9:7
b La 2:3
c 2Ki 22:17
Jer 17:27
d Isa 1:11
Jer 6:20
Ho 8:13
Am 5:21
e 1Sa 15:22
Ho 6:6
f Ex 19:5
Le 26:3,12
g De 5:29
h Ex 32:8
i Ho 4:16
Zec 7:12
j De 9:7
1Sa 8:8
k 2Ki 17:13
2Ch 36:15
Ne 9:17,30
Jer 25:4
l 2Ch 33:10
Jer 25:3
m Jer 26:2
Eze 2:7

Second Col.

- a Jer 5:1
Mic 7:2
b 2Ki 21:1,4
2Ch 33:1,4
Jer 23:11
Jer 32:34
c Jos 15:8,12
d De 12:29-31
2Ki 17:17
2Ch 28:1,3
2Ch 33:1,6
Eze 20:31
e Le 18:21
Le 20:3
Jer 19:5,6
Jer 32:35
f Jer 19:11
Eze 6:4,5
g De 28:26
Ps 79:2
Jer 16:4
h Isa 24:8
Jer 25:10
i Le 26:33
Isa 1:7
Isa 6:11

to them, "This is the nation that did not obey the voice of Jehovah their God and refused to accept discipline. Faithfulness has perished and is not even mentioned among them."^a

29 "Shear off your uncut* hair and throw it away, and on the bare hills raise a dirge,[#] for Jehovah has rejected and will abandon this generation that has infuriated him. **30** 'For the people of Judah have done what is bad in my eyes,' declares Jehovah. 'They have set up their disgusting idols in the house that bears my name, in order to defile it.'^b **31** They have built the high places of To'pheth, which is in the Valley of the Son of Hin'nom,^{*c} in order to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire,^d something that I had not commanded and that had never even come into my heart.'^{##}

32 "'Therefore look! the days are coming,' declares Jehovah, 'when it will no longer be called To'pheth or the Valley of the Son of Hin'nom* but the Valley of the Slaughter. They will bury in To'pheth until there is no place left.'^f **33** And the dead bodies of this people will become food for the birds of the heavens and for the beasts of the earth, with no one to frighten them away.^g **34** I will put an end to the sound of exultation and the sound of rejoicing, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride,^h in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, for the land will be reduced to ruins."^{##i}

8 "At that time," declares Jehovah, "the bones of the kings of Judah, the bones of its

7:28 *Lit., "is cut off from their mouth."
7:29 *Or "dedicated." #Or "song of mourning." 7:31, 32 *See Glossary, "Gehenna." 7:31 #Or "had never entered my thoughts."

princes, the bones of the priests, the bones of the prophets, and the bones of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will be taken from their graves. **2** They will be spread out to the sun and to the moon and to all the army of the heavens that they loved and served and followed and sought after and bowed down to.^a They will not be gathered, nor will they be buried. They will become like manure on the surface of the ground.”^b

3 “And the remnant of this evil family who survive will choose death over life in all the places where I disperse them,” declares Jehovah of armies.

4 “And you must say to them, ‘This is what Jehovah says: ‘Will they fall and not get up again?

If one would turn back, will the other not also turn back?

5 Why is this people, Jerusalem, unfaithful with an enduring unfaithfulness? They hold fast to deception; They refuse to turn back.^c

6 I paid attention and kept listening, but the way they spoke was not right. Not a man repented over his wickedness or asked, ‘What have I done?’^d

Each one keeps returning to the popular course, like a horse dashing into the battle.

7 Even the stork in the sky knows its seasons;* The turtledove and the swift and the thrush[#] keep to the time of their return.[△] But my own people do not understand the judgment of Jehovah.”^e

8:7 *Or “appointed times.” #Or possibly, “crane.” △Or “migration.”

CHAP. 8
a De 4:19
2Ki 17:16
2Ki 21:1, 3
Jer 19:13
Eze 8:16
Zep 1:4, 5

b Jer 16:4

c Jer 5:3

d Jer 5:1

e Isa 1:3

Second Col.

a Isa 8:1

b Isa 29:14

c De 28:30
Zep 1:13

d Isa 56:11
Eze 33:31
Mic 3:11

e Jer 5:31
Jer 6:12-15
Jer 27:9
La 2:14
Eze 22:28

f Jer 23:16, 17
Eze 13:10

g Jer 3:3

h Jer 23:12

8 ‘How can you say: “We are wise, and we have the law* of Jehovah”?’

For in fact, the lying[#] stylus^{△a} of the scribes[Ⓢ] has been used only for falsehood.

9 The wise have been put to shame.^b

They have become terrified and will be caught.

Look! They have rejected the word of Jehovah, And what wisdom do they have?

10 So I will give their wives to other men, Their fields to other owners;^c For from the least to the greatest, each one is making dishonest gain;^d

From the prophet to the priest, each one is practicing fraud.^e

11 And they try to heal the breakdown* of the daughter of my people lightly,[#] saying, “There is peace! There is peace!”

When there is no peace.^f

12 Do they feel ashamed of the detestable things they have done?

They feel no shame at all! They do not even know how to feel humiliated!^g

So they will fall among the fallen.

When I bring punishment on them they will stumble,^h says Jehovah.

13 ‘When I gather them, I will bring them to their end,’ declares Jehovah.

“There will be no grapes left on the vine, no figs on the fig tree, and the leaves will wither.

And what I gave to them will be lost to them.”

8:8 *Or “instruction.” #Or “false.” △Or “pen.” ⓈOr “secretaries.” 8:11 *Or “fracture.” #Or “superficially.”

- 14** “Why are we sitting here?
Let us gather together and
enter the fortified cities^a
and perish there.
For Jehovah our God will do
away with us,
And he gives us poisoned
water to drink,^b
Because we have sinned
against Jehovah.
- 15** There was a hope for peace,
but nothing good came,
For a time of healing, but
there is terror!^c
- 16** From Dan is heard the
snorting of his horses.
At the sound of the neighing
of his stallions,
The whole land quakes.
They come in and devour the
land and everything in it,
The city and its inhabitants.”
- 17** “For here I am sending in
serpents among you,
Poisonous snakes that
cannot be charmed,
And they will certainly bite
you,” declares Jehovah.
- 18** My grief is incurable;
My heart is sick.
- 19** From a distant land there is
a cry for help
From the daughter of my
people:
“Is Jehovah not in Zion?
Or is her king not in her?”
“Why have they offended me
with their graven images,
With their worthless foreign
gods?”
- 20** “The harvest has passed, the
summer has ended,
But we have not been saved!”
- 21** I am shattered over the
breakdown of the daughter
of my people;^d
I am dejected.
Horror has seized me.
- 22** Is there no balsam* in
Gil'e-ad?^e

8:22 *Or “soothing balm.”

CHAP. 8

a Jer 4:5

b Jer 9:15
Jer 23:15
La 3:19

c Jer 4:10
Jer 14:19

d Jer 4:19, 20
Jer 14:17

e Ge 37:25

Second Col.

a Jer 30:12, 13

b Jer 30:17
Jer 33:4, 6

CHAP. 9

c Isa 22:4
Jer 13:17

d Jer 5:7
Jer 23:10

e Isa 59:3

f Jer 4:22

g Jer 12:6
Mic 7:2, 5

h Jer 6:28
Eze 22:9

i Ps 50:19
Mic 6:12

j Isa 1:25
Isa 48:10

Or is there no healer* there?^a
Why has the daughter of my
people not been restored
to health?^b

- 9** O that my head were waters,
My eyes a fountain of tears!^c
Then I would weep day and
night
For the slain ones of my
people.
- 2** O that I had a traveler's lodg-
ing place in the wilderness!
Then I would leave my peo-
ple and go away from them,
For they are all adulterers,^d
A band of treacherous
people.
- 3** They bend their tongue like
a bow;
Falseness, not faithfulness,
prevails in the land.^e
“They advance from evil to
evil,
And they pay no attention to
me,” declares Jehovah.
- 4** “Everyone, be on guard
against your neighbor,
And do not trust even your
brother.
For every brother is a
betrayer,^g
And every neighbor is a
slanderer.^h
- 5** Each one cheats his
neighbor,
And no one speaks truth.
They have taught their
tongue to speak falsehood.ⁱ
They wear themselves out
doing what is wrong.
- 6** You are living in the midst
of deception.
In their deception they
refused to know me,”
declares Jehovah.
- 7** Therefore this is what
Jehovah of armies says:
“I will smelt them and test
them,^j
For what else can I do with
the daughter of my people?”

