

- 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)

Ab/Bb Bb7 Ebma7 E° Fm11

This is a song, a hap - py song of vic - t'ry;
 With this new song, we ad - ver - tise the King - dom.
 This King - dom song, all hum - ble ones can mas - ter.

Bb7 E° Fm7 Ab/Bb Bb7 Ebma7

It mag - ni - fies the One who is su - preme.
 Christ Je - sus rules; the earth is his do - main.
 The words are clear, their mes - sage warm and bright.

Eb6 Bb/D Bbm6/Db Bbm6/C C7b9b13 Bb° Abma7 Ab6

The words give hope and prompt all to be loy - al.
 And as fore - told, there is a new - born na - tion:
 In all the earth, a mul - ti - tude have learned it,

Db7 Eb/Bb C° Bb7sus4 Ab/Bb Gm/Bb Bb7 Eb Chorus Eb/G

Come sing with us; en - joy its King - dom theme:
 The King - dom heirs, who wel - come Je - sus' reign: 'Come
 And they in turn still oth - ers now in - vite:

Join in the Kingdom Song!

Bb7/F Eb Bb7sus4 Bb7 Ebma7/Bb

wor - ship God Be - fore his throne.

Detailed description: This system contains the first two lines of music. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). The bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are 'wor - ship God Be - fore his throne.' The music features chords and melodic lines in both staves.

Eb6/Bb Cm6/A D7sus4 D7 Gm

His Son is King; Let's make it known!

Detailed description: This system contains the third and fourth lines of music. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are 'His Son is King; Let's make it known!'. The music continues with chords and melodic lines.

Fm7 Ab/Bb Bb7 Eb Eb/Db Ab/C

Come learn this song, this song a - bout the King - dom;

Detailed description: This system contains the fifth and sixth lines of music. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are 'Come learn this song, this song a - bout the King - dom;'. The music continues with chords and melodic lines.

Abm/Cb Eb/Bb C° Bb7sus4 Ab/Bb Gm/Bb Bb7 Eb

Bow down to God, and praise his ho - ly name.'

Detailed description: This system contains the seventh and eighth lines of music. The top staff is in treble clef and the bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are 'Bow down to God, and praise his ho - ly name.' The music concludes with chords and melodic lines.

47 But I will gather the captives of Mo'ab in the final part of the days,' declares Jehovah.

'Down to this point is the judgment on Mo'ab.'"^a

49 For the Am'mon-ites,^b this is what Jehovah says:

"Does Israel have no sons?

Does he have no heir?

Why has Mal'cam^c taken possession of Gad?^d

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^e of the Am'mon-ites.^f

She will become a desolate mound,

And her dependent^g towns will be set on fire.'

'And Israel will take possession of those who dispossessed him,^g 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.^h

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?""

49:2 *Or possibly, "the sound of the battle cry." ^aOr "surrounding." **49:3** *Or "sheep pens." **49:4** *Or "low plains."

CHAP. 48
a Eze 25:11

CHAP. 49
b Ge 19:36, 38
De 2:19
2Ch 20:1

c 1Kl 11:5
Zep 1:4, 5

d Am 1:13

e De 3:11
Jos 13:24, 25
Eze 25:5
Am 1:14

f Eze 21:19, 20

g Isa 14:2
Jer 50:19
Zep 2:9

h Am 1:13, 15

Second Col.
a Ge 36:10, 11
Eze 25:13
Am 1:12
Ob 8

b Isa 21:13
Jer 25:17, 23

c Ob 5

d Ob 6, 9

e Mal 1:3, 4

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?^a

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!^b

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.^c

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,^d

And he will be no more.^e

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.”^a

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

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.”^d

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

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.^f 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 neigh-
boring towns,”^g Jehovah says,
“no one will dwell there, and no
man will settle there.”^h

19 “Look! Someone will come
up against the secure pastures
like a lionⁱ from the dense thick-
ets along the Jordan, but in
a moment I will make him run
away from her. And I will ap-
point over her the chosen one.
For who is like me, and who

CHAP. 49

a Jer 25:27, 28
La 4:21
Ob 16

b Isa 34:6
Isa 63:1
Jer 49:22
Am 1:12

c Ob 18
Mal 1:3

d Ob 1

e Ob 2-4

f Jer 49:13

g Ge 19:24, 25

h Isa 34:6, 10

i Jer 4:7

Second Col.

