

- Song 74 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “Jehovah Blesses Humility and Punishes Arrogance”: (10 min.)

Jer 50:4-7—A remnant of repentant, humbled Israelites would be released from captivity and would return to Zion

Jer 50:29-32—Babylon would be destroyed for acting arrogantly against Jehovah (*it-1* 54)

Jer 50:38, 39—Babylon would never again be inhabited (*jr* 161 ¶15; *w98* 4/1 20 ¶20)

- Digging for Spiritual Gems: (8 min.)

Jer 49:1, 2—Why were the Ammonites rebuked by Jehovah? (*it-1* 94 ¶6)

Jer 49:17, 18—How did Edom become like Sodom and Gomorrah, and why? (*jr* 163 ¶18; *ip-2* 351 ¶6)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- Bible Reading: (4 min. or less) Jer 50:1-10

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- Initial Call: (2 min. or less) *T-32*—Lay the groundwork for a return visit.
- Return Visit: (4 min. or less) *T-32*—Discuss “To Think About.” Lay the groundwork for the next visit.
- Talk: (6 min. or less) *w15* 3/15 17-18—Theme: In Recent Years, Why Have Our Publications Seldom Mentioned Types and Antitypes?

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 41
- Remove the Rafter: (15 min.) Play the video *Remove the Rafter* (video category THE BIBLE). Then discuss the following questions: How did the brother demonstrate a proud, critical attitude? What helped him to adjust his thinking? How did he benefit?
- Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *kr* chap. 13 ¶11-23
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 148 and Prayer

JEREMIAH 49-50 | Jehovah Blesses Humility and Punishes Arrogance

50:4-7

- Repentant Israelites would weep for joy when Jehovah released them from captivity
- They would acknowledge their covenant with him anew and make the long journey back to Jerusalem to restore true worship



50:29, 39

- Arrogant Babylon would not go unpunished for its excessive cruelty to Jehovah’s people
- As prophesied, Babylon became an uninhabited wasteland



Join in the Kingdom Song!

(Psalm 98:1)

1. This is a song, a happy song of vict'ry;
It magnifies the One who is supreme.
The words give hope and prompt all to be loyal.
Come sing with us; enjoy its Kingdom theme:

(CHORUS)

*'Come worship God Before his throne.
His Son is King; Let's make it known!
Come learn this song, this song about the Kingdom;
Bow down to God, and praise his holy name.'*

2. With this new song, we advertise the Kingdom.
Christ Jesus rules; the earth is his domain.
And as foretold, there is a newborn nation:
The Kingdom heirs, who welcome Jesus' reign:

(Chorus)

3. This Kingdom song, all humble ones can master.
The words are clear, their message warm and bright.
In all the earth, a multitude have learned it,
And they in turn still others now invite:

(Chorus)

Jeremiah 49-50

- 49** For the Am'mon-ites, this is what Jehovah says:
“Does Israel have no sons?
Does he have no heir?
Why has Mal'cam taken possession of Gad?
And why are his people living in Israel's cities?”
- 2** ““Therefore look! the days are coming,' declares Jehovah,
‘When I will cause the alarm signal of war to be heard against Rab'bah of the Am'mon-ites. She will become a desolate mound, And her dependent towns will be set on fire.’
‘And Israel will take possession of those who dispossessed him,' says Jehovah.
- 3** ‘Wail, O Hesh'bon, for A'i has been destroyed!
Cry out, O dependent towns of Rab'bah.
Put on sackcloth.
Wail and rove about among the stone pens,
For Mal'cam will go into exile,
Together with his priests and his princes.
- 4** Why do you brag about the valleys,
About your flowing plain, O unfaithful daughter,
Who trusts in her treasures
And who says: “Who will come against me?””

- ⁵ “Here I am bringing something dreadful on you,’
declares the Sovereign Lord, Jehovah of
armies,
‘From all those around you.
You will be dispersed in every direction,
And no one will gather those who flee.’”
- ⁶ “But afterward I will gather the captives of the
Am'mon-ites,’ declares Jehovah.”
- ⁷ For E'dom, this is what Jehovah of armies says:
“Is there no longer any wisdom in Te'man?
Has good advice perished from those with
understanding?
Has their wisdom rotted?
- ⁸ Flee, turn back!
Go and dwell down in the depths, O inhabitants
of De'dan!
For I will bring disaster on E'sau
When the time comes to turn my attention to
him.
- ⁹ If grape gatherers came in to you,
Would they not leave some behind for gleaning?
If thieves came in by night,
They would cause only as much ruin as they
wanted.
- ¹⁰ But I will strip E'sau bare.
I will uncover his places of concealment,

So that he cannot hide.

His children and his brothers and his neighbors
will all be destroyed,
And he will be no more.

¹¹ Leave your fatherless children,
And I will preserve them alive,
And your widows will trust in me.”

¹² For this is what Jehovah says: “Look! If those not sentenced to drink the cup must drink it, should you be left completely unpunished? You will not be left unpunished, for you must drink it.”

¹³ “For by myself I have sworn,” declares Jehovah, “that Boz'rah will become an object of horror, a reproach, a devastation, and a curse; and all her cities will become perpetual ruins.”

¹⁴ I have heard a report from Jehovah,
An envoy has been sent among the nations,
saying:
“Gather yourselves together and come against
her;
Prepare for battle.”

¹⁵ “For look! I have made you insignificant among the
nations,
Despised among men.

¹⁶ The shuddering you caused has deceived you,
The presumptuousness of your heart,

O you who reside in the retreats of the crag,
Occupying the highest hill.
Although you build your nest high up like an
eagle,
I will bring you down from there,” declares
Jehovah.

¹⁷ “And E'dom must become an object of horror.
Everyone passing along by her will stare in horror and
whistle on account of all her plagues. ¹⁸ Just as in the
overthrow of Sod'om and Go-mor'rah and of their
neighboring towns,” Jehovah says, “no one will dwell
there, and no man will settle there.

¹⁹ “Look! Someone will come up against the secure
pastures like a lion from the dense thickets along the
Jordan, but in a moment I will make him run away from
her. And I will appoint over her the chosen one. For
who is like me, and who will challenge me? What
shepherd can stand before me? ²⁰ Therefore hear, O
men, the decision that Jehovah has made against
E'dom and what he has thought out against the
inhabitants of Te'man:

Surely the little ones of the flock will be dragged
away.

He will make their dwelling place desolate
because of them.

²¹ At the sound of their falling, the earth has quaked.
There is an outcry!

The sound has been heard as far as the Red Sea.

²² Look! Just like an eagle he will ascend and swoop down,
And he will spread out his wings over Boz'rah.
In that day the heart of the warriors of E'dom
Will become like the heart of a woman in childbirth.”

²³ For Damascus:
“Ha'math and Ar'pad have been put to shame,
For they have heard a bad report.
They melt in fear.
There is anxiety in the sea that cannot be calmed.

²⁴ Damascus has lost courage.
She has turned to flee, but panic has seized her.
Distress and pain have taken hold of her,
Like a woman who is giving birth.

²⁵ How is it that the city of praise has not been abandoned,
The town of exultation?

²⁶ For her young men will fall in her public squares,
And all the soldiers will perish in that day,”
declares Jehovah of armies.

²⁷ “I will set the wall of Damascus on fire,

And it will consume the fortified towers of Ben-ha'dad.”

²⁸ For Ke'dar and the kingdoms of Ha'zor, which King Neb-u-chad-nez'zar of Babylon struck down, this is what Jehovah says:

“Rise up, go up to Ke'dar,
And destroy the sons of the East.

²⁹ Their tents and their flocks will be taken,
Their tent cloths and all their goods.
Their camels will be carried off,
And they will cry out to them, “Terror is all
around!”

³⁰ “Flee, go far away!
Go and dwell down in the depths, O inhabitants
of Ha'zor,” declares Jehovah.
“For King Neb-u-chad-nez'zar of Babylon has
devised a strategy against you,
And he has thought out a plan against you.”

³¹ “Rise up, go up against the nation that is at peace,
Dwelling in security!” declares Jehovah.
“It has no doors or bars; they live in isolation.

³² Their camels will become plunder,
And their abundant livestock a spoil.
I will scatter them to every wind,
Those who clip their hair at the temples,

And I will bring their disaster from every direction,” declares Jehovah.

³³ “And Ha'zor will become a lair of jackals,
A perpetual desolation.
No one will dwell there,
And no man will settle in her.”