8:22 *Or “physician.”

8 Their tongue is a deadly arrow that speaks deception.
 With his mouth a person speaks of peace to his neighbor,
 But inside he lays an ambush.”

9 “Should I not call them to account for these things?” declares Jehovah.
 “Should I* not avenge myself on such a nation?^a”

10 I will weep and lament over the mountains
 And take up a dirge* over the pastures of the wilderness,
 For they have been burned up so that no man passes through,
 And the sound of livestock is not heard.
 The birds of heaven and the beasts have fled; they are gone.^b

11 I will make Jerusalem piles of stones,^c the lair of jackals,^d
 And I will make the cities of Judah desolate, without an inhabitant.^e

12 Who is wise enough to understand this?
 To whom has the mouth of Jehovah spoken, that he may declare it?
 Why has the land perished?
 Why is it scorched like the wilderness,
 So that no one is passing through?”

13 Jehovah replied: “Because of their rejecting my law* that I set before them, and because they have not followed it and obeyed my voice. **14** Instead, they stubbornly followed their own hearts,^f and they followed the Ba'al images, as their fathers had taught them to do.^g

9:9 *Or “my soul.” **9:10, 20** *Or “song of mourning.” **9:13** *Or “instruction.”

CHAP. 9
 a Jer 5:9, 29
 b Jer 4:25
 Zep 1:3
 c Ps 79:1
 Jer 26:18
 d Jer 10:22
 e Jer 4:27
 Jer 25:11
 Jer 32:43
 f Jer 7:24
 g Jg 3:7
 1Sa 12:10
 Ho 11:2

Second Col.
 a Jer 8:14
 Jer 23:15
 La 3:15, 19
 b Le 26:33
 De 28:64
 Ps 106:27
 Zec 7:14
 c Jer 29:17
 Eze 5:2
 d 2Ch 35:25
 e Jer 6:26
 Jer 14:17
 f Jer 4:31
 Eze 7:16
 Mic 1:8, 9
 g La 4:15
 Mic 2:10
 h Isa 29:2
 Jer 7:29
 i 2Ch 36:17
 Jer 6:11

15 Therefore this is what Jehovah of armies, the God of Israel, says, ‘Here I am making this people eat wormwood, and I will make them drink poisoned water.’^a **16** I will scatter them among the nations that they and their fathers have not known,^b and I will send a sword after them until I will have exterminated them.’^c

17 This is what Jehovah of armies says,
 ‘Behave with understanding.
 Summon the women who sing dirges,^{*d}
 And send for the skilled women to come,
18 So that they may hurry and raise a lamentation for us,
 So that our eyes may stream with tears
 And our eyelids trickle with water.’^e

19 For the sound of lamentation has been heard from Zion:^f
 “How we have been devastated!
 How great our shame is!
 For we have left the land,
 and they have thrown down our homes.”^g

20 You women, hear the word of Jehovah.
 May your ear receive the word of his mouth.
 Teach your daughters this lamentation,
 And teach one another this dirge.^{*h}

21 For death has come up through our windows;
 It has entered our fortified towers
 To take away the children from the streets
 And the young men from the public squares.ⁱ

22 Say, ‘This is what Jehovah declares:
9:17 *Or “songs of mourning.”

"The dead bodies of people will fall like manure on the surface of the field, Like a row of newly cut grain after the reaper, With no one to gather them up."^a

- 23** This is what Jehovah says: "Let not the wise man boast about his wisdom;^b Let not the mighty man boast about his mightiness; And let not the rich man boast about his riches."^c
- 24** "But let the one boasting boast about this: That he has insight and knowledge of me,^d That I am Jehovah, the One showing loyal love, justice, and righteousness in the earth.^e For in these things I take delight,"^f declares Jehovah.

25 "Look! Days are coming," declares Jehovah, "and I will hold an accounting with everyone circumcised and yet uncircumcised,^g **26** with Egypt^h and Judahⁱ and E'dom^j and the Am'mon-ites^k and Mo'ab^l and with all of those with hair clipped at the temples who are dwelling in the wilderness;^m for all the nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel are uncircumcised in heart."ⁿ

10 Hear the word that Jehovah has spoken against you, O house of Israel. **2** This is what Jehovah says:

"Do not learn the way of the nations,^o And do not be terrified by the signs of the heavens Because the nations are terrified by them."^p

- 3** For the customs of the peoples are a delusion.* It is just a tree of the forest that is cut down,

10:3, 8 *Or "futility."

CHAP. 9

- a Isa 5:25
Jer 16:3, 4
b Isa 5:21
c De 8:12-14
De 8:17, 18
d 1Co 1:31
2Co 10:17
e Ex 34:6
Ps 89:14
f Ps 99:4
Ho 6:6
Mic 6:8
Mic 7:18
g Am 3:1, 2
h Isa 19:1
Eze 29:2
i Isa 1:1
j Jer 27:2, 3
Eze 32:29
Ob 1
k Jer 49:1
Eze 25:2
l Isa 15:1
Jer 48:1
m Jer 25:17, 23
Jer 49:32
n Le 26:41
Jer 4:4

CHAP. 10

- o Le 18:3, 30
Le 20:23
De 12:30
p Isa 47:13

Second Col.

- a Isa 40:20
Isa 44:14, 15
Isa 45:20
Hab 2:18
b Ps 115:4
Isa 40:19
c Isa 41:7
d Hab 2:19
e Isa 46:7
f Isa 41:23
Isa 44:9
1Co 8:4
g Ex 15:11
2Sa 7:22
Ps 86:8
h Ps 22:28
i Ps 89:6
Da 4:35
j Jer 51:17
Hab 2:18
k Isa 44:19
l 1KI 10:22
m Jos 3:10
Da 6:26
n Da 4:3
Hab 1:12
Re 15:3
o Na 1:5

Worked by the hands of the craftsman with his tool.*^a

- 4** They adorn it with silver and gold^b And fasten it with hammer and nails so that it will not fall over.^c
- 5** Like a scarecrow in a cucumber field, they cannot speak;^d They have to be carried, for they cannot walk.^e Do not fear them, for they can do no harm, Nor can they do any good."^f
- 6** No one is like you, O Jehovah.^g You are great, and your name is great and mighty.
- 7** Who should not fear you, O King of the nations,^h for it is fitting; Because among all the wise ones of the nations and among all their kingdoms, There is no one at all like you.ⁱ
- 8** They are all unreasoning and stupid.^j Instruction from a tree is an utter delusion.*^k
- 9** Silver plates are imported from Tar'shish^l and gold from U'phaz, The work of a craftsman, of the hands of a metal-worker. Their clothing is blue thread and purple wool. They are all made by skilled workers.
- 10** But Jehovah is truly God. He is the living God^m and the eternal King.ⁿ Because of his indignation the earth will quake,^o And no nations will endure his denunciation.
- 11** * This is what you should say to them:

10:3 *Or "billhook." 10:11 *Vs. 11 was originally written in Aramaic.

“The gods that did not make the heavens and the earth Will perish from the earth and from under these heavens.”^a

12 He is the Maker of the earth by his power, The One who established the productive land by his wisdom^b And who stretched out the heavens by his understanding.^c

13 When he makes his voice heard, The waters in the heavens are in turmoil,^d And he causes clouds* to ascend from the ends of the earth.^e He makes lightning for[#] the rain, And he brings the wind out of his storehouses.^f

14 Every man acts unreasonably and without knowledge. Every metalworker will be put to shame because of the carved image;^g For his metal image* is a falsehood, And there is no spirit[#] in them.^h

15 They are a delusion,^{*} a work of mockery,ⁱ When their day of reckoning comes, they will perish.

16 The Share of Jacob is not like these things, For he is the One who formed everything, And Israel is the staff of his inheritance.^j Jehovah of armies is his name.^k

17 Gather up your bundle from the ground,

10:13 *Or “vapors.” [#]Or possibly, “makes sluices for.” **10:14** *Or “molten statue.” [#]Or “breath.” **10:15** *Or “futility.”