a Ps 76:7
Jer 50:44-46
Na 1:6

b Ob 9

c Mal 1:4

d 1Ki 9:26

e Jer 4:13

f Jer 48:40
Jer 49:13

g Isa 17:1
Am 1:3

h Nu 13:21
2Ki 17:24
Zec 9:1, 2

will challenge me? What shep-
herd can stand before me?”^a

20 Therefore hear, O men, the
decision* that Jehovah has made
against E’dom and what he has
thought out against the inhabi-
tants of Te’man:^b

Surely the little ones of the
flock will be dragged away.
He will make their dwelling
place desolate because
of them.^c

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.^d

22 Look! Just like an eagle
he will ascend and swoop
down,^e

And he will spread out his
wings over Boz’rah.^f

In that day the heart of the
warriors of E’dom

Will become like the heart
of a woman in childbirth.”^g

23 For Damascus:^g
“Ha’math^h 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,” de-
clares Jehovah of armies.

49:20 *Or “counsel.”

- 27 "I will set the wall of Damascus on fire, And it will consume the fortified towers of Ben-ha'dad."^a
- 28 For Ke'dar^b 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,^c And I will bring their disaster from every direction," declares Jehovah.

49:28, 30 *Lit., "Nebuchadrezzar," a variant spelling. 49:32 *Or "in every direction."

CHAP. 49
a Am 1:4

b Ge 25:13
Isa 42:11
Isa 60:7
Eze 27:21

c Jer 9:25, 26
Jer 25:17, 23

Second Col.

a Ge 10:22
Isa 21:2
Jer 25:17, 25
Eze 32:24
Da 8:2
Ac 2:8, 9

b 2Ki 24:18

c Isa 22:6

d Jer 25:17, 25

CHAP. 50
e Isa 13:1

f Jer 51:8
Re 14:8

- 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^a in the beginning of the reign of King Zed-e-ki'ah^b of Judah:

- 35 "This is what Jehovah of armies says, 'Here I am breaking the bow of E'lam,^c 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'lamites 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,^d 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,^e 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.'^f

49:35 *Lit., "beginning." 49:37 *Or "seeking their soul." 50:2 *Or "signal pole."

Bel has been put to shame.^a
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.^b

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 peo-
ple of Judah will come together.^c
They will weep as they walk,^d
and together they will seek Je-
hovah their God.^e **5** They will
ask the way to Zion, with
their faces turned in that direc-
tion,^f saying, 'Come and let us
join ourselves to Jehovah in an
everlasting covenant that will
not be forgotten.'^g **6** My peo-
ple have become a flock of
lost sheep.^h Their own shepherds
caused them to stray!ⁱ They led
them away onto the moun-
tains, roaming from mountain
to hill. They have forgotten their
resting-place. **7** All those find-
ing them have devoured them,^j
and their enemies have said,
'We are not guilty, because they
sinned against Jehovah, against
the dwelling place of righteous-
ness and the hope of their fore-
fathers, Jehovah.'"

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

50:2 *The Hebrew term may be related
to a word for "dung" and is used as an
expression of contempt.

CHAP. 50

a Isa 46:1
Jer 51:44

b Isa 13:17
Jer 51:11, 48

c Isa 11:12
Jer 3:18
Ho 1:11

d Jer 31:8, 9

e Ho 3:5

f Isa 35:10

g Jer 31:31

h Isa 53:6

i Jer 10:21
Jer 23:2
Eze 34:2, 6

j Ps 79:6, 7

k Isa 48:20
Jer 51:6, 45
Zec 2:7
2Co 6:17
Re 18:2, 4

Second Col.

a Isa 21:2
Jer 51:11, 27,
28, 48
Da 5:28, 30

b Isa 13:17, 18

c Jer 25:12
Jer 27:6, 7

d Re 17:16

e La 1:21

f Isa 14:4-6
Isa 47:6
Jer 30:16

g Isa 47:8

h Isa 13:20, 21

i Zec 1:15

j Jer 25:12

k Jer 51:37

l Isa 13:18
Jer 51:11

- 9** For here I am raising up and
bringing against Babylon
An assembly of great nations
from the land of the north.^a

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;^b

They do not come back
without results.

- 10** Chal-de'a will become a
spoil.^c

All those taking spoil from
her will be fully satisfied,^d
declares Jehovah.

- 11** "For you kept rejoicing,^e you
kept exulting

When pillaging my own
inheritance.^f

For you kept pawing like a
heifer in the grass,

And you kept neighing like
stallions.