³⁴ This is the word of Jehovah that came to Jeremiah the prophet concerning E'lam in the beginning of the reign of King Zed-e-ki'ah of Judah: ³⁵ “This is what Jehovah of armies says, ‘Here I am breaking the bow of E'lam, the source of their mightiness. ³⁶ I will bring in on E'lam the four winds from the four extremities of the heavens, and I will scatter them to all these winds. There will not be a nation to which the dispersed ones of E'lam will not go.’”

³⁷ “I will shatter the E'lam-ites before their enemies and before those seeking to take their life; and I will bring calamity on them, my burning anger,” declares Jehovah. “And I will send the sword after them until I have exterminated them.”

³⁸ “And I will set my throne in E'lam, and I will destroy from there the king and the princes,” declares Jehovah.

³⁹ “But in the final part of the days, I will gather the captives of E'lam,” declares Jehovah.

50 The word that Jehovah spoke concerning Babylon, concerning the land of the Chal-de'ans, through Jeremiah the prophet:

² “Declare it among the nations and proclaim it.
Raise a signal and proclaim it.
Do not hide anything!
Say, ‘Babylon has been captured.
Bel has been put to shame.
Mer'o-dach has become terrified.
Her images have been put to shame.
Her disgusting idols have become terrified.’

³ For a nation has come against her from the north.
It makes her land an object of horror;
No one is dwelling in her.
Both man and beast have taken flight;
They have gone away.”

⁴ “In those days and at that time,” declares Jehovah, “the people of Israel and the people of Judah will come together. They will weep as they walk, and together they will seek Jehovah their God. ⁵ They will ask the way to Zion, with their faces turned in that direction, saying, ‘Come and let us join ourselves to Jehovah in an everlasting covenant that will not be forgotten.’ ⁶ My people have become a flock of lost sheep. Their own shepherds caused them to stray. They led them away onto the mountains, roaming from mountain to hill. They have forgotten their resting-place. ⁷ All those

finding them have devoured them, and their enemies have said, 'We are not guilty, because they sinned against Jehovah, against the dwelling place of righteousness and the hope of their forefathers, Jehovah.'”

⁸ “Flee out of the midst of Babylon,
Go out of the land of the Chal-de'ans,
And be like the leading animals before the flock.

⁹ For here I am raising up and bringing against
Babylon
An assembly of great nations from the land of
the north.
They will come against her in battle formation;
From there she will be captured.
Their arrows are like those of a warrior
Causing bereavement of children;
They do not come back without results.

¹⁰ Chal-de'a will become a spoil.
All those taking spoil from her will be fully
satisfied,” declares Jehovah.

¹¹ “For you kept rejoicing, you kept exulting
When pillaging my own inheritance.
For you kept pawing like a heifer in the grass,
And you kept neighing like stallions.

¹² Your mother has been put to shame.

She who gave birth to you has been
disappointed.

Look! She is the least of the nations,
A waterless wilderness and a desert.

¹³ Because of the indignation of Jehovah she will not
be inhabited;

She will become utterly desolate.

Anyone passing by Babylon will stare in horror
And whistle because of all her plagues.

¹⁴ Come against Babylon in battle formation on every
side,

All you who are bending the bow.

Shoot at her, spare no arrow,

For it is against Jehovah that she has sinned.

¹⁵ Shout a war cry against her on every side.

She has surrendered.

Her pillars have fallen, her walls are torn down,

For it is the vengeance of Jehovah.

Take your vengeance on her.

Do to her just as she has done.

¹⁶ Cut off the sower from Babylon

And the one handling the sickle in harvesttime.

Because of the cruel sword, each will return to
his own people,

Each one will flee to his own land.

¹⁷ “The people of Israel are scattered sheep. Lions have dispersed them. First the king of As-syr'i-a devoured them; then King Neb-u-chad-nez'zar of Babylon gnawed on their bones. ¹⁸ Therefore this is what Jehovah of armies, the God of Israel, says: ‘Here I will deal with the king of Babylon and with his land in the same way that I dealt with the king of As-syr'i-a.

¹⁹ And I will bring Israel back to his pasture, and he will graze on Car'mel and on Ba'shan, and on the mountains of E'phra-im and of Gil'e-ad he will be satisfied.’”

²⁰ “In those days and at that time,” declares Jehovah,
“Israel’s guilt will be searched for,
But there will be none,
And the sins of Judah will not be found,
For I will forgive those whom I let remain.”

²¹ “Go up against the land of Mer-a-tha'im and
against the inhabitants of Pe'kod.
Let them be massacred and completely
destroyed,” declares Jehovah.
“Do all that I have commanded you.

²² There is the sound of war in the land,
A great catastrophe.

²³ How the forge hammer of all the earth has been
cut down and broken!

How Babylon has become an object of horror
among the nations!

²⁴ I have laid a snare for you, and you have been
caught, O Babylon,
And you did not know it.
You were found and captured,
For it was Jehovah whom you opposed.

²⁵ Jehovah has opened his storehouse,
And he brings out the weapons of his
indignation.
For the Sovereign Lord, Jehovah of armies, has
a work
In the land of the Chal-de'ans.

²⁶ Come against her from distant places.
Open up her granaries.
Pile her up like heaps of grain.
Destroy her completely.
May she have no one left.

²⁷ Massacre all her young bulls;
Let them go down to the slaughter.
Woe to them, for their day has come,
Their time of reckoning!

²⁸ There is the sound of those fleeing,
Those escaping from the land of Babylon,
To declare in Zion the vengeance of Jehovah our
God,

The vengeance for his temple.

- ²⁹ Summon archers against Babylon,
All who are bending the bow.
Camp all around her; let no one escape.
Repay her according to her activity.
Do to her just as she has done.
For she has acted arrogantly against Jehovah,
Against the Holy One of Israel.
- ³⁰ So her young men will fall in her public squares,
And all her soldiers will perish in that day,”
declares Jehovah.
- ³¹ “Look! I am against you, O defiant one,” declares
the Sovereign Lord, Jehovah of armies,
“For your day must come, the time that I will call
you to account.
- ³² You, O defiant one, will stumble and fall,
With no one to raise you up.
And I will set your cities on fire,
And it will consume everything around you.”
- ³³ This is what Jehovah of armies says:
“The people of Israel and Judah are oppressed,
And all those taking them captive have held onto
them.
They have refused to let them go.
- ³⁴ But their Repurchaser is strong.
Jehovah of armies is his name.

He will surely plead their legal case,
In order to give rest to the land
And to bring agitation to the inhabitants of
Babylon.”

- 35 “There is a sword against the Chal-de'ans,”
declares Jehovah,
“Against the inhabitants of Babylon and against
her princes and against her wise ones.
- 36 There is a sword against the empty talkers, and
they will act foolishly.
There is a sword against her warriors, and they
will become terrified.
- 37 There is a sword against their horses and their war
chariots,
And against all the mixed populations in her
midst,
And they will become like women.
There is a sword against her treasures, and they
will be plundered.
- 38 There is a devastation on her waters, and they will
be dried up.
For it is a land of graven images,
And because of their frightful visions they keep
acting with madness.
- 39 Therefore, the desert creatures will dwell with the
howling animals,

And in her the ostriches will dwell.
She will never again be inhabited,
Nor will she be a place of residence throughout
all generations.”

⁴⁰ “Just as with God’s overthrow of Sod’om and Go-mor’rah and of their neighboring towns,” declares Jehovah, “no one will dwell there, and no man will settle there.

⁴¹ Look! A people is coming in from the north;
A great nation and grand kings will be raised up
From the remotest parts of the earth.

⁴² Bow and javelin they wield.
They are cruel and will show no mercy.
Their sound is like the roaring sea,
As they ride on their horses.
Like one man, they line up in battle formation
against you, O daughter of Babylon.

⁴³ The king of Babylon has heard the report about
them,
And his hands drop down.
Anguish seizes him,
Pain like that of a woman giving birth.

⁴⁴ “Look! Someone will come up against the secure pastures like a lion from the dense thickets along the Jordan, but in a moment I will make them run away from her. And I will appoint over her the chosen one.

For who is like me, and who will challenge me? What shepherd can stand before me? ⁴⁵ Therefore hear, O men, the decision that Jehovah has made against Babylon and what he has thought out against the land of the Chal-de'ans.

Surely the little ones of the flock will be dragged away.

He will make their dwelling place desolate because of them.

⁴⁶ At the sound of Babylon's capture, the earth will quake,
And an outcry will be heard among the nations."

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Jer 50:29-32—Babylon would be destroyed for acting arrogantly against Jehovah (*it-1* 54)

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- Digging for Spiritual Gems: (8 min.)