CHAP. 10

a Isa 2:18
Jer 51:17,18
Zep 2:11

b Pr 3:19
Isa 45:18

c Ps 136:3, 5
Isa 40:22
Jer 51:15, 16

d Job 37:2
Job 38:34

e Job 36:27
Ps 135:7

f Ge 8:1
Ex 14:21
Nu 11:31
Jon 1:4

g Isa 42:17
Isa 44:11

h Jer 51:17
Hab 2:18, 19

i Isa 41:29

j De 32:9
Ps 135:4

k Isa 47:4

Second Col.

a De 28:63
Jer 16:13

b Jer 8:21

c Jer 4:20

d Jer 31:15

e Jer 5:31

f Jer 2:8
Jer 8:9

g Jer 23:1
Eze 34:5, 6

h Jer 1:15
Jer 4:6
Jer 6:22
Hab 1:6

i Jer 9:11

j Ps 17:5
Ps 37:23
Pr 16:3
Pr 20:24

k Ps 6:1
Ps 38:1

l Jer 30:11

m Isa 34:2

O woman dwelling under siege.

18 For this is what Jehovah says:

“Here I am hurling* the inhabitants out of the land at this time,^a And I will cause them to experience distress.”

19 Woe to me because of my breakdown!^{*b}

My wound is incurable. And I said: “Surely this is my sickness, and I must bear it.

20 My tent has been devastated, and my tent cords have all been torn apart.^c

My sons have left me and are no more.^d

There is no one left to stretch out my tent or raise up my tent cloths.

21 For the shepherds have behaved senselessly,^e And they have not inquired of Jehovah.^f

That is why they have not acted with insight, And all their flocks have been scattered.”^g

22 Listen! A report! It is coming! A great pounding from the land of the north,^h

To make the cities of Judah desolate, a lair of jackals.ⁱ

23 I well know, O Jehovah, that man’s way does not belong to him.

It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step.^j

24 Correct me, O Jehovah, with judgment, But not in your anger,^k that you may not reduce me to nothing.^l

25 Pour out your wrath on the nations who ignore you^m

10:18 *Or “slinging.” **10:19** *Or “fracture!”

And on the families who do not call on your name. For they have devoured Jacob.^a

Yes, they have devoured him to the point of extermination,^b

And they have desolated his homeland.^c

11 This is the word that came to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying: **2** "Hear the words of this covenant, you people!

"Speak* them to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem **3** and say to them, 'This is what Jehovah the God of Israel says: "Cursed is the man who does not obey the words of this covenant,^d **4** which I commanded your forefathers on the day I brought them out of the land of Egypt,^e out of the iron-smelting furnace,^f saying, 'Obey my voice, and do all the things that I command you; and you will become my people and I will be your God,^g **5** so that I may fulfill the oath that I swore to your forefathers, to give them the land flowing with milk and honey,^h as it is this day.'""

And I answered: "Amen,* O Jehovah."

6 Jehovah then said to me: "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem: 'Hear the words of this covenant, and carry them out. **7** For I solemnly admonished your forefathers in the day I brought them out of the land of Egypt and to this day, admonishing them again and again:* "Obey my voice."ⁱ **8** But they did not listen or incline their ear; instead, each kept stubbornly following his own wicked heart.^j So I brought on them all

11:2 *Apparently addressed to Jeremiah. 11:5 *Or "So be it." 11:7 *Lit., "rising up early and admonishing."

CHAP. 10

a Jer 51:34

b Isa 10:22

c Ps 79:6, 7
Jer 8:16
La 2:22

CHAP. 11

d De 27:26
De 28:15

e Ex 24:3

f Ex 13:3
De 4:20

g Le 26:3, 12

h Ge 15:18
Ex 3:8
Le 20:24
De 6:3i Jer 7:13
Jer 25:4
Jer 35:15j Isa 65:2
Jer 7:24, 26
Eze 20:8
Zec 7:11, 12

Second Col.

a Jg 2:11, 17
1Sa 8:8
2Ki 22:17b 2Ch 28:22,
23c De 31:16
2Ki 17:6, 7
Ho 6:7d 2Ki 22:16
Jer 6:19
Eze 7:5e Isa 1:15
Jer 14:12
Eze 8:18
Mic 3:4f De 32:37, 38
Jer 2:28

g Jer 7:9, 10

h Jer 7:16
Jer 14:11

the words of this covenant that I commanded them to do, but they refused to carry them out."

9 Jehovah then said to me: "There is a conspiracy among the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. **10** They have returned to the errors of their forefathers of old, who refused to obey my words.^a They too have followed other gods and have served them.^b The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant that I made with their forefathers.^c **11** Therefore this is what Jehovah says, 'Here I am bringing on them a calamity^d that they will not be able to escape. When they call to me for help, I will not listen to them.^e

12 Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go to the gods to which they are making sacrifices* and call for help,^f but these will by no means save them in the time of their calamity. **13** For your gods have become as many as your cities, O Judah, and you have set up as many altars to the shameful thing* as there are streets in Jerusalem, altars to make sacrifices to Ba'al.^g

14 "As for you,* do not pray in behalf of this people. Do not cry out in their behalf or offer a prayer for them,^h for I will not be listening when they call out to me because of their calamity.

15 What right does my beloved one have to be in my house when so many have carried out evil schemes?

With holy flesh* will they avert the calamity when it comes upon you?

Will you exult at that time?

16 Jehovah once called you a thriving olive tree,

11:12 *Or "sacrificial smoke." 11:13 *Or "the shameful god." 11:14 *That is, Jeremiah. 11:15 *That is, sacrifices made in the temple.

Beautiful with fine fruit.
With a great roaring sound,
he has set her on fire,
And they have broken its
branches.

17 “Jehovah of armies, your Planter,^a has declared that a calamity will come upon you because of the evil committed by the house of Israel and the house of Judah, who have offended me by making sacrifices to Ba'al.”^b

18 Jehovah informed me so that I would know;
At that time you caused me to see what they were doing.

19 I was like a docile lamb being brought to the slaughter. I did not know that they were scheming against me:^c

“Let us destroy the tree with its fruit,
And let us cut him off from the land of the living,
So that his name may be remembered no more.”

20 But Jehovah of armies judges with righteousness; He examines the innermost thoughts* and the heart.^d Let me see your vengeance on them,
For to you I have committed my legal case.

21 Therefore this is what Jehovah says against the men of An'a-thoth^e who are seeking to take your life* and who say: “You must not prophesy in the name of Jehovah,^f or you will die by our hand”; **22** therefore this is what Jehovah of armies says: “Here I am going to call them to account. The young men will die by the sword,^g and their sons and their daughters will die by famine.^h **23** Not even a remnant will be left of them, be-

11:20; 12:2 *Or “deepest emotions.” Lit., “kidneys.” 11:21 *Or “seeking your soul.”

CHAP. 11

a Isa 5:2
Jer 2:21

b Jer 19:5, 15

c Jer 18:18

d 1Ch 28:9
Jer 17:10
Jer 20:12

e Jer 1:1

f Isa 30:10
Am 2:12
Am 7:16

g 2Ch 36:17
La 2:21

h Jer 18:21

Second Col.

a Jos 21:8, 18

CHAP. 12

b Ge 18:25

c Job 12:6
Job 21:7
Ps 73:3
Jer 5:28

d Isa 29:13

e Ps 139:1, 2

f 2Ki 20:3
Ps 17:3
Jer 11:20

g Jer 14:6
Jer 23:10

h Jer 4:13

cause I will bring calamity on the men of An'a-thoth^a in the year of their being called to account.”

12 You are righteous,
O Jehovah,^b when I make my complaint to you,

When I speak about matters of justice with you.

But why is the way of wicked ones successful,^c
And why are the treacherous unworried?

2 You planted them, and they have taken root.
They have grown and produced fruit.

You are on their lips, but far away from their innermost thoughts.^{*d}

3 But you know me well,
O Jehovah,^e you see me;
You have examined my heart and found it in union with you.^f

Single them out like sheep for slaughtering,
And set them apart for the day of killing.

4 How much longer should the land wither away
And the vegetation of every field dry up?^g

Because of the evil of those dwelling in it,
The beasts and the birds have been swept away.

For they have said: “He does not see what will happen to us.”

5 If you get tired running with footmen,
How can you run a race against horses?^h

Even if you are confident in the land of peace,
How will you fare among the dense thickets along the Jordan?

