

- Song 143 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD**

- **“A Waiting Attitude Helps Us to Endure”:** (10 min.) [Play the video *Introduction to Lamentations.*] La 3:20, 21, 24—Jeremiah showed a waiting attitude and relied on Jehovah (w12 6/1 14 ¶3-4; w11 9/15 8 ¶8)  
La 3:26, 27—Enduring tests of faith will help us to deal with future challenges (w07 6/1 11 ¶4-5)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)  
La 2:17—What particular “saying” did Jehovah carry out in connection with Jerusalem? (w07 6/1 9 ¶4)

La 5:7—Does Jehovah hold people accountable for the errors of their forefathers? (w07 6/1 11 ¶1)

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) La 2:20–3:12

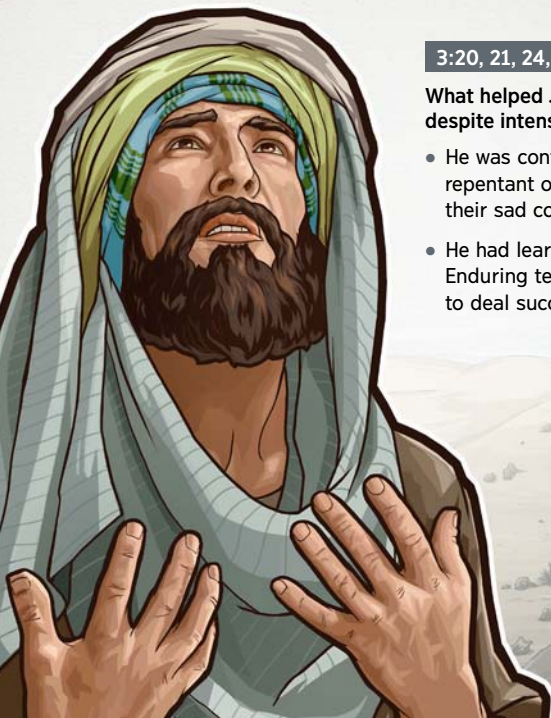
**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) g17.3 cover—Lay the groundwork for a return visit.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) g17.3 cover—Invite the person to our meetings.
- **Talk:** (6 min. or less) w11 9/15 9-10 ¶11-13—Theme: Jehovah Is My Share.

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 91
- **Local Needs:** (8 min.) As an option, discuss “A Letter From the Governing Body” in the *Yearbook.* (yb17 2-5)
- **Organizational Accomplishments:** (7 min.) Play the *Organizational Accomplishments* video for June 2017.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) kr chap. 13 ¶133-34, box on pp. 146-147, review box on p. 145
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 71 and Prayer

LAMENTATIONS 1-5 | A Waiting Attitude Helps Us to Endure



**3:20, 21, 24, 26, 27**

What helped Jeremiah to endure with a good attitude despite intense suffering?

- He was confident that Jehovah would “bow low” over repentant ones among His people and lift them out of their sad condition
- He had learned “to carry the yoke during his youth.” Enduring tests of faith while young prepares a person to deal successfully with challenges later in life



How can I prepare for future challenges?

How can I show a waiting attitude?



# 143 *Keep Working, Watching, and Waiting*

(Romans 8:20-25)

1. The God of times and of seasons,  
Whose name alone is Jehovah—  
The time for his vindication  
Is near by signs we can see.

*(CHORUS)*

*Keep on working and watching and waiting,  
Joyfully anticipating,  
Life as God meant it to be.*

2. The time has long been appointed;  
His Son is ready to conquer,  
Defeating all who oppose him.  
His sword will bring victory.

*(Chorus)*

3. Though all creation is groaning,  
In faith we're eagerly waiting.  
Jehovah's day is approaching,  
The time for setting us free.

*(Chorus)*

## Lamentations 1-5

1 How she now sits all alone, the city that was full of people!

How she has become like a widow, she who was populous among the nations!

How she who was a princess among the provinces has been put to forced labor!

ב [*Beth*]

2 She weeps profusely during the night, and her tears cover her cheeks.

Not one of all her lovers is there to comfort her.

All her own companions have betrayed her; they have become her enemies.

ג [*Gimel*]

3 Judah has gone into exile under affliction and harsh slavery.

She must dwell among the nations; she finds no resting-place.

All her persecutors have overtaken her in her distress.

ד [*Daleth*]

4 The roads to Zion are mourning, because no one is coming to the festival.

All her gates are desolate; her priests are  
sighing.

Her virgins are grieving, and she is in bitter  
anguish.

ה [He]

<sup>5</sup> Her adversaries are now her master; her enemies  
are carefree.

For Jehovah has brought grief to her because of  
her many transgressions.

Her children have gone into captivity before the  
adversary.

ו [Waw]

<sup>6</sup> All the splendor has departed from the daughter of  
Zion.

Her princes are like stags that have found no  
pasture,

And they walk exhausted before the pursuer.

ז [Zayin]

<sup>7</sup> In the days of her affliction and her homelessness,  
Jerusalem remembers

All the precious things that were hers in the days  
of long ago.

When her people fell into the hand of the  
adversary and she had no helper,

The adversaries saw her and laughed over her collapse.

ן [*Heth*]

<sup>8</sup> Jerusalem has sinned greatly.

That is why she has become something abhorrent.