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- They would acknowledge their covenant with him anew and make the long journey back to Jerusalem to restore true worship



50:29, 39

- Arrogant Babylon would not go unpunished for its excessive cruelty to Jehovah’s people
- As prophesied, Babylon became an uninhabited wasteland



May 29–June 4

Living as Christians

Jeremiah 50:29-32—Babylon would be destroyed for acting arrogantly against Jehovah

Reference: it-1 54.

When God’s people were unfaithful he allowed their adversaries to plunder and defeat them. (**Psalm 89:42; Lamentations 1:5, 7, 10, 17; 2:17; 4:12**) The enemy, however, drew wrong conclusions from these victories, taking credit for themselves and praising their gods or feeling that they would not be called to account for the way they treated Jehovah’s people. (**Deuteronomy 32:27; Jeremiah 50:7**) Jehovah was therefore obliged to humble these proud and boasting adversaries (**Isaiah 1:24; 26:11; 59:18; Nahum 1:2**); and this he did for his holy name’s sake.—**Isaiah 64:2; Ezekiel 36:21-24**.

Jeremiah 50:38, 39—Babylon would never again be inhabited

Reference: jr 161 **paragraph 15**.

Jeremiah also prophesied about the end of Egypt’s conqueror, Babylon itself. A century before it occurred, Jeremiah accurately predicted the sudden fall of Babylon. How? God’s prophet foretold that her protective waters would be “dried up,” and her mighty men would not fight.

(**Jeremiah 50:38; 51:30**) These prophecies were fulfilled in detail when the Medes and the Persians diverted the Euphrates River, waded across its bed, and then entered the city, taking the Babylonians by surprise. You would likely consider equally significant the declaration that the city would become an uninhabited wasteland. (**Jeremiah 50:39; 51:26**) To this day, the desolate condition of once-mighty Babylon testifies to the accuracy of divine prophecy.

Reference: w98 4/1 20 **paragraph 20**.

Isaiah never lived to see Babylon become uninhabited. But true to prophecy, Babylon eventually became mere “piles of stones.” (Jeremiah 51:37) According to Hebrew scholar Jerome (born in the fourth century C.E.), by his day Babylon was a hunting ground in which “beasts of every type” roamed, and it remains desolate to this day. Any restoration of Babylon as a tourist attraction might lure visitors, but Babylon’s “progeny and posterity” are gone forever, as Isaiah foretold.—Isaiah 14:22.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Jeremiah 49:1, 2—Why were the Ammonites rebuked by Jehovah?

Reference: it-1 94 **paragraph 6**.

It appears likely that, following the deporting of the people of the northern kingdom of Israel by Tiglath-pileser III and

one of his successors (**2 Kings 15:29; 17:6**, the Ammonites began occupying the territory of the tribe of Gad, for which they had unsuccessfully fought against Jephthah. (Compare **Psalm 83:4-8**.) Thus, in Jehovah's prophetic message through Jeremiah, the Ammonites are rebuked for seizing the Gadites' inheritance and are warned of a coming desolation upon Ammon and its god Malcam (Milcom). (**Jeremiah 49:1-5**) The Ammonites went yet further by sending marauder bands to harass Judah under King Jehoiakim during the closing years of the Judean kingdom.—**2 Kings 24:2, 3**.

Jeremiah 49:17, 18—How did Edom become like Sodom and Gomorrah, and why?

Reference: jr 163 **paragraph 18**.

Another prophecy was also fulfilled in the first century C.E. God foretold through Jeremiah that Edom was among the nations that would suffer from the Babylonian invasion. (**Jeremiah 25:15-17, 21; 27:1-7**) But the divine word went beyond that. Edom would become like Sodom and Gomorrah. You know what that meant—uninhabited for all time, ceasing to exist. (**Jeremiah 49:7-10, 17, 18**) That is exactly what happened. Where do you think the names Edom and Edomites can be found today? On any modern maps? No. They are mainly found in books of ancient and Bible history or on maps reflecting that time. Flavius

Josephus recounts that the Edomites were forced to accept Judaism in the second century B.C.E. Thereafter, with the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., they ceased to exist as a distinct people.

Reference: ip-2 351 **paragraph 6.**

Why, though, is Jehovah returning from a battle in Edom? The Edomites, perpetrators of an animosity that began with their forefather, Esau, are age-old enemies of God's covenant people. (Genesis 25:24-34; Numbers 20:14-21) The depth of Edom's hatred for Judah became particularly evident during the desolation of Jerusalem when the Edomites cheered on the Babylonian soldiers. (Psalm 137:7) Jehovah takes such animosity as an offense against him personally. No wonder that he determined to unleash his sword of vengeance against Edom!—Isaiah 34:5-15; Jeremiah 49:7-22.

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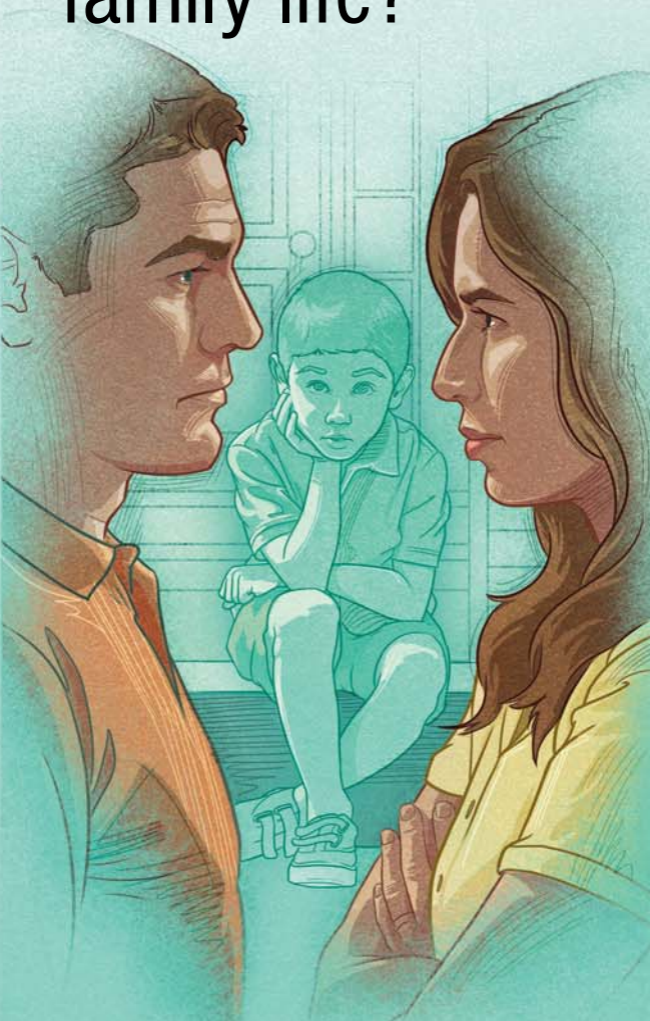


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What is the key to happy family life?



Do you think it is . . .

- love?
- money?
- something else?

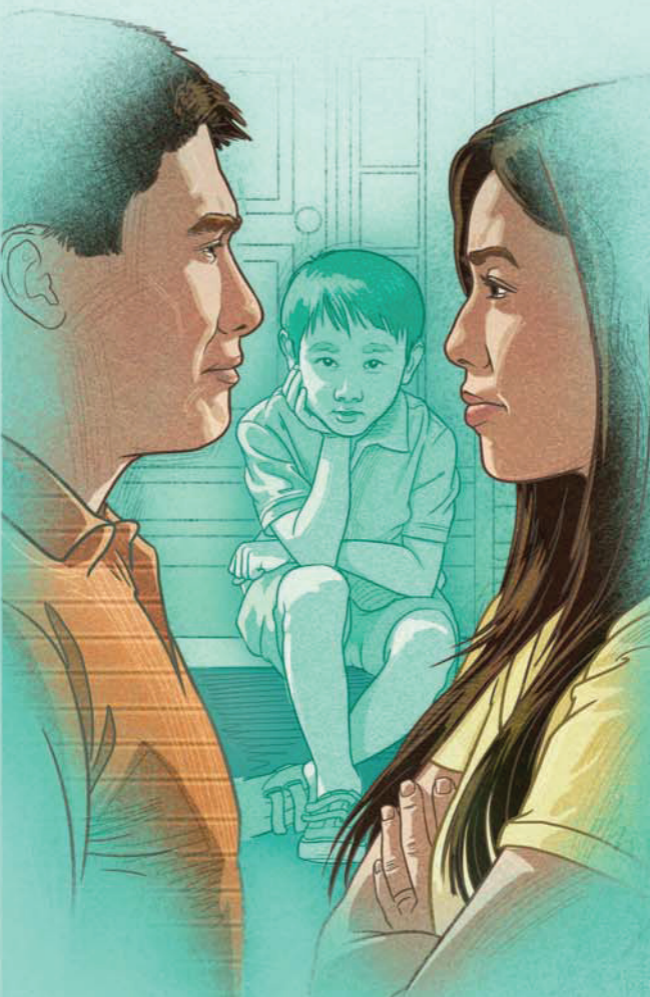
Ni nini siri ya kuwa na familia yenye furaha?