6 For even your own brothers, the household of your own father,

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

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Humans Can Have Success Only With Jehovah’s Guidance”:** (10 min.)
 Jer 10:2-5, 14, 15—The gods of the nations are false gods (*it-1* 555)
 Jer 10:6, 7, 10-13—Unlike the gods of the nations, Jehovah is the only true God (*w04* 10/1 11 ¶10)
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 Jer 11:10—Why did Jeremiah include the northern ten-tribe kingdom in his pronouncements, even though Samaria had fallen in 740 B.C.E.? (*w07* 3/15 9 ¶2)

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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

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- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *kr* pp. 98-99, chap. 10 ¶1-7
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JEREMIAH 8-11 | Humans Can Have Success Only With Jehovah’s Guidance



10:21-23

Humans have neither the ability nor the right to govern themselves

- ◀ Because Israel’s spiritual shepherds did not inquire of Jehovah, the people were scattered
- ▶ Those who followed Jehovah’s direction had peace, happiness, and prosperity



March 20-26

Treasures From God's Word

Jeremiah 10:2-5, 14, 15—The gods of the nations are false gods

Reference: *it-1* 555.

Pillars, poles, or other devices were also placed in the cultivated fields to scare off the animals, and to such a mute inanimate “scarecrow of a cucumber field” the prophet Jeremiah likened the images made by the idolatrous nations.—**Jeremiah 10:5**.

Jeremiah 10:6, 7, 10-13—Unlike the gods of the nations, Jehovah is the only true God

Reference: *w04* 10/1 11 **paragraph 10**.

Whether you look at the heavens above or gaze at creation right here on earth, the evidence of a Creator is clear. (Jeremiah 10:12) We should heartily agree with the heavenly creatures who cry out: “You are worthy, Jehovah, even our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because you created all things.” (Revelation 4:11) Yet, many scientists fail to see the evidence with ‘the eyes of their heart,’ even though they may marvel at the design in things they see with the eyes of their body. (Ephesians 1:18) We can illustrate it this way: To admire the beauty and design in nature and deny the existence of a Great Designer is as illogical as admiring a magnificent painting and at the same time denying the existence of the artist who transformed a blank canvas into a masterpiece. Little wonder that those who refuse to believe in God are pronounced “inexcusable”!

Jeremiah 10:21-23—Humans cannot have success without Jehovah's guidance

Reference: *w15* 9/1 15 **paragraph 1**.

The miserable conditions on earth today are clear evidence that human rulership has utterly failed. Not only have worldly governments failed to bring peace, security, and happiness but they have also brought the earth to the brink of ruin. This reinforces the fundamental truth stated in the Bible: “It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step.” (Jeremiah 10:23) Only God's way of ruling can guarantee lasting peace, happiness, and prosperity to mankind, because that is God's purpose.—Isaiah 45:18.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Jeremiah 9:24—What type of boasting and pride are good?

Reference: *w13 1/15 20* **paragraph 16**.

Taking pride in the right things can be good. For example, we should always feel proud to be Jehovah's Witnesses. (**Jeremiah 9:24**) A healthy measure of self-respect helps us to make good decisions and to avoid lowering our moral standards. But placing too high a value on our own views or position can distance us from Jehovah.—**Psalm 138:6**; **Romans 12:3**.

Jeremiah 11:10—Why did Jeremiah include the northern ten-tribe kingdom in his pronouncements, even though Samaria had fallen in 740 B.C.E.?

Reference: *w07 3/15 9* **paragraph 2**.

This was because the destruction of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E. was an expression of Jehovah's judgment on the entire nation of Israel, not on Judah alone. (**Ezekiel 9:9, 10**) Moreover, after its fall, the interests of the ten-tribe kingdom continued to be represented in Jerusalem, since the messages of God's prophets continued to include the Israelites.

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

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INVITATION

Centuries ago, a divinely inspired prophet foretold the time when man would be at peace with nature. Illness would be eliminated. Families would build their own houses, plant their own fields, and enjoy the fruits of their labors.—Isaiah 11:6-9; 35:5, 6; 65:21-23.

Jesus performed powerful works that showed on a small scale how such prophecies will become a global reality. His death was fundamental to the future elimination of every cause for sorrow. So important was Jesus' death to the fulfillment of God's purposes that Jesus commanded his disciples to commemorate it.—Luke 22:19, 20.

This year, according to the Bible's lunar calendar, the anniversary of Jesus' death falls on **Tuesday, April 11**. Jehovah's Witnesses invite you to meet with them on that date to listen to an explanation of how his death can benefit you and your family.

This free event will be held at the time and place shown below.

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www.jw.org
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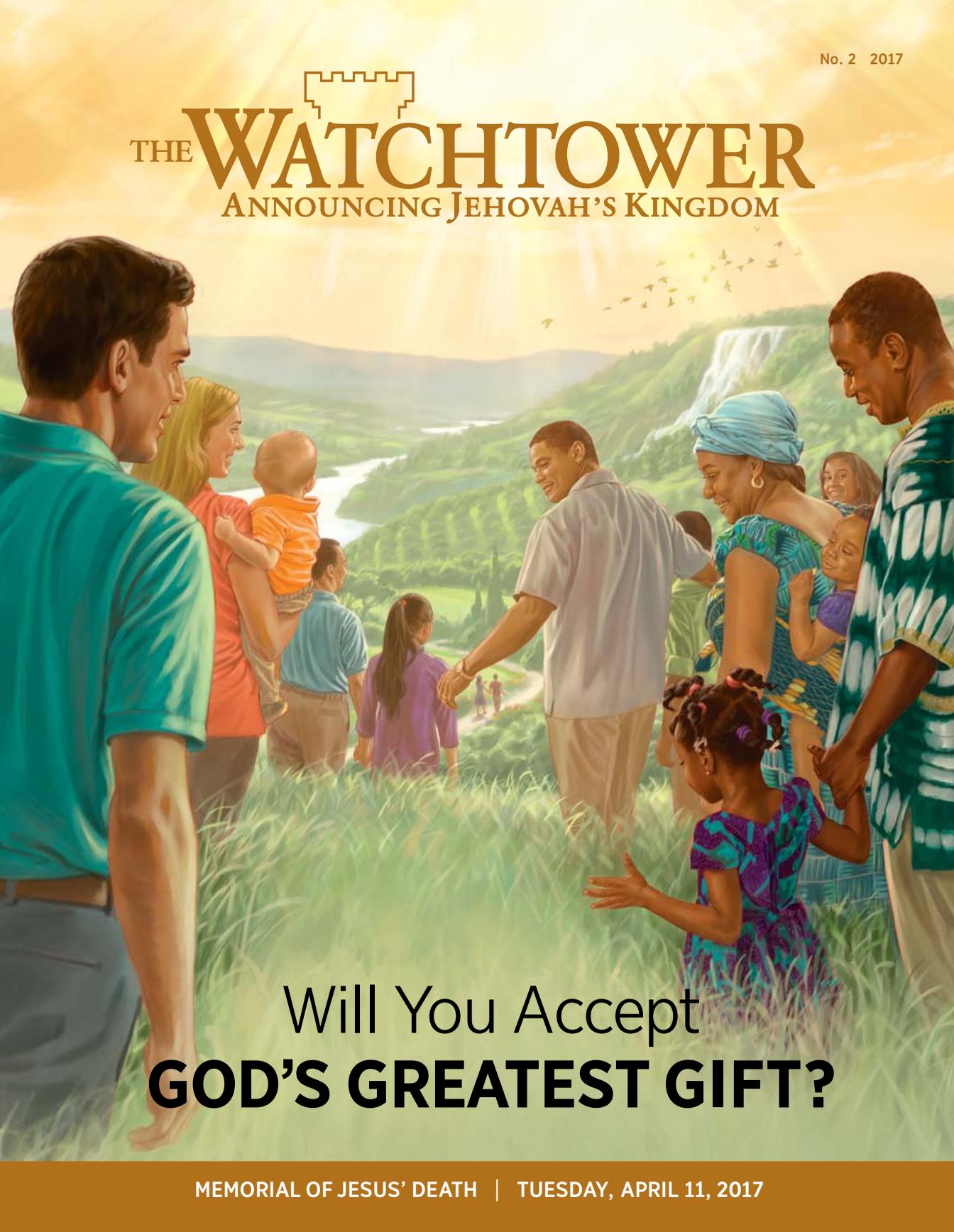
You are also invited to a special Bible talk entitled
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THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

Will You Accept
GOD'S GREATEST GIFT?



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What is the greatest gift that God has ever given us?

The Bible says: “God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son.”—John 3:16.

This issue of *The Watchtower* discusses why God sent Jesus to earth to die for us and how we can show appreciation for that gift.

WILL YOU ACCEPT GOD’S GREATEST GIFT?

- 3 A Gift Unlike Any Other
- 4 God’s Greatest Gift—Why So Precious?
- 6 How Will You Respond to God’s Greatest Gift?