- 12** Your mother has been put
to shame.^g

She who gave birth to you
has been disappointed.

Look! She is the least of the
nations,

A waterless wilderness and
a desert.^h

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

She will become utterly
desolate.^j

Anyone passing by Babylon
will stare in horror

And whistle because of all
her plagues.^k

- 14** Come against Babylon in bat-
tle formation on every side,
All you who are bending*
the bow.

Shoot at her, spare no
arrow,^l

50:14 *Lit., "treading."

For it is against Jehovah that she has sinned.^a

15 Shout a war cry against her on every side.

She has surrendered.*

Her pillars have fallen, her walls are torn down,^b

For it is the vengeance of Jehovah.^c

Take your vengeance on her. Do to her just as she has done.^d

16 Cut off the sower from Babylon

And the one handling the sickle in harvesttime.^e

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

Each one will flee to his own land.^f

17 "The people of Israel are scattered sheep.^g Lions have dispersed them.^h First the king of As-syr'i-a devoured them;ⁱ then King Neb-u-chad-nez'zar* of Babylon gnawed on their bones.^j

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.^k

19 And I will bring Israel back to his pasture,^l and he will graze on Car'mel and on Ba'shan,^m and on the mountains of E'phra-imⁿ and of Gil'e-ad^o he* will be satisfied."^p

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."^p

50:15 *Lit., "given her hand." **50:17** *Lit., "Nebuchadrezzar," a variant spelling. **50:19** *Or "his soul."

CHAP. 50

a Jer 51:35, 36

b Jer 51:58

c Jer 51:6, 11

d Ps 137:8
Re 18:6

e Jer 51:23

f Isa 13:14
Jer 51:9

g Jer 23:1
Jer 50:6
Eze 34:5

h Jer 2:15

i 2Ki 17:6
Isa 8:7

j 2Ki 25:1
2Ch 36:17
Jer 4:7

k 2Ki 19:35
Isa 14:25
Zep 2:13

l Isa 11:16
Isa 65:10
Jer 23:3
Jer 33:7
Eze 34:14
Mic 2:12

m Mic 7:14

n Jer 31:6

o Ob 19

p Isa 44:22
Jer 31:34
Mic 7:19

Second Col.

a Eze 23:22, 23

b Isa 14:5, 6
Jer 51:20

c Jer 51:41
Re 18:15, 16

d Jer 51:31
Da 5:30
Re 18:8

e Isa 13:5
Jer 51:11

f Jer 51:27

g Jer 50:10

h Isa 14:22, 23

i Isa 34:6, 7
Eze 39:18

21 "Go up against the land of Mer-a-tha'im and against the inhabitants of Pe'kod.^a 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!^b

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

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,^d

For it was Jehovah whom you opposed.

25 Jehovah has opened his storehouse,

And he brings out the weapons of his indignation.^e

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.^f

Open up her granaries.^g Pile her up like heaps of grain.

Destroy her completely.*^h May she have no one left.

27 Massacre all her young bulls;ⁱ

Let them go down to the slaughter.

Woe to them, for their day has come,

Their time of reckoning!

50:21 *Or "and devote them to destruction." **50:26** *Or "Devote her to destruction."

- 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.^a
- 29** Summon archers against Babylon,
All who are bending* the bow.^b
Camp all around her; let no one escape.
Repay her according to her activity.^c
Do to her just as she has done.^d
For she has acted arrogantly against Jehovah,
Against the Holy One of Israel.^e
- 30** So her young men will fall in her public squares,^f
And all her soldiers will perish* in that day," declares Jehovah.
- 31** "Look! I am against you,^g
O defiant one,"^h 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.ⁱ
And I will set your cities on fire,
And it will consume everything around you."^j
- 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."^j

50:29 *Lit., "treading." 50:30 *Lit., "be silenced."

CHAP. 50

- a Ps 94:1
Jer 51:11
- b Jer 50:14
- c Ps 137:8
Jer 51:56
- d La 3:64
Re 18:6
- e Isa 14:13
- f Isa 13:17, 18
- g Jer 51:25
- h Isa 14:13
Da 4:30
- i Jer 51:26
- j Isa 47:6

Second Col.