Je, unafikiri ni . . .

- upendo?
- pesa?
- jambo lingine?

家庭幸福 主要靠什么？

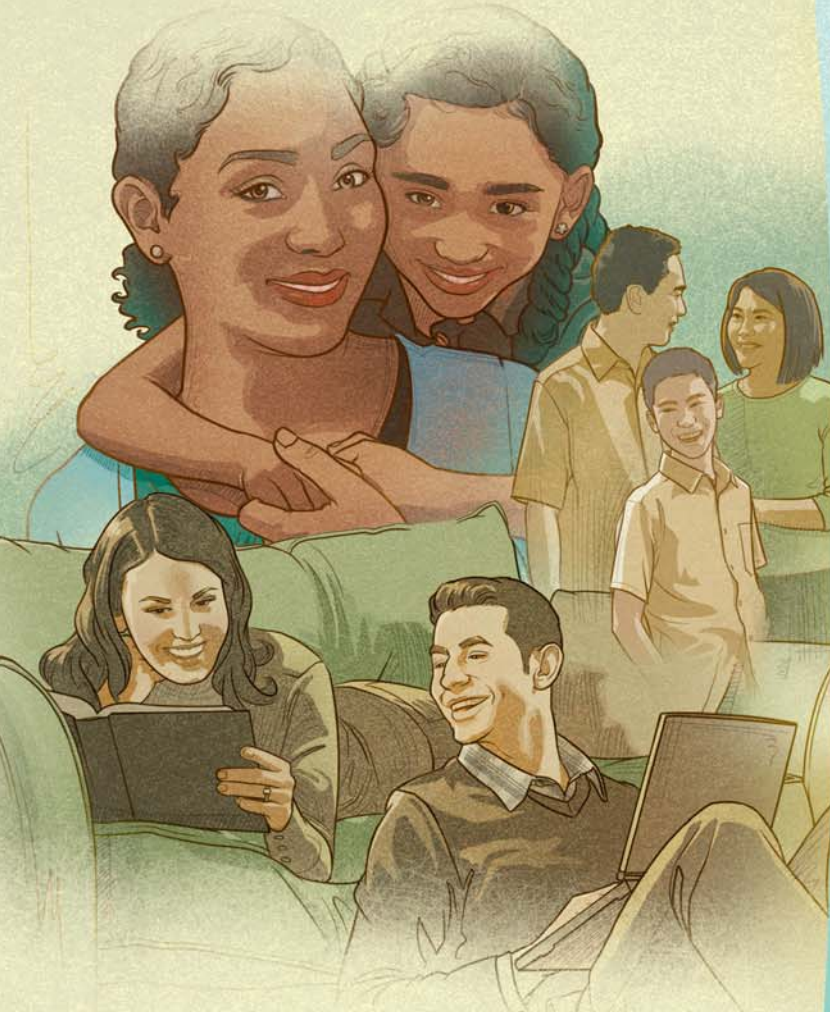


你觉得要靠……

- 爱？
- 金钱？
- 其他？

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

“Happy are those hearing the word of God and keeping it!”—Luke 11:28, *New World Translation*.



WHAT THAT CAN MEAN FOR YOU

- Finding real love.—Ephesians 5:28, 29.
- Enjoying genuine respect.—Ephesians 5:33.
- Having true security.—Mark 10:6-9.

CAN WE REALLY BELIEVE WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS?

Yes, for at least two reasons:

- **God is the Originator of family life.** The Bible says that “every family . . . owes its name” to Jehovah God. (Ephesians 3:14, 15) In other words, the family unit exists because Jehovah created it. Why is that significant?

Consider: If you were enjoying a tasty meal and wanted to learn its ingredients, whom would you ask? Logically, the person who prepared it.

Likewise, to discover the ingredients for a happy family life, we do well to look to Jehovah, the Originator of the family arrangement.—Genesis 2:18-24.

- **God cares about you.** Families are wise to seek Jehovah’s advice, which he provides through his Word. Why? “Because he cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:6, 7) Jehovah has your best interests at heart—and his counsel always works!—Proverbs 3:5, 6; Isaiah 48:17, 18.

If you do not have a Bible, you can read it online at www.jw.org/en
(Go to PUBLICATIONS > BIBLE)

TO THINK ABOUT

How can you be a good husband,
wife, or parent?

The Bible answers that question at
EPHESIANS 5:1, 2 and COLOSSIANS 3:18-21.



TO LEARN MORE WITHOUT COST

Read lesson 9 of this brochure.

Please send me this brochure.

.....
(Indicate which language.)

Discuss the Bible
with Jehovah's Witnesses.

Please send someone to visit me.

You can also request a visit or
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watch the video
*Why Study
the Bible?*



T-32-E
140205

Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry

Talk: In Recent Years, Why Have Our Publications Seldom Mentioned Types and Antitypes?

Reference: w15 3/15 17-18

The Watchtower of September 15, 1950, defined a “type” and an “antitype” this way: “A *type* is an image or representation of something that will come to pass at some future time. The *antitype* is the reality of the thing which the type represents. The type may properly be called a *shadow*; the antitype, the *reality*.”

Many years ago, our publications stated that such faithful men and women as Deborah, Elihu, Jephthah, Job, Rahab, and Rebekah, as well as many others, were really types, or shadows, of either the anointed or the “great crowd.”

(**Revelation 7:9**) For example, Jephthah, Job, and Rebekah were thought to represent the anointed, while Deborah and Rahab were said to foreshadow the great crowd. However, in recent years we have not drawn such comparisons. Why not?

The Scriptures do indicate that some individuals mentioned in the Bible served as types of something greater. As recorded at Galatians 4:21-31, the apostle Paul mentions “a symbolic drama” involving two women. Hagar, Abraham’s slave girl, represented or corresponded to literal Israel, which was bound to Jehovah by the Mosaic Law. But Sarah,

“the free woman,” symbolized God’s wife, the heavenly part of his organization. In his letter to the Hebrews, Paul links king-priest Melchizedek to Jesus, highlighting specific similarities between the two. (**Hebrews 6:20; 7:1-3**) Further, Paul compares Isaiah and his sons to Jesus and his anointed followers. (**Hebrews 2:13, 14**) Paul was writing under inspiration; thus, we gladly accept what he says about these types.

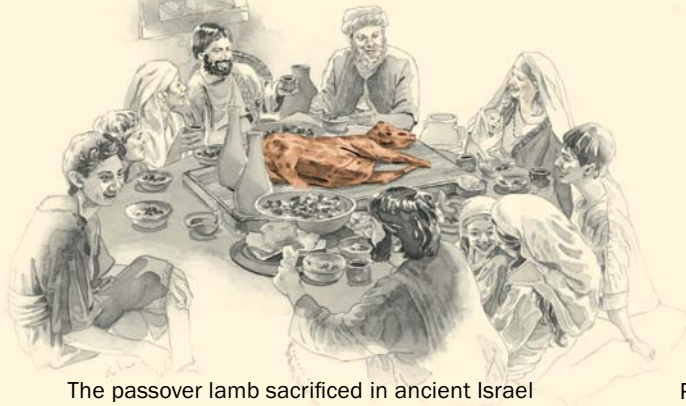
Pictures on page 17:

Type: The passover lamb sacrificed in ancient Israel was a type.—**Numbers 9:2**

Antitype: Paul identified Christ as “our Passover lamb.”—**1 Corinthians 5:7**

However, even where the Bible indicates that someone is a type of someone else, we should not conclude that every detail or incident in the life of the type is a picture of something greater. For example, although Paul tells us that Melchizedek is a type of Jesus, Paul says nothing about the fact that on one occasion Melchizedek brought out bread and wine for Abraham to enjoy after he had defeated four kings. Hence, there is no Scriptural basis for finding a hidden meaning in that incident.—**Genesis 14:1, 18.**

TYPE



The passover lamb sacrificed in ancient Israel was a type.—Num. 9:2

ANTITYPE



Paul identified Christ as “our Passover lamb.”
—1 Cor. 5:7

Some writers in the centuries after Christ's death fell into a trap—they saw types everywhere. Describing the teachings of Origen, Ambrose, and Jerome, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia* explains: “They sought for types, and of course found them, in every incident and event, however trivial, recorded in Scripture. Even the most simple and commonplace circumstance was thought to conceal within itself the most recondite [hidden] truth ... , even in the number of fish caught by the disciples on the night the risen Saviour appeared to them—how much some have tried to make of that number, 153!”