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

8 IS CELIBACY A REQUIREMENT FOR CHRISTIAN MINISTERS?

10 ESCAPE FROM SLAVERY—THEN AND NOW

13 ENJOY THE BENEFITS OF GIVING

16 WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?



Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study?

Visit www.jw.org, or send your request to one of the addresses below.

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For a complete list of worldwide addresses, see www.jw.org/en/contact.



How Is Jesus’ Sacrifice “a Ransom for Many”?

(Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > BIBLE QUESTIONS ANSWERED)

THE **WATCHTOWER**[®]
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH’S KINGDOM

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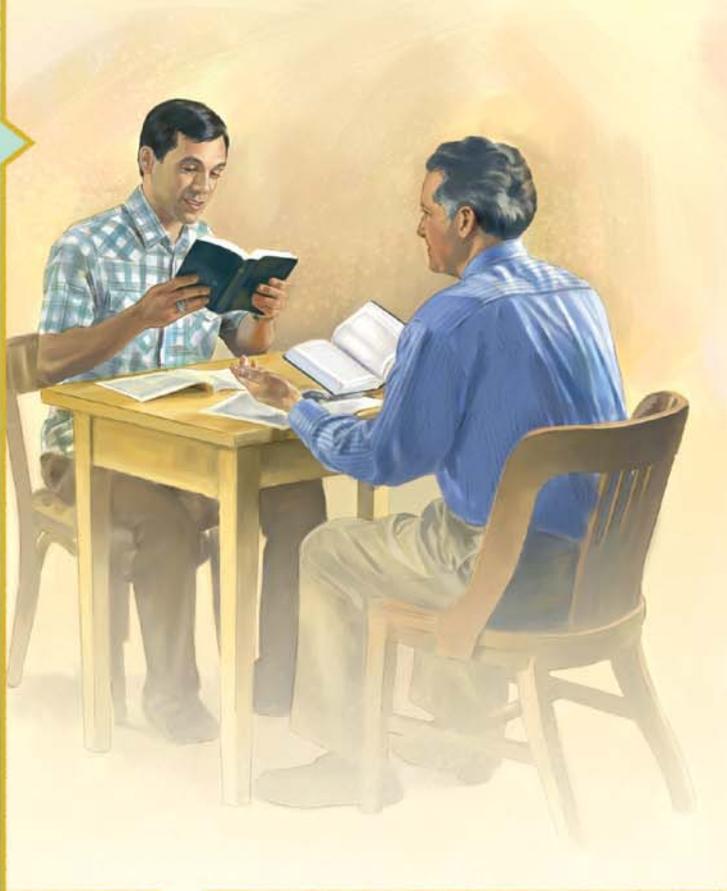
Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

THIS MAGAZINE, *The Watchtower*, honors Jehovah God, the Ruler of the universe. It comforts people with the good news that God’s heavenly Kingdom will soon end all wickedness and transform the earth into a paradise. It promotes faith in Jesus Christ, who died so that we might gain everlasting life and who is now ruling as King of God’s Kingdom. This magazine has been published continuously since 1879 and is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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God speaks to us through the Bible.
2 Timothy 3:16



People everywhere are listening.
Matthew 28:19

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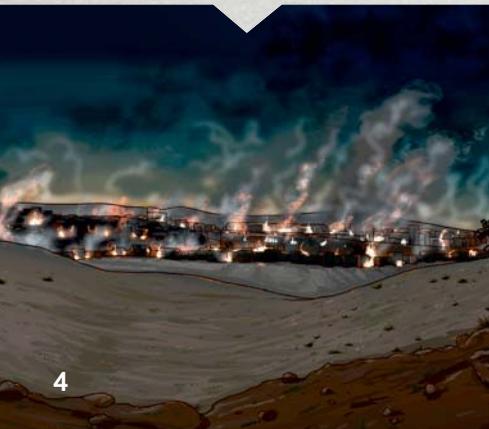
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Making Known the Kingdom Truth

(Acts 20:20, 21)

F C/E Dm11 C F/C Cma7 F/C

There was a time we did not know The way a

C F/C G/B Am7 C/G F Fma7 G/F

Chris - tian ought to go. Then Je - ho - vah sent the

Em7 Am7 Dm11 Dm7 C/E F F/G Em/G Dm/G F/G

light, His King - dom truth so clear and bright. Our Fa - ther's

C F/C Cma7 F/C C F/C G/B

will we then could see To serve the grand The - oc - ra -

Making Known the Kingdom Truth

Am7 C/G F Fma7 G/F Em7 Am7

cy, To de - clare Je - ho - vah's fame, And help to

R.H.

Detailed description: This system contains the first two lines of music. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat and a 4/4 time signature. The lyrics are: 'cy, To de - clare Je - ho - vah's fame, And help to'. The bass staff includes a 'R.H.' marking above the first measure. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff.

Dm11 C/E F F/G Em/G Dm/G C Cma7 Fma7 F6 G7/F

glo - ri - fy his ho - ly name. We wit - ness now to all we

Detailed description: This system contains the third and fourth lines of music. The treble staff continues the melody with lyrics: 'glo - ri - fy his ho - ly name. We wit - ness now to all we'. The bass staff provides harmonic support. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff.

Em7 C/E Am Em/G F Fma7 G7sus4 G7 G#° E/G#

meet, From door to door and on the street. We take the

Detailed description: This system contains the fifth and sixth lines of music. The treble staff continues the melody with lyrics: 'meet, From door to door and on the street. We take the'. The bass staff provides harmonic support. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff.

Am Em/G Am/G Fma7 Dm/F F Em7 C/E F

time to help them see; We teach the truth that sets us

Detailed description: This system contains the seventh and eighth lines of music. The treble staff continues the melody with lyrics: 'time to help them see; We teach the truth that sets us'. The bass staff provides harmonic support. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff.

Making Known the Kingdom Truth

F/G Em/G Dm/G F/G C F/C Cma7 F/C

free. And as we strive in ev-'ry land Je-ho-vah's

C F/C G/B Am7 C/G F Fma7 G/F

wor-ship to ex-pand, May we serve our God as

Em7 Am7 Dm11 C/E F F/G Em/G Dm/G C

one Un-til Je-ho-vah says the work is done.

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Jehovah gave Adam and Eve many good things.
Genesis 1:28



God said not to eat from one of the trees.
Genesis 2:16, 17

What Was Life Like in Paradise?

Jehovah made the first woman, Eve, and gave her to Adam to be his wife.
—Genesis 2:21, 22.

Jehovah created them with minds and bodies that were perfect, without any flaw.

Their Paradise home was the garden of Eden—a place of great beauty with a river and fruit trees and animals.

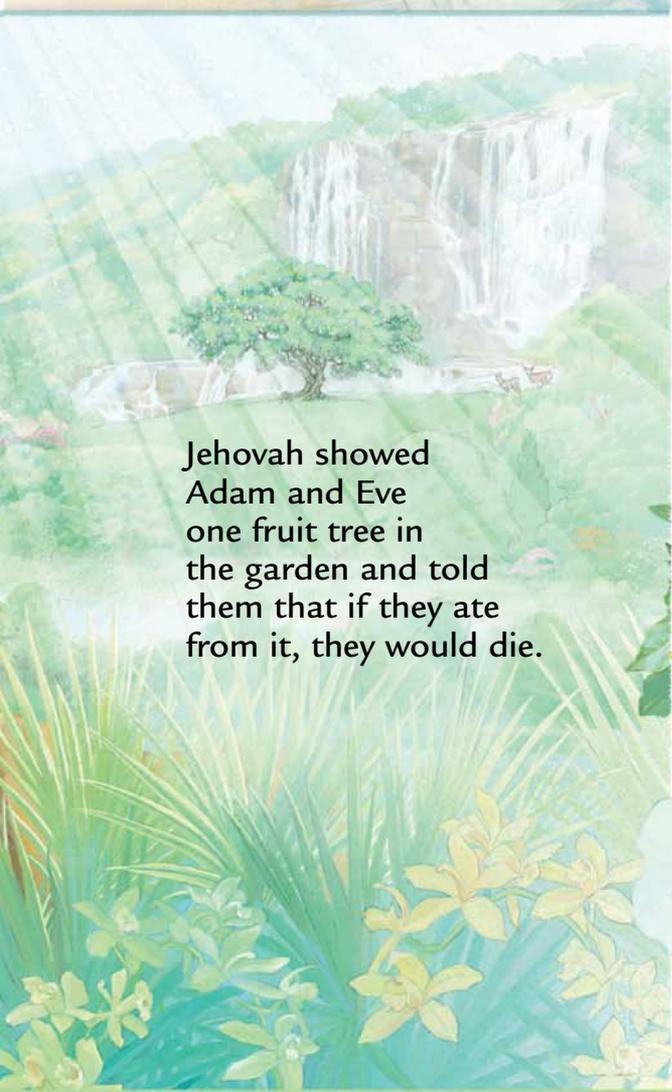
Jehovah spoke to them; he taught them. If they listened to him, they would live forever in Paradise on earth.