- a Isa 14:17
- b Isa 41:14
Re 18:8
- c Isa 47:4
- d La 3:59
- e Isa 14:3, 4
- f Jer 51:24
- g Isa 47:13
Jer 51:57
Da 5:7
- h Jer 51:30
- i Isa 13:8
- j Isa 45:3
- k Isa 44:27
Jer 51:36, 37
Re 16:12
- l Isa 46:1
Jer 51:44, 52
Da 5:1, 4
- m Isa 13:20, 21
Jer 51:37
Re 18:2

They have refused to let them go.^a

- 34** But their Repurchaser is strong.^b
Jehovah of armies is his name.^c
He will surely plead their legal case,^d
In order to give rest to the land^e
And to bring agitation to the inhabitants of Babylon."^f
- 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.^g
- 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.^h
- 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.ⁱ
There is a sword against her treasures, and they will be plundered.^j
- 38** There is a devastation on her waters, and they will be dried up.^k
For it is a land of graven images,^l
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.^m
She will never again be inhabited,

50:36 *Or "the false prophets."

Nor will she be a place of residence throughout all generations.”^a

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

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

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

43 The king of Babylon has heard the report about them,^k And his hands drop down.^l 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.^m For who is like me, and who will challenge me? What shepherd can stand before me?ⁿ **45** Therefore hear, O men, the decision* that Jehovah has made against Babylon^o 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.

50:45 *Or “counsel.”

CHAP. 50

a Jer 25:12
Jer 51:43, 64

b Isa 13:19

c Ge 19:24, 25
Jude 7

d Jer 51:26

e Isa 45:1
Jer 51:11
Jer 51:27, 28

f Isa 13:5, 17

g Jer 50:9

h Ps 137:8
Isa 13:17, 18

i Jer 51:42

j Jer 51:27

k Jer 51:31

l Da 5:6

m Isa 41:25

n Jer 49:19-21

o Jer 51:11

Second Col.

a Isa 13:1, 20
Jer 51:43

b Re 18:9

CHAP. 51

c Jer 50:9

d Jer 50:14, 29

e Isa 13:17, 18
Jer 50:30

f Isa 13:15

g Ps 94:14
Isa 44:21
Jer 46:28
Zec 2:12

h Jer 50:8
Zec 2:7
Re 18:4

i Jer 25:12, 14
Jer 50:15

He will make their dwelling place desolate because of them.^a

46 At the sound of Babylon’s capture, the earth will quake,

And an outcry will be heard among the nations.”^b

51 This is what Jehovah says: “Here I am raising up a destructive wind

Against Babylon^c and the inhabitants of Leb-ka’mi.*

2 I will send winnowers to Babylon,

And they will winnow her and make her land empty; They will come against her on all sides in the day of calamity.^d

3 Let the archer not bend* his bow.

And let no one stand up in his coat of mail.

Show no compassion for her young men.^e

Devote all her army to destruction.

4 And they will fall slain in the land of the Chal-de’ans, Pierced through in her streets.^f

5 For Israel and Judah are not widowed from their God, from Jehovah of armies.^g But their land* is full of guilt from the standpoint of the Holy One of Israel.

6 Flee out of the midst of Babylon, And escape for your life.^{*h} Do not perish because of her error.

For it is the time for Jehovah’s vengeance.

He is paying her back for what she has done.ⁱ

51:1 *This appears to be a cryptographic name for Chaldea. 51:3 *Lit., “tread.” 51:5 *That is, the land of the Chaldeans. 51:6 *Or “soul.”

- 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)

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

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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