Augustine of Hippo commented extensively on the account where we read that Jesus fed about 5,000 men with five barley loaves and two fish. Since barley was considered to be inferior to wheat, Augustine concluded that the five loaves must represent the five books of Moses (the inferior “barley” representing the supposed inferiority of the “Old Testament”). And the two fish? For some reason he likened them to a king and a priest. Another scholar fond of looking for types and antitypes asserted that Jacob's purchase of Esau's birthright with a bowl of red stew represented Jesus' purchase of the heavenly inheritance for mankind with his red blood!

If such interpretations seem far-fetched, you can understand the dilemma. Humans cannot know which Bible accounts are shadows of things to come and which are not. The clearest

course is this: Where the Scriptures teach that an individual, an event, or an object is typical of something else, we accept it as such. Otherwise, we ought to be reluctant to assign an antitypical application to a certain person or account if there is no specific Scriptural basis for doing so.

How, then, can we benefit from the events and examples found in the Scriptures? At Romans 15:4, we read the apostle Paul's words: "All the things that were written beforehand were written for *our* instruction, so that through *our* endurance and through the comfort from the Scriptures *we* might have hope." Paul was saying that his anointed brothers in the first century could learn powerful lessons from the events that were recorded in the Scriptures.

However, God's people in every generation, whether of the anointed or of the "other sheep," whether living in "the last days" or not, could benefit—and have benefited—from the lessons taught in "all the things that were written beforehand."—John 10:16; **2 Timothy 3:1**.

Instead of viewing most of these accounts as finding their application to only one class, whether the anointed or the great crowd, and to only one time period, God's people of either class and from any time period can apply to themselves many of the lessons the accounts teach us. Thus, for example, we need not limit the application of the book of Job to the experiences the anointed endured during World War I. Many of God's servants, both men and women, both

of the anointed and of the great crowd, have undergone experiences such as Job faced and “have seen the outcome Jehovah gave, that Jehovah is very tender in affection and merciful.”—**James 5:11**.

Consider: In our congregations today, do we not find older women as loyal as Deborah, fine young elders as wise as Elihu, courageous pioneers as zealous as Jephthah, and faithful men and women as patient as Job? How grateful we are that Jehovah preserved the record of “all the things that were written beforehand,” so that “through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope”!

So for these reasons our publications in recent years have emphasized the lessons we can learn from Bible accounts instead of trying to find typical and antitypical patterns and fulfillments.

The End

Please Hear My Prayer

(Psalm 54)

1. Heavenly Father, please hear my song.
You are my God; to you I belong.
Great is your name, beyond all compare.

(CHORUS)

Gracious Jehovah, please hear my prayer.

2. Thank you, O God, for granting this day,
Giving me life, and showing the way.
How I delight in your tender care.

(Chorus)

3. Oh, how I long to do what is right!
Help me, O Lord, to walk in the light.
Give me the strength all burdens to bear.

(Chorus)

- Song 74 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “Jehovah Blesses Humility and Punishes Arrogance”: (10 min.)

Jer 50:4-7—A remnant of repentant, humbled Israelites would be released from captivity and would return to Zion

Jer 50:29-32—Babylon would be destroyed for acting arrogantly against Jehovah (*it-1* 54)

Jer 50:38, 39—Babylon would never again be inhabited (*jr* 161 ¶15; *w98* 4/1 20 ¶20)

- Digging for Spiritual Gems: (8 min.)

Jer 49:1, 2—Why were the Ammonites rebuked by Jehovah? (*it-1* 94 ¶6)

Jer 49:17, 18—How did Edom become like Sodom and Gomorrah, and why? (*jr* 163 ¶18; *ip-2* 351 ¶6)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- Bible Reading: (4 min. or less) Jer 50:1-10

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- Initial Call: (2 min. or less) *T-32*—Lay the groundwork for a return visit.
- Return Visit: (4 min. or less) *T-32*—Discuss “To Think About.” Lay the groundwork for the next visit.
- Talk: (6 min. or less) *w15* 3/15 17-18—Theme: In Recent Years, Why Have Our Publications Seldom Mentioned Types and Antitypes?

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 41
- Remove the Rafter: (15 min.) Play the video *Remove the Rafter* (video category THE BIBLE). Then discuss the following questions: How did the brother demonstrate a proud, critical attitude? What helped him to adjust his thinking? How did he benefit?
- Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *kr* chap. 13 ¶11-23
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 148 and Prayer

JEREMIAH 49-50 | Jehovah Blesses Humility and Punishes Arrogance

50:4-7

- Repentant Israelites would weep for joy when Jehovah released them from captivity
- They would acknowledge their covenant with him anew and make the long journey back to Jerusalem to restore true worship



50:29, 39

- Arrogant Babylon would not go unpunished for its excessive cruelty to Jehovah’s people
- As prophesied, Babylon became an uninhabited wasteland



restrictions allows us as Witnesses today to share a message of hope with others in the communities where we live.”

Seditionists—Or Proclaimers of Truth?

¹¹ During the 1940’s, Jehovah’s Witnesses in **Canada** faced fierce opposition. Hence, in 1946, to publicize the State’s disregard for the right to freedom of worship, our brothers there held a 16-day campaign in which they distributed a tract entitled *Quebec’s Burning Hate for God and Christ and Freedom Is the Shame of All Canada*. This four-page tract exposed in detail the clergy-instigated riots, police brutality, and mob violence committed against our brothers in the province of Quebec. “Lawless arrests of Jehovah’s witnesses continue,” stated the tract. “There are about 800 charges stacked up against Jehovah’s witnesses in Greater Montreal.”

¹² Quebec’s Premier Maurice Duplessis, working hand in glove with Roman Catholic Cardinal Ville-neuve, reacted to the tract by declaring a “war with-

11. What campaign did our brothers in Canada carry out, and why?

12. (a) How did opposers react to the tract campaign? (b) Our brothers were charged with what crime? (See also footnote.)

QUEBEC'S

Burning hate

For God and Christ and Freedom
Is the shame of all Canada

PUBLISHERS
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY
TORONTO, ONT.

FIRST PRINTING:
1,000,000 ENGLISH
500,000 FRENCH
75,000 UKRAINIAN

BEFORE the hot denials and protests and false countercharges boom out from the priestly keepers of Quebec province and whip up an unreasonable frenzy, calmly and soberly and with clear mental faculties reason on the evidence presented in support of the above-headlined indictment. Words in lip service to God and Christ and freedom can be as cheap as the free wind it takes to utter them, but actions speak louder to reasoning minds. As God's Word says, "Let us not love in word, nor in tongue, but in deed." (1 John 3:18, *Catholic Douay Version Bible*) Is your mind reasonable enough to let you listen to loud-speaking deeds that count for more than easy words? Are you willing and unafraid to allow the evidence to be weighed in the just balances of God's true Word, and see whether Quebec is found wanting in love for God and Christ and freedom? The few minutes so spent in reasoning will not make it too late for you to thereafter believe the hot denials and protests and false countercharges booming out of religious Quebec, if you still wish to. But now, pause and consider:

Is it love for God that moves Quebec mobs to tear copies of God's Word, the Bible, to shreds and burn them in the flames? Is it an evidence of love for Christ for these same religious mobs to club and stone Christ's followers, hound them throughout the province, damage their property, and otherwise go on deliriously wild rampages of vandalism against Christ's brethren? Did not Christ

say: "As long as you did it to one of these my least brethren, you did it to me"? (Matthew 25:40, *Douay*) Did the parish priests that have stood by and approvingly witnessed such outrages show regard or disregard for Christian principles? And what about Quebec's law-making bodies that frame mischief by law to "get" those not favored by the ruling elements? and her police forces that allow mobsters to riot unchecked while they arrest the Christian victims, sometimes for no more than distributing Bibles or leaflets with Bible quotations, or even as these followers of Christ walk along the streets or wait for a streetcar? and what of her judges that impose heavy fines and prison sentences against them and heap abusive language upon them, and deliberately follow a malicious policy of again and again postponing cases to tie up tens of thousands of dollars in exorbitant bails and keep hundreds of cases pending? Do such legislators and police and judges of Quebec thereby show their love for freedom? Honestly, do you think such fruits are borne by love, or by hate? "By their fruits you shall know them."—Matthew 7:20, *Douay Version Bible*.