Jehovah gave Adam and Eve many good things.

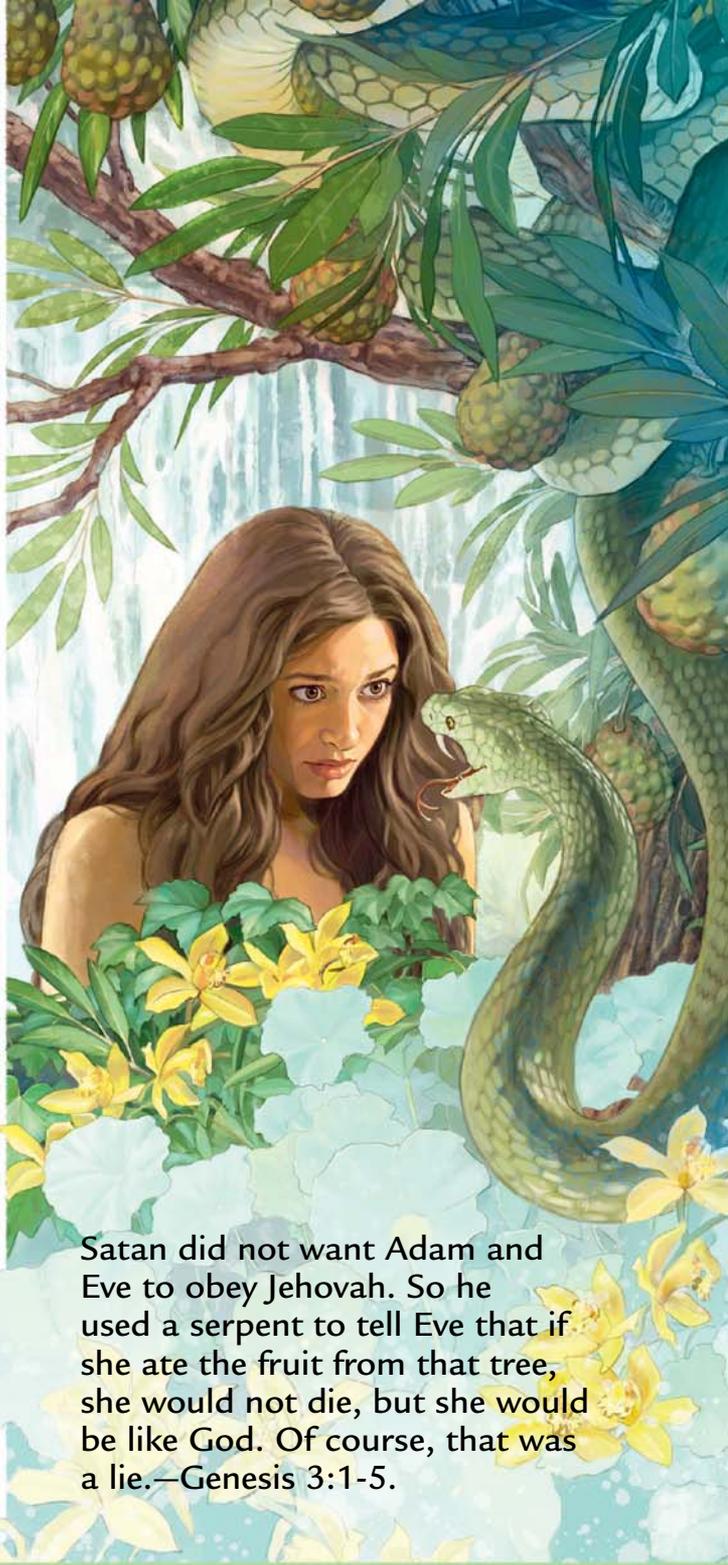
Genesis 1:28



One of the angels rebelled against God. That wicked angel is Satan the Devil.



Jehovah showed Adam and Eve one fruit tree in the garden and told them that if they ate from it, they would die.



Satan did not want Adam and Eve to obey Jehovah. So he used a serpent to tell Eve that if she ate the fruit from that tree, she would not die, but she would be like God. Of course, that was a lie.—Genesis 3:1-5.

God said not to eat from one of the trees.
Genesis 2:16, 17



Left:
The Brooklyn Bethel
family celebrated
its last Christmas
in 1926

Right:
People notice that
Jehovah's Witnesses
are different

SECTION 3

KINGDOM STANDARDS

Seeking God's
Righteousness



YOU wave to your neighbor as you walk by. Lately, you have noticed that he has been observing you and your family. He waves back and then beckons you over. He says: “May I just ask a question? What is it that makes you people so different?” “What do you mean?” you ask. “Well,” he says, “you are Jehovah’s Witnesses, right? You are not like anybody else. You do not fit in with the other religions—you don’t celebrate the holidays, and you don’t get involved in politics and wars. None of you smoke. And your family seems to have high

moral standards. What is it that makes you people so different in so many ways?”

You know that the answer comes down to one thing: We live under the rulership of God’s Kingdom. As King, Jesus is ever refining us. He is helping us to walk in his footsteps and thus to stand out as different in this wicked world. In this section, we will see how the Messianic Kingdom has been refining God’s people spiritually, morally, and organizationally—all to Jehovah’s glory.

10

The King Refines His People Spiritually

FOCUS OF CHAPTER

Why and how Jesus has refined and cleansed his followers spiritually

1-3. What did Jesus do when he found that the temple was being polluted?

4, 5. (a) How were Jesus' anointed followers refined and cleansed from 1914 to early 1919? (b) Was that the end of the refining and cleansing for God's people? Explain.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Visiting Jews had to use certain currency to pay the annual temple tax, and the money changers charged a fee to convert coins into the required currency. Additionally, visitors might have needed to buy animals for offerings. Jesus called the merchants "robbers," likely because they charged exorbitant prices or fees for their services.

[2] Jehovah's people on earth worship him in the earthly courtyards of his great spiritual temple.

JESUS had great respect for the temple in Jerusalem because he knew what it stood for. The temple had long been the center of true worship on earth. But that worship—the worship of the holy God, Jehovah—must be clean and pure. Imagine, then, how Jesus felt when he came to the temple on Nisan 10, 33 C.E., and found that it was being polluted. What was happening?—**Read Matthew 21:12, 13.**

² In the Court of the Gentiles, greedy merchants and money changers were taking unfair advantage of the worshippers who came to present offerings to Jehovah.^[1] Jesus "threw out all those selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers." (Compare Nehemiah 13:7-9.) He denounced those selfish men for turning his Father's house into "a cave of robbers." Jesus thereby showed his respect for the temple and what it represented. The worship of his Father had to be kept clean!

³ Centuries later, after he was installed as Messianic King, Jesus again cleansed a temple—one that involves all today who want to worship Jehovah acceptably. What temple did he then cleanse?

Cleansing "the Sons of Levi"

⁴ As we saw in Chapter 2 of this publication, after being enthroned in 1914, Jesus came with his Father to inspect the *spiritual* temple—the arrangement for pure worship.^[2] As a result of that inspection, the King saw that anointed Christians, "the sons of Levi," needed some refining and cleansing. (Mal. 3:1-3) From 1914 to early 1919, the Refiner, Jehovah, allowed his people to go through various trials and hardships that served to refine and cleanse them. Happily, those anointed ones emerged from the fiery tests in a cleaner condition, eager to show their support for the Messianic King!

⁵ Was that the end of the refining and cleansing for God’s people? No. Throughout the last days, Jehovah by means of the Messianic King has continued to help his followers to be clean so that they might remain in the spiritual temple. In the next two chapters, we will see how he has refined them morally and organizationally. First, though, let us discuss *spiritual* cleansing. It is faith-strengthening to consider what Jesus has done—both in clearly recognizable ways and behind the scenes—to help his followers to be spiritually clean.