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 **Psalms 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. (**Psalms 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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- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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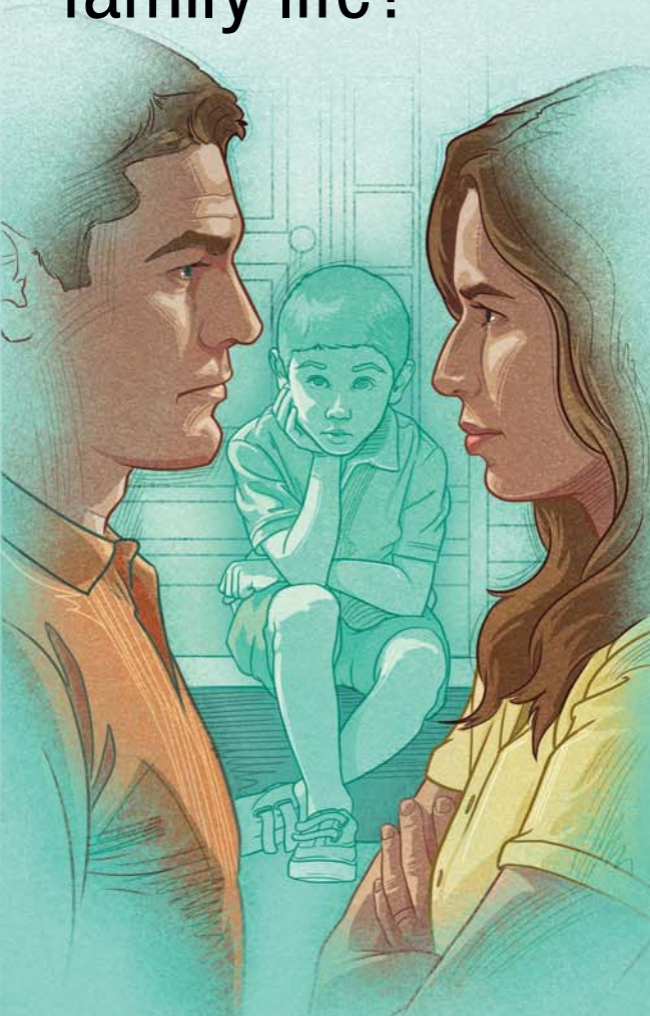


50:29, 39

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



What is the key to happy family life?



Do you think it is . . .

- love?
- money?
- something else?

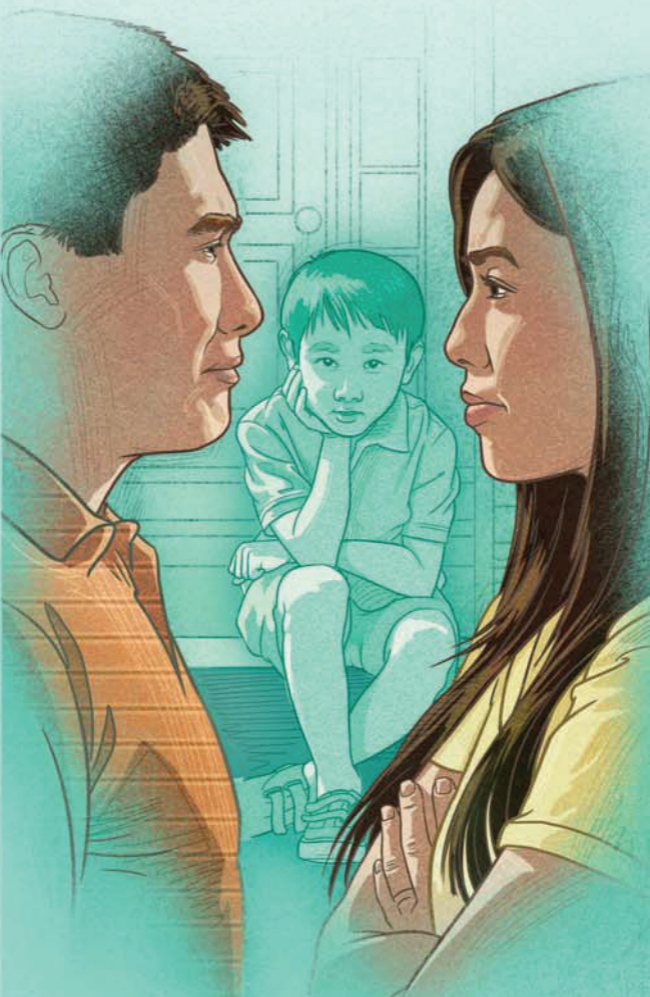
Ni nini siri ya kuwa na familia yenye furaha?



Je, unafikiri ni . . .

- upendo?
- pesa?
- jambo lingine?