In a torrential downpour all the foregoing violences and injustices rain down daily upon Jehovah's witnesses in Quebec province. Now do we hear you say to yourself, "Ah, Jehovah's witnesses! I thought so. They are always in trouble"? Because they are often persecuted, or because they are an unpopular minority, or because they may have been misrepre-

sented to you by incorrect reports, that is not just cause for a hasty dismissal of the matter. On the contrary, it is all the stronger reason for fair-minded persons to hear out all the evidence.

Were not Christ and early Christians persecuted often? an unpopular minority? and grossly misrepresented by religious liars? If you can identify enemies by their fruits, by the fruits of Jehovah's witnesses you may also know them as true followers of Christ. Both the message they preach and the methods by which they preach it have full backing and foundation in the Bible, as you will soon see if you allow one of Jehovah's witnesses to explain them to you instead of listening to the lying and prejudicial reports of the witnesses' persecutors. But neither space nor subject permit full discussion of these matters here, and such discussion is not at all necessary. It does not alter the issue here at stake. Whether you agree or disagree with the witnesses, you do know for a certainty that it does not show love for God, Christ, Bible principles and freedom to burn Bibles and to mob and stone and falsely arrest and imprison those endeavoring to serve God. Such deeds are the outgrowth of burning hate, and cause the finger of shame to point to Canada.

HATEFUL PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS

A brief sketch of only a few of the instances of persecution of and violence against Jehovah's witnesses in Quebec

out mercy” against the Witnesses. The number of prosecutions quickly doubled from 800 to 1,600. “The police arrested us so many times that we lost count,” said a pioneer sister. Witnesses who were caught distributing the tract were charged with the crime of publishing “seditious libel.”*[2]

¹³ In 1947, Brother Aimé Boucher and his daughters Gisèle, aged 18, and Lucille, aged 11, were the first to be tried in court on charges of sedition. They had distributed *Quebec’s Burning Hate* tracts near their farm in the hills south of Quebec City, but it was hard to picture them as lawless troublemakers. Brother Boucher was a humble and mild man who quietly tended his small farm and occasionally traveled into town by horse and buggy. Still, his family had endured some of the very abuses mentioned in the tract. The trial court judge, who hated Witnesses, refused to admit evidence that proved the Bouchers’ innocence. Instead, he accepted the prosecution’s

*[2] The charge was based on a law enacted in 1606. It allowed a jury to declare a person guilty if they felt that what that one said promoted hostility—even if what was said was true.

13. Who were the first to be tried on charges of sedition, and how did the court rule?

position that the tract stirred up ill will and that thus the Bouchers should be found guilty. So the judge's view boiled down to this: It is a crime to tell the truth! Aimé and Gisèle were convicted of seditious libel, and even young Lucille spent two days locked in jail. The brothers appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada, the land's highest court, which agreed to hear the case.

¹⁴ Meanwhile, our courageous brothers and sisters in Quebec continued to preach the Kingdom message in the face of unrelenting and violent attacks—often with outstanding results. During the four years after the start of the tract campaign in 1946, the number of Witnesses in Quebec increased from 300 to 1,000!*[3]

¹⁵ In June 1950, the full Supreme Court of Canada, made up of nine justices, heard the case of Aimé

*[3] In 1950, 164 full-time ministers served in Quebec—including 63 Gilead graduates who had willingly accepted their assignment despite the fierce opposition that awaited them.

14. How did the brothers in Quebec react during the years of persecution?

15, 16. (a) How did the Supreme Court of Canada rule in the case of the Boucher family? (b) What effect did this victory have on our brothers and on others?

Boucher. Six months later, on December 18, 1950, the Court ruled in our favor. Why? Brother Glen How, a lawyer for the Witnesses, explained that the Court agreed with the argument presented by the defense that “sedition” requires incitement to violence or insurrection against government. The tract, however, “contained no such incitements and was therefore a lawful form of free speech.” Brother How added: “I saw firsthand how Jehovah gave the victory.”*^[4]

¹⁶ The Supreme Court’s decision was, indeed, a resounding victory for God’s Kingdom. It eliminated the basis for all the other 122 pending cases in which Witnesses in Quebec had been charged with seditious libel. Further, the Court’s ruling meant that citizens of Canada and the Commonwealth now had the freedom to voice their concerns over the manner of government. Moreover, this victory broke the back of Quebec’s Church-State attack on the liberties of Jehovah’s Witnesses.[#]^[5]

*^[4] Brother W. Glen How was a courageous attorney who, from 1943 to 2003, skillfully fought hundreds of legal battles for Jehovah’s Witnesses in Canada and abroad.

[#]^[5] For more details of this case, see the article “The Battle Is Not Yours, but God’s” in the April 22, 2000, issue of *Awake!* pages 18-24.

Peddlers—Or Zealous Heralds of God’s Kingdom?

¹⁷ Like the early Christians, Jehovah’s servants today “are not peddlers of the word of God.” (**Read 2 Corinthians 2:17.**) Still, some governments try to control our ministerial activities by means of laws that regulate commerce. Let us consider two of the court cases that ruled on the question of whether Jehovah’s Witnesses are peddlers or are ministers.

¹⁸ **Denmark.** On October 1, 1932, a law took effect that made it illegal to sell printed material without a peddler’s license. Our brothers, however, did not apply for any license. The next day, five publishers spent the day preaching in Roskilde, a town some 20 miles west of Copenhagen, the capital. At day’s end, one of the publishers, August Lehmann, was missing. He had been arrested for selling goods without a license.

¹⁹ On December 19, 1932, August Lehmann appeared in court. He testified that he had called on people to offer Bible literature, but he denied that

17. How do some governments try to control our preaching activities?
18, 19. How did authorities in Denmark try to restrain the preaching work?

he was peddling. The trial court agreed with him. It stated: “The defendant . . . is able to support himself financially, and [he] has not received any economic benefit nor had any intentions to receive such, but instead his activities have caused him financial loss.” Siding with the Witnesses, the court ruled that Lehmann’s activity could not “be characterized as trade.” The adversaries of God’s people, though, were determined to restrain the preaching work throughout the land. (Ps. 94:20) The public prosecutor appealed all the way to the country’s Supreme Court. How did our brothers respond?

²⁰ In the week leading up to the Supreme Court hearing, Witnesses throughout Denmark stepped up their preaching activities. On Tuesday, October 3, 1933, the Supreme Court announced its decision. It agreed with the lower court that August Lehmann had not broken the law. This ruling meant that the Witnesses could continue to preach freely. To express their gratitude to Jehovah for giving this legal victory, the brothers and sisters increased their

20. How did the Supreme Court of Denmark rule, and what was our brothers’ reaction?

preaching activities even more. Ever since that Court decision, our brothers in Denmark have been able to carry out their ministry without government interference.

²¹ **United States.** On Sunday, February 25, 1940, pioneer Robert Murdock, Jr., and seven other Witnesses were arrested while preaching in Jeannette, a city near Pittsburgh, in the state of Pennsylvania. They were convicted of failing to buy a license to offer literature. On appeal, the U.S. Supreme Court agreed to hear the case.

²² On May 3, 1943, the Supreme Court announced its ruling, which came out in defense of the Witnesses. The Court objected to the requirement of obtaining a license because that imposed “a charge for the enjoyment of a right granted by the Federal Constitution.” The Court invalidated the city ordinance as “an abridgment of freedom of press and a restraint on the free exercise of religion.” In delivering the Court’s majority opinion, Justice William O. Douglas stated that the activity of Jehovah’s Witnesses “is

21, 22. What was the decision of the U.S. Supreme Court in the case of Brother Murdock?

more than preaching; it is more than distribution of religious literature. It is a combination of both.” He added: “This form of religious activity occupies the same high estate . . . as do worship in the churches and preaching from the pulpits.”

²³ This Supreme Court ruling constituted a major legal victory for God’s people. It affirmed what we truly are—Christian ministers, not commercial salesmen. On that memorable day in 1943, Jehovah’s Witnesses won 12 of their 13 cases before the Supreme Court, including the *Murdock* case. These court decisions have served as a powerful precedent in more recent court cases in which our opposers have again challenged our right to preach the Kingdom message publicly and from house to house.