“Keep Yourselves Clean”

⁶ What is spiritual cleanness? To answer that, let us examine the words that Jehovah spoke to Jewish exiles as they were about to leave Babylon in the sixth century B.C.E. (**Read Isaiah 52:11.**) Those exiles were returning home to Jerusalem primarily to rebuild the temple and restore true worship. (Ezra 1:2-4) Jehovah wanted his people to leave behind all traces of Babylon’s religion. Notice that he gave them a series of commands: “Touch nothing unclean,” “get out from the midst of her,” and “keep yourselves clean.” Jehovah’s pure worship must not be tainted by false worship. What, then, may we conclude? Spiritual cleanness involves keeping free of the teachings and practices of false religion.

⁷ Shortly after he was installed as King, Jesus put in place a clearly recognizable channel through which he has helped his followers to be spiritually clean. That channel is the faithful and discreet slave, which Christ appointed in 1919. (Matt. 24:45) By that year, the Bible Students had already cleansed themselves of many false religious teachings. Still, they needed some further cleansing spiritually. Through his faithful slave, Christ has gradually enlightened his followers about various observances and practices that they needed to abandon. (Prov. 4:18) Let us consider some examples of this.

Should Christians Celebrate Christmas?

⁸ The Bible Students long acknowledged that Christmas has pagan roots and that Jesus was not born on December 25. *Zion’s Watch Tower* of December 1881 stated: “Millions were brought into the church from Paganism. But the *change* was mostly in *name*, for the pagan priests became christian priests and the pagan holidays came to be called by christian names—Christmas being one of these holidays.” In 1883, under the title “When Was Jesus Born?” the

-
6. How do Jehovah’s commands to the Jewish exiles help us to understand what spiritual cleanness involves?
 7. Through what channel has Jesus helped his followers to be spiritually clean?
 8. What had the Bible Students long acknowledged about Christmas, yet what did they not see clearly?

Gratitude for Divine Patience

(2 Peter 3:15)

C F6 Em/G G7 C

Great One God, thou - sand years, Je - ho - vah, from your bound - less point in might, of view,

C G7/D C/E Am G/D D7 G

You Are like a day when they are through. You have made known your love of right. You have made known your love of right.

R.H.

G/B Gm/E A7 Dm

Bad - ness pre - vails on earth be - low, Time now pro - ceeds to your great day;

G7 Em/G G/F C/E Am Dm6/F E

Caus - ing us pain, as you well know. It will ar - rive with - out de - lay.

Gratitude for Divine Patience

Am E7/B Am/C Am Am/E E7 Am

You are not slow, as men may con - tend;
 Though all trans - gres - sion you do re - sent,

F G9/F C/E G7/D C G/B G C

Your time is near for pa - tience to end.
 Your heart is glad when sin - ners re - pent.

Chorus
 C G7/D C/E F A7/E Dm/F D7/F# G G/F

We look a - head with hope re - newed,

C/E C F6 F Dm7 G7 C

Prais - ing your name in deep grat - i - tude.

JANUARY 2017

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
FEBRUARY 27–APRIL 2, 2017



COVER IMAGE:

CHILE

Publishers in the south of Chile follow a river that winds through lush forests and snowcapped peaks of the Andes Mountains. They participate in a preaching campaign to reach as many remote homes as possible while the weather is favorable.

PUBLISHERS

76,296

BIBLE STUDIES

64,178

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE
(2015)

174,761

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27 WEEK OF MARCH 27–APRIL 2 “These Things Entrust to Faithful Men”

As one generation replaces another, younger ones take on the work of older ones. This article discusses how both young and old can successfully make the transition.

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Daily Walking With Jehovah

(Micah 6:8)

F/C F C7 Bb/D Bb Bb/F F Dm

Hand in hand with our dear Fa - ther, We would
In this day of Sa - tan's an - ger, As the
Help for us God has pro - vid - ed Through his

Am Dm Bb Bb/C C7 F F/C

hum - bly walk with him each day. Oh, how
end is draw - ing ev - er near, We are
spir - it and his writ - ten Word, Through the

F C7 Bb/D Bb Bb/F F Dm

un - de - served his kind - ness That he
faced with op - po - si - tion That could
Chris - tian con - gre - ga - tion, Through as -

Am Dm Bb Bb/C C7 F F/A

grants to those who seek his way! By his
make us turn a - way in fear. But Je -
sur - ance that our prayer is heard. As we're

Daily Walking With Jehovah

C/Bb Bb C7 Bb/F F F/C

love God made pro - vi - sion; We may
 ho - vah gives pro - tec - tion; Close to
 walk - ing with Je - ho - vah, He will

G/B G7/B C/G G7 C7 F F/A

free - ly take his hand. So we
 him we want to stay, That we
 help us do what's right. He will

C/Bb Bb C7 Bb/F F F/A A+5

make our ded - i - ca - tion; With Je -
 might for ev - er serve him. Love him
 help us to be loy - al And walk

Bb Bb/C C7 F

ho - vah we take our stand.
 loy - al - ly, nev - er stray.
 mod - est - ly in his sight.



You Can Remain Modest Under Test

“Walk in modesty with your God!”—MIC. 6:8.

SONGS: 48, 80

HOW CAN MODESTY HELP US TO . . .

succeed in our assignments?

cope with criticism or praise?

make decisions in the face of uncertainty?

SOMETIME during King Jeroboam’s reign, Jehovah sent a certain prophet from Judah to deliver a scathing judgment message to that apostate king of Israel. The humble prophet faithfully delivered God’s message, and Jehovah protected his servant from Jeroboam’s violent wrath.—1 Ki. 13:1-10.

² On his way home, the prophet unexpectedly met up with an old man from nearby Bethel. The man claimed to be a prophet of Jehovah. He deceived the younger man into disobeying Jehovah’s strict instructions ‘not to eat bread or drink water in Israel’ and ‘not to return by the way that he came.’ Jehovah was not pleased. Later, on his way home, a lion came across Jehovah’s prophet on the road and killed him.—1 Ki. 13:11-24.

³ Why did the once modest prophet presumptuously go along with that deceitful older man? The Bible does not say. But it could be that he completely forgot that he was supposed to be ‘walking modestly with God.’ **(Read Micah 6:8.)** In the Bible, walking with Jehovah conveys the idea of

1-3. What did the unnamed prophet from Judah fail to do, and what was the result? (See opening picture.)

trusting in him, supporting his sovereignty, and following his lead. A modest person is keenly aware that he can and must be in constant communication with his loving and almighty Father. The prophet could have asked Jehovah to clarify His instructions, but the Scriptures do not say that he did so. At times, we too have to make difficult decisions, and the right course to take may not be clear. Modestly seeking Jehovah's guidance helps us to avoid making grave mistakes.

⁴ In the preceding article, we learned why modesty is still important for Christians and what displaying it involves. What situations, though, might put our modesty to the test? And how can we cultivate this desirable quality, so that we remain modest even under pressure? To answer these questions, we will consider three common situations that can put modesty to the test, and we will see how we can act wisely in each case.—Prov. 11:2.

WHEN OUR CIRCUMSTANCES CHANGE

⁵ Changes in personal circumstances or of assignments can test our modesty. When David asked 80-year-old Barzillai to accept an invitation to live in the royal court, Barzillai must have been greatly honored. Accepting David's invitation would have allowed him to continue to enjoy the king's association. Yet, Barzillai declined. Why? Because of his advanced age, he told David that he did not want to become a burden to the king. So Barzillai recommended that Chimham, presumably one of his sons, take his place.—2 Sam. 19:31-37.

⁶ Modesty helped Barzillai to make a reasonable decision. He did not turn down David's invitation because he felt inadequate to shoulder responsibility or because he wanted to enjoy a quiet life in retirement. He simply recognized and accepted his changing circumstances and his limitations. He did not want to take on more than he reasonably could. **(Read Galatians 6:4, 5.)** If we focus on position, prominence, or recognition, it only provides a breeding ground for egotism, competition, and eventual disappointment. (Gal. 5:26) Modesty, however, helps all to focus their collective abilities and efforts on bringing glory to God and doing what is best to help others.—1 Cor. 10:31.

⁷ Greater responsibility often comes with greater authority, and that can test our modesty. When Nehemiah heard about the plight of the people in Jerusalem, he fervently prayed to Jehovah. (Neh. 1:4, 11) Jehovah's blessing came when King Artaxerxes appointed Nehemiah governor of the region. Yet, despite his prominent position, personal wealth, and considerable authority, Nehemiah never relied on his own experience or abilities. He kept walking with God. He continually sought Jehovah's direction by consulting God's Law. (Neh. 8:1, 8, 9) Nehemiah did not dominate over others; rather, he served them at his own expense.—Neh. 5:14-19.