家庭幸福 主要靠什么？

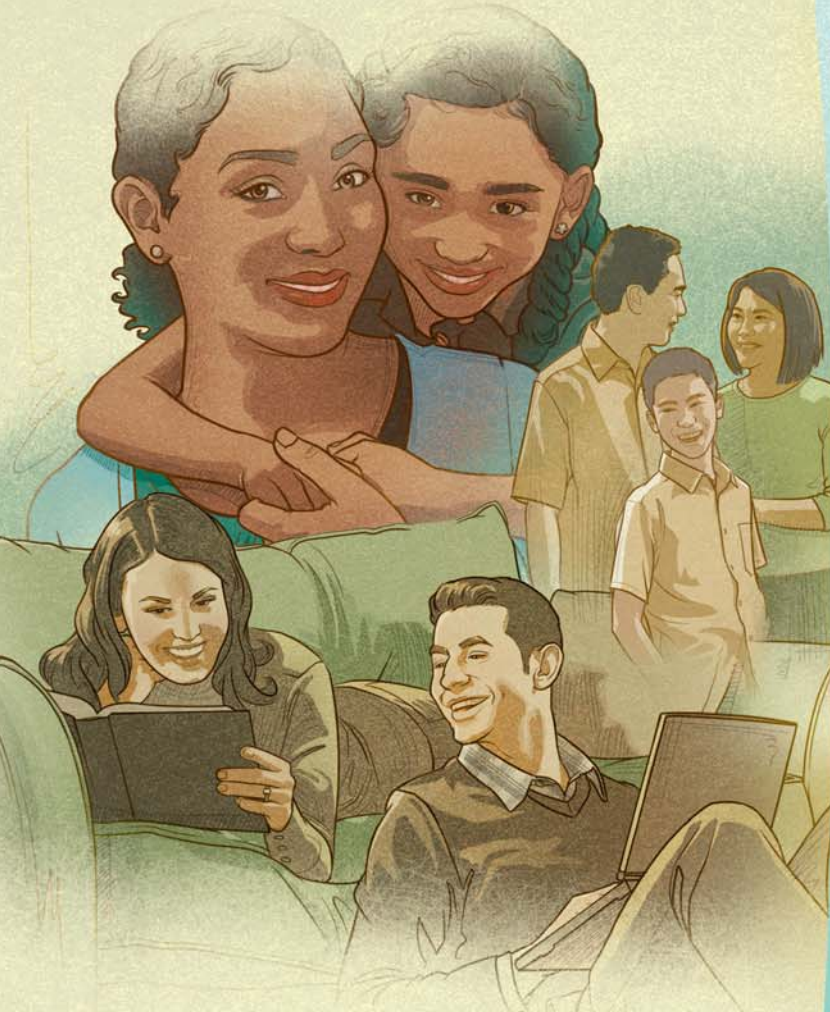


你觉得要靠……

- 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
download the brochure at www.jw.org.



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

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watch the video
*Why Study
the Bible?*



T-32-E
140205

In the past, our publications often mentioned types and antitypes, but in recent years they have seldom done so. Why is that?

■ *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.” (Rev. 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. (Heb. 6:20; 7:1-3) Further, Paul compares Isaiah and his sons to Jesus and his anointed followers. (Heb. 2:13, 14) Paul was writing under inspiration; thus, we gladly accept what he says about these types.

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

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

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.—Gen. 14:1, 18.

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 Tim. 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."—Jas. 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.

Please Hear My Prayer

(Psalm 54)

F B \flat /D C/E B \flat /D Gm9 C F

Heav - en - ly Fa - ther, please hear my song.
 Thank you, O God, for grant - ing this day,
 Oh, how I long to do what is right!

R.H.

B \flat /D C/E B \flat /D Gm6 A7 Dm

You are my God; to you I be - long.
 Giv - ing me life, and show - ing the way.
 Help me, O Lord, to walk in the light.

R.H.

B \flat C/B \flat B \flat F/A F/C C/B \flat Gm7 Gm/E A

Great is your name, be - yond all com - pare.
 How I de - light in your ten - der care.
 Give me the strength all bur - dens to bear.

R.H.

Chorus
 F F/E B \flat /D Fadd9/C Dm Gm7 Gm C13 F

Gra - cious Je - ho - vah, please hear my prayer.

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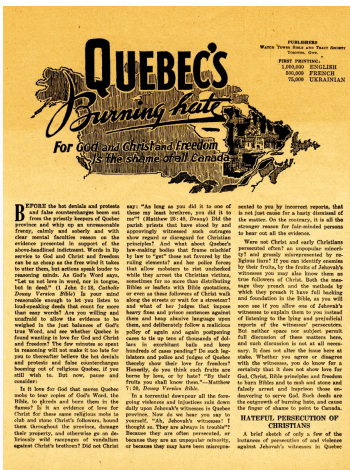
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- As prophesied, Babylon became an uninhabited wasteland



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.)

Zoomable



Quebec's Burning Hate for God and Christ and Freedom Is the Shame of All Canada

FOOTNOTES

[1] This case, *Cantwell v. State of Connecticut*, was the first of 43 cases before the U.S. Supreme Court that Brother Hayden Covington would handle in defense of the brothers. He died in 1978. His widow, Dorothy, at age 90, still faithfully serves as a pioneer.