“We Must Obey God as Ruler Rather Than Men”

²⁴ As Jehovah’s servants, we deeply appreciate it when governments grant us the legal right to preach the Kingdom message freely. However, when a government bans our preaching work, we simply adjust our methods, continuing our work in any way

23. Why are the court victories of 1943 important for us today?

24. How do we react when a government bans our preaching work?

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

(CHORUS)

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

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

(Chorus)

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

(Chorus)

APRIL 2017

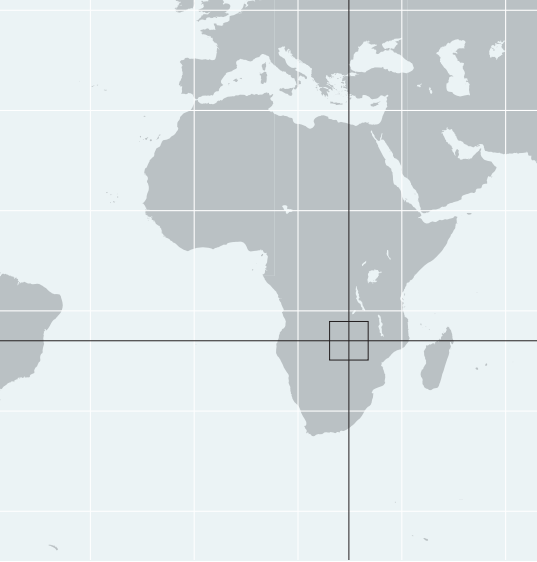
THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
MAY 29–JULY 2, 2017

LARGE
PRINT
EDITION



COVER IMAGE:
ZAMBIA

An enthusiastic field service group leaving for witnessing activity in Lusaka, Zambia. The well-maintained Kingdom Hall serves as a powerful witness to Jehovah

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 WEEK OF MAY 29–JUNE 4

“What You Vow, Pay”

How many vows have you made to Jehovah? One, two, or more? Do you feel that you are living up to them to the best of your ability? What about your dedication vow or your marriage vow? This article reminds us of the excellent examples that Jephthah and Hannah set for us as we faithfully strive to fulfill our vows to God.

18 WEEK OF JUNE 5-11

What Will Go When God’s Kingdom Comes?

We often think about what Jehovah will give us in Paradise, but in this article, we will focus on what he will take away. What will Jehovah remove in order to build a peaceful, happy world? Contemplating the answer will strengthen our faith and our determination to endure.

Ever Loyal (Psalm 18:25)

1. Ever loyal to Jehovah,
Loyal love we wish to show.
As a people, dedicated,
His commands we want to know.
His advice will never fail us,
And his counsel we obey.
He is loyal; we can trust him.
From his side we'll never stray.
2. Ever loyal to our brothers,
Sticking close in times of need.
Ever caring, always trusting,
Ever kind in word and deed.
We show honor to our brothers
And respect them from the heart.
Ever loyal, ever closer,
From their side we'll never part.
3. Ever loyal to their guidance
When our brothers lead the way.
When they give us clear direction,
May we loyally obey.
Then the blessing from Jehovah
Will be ours to make us strong.
When we're loyal, ever faithful,
To Jehovah we'll belong.



SONGS:
124, 51

**HOW DO YOU
FEEL ABOUT THE
IMPORTANCE OF
LIVING UP TO . . .**

your dedication
vow?

your marriage vow?

the vow that
you have taken
if you are in special
full-time service?

“What You Vow, Pay”

*“You must pay your vows
to Jehovah.”—MATT. 5:33.*

HE WAS a valiant leader; she was a submissive wife. He was a brave warrior; she was a humble homemaker. Besides worshipping the same God, what could Judge Jephthah and Elkanah’s wife Hannah possibly have in common? Each was under a vow to God, and they both faithful—

-
1. (a) What did Judge Jephthah and Hannah have in common? (See opening pictures.)
(b) What questions will be answered in this article?

ly paid their vow to him. They are excellent examples for men and women today who choose to make vows to Jehovah. However, some key questions arise: What is a vow? How serious is it to make a vow to God? What lessons can we learn from Jephthah and Hannah?

² As used in the Bible, a vow is a solemn promise that is made to God. A person promises to perform some act, to offer some gift, to enter some type of service, or to abstain from certain things. Vows are made voluntarily, of one's own free will. Nevertheless, they are sacred and binding in God's eyes because they carry the force of an oath—a sworn statement—that promises that a person will or will not do a certain thing. (Gen. 14:22, 23; Heb. 6:16, 17) What do the Scriptures say about the seriousness of making vows to God?

³ The Mosaic Law stated: “If a man makes a vow to Jehovah or swears an oath to impose on himself a vow . . . , he must not violate his word. He should do everything he vowed he would do.” (Num. 30:2) Later, Solomon was inspired to write: “Whenever you make a vow to God, do not delay

2, 3. (a) What is a vow? (b) What do the Scriptures say about making vows to God?

to pay it, for he finds no pleasure in the stupid ones. What you vow, pay.” (Eccl. 5:4) Jesus confirmed the seriousness of making vows when he stated: “It was said to those of ancient times: ‘You must not swear without performing, but you must pay your vows to Jehovah.’”—Matt. 5:33.

⁴ It is clear, then, that it is a very serious matter to make promises to God. The way we treat our vows affects our relationship with Jehovah. David wrote: “Who may ascend to the mountain of Jehovah, and who may stand up in his holy place? Anyone . . . who has not sworn a false oath by My [Jehovah’s] life, nor taken an oath deceitfully.” (Ps. 24:3, 4; ftn.) What did Jephthah and Hannah vow, and how easy was it for them to pay their vow?

THEY FAITHFULLY PAID THEIR VOW TO GOD

⁵ *Jephthah* faithfully kept the promise that he had made to Jehovah when going out to war against the Ammonites, who had been terrorizing God’s people. (Judg. 10:7-9) Earnestly desiring a victory, Jephthah vowed: “If you give the Ammonites into my hand, then whoever comes out of the

4. (a) How serious is it to make a vow to God? (b) What do we want to learn about Jephthah and Hannah?

5. What did Jephthah vow, and what was the result?

door of my house to meet me when I return in peace from the Ammonites will become Jehovah's." The result? The Ammonites were conquered, and it was Jephthah's beloved daughter who came out to meet him upon his victorious return. She would be the one who would "become Jehovah's." (Judg. 11:30-34) What did that mean for her?

⁶ To pay her father's vow, Jephthah's daughter had to serve Jehovah full-time at his sanctuary. Was it a thoughtless vow that Jephthah had made? No, for he might well have known that his daughter could be the one who would come out of his house to meet him. Even so, it was an emotionally difficult situation for father and daughter—a real sacrifice for both of them. When he saw her, Jephthah "ripped his garments" and said that his heart was broken. His daughter 'wept over her virginity.' Why? Jephthah had no son, and his only daughter would never be able to marry and bear him grandchildren. There would be no way to pass on the family name and legacy. That was not the most important consideration, though. Jephthah said: "I

6. (a) How easy was it for Jephthah and his daughter to pay his vow to God? (b) What do Deuteronomy 23:21, 23 and Psalm 15:4 impress upon you about making a vow to God?

have opened my mouth to Jehovah, and I am unable to turn back.” And his daughter replied: “Do to me as you have promised.” (Judg. 11:35-39) These were loyal individuals who would never have thought of breaking a vow that was made to the Most High God—no matter what it cost them personally.—Read Deuteronomy 23:21, 23; Psalm 15:4.

⁷ *Hannah* was another one who faithfully kept the vow that she had made to Jehovah. She made her promise when she was in great anguish and distress over her barrenness and the constant insults she was subjected to. (1 Sam. 1:4-7, 10, 16) Hannah poured out her soul to God and vowed: “O Jehovah of armies, if you look upon the affliction of your servant and remember me and you do not forget your servant and give to your servant a male child, I will give him to Jehovah all the days of his life, and no razor will touch his head.”* (1 Sam. 1:11) Hannah’s request was granted, and she gave birth to her firstborn—a son. What joy

* According to Hannah’s vow, her child would become a lifelong Nazirite, meaning that he was to be singled out, dedicated, and separated for Jehovah’s sacred service.—Num. 6:2, 5, 8.

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7. (a) What did Hannah vow, and why, and how did it turn out for her?
(b) What did Hannah’s vow mean for Samuel? (See footnote.)

that brought her! Still, she did not forget the vow she had made to God. When she gave birth to her baby boy, she announced: “It is from Jehovah that I have asked him.”—1 Sam. 1:20.

⁸ As soon as young Samuel was weaned, at about the age of three, Hannah did exactly as she had vowed to God. She did not even think of doing otherwise. She took Samuel to High Priest Eli at the tabernacle in Shiloh and said: “It was for this boy that I prayed, and Jehovah granted my petition that I asked of him. I, in turn, now lend him to Jehovah. For all his days, he is lent to Jehovah.” (1 Sam. 1:24-28) There, “the boy Samuel continued growing up before Jehovah.” (1 Sam. 2:21) But what did that mean for Hannah? She dearly loved her little boy, but now she would not be able to have everyday contact with him during his boyhood. Think of how she longed to cuddle him, to play with him, to nurture him—to share in all the endearing memories that a loving mother cherishes as she watches her little one grow up. Even so, Hannah had no regrets about keeping her vow to God. Her heart rejoiced in Jehovah.—1 Sam. 2:1, 2; read Psalm 61:1, 5, 8.