⁸ Nehemiah's example demonstrates how modesty can help us to keep from becoming self-reliant when we receive a change of assignment or additional responsibility. Relying just on his own

4. What will we learn in this article?

5, 6. How did Barzillai manifest modesty?

7, 8. How can modesty help us to avoid becoming self-reliant?



Does our dress and grooming show respect for Jehovah and others, or does it show a lack of modesty?
(See paragraph 12)

experience, an elder could begin to care for congregation matters without first approaching Jehovah in prayer. Others might make a decision first and then pray for Jehovah to bless their decision. Is that being modest, however? A modest person will always remember his place before God and his role in God's arrangement. Our abilities are not the important thing. Especially when we are faced with a familiar situation or problem, we have to be careful not to rely on ourselves. **(Read Proverbs 3:5, 6.)** As members of God's household, we learn to think in terms of fulfilling roles in a family or as part of a congregation rather than achieving a rank or climbing a corporate ladder.—1 Tim. 3:15.

RECEIVING CRITICISM OR PRAISE

⁹ It can be hard to control our feelings when we have to put up with un-

9, 10. How can modesty help us to cope with unfair criticism?

fair criticism. Hannah often cried because Peninnah, her rival, relentlessly taunted her. Hannah's husband loved her, but she was barren. Later, when she was praying at the tabernacle, High Priest Eli mistakenly accused her of being drunk. Imagine that! Yet, despite all of this, modest Hannah kept herself restrained and was respectful in her response to Eli. Her touching prayer is preserved in the Bible. It is full of expressions of faith, praise, and appreciation.—1 Sam. 1:5-7, 12-16; 2:1-10.

¹⁰ Modesty can also help us to “keep conquering the evil with the good.” (Rom. 12:21) Life in Satan's system is often unfair, and we need to fight against becoming incensed by the conduct of evildoers. (Ps. 37:1) When problems arise between spiritual brothers or sisters, the pain can be much deeper. A modest person will imitate Jesus. “When he was being insulted,” the Bible says, “he did not insult in return . . . ,

but he entrusted himself to the One who judges righteously.” (1 Pet. 2:23) Jesus knew that vengeance belongs to Jehovah. (Rom. 12:19) Christians are likewise admonished to be humble and not to “pay back injury for injury.”—1 Pet. 3:8, 9.

¹¹ Excessive flattery or praise can test our modesty as well. Consider Esther’s excellent response to a surprising turn of events. She was strikingly beautiful and was pampered with luxurious treatments for a year. She was in daily association with many young women from all over the Persian Empire who were competing for the attention of the king. Yet, she remained respectful and composed. She did not become vain or immodest even after the king selected her to be his queen.—Esther 2:9, 12, 15, 17.

¹² Modesty helps us always to dress, groom, and comport ourselves in a decent and respectable manner. We realize that we win people’s hearts, not by boasting or drawing undue attention to ourselves, but by displaying a “quiet and mild spirit.” (Read 1 Peter 3:3, 4; Jer. 9:23, 24) Vain sentiments in our hearts will eventually show up in our actions. We might drop hints, for example, implying that we enjoy special privileges, possess inside information, or have special relationships with responsible brothers. Or we might explain things in such a way that only we get the credit for ideas or accomplishments that others also contributed to. Again,

11, 12. (a) How can modesty help us to deal with flattery or excessive praise? (b) How should modesty govern our choice of dress and grooming as well as our behavior?

Jesus set a wonderful example. A good portion of what he said was either a quotation from or an allusion to the Hebrew Scriptures. He modestly spoke that way so that his hearers would know that what he said was coming from Jehovah and was not the product of his own intellect or wisdom.—John 8:28.

COPING WITH UNCERTAINTY

¹³ Another test of our modesty might come when decisions are made. While the apostle Paul was staying in Caesarea, the prophet Agabus told him that if he continued on to Jerusalem, he would end up being arrested. He might even be killed. Fearing the worst, the brothers begged Paul not to go. However, Paul would not be dissuaded. He was neither overconfident nor paralyzed with fear. He trusted in Jehovah completely and was prepared to see his assignment through, wherever Jehovah would allow it to take him. On hearing this, the brothers modestly stopped objecting to Paul’s decision to go on to Jerusalem.—Acts 21:10-14.

¹⁴ Modesty can also help us to make good decisions even when we cannot fully know or control how things will turn out. As an example, if we enter some feature of the full-time service, what will happen to us if we get sick? What if our aging parents need our help? How will we look after ourselves in our old age? No amount of prayer or research will reveal a complete answer to questions like these. (Eccl. 8:16, 17) Our confidence in Jehovah will help us not only to acknowledge but also to

13, 14. How can modesty help us to make better decisions?

accept our limitations. After doing research, consulting others, and praying for guidance, we need to take steps in the direction that God's spirit is leading us. **(Read Ecclesiastes 11:4-6.)** That gives Jehovah something to bless, or he can gently redirect our goals.—Prov. 16: 3, 9.

CULTIVATING MODESTY

¹⁵ Since modesty has so many advantages, how can we cultivate it to an even greater degree? Let us consider four ways. First, we will develop greater modesty and reverence for Jehovah by appreciatively reflecting on his vastly superior qualities and position. (Isa. 8: 13) Remember, we are walking with Almighty God, not an angel or a man. That realization will move us 'to humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God.'—1 Pet. 5:6.

¹⁶ Second, meditating on Jehovah's love will help us to cultivate modesty. The apostle Paul wrote that Jehovah surrounded the less honorable parts of the human body "with greater honor." (1 Cor. 12:23, 24) Similarly, Jehovah cares for each one of us despite our limitations. He does not compare us with others or withhold his love when we make mistakes. Because of Jehovah's love, we can feel secure wherever we serve in his household.

¹⁷ Third, appreciation for our role in Jehovah's service will grow as we, in imitation of our God, look for the good in

others. Instead of seeking the spotlight or always stepping in to take over, we will more often find ourselves modestly seeking the advice of others and yielding to their suggestions. (Prov. 13:10) We will rejoice with them when they receive privileges. And we will praise Jehovah as we see how he blesses "the entire association of [our] brothers in the world."—1 Pet. 5:9.

¹⁸ Fourth, our personal sense of decency and respectability will be refined when we train our conscience according to Bible principles. We will develop good judgment by modestly learning to see things from Jehovah's viewpoint. Through regular study, prayer, and application of what we learn, we can gradually strengthen our conscience. (1 Tim. 1:5) We learn to put others first. If we do our part, Jehovah promises that he will 'finish our training,' helping us to develop modesty and other godly qualities.—1 Pet. 5:10.

¹⁹ A single presumptuous act cost the unnamed prophet from Judah his life and his good standing with God. It is possible, though, to remain modest under test. Faithful ones before us and modest ones today have proved that it can be done. The longer we walk with Jehovah, the deeper our modesty should become. (Prov. 8:13) Whatever our place right now, walking with Jehovah is in itself a wonderful and matchless privilege. Cherish that honor, and continue to do your best to walk modestly with Jehovah forever.

15. How does reflecting on Jehovah help to keep us humble?

16. How will meditating on God's love motivate us to be modest?

17. What effect will learning to look for the good in others have on us?

18. How can we train our conscience to have a godly sense of decency?

19. What will help us to remain modest forever?

"Taste and See That Jehovah Is Good"

(Psalm 34:8)

D F#m7 Gma7 G6 G/A A7

Our ser - vice to God we cher - ish; We
For those in the full - time ser - vice, Rich

D F#m7 G G/A A9

val - ue our priv - 'lege to preach. We
bless - ings and trea - sures a - bound. By

F#m7 G F#m7 G

buy out the time and give God our best, For
trust - ing in God to care for our needs, In

F#m7 Bm7 Em7 A7 Dsus4 D

man - y we still need to reach.
all things con - tent - ment is found.

"Taste and See That Jehovah Is Good"

Chorus

G D/F# Em7 A7 D

God's Word in - vites us: 'Come taste and see—

G A/G D/F# E/G# Asus4 A

See that Je - ho - vah is good.'

G D/F# A#° F#+5 F#7 Bm Bm/A

God - ly de - vo - tion brings great - est gain,

G Asus4 A7 Dsus4 D

We know we've done all we could.