[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.

for Jehovah's Witnesses.^[1] When the attorney for the state of Connecticut presented his arguments in an effort to prove that the Witnesses were troublemakers, one justice asked: "Was it not true that the message that Christ Jesus proclaimed was unpopular in his day?" The state's attorney replied: "It was, and, if I remember my Bible correctly, it also tells what happened to Jesus for proclaiming that message." What a revealing statement! Unwittingly, the attorney grouped the Witnesses with Jesus and grouped the state with those who convicted him. On May 20, 1940, the Court unanimously ruled in favor of the Witnesses.

10 What was the significance of the Court's ruling? It expanded protection of the right to the free exercise of religion so that no federal, state, or local government could lawfully limit religious freedom. Further, the Court found in Jesse's conduct "no . . . menace to public peace and order." Hence, the ruling clearly established that Jehovah's Witnesses are not disturbers of public order. What a decisive legal victory for God's servants! How do we still benefit from it? A lawyer who is a Witness notes: "The right to exercise our religion freely without fear of unfair 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 Villeneuve, reacted to the tract by declaring a "war without 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 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 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]

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

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?

FOOTNOTES

[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.

[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.

17. How do some governments try to control our preaching activities?

18, 19. How did authorities in Denmark try to restrain the preaching work?

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

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

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 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 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 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*

Courageous Witnesses in Denmark in the 1930’s

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

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

25, 26. What events in Nicaragua led to a Supreme Court case there, and what was the outcome?

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 possible. Like the apostles, “we must obey God as ruler rather than men.” (Acts 5:29; Matt. 28:19, 20) At the same time, we appeal to the courts to lift the ban on our activities. Consider two examples.

25 Nicaragua. On November 19, 1952, missionary and branch servant Donovan Munsterman stepped into the Office of Immigration in Managua, the capital. He had been ordered to appear before Captain Arnolando García, who headed the office. The captain told Donovan that all of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Nicaragua were “prohibited to continue preaching their doctrines and promoting their religious activities.” When asked why, Captain García explained that the Witnesses did not have permission from the minister of government to perform their ministry and that they were accused of being communists. Who were our accusers? The Roman Catholic clergy.

26 Brother Munsterman immediately appealed to the Ministry of Government and Religions as well as to Presi-

Brothers in Nicaragua during the ban



Jehovah Provides Escape

(2 Samuel 22:1-8)

A Dm Gm/B \flat A Dm Gm6/B \flat A7+5 Dm A Dm

The liv - ing God, Je - ho - vah, you have proved to be;
 Though ropes of death en - cir - cle me, I call to you,
 From heav - en you will thun - der and give forth your voice.

Dm/F E \flat /G Gm7 A A(b9) A A7 Dm A

Your might - y works a - bound in earth and sky and
 "Je - ho - vah, give me strength, and give me cour - age
 Your en - e - mies will quake; your ser - vants will re -

Dm Gm D7/F \sharp Cadd9/E D/F \sharp D7 Gm Cm7 Cm6 Gm/B \flat D/A Gm

sea. No ri - val god can e - qual what you have done—
 too." From your own tem - ple dwell - ing, you hear my plea,
 joyce. You prove to be what - ev - er you need to be;

Gm6 B \flat /F Gm6/EA7 Dm Gm/B \flat Dm/A B \flat 7 \flat 5 B \flat 7 A Bm7 A/C \sharp A/C \sharp *Chorus*

there is none. Our foes will be con - sumed.
 "Shel - ter me; Res - cue me, O my God." Je -
 all will see How you pro - vide es - cape.

Jehovah Provides Escape

D A/C# G A A7 D D7/C G/B D/A

ho - vah pro - vides es - cape for the loy - al. His ser - vants will

G6 D/A G/B D/A Bm6/G# A D D7 G Em6/G

see what a might - y Crag is he. So with cour - age and

D/F# F#/A# Bm D7/A G A9/G D/F# D Em11 D/F#

faith in our God, we spread the fame Of Je -

G Em7 G D/F# F#/A# Bm D7/A Em/G A7 D

ho - vah, our Source of es - cape, and praise his name.