8. (a) How easy was it for Hannah to pay her vow? (b) How do David’s expressions recorded in Psalm 61 remind you of Hannah’s exemplary attitude?

⁹ Now that we understand how serious it is to make a vow to God, let us consider these questions: What sort of vows might we as Christians make? Also, how determined should we be to keep our vows?

YOUR DEDICATION VOW

¹⁰ The most important vow that a Christian can make is the one with which he dedicates his life to Jehovah. Why so? Because, in private prayer, he solemnly promises Jehovah that he will use his life to serve God forever, no matter what. To use Jesus' words, a person thus 'disowns himself,' gives up all rights to himself, and vows to put God's will above everything else in his life. (Matt. 16:24) From that day forward, 'he belongs to Jehovah.' (Rom. 14:8) Anyone who makes a dedication vow should take it very seriously, just as did the psalmist who spoke of the vows he had made to God: "With what will I repay Jehovah for all the good he has done for me? I will pay my vows to Jehovah in the presence of all his people."—Ps. 116:12, 14.

9. What questions remain to be answered?


10. What is the most important vow that a Christian can make, and what does it entail?

¹¹ Have you dedicated your life to Jehovah and symbolized your dedication by water baptism? If so, that is wonderful! Recall that on your baptism day, before eyewitnesses, you were asked whether you had dedicated yourself to Jehovah and understood that *“your dedication and baptism identify you as one of Jehovah’s Witnesses in association with God’s spirit-directed organization.”* Your affirmative answers served as a public declaration of your unreserved dedication and showed that you were qualified for baptism as an ordained minister of Jehovah. You must have made Jehovah very happy!

¹² Baptism is just the beginning, though. Thereafter, we want to continue living up to our dedication in faithful service to God. Hence, we might ask ourselves: ‘How has my spiritual life progressed since my baptism? Am I continuing to serve Jehovah wholeheartedly? (Col. 3:23) Am I praying, reading God’s Word, attending congregation meetings, and sharing in the ministry as often as possible? Or has there been some lessening of these spiritual activities?’ The apostle Peter

11. What happened on your baptism day?

12. (a) What questions do we do well to ask ourselves? (b) What qualities did Peter say we should look for in ourselves?



Special full-time
service vow
(See paragraph 19)

Are you paying
your vows to
Jehovah?

Dedication vow
(See paragraph 10)

Marriage vow
(See paragraph 14)

explained that we can avoid becoming inactive in our service if we keep supplying to our faith knowledge, endurance, and godly devotion.—**Read 2 Peter 1:5-8.**

¹³ There is no way to undo a dedication vow, taking back what we promised God. If a person tires

13. What must a dedicated, baptized Christian realize?

of serving Jehovah or of living a Christian way of life, he cannot claim that he was never really dedicated and that his baptism was invalid.* To all intents and purposes, he presented himself as one who was wholly dedicated to God. He will be accountable before Jehovah and the congregation for any serious sins that he may commit. (Rom. 14: 12) May it never be said of us that ‘we left the love we had at first.’ Instead, we want Jesus to be able to say of us: “I know your deeds, and your love and faith and ministry and endurance, and that your deeds of late are more than those you did at first.” (Rev. 2:4, 19) May we zealously continue to live up to our dedication vow—to Jehovah’s delight.

YOUR MARRIAGE VOW

¹⁴ The second most important vow that a person can make is the marriage vow. Why so? Because marriage is sacred. Before God and eyewitnesses, the bride and groom exchange their marriage vows. They usually promise that they will love, cherish, and respect each other and that they will

* Considering the steps that the elders take to be sure that a person is qualified for baptism, it would be extremely rare for anyone’s baptism to be invalid.

14. What is the second most important vow that a person can make, and why?

do so “for as long as [they] both shall live together on earth according to God’s marital arrangement.” Others may not have said these exact words, but they still made a vow before God. They are then pronounced husband and wife, and their marriage is meant to be a lifelong bond. (Gen. 2:24; 1 Cor. 7:39) “Therefore,” to use Jesus’ words, “what God has yoked together, let no man put apart”—neither the husband nor the wife nor anyone else. Thus, couples entering marriage must have the view that divorce is not an option.—Mark 10:9.

¹⁵ Of course, there has never been a perfect marriage. Each marriage is made up of two imperfect people. That is why the Bible says that married people “will have tribulation” at times. (1 Cor. 7:28) Sad to say, many individuals in this world have a casual attitude toward marriage. When the relationship becomes strained, they just give up and walk out on their marriage mate. That, however, is not the Christian way. Breaking one’s marriage vow is equivalent to lying to God, and God hates liars! (Lev. 19:12; Prov. 6:16-19) The apostle Paul wrote: “Are you bound to a wife? Stop seeking a release.” (1 Cor. 7:27) Paul could say that because

15. Why must Christians not adopt the world’s casual attitude toward marriage?

he knew that Jehovah also hates a treacherous divorce.—Mal. 2:13-16.

¹⁶ Jesus taught that the only Scriptural ground for dissolving a marriage vow is when an innocent mate chooses not to forgive an adulterous partner. (Matt. 19:9; Heb. 13:4) What, then, about separating from one's marriage mate? The Bible is clear on this too. (Read 1 Corinthians 7:10, 11.) The Bible does not set out grounds for marital separation. However, some married Christians have viewed certain situations as a reason for separation, such as the *extreme* endangerment of one's life or spirituality by an abusive or apostate spouse.*

¹⁷ When individuals approach congregation elders for advice about marital problems, the elders do well to ask whether the couple have recently watched the video *What Is True Love?* and studied together the brochure *Your Family Can Be Happy*. Why? Because these tools highlight the godly principles that have helped many to strengthen their marriage. One couple said: "Since we have been

* See the book "Keep Yourselves in God's Love," pp. 219-221.

16. What does the Bible say about divorce and separation?

17. How can a Christian couple make their marriage a lasting union?

studying this brochure, our marriage has been happier than ever.” A wife said of her 22-year-long marriage that was at the point of a breakup: “We are both baptized, but we were on two different pages emotionally. The video came right on time! We are doing much better now as a couple.” Are you married? By all means, apply Jehovah’s principles in your marriage. Doing so will help you to live up to your marriage vow—happily!

THE VOW OF SPECIAL FULL-TIME SERVANTS

¹⁸ Did you realize what else Jephthah and Hannah had in common? Their respective vows resulted in Jephthah’s daughter and Hannah’s son being devoted to special, sacred service at the tabernacle. That meant a most satisfying way of life. Today, many Christian parents have encouraged their children to take up the full-time ministry and to center their lives on their service to God. Those who have done so are worthy of sincere commendation.—Judg. 11:40; Ps. 110:3.

¹⁹ Currently, there are some 67,000 members of the Worldwide Order of Special Full-Time Servants of Jehovah’s Witnesses. Some perform

18, 19. (a) What have many Christian parents done? (b) What can be said about those who are in special full-time service?

Bethel service, others engage in construction or in circuit work, serve as field instructors or special pioneers or missionaries or as Assembly Hall or Bible school facility servants. They are all bound by a “Vow of Obedience and Poverty,” with which they agree to do whatever is assigned to them in the advancement of Kingdom interests, to live a simple lifestyle, and to abstain from secular employment without permission. It is not the people but their assignments that are viewed as special. They realize the seriousness of humbly living up to their solemn vow for as long as they remain in special full-time service.

²⁰ How many of the vows that we have discussed have you made to God—one, two, or all three? You surely realize that your vows should not be treated lightly. (Prov. 20:25) The failure to keep one’s word to Jehovah and to pay a vow may have serious consequences. (Eccl. 5:6) So let us happily ‘sing praises to Jehovah’s name forever as we pay our vows day after day.’—Ps. 61:8.

20. What should we do “day after day,” and why?

51 *To God We Are Dedicated!*

(Matthew 16:24)

1. To Christ, by our God, Jehovah, we have been drawn
 To be his disciples from now on.
From Jehovah's lofty throne,
 How the light of truth has shone.
In our hearts, our faith has grown;
 Our lives we vow to disown.

(CHORUS)

*To God we are dedicated; This is our choice.
In him and in Jesus we now rejoice.*

2. In prayer we have come before Jehovah to say
 We'll serve him forever and obey.
It's a joy beyond compare,
 One that we are glad to share,
As Jehovah's name we bear,
 And Kingdom truth we declare.

(Chorus)