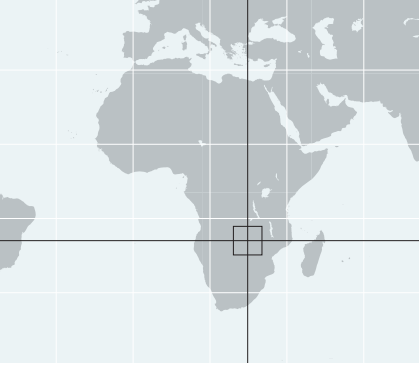
APRIL 2017

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
MAY 29–JULY 2, 2017



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

PUBLISHERS
183,586

BIBLE STUDIES
415,706

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE
(2016)
782,527

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28 WEEK OF JUNE 26–JULY 2 May Your Volunteer Spirit Bring Praise to Jehovah!

Jehovah is complete in himself; yet he is pleased to note our intense interest in supporting his sovereignty. Judges chapters 4 and 5 indicate how Jehovah appreciates it when we willingly rally to carry out his clear direction.

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ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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April 2017

Vol. 138, No. 6 ENGLISH

Ever Loyal

(Psalm 18:25)

Bb7sus4 Bb7 Eb Fm11 Bb7/F Eb/G Ab

Ev - er loy - al to Je - ho - vah, Loy - al
 Ev - er loy - al to our broth - ers, Stick - ing
 Ev - er loy - al to their guid - ance When our

R.H.

Eb/Bb Gm Gm7 Ab C7sus4 C7

love we wish to show. As a
 close in times of need. Ev - er
 broth - ers lead the way. When they

Fm Gm11 C7/G Fm/Ab Bb/C C7

peo - ple, ded - i - cat - ed, His com -
 car - ing, al - ways trust - ing, Ev - er
 give us clear di - rec - tion, May we

R.H.

Fm Ab/Eb Dm11 G7

mands we want to know. His ad -
 kind in word and deed. We show
 loy - al - ly o - bey. Then the

Ever Loyal

Cm Ab Eb/G G7

vice will nev - er fail us, And his
hon - or to our broth - ers, And re -
bless - ing from Je - ho - vah, Will be

R.H.

Cm Eb/F F9 Bb Bb/Ab Eb/G

coun - sel we o - bey. He is
spect - them from the us heart. Ev - er
ours to make us strong. When we're

Fm7 Bb Bb/Ab Eb/G Cm9 Cm

loy - al; we can trust him. From his
loy - al, ev - er clos - er, From their
loy - al, ev - er faith - ful, To Je -

R.H.

Fm7 Bb7sus4 Bb7 Eb

side we'll nev - er stray.
side we'll nev - er part.
ho - vah we'll be - long.

R.H.



“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 faithfully 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?

1. (a) What did Judge Jephthah and Hannah have in common? (See opening pictures.) (b) What questions will be answered in this article?
- 2, 3. (a) What is a vow? (b) What do the Scriptures say about making vows to God?

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?

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 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

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?

comes out of the 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 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.**

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?

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 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 be-

* 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.

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.)

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?

fore 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.**

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?



Are you paying your vows to Jehovah?

Dedication vow
(See paragraph 10)

Special full-time service vow
(See paragraph 19)

Marriage vow
(See paragraph 14)

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

11. What happened on your baptism day?

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

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

meetings, and sharing in the ministry as often as possible? Or has there been some lessening of these spiritual activities? The apostle Peter 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 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

* 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.

13. What must a dedicated, baptized Christian realize?

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

they will love, cherish, and respect each other and that they will 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 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.

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

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

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 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 re-

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

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

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

spective 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 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?

To God We Are Dedicated!

(Matthew 16:24)

D Dma7/F# G A/C# D/F# Dma7/F#

To Christ, by our God, Je - ho - vah, we have been
In prayer we have come be - fore Je - ho - vah to

G6 A7 Bm F#m/A Gma7 Em7 A7 D Em/D

drawn To be his dis - ci - ples from now on.
say We'll serve him for - ev - er and o - bey.

Em/D D F/C G/C C

From Je - ho - vah's loft - y throne, How the
It's a joy be - yond com - pare, One that

F/C G/C C Eb/Bb F/Bb

light of truth has shone. In our hearts, our faith has
we are glad to share, As Je - ho - vah's name we

To God We Are Dedicated!

B \flat D/A E7/A Asus4 A Chorus

grown; bear, Our And lives King - dom we vow truth we to dis - own. de - clare. To

D Dma7/F# G A/G D/F# Bm7 D/A G Em7

God we are ded - i - cat - ed; This is our choice. In

F#m7 Bm7 Em9 G/A A7 D

him and in Je - sus we now re - jice.