All who used to honor her now treat her as something contemptible, for they have seen her nakedness.

She herself groans and turns away in shame.

ו [*Teth*]

<sup>9</sup> Her uncleanness is in her skirts.

She gave no thought to her future.

Her downfall was astounding; she has no one to comfort her.

O Jehovah, see my affliction, for the enemy has magnified himself.

י [*Yod*]

<sup>10</sup> The adversary has laid his hands on all her treasures.

For she has seen nations enter her sanctuary,  
Those whom you commanded should not enter  
into your congregation.

כ [*Kaph*]

<sup>11</sup> All her people are sighing; they are looking for bread.

They have given their valuable things for something to eat, just to stay alive.

Look, O Jehovah, and see that I have become as a worthless woman.

ל [*Lamed*]

<sup>12</sup> Is it nothing to all of you who pass along the road? Look and see!

Is there any pain like the pain that was dealt out to me,

Which Jehovah made me suffer in the day of his burning anger?

מ [*Mem*]

<sup>13</sup> From on high he has sent fire into my bones, and he subdues each one.

He has spread out a net for my feet; he has forced me to turn backward.

He has made me a desolate woman.

All day long I am ill.

נ [*Nun*]

<sup>14</sup> My transgressions are bound as a yoke, fastened together by his hand.

They have been placed on my neck, and my strength has failed.

Jehovah has given me into the hand of those  
whom I cannot resist.

o [*Samekh*]

<sup>15</sup> Jehovah has tossed aside all the powerful men in  
my midst.

He has summoned an assembly against me to  
crush my young men.

Jehovah has trodden the virgin daughter of  
Judah in the winepress.

υ [*Ayin*]

<sup>16</sup> I am weeping because of these things; my eyes  
flow with tears.

For anyone who could comfort me or refresh me  
is far away from me.

My sons are desolate, for the enemy has  
prevailed.

פ [*Pe*]

<sup>17</sup> Zion has spread out her hands; she has no one to  
comfort her.

Jehovah has given an order against Jacob to all  
his adversaries around him.

Jerusalem has become to them an abhorrent  
thing.

צ [*Tsade*]

<sup>18</sup> Jehovah is righteous, for it is against his  
commands that I have rebelled.  
Listen, all you peoples, and see my pain.  
My virgins and my young men have gone into  
captivity.

ק [Qoph]

<sup>19</sup> I have called out to my lovers, but they have  
betrayed me.  
In the city my priests and my elders have  
perished,  
While they searched for food in order to stay  
alive.

ר [Resh]

<sup>20</sup> See, O Jehovah, for I am in great distress.  
My insides are churning.  
My heart has turned over within me, for I have  
been completely rebellious.  
Outside the sword bereaves; inside the house it  
is like death.

ש [Shin]

<sup>21</sup> People have heard my sighing; there is no one to  
comfort me.  
All my enemies have heard of my calamity.  
They are joyful, because you brought it about.



But you will bring about the day that you  
proclaimed, when they will become like me.

ת [Taw]

<sup>22</sup> May all their badness come before you, and may  
you deal harshly with them,  
Just as you have dealt harshly with me because  
of all my transgressions.  
For my sighs are many, and my heart is sick.

א [Aleph]

**2** How Jehovah has covered the daughter of Zion in  
the cloud of his anger!  
He has thrown down the beauty of Israel from  
heaven to earth.  
He has not remembered his footstool in the day  
of his anger.

ב [Beth]

<sup>2</sup> Jehovah has swallowed up without compassion all  
the dwellings of Jacob.  
In his fury he has torn down the fortified places  
of the daughter of Judah.  
He has brought down to the ground and  
profaned the kingdom and her princes.

ג [Gimel]

<sup>3</sup> In the heat of anger he has cut down all the strength of Israel.  
He withdrew his right hand when the enemy approached,  
And in Jacob he kept burning like a fire that consumed everything around it.

ט [*Daleth*]

<sup>4</sup> He has bent his bow like an enemy; his right hand is poised as an adversary;  
He kept killing all those desirable to the eyes.  
And he poured out his wrath like a fire into the tent of the daughter of Zion.

ה [*He*]

<sup>5</sup> Jehovah has become like an enemy;  
He has swallowed down Israel.  
He has swallowed down all her towers;  
He has destroyed all its fortified places.  
And in the daughter of Judah he makes mourning and lamentation abound.

ו [*Waw*]

<sup>6</sup> He treats his booth violently, like a hut in a garden.  
He has put an end to his festival.  
Jehovah has caused festival and sabbath to be forgotten in Zion,

And in his fierce indignation he shows no regard  
for king and priest.

ט [*Zayin*]

- <sup>7</sup> Jehovah has rejected his altar;  
He has spurned his sanctuary.  
He has surrendered the walls of her fortified  
towers into the hand of the enemy.  
They have raised their voice in the house of  
Jehovah, as on the day of a festival.

נ [*Heth*]

- <sup>8</sup> Jehovah has resolved to destroy the wall of the  
daughter of Zion.  
He has stretched out the measuring line.  
He has not held back his hand from bringing  
destruction.  
And he causes rampart and wall to mourn.  
Together they have been made weak.

ו [*Teth*]

- <sup>9</sup> Her gates have sunk down into the earth.  
He has destroyed and broken her bars.  
Her king and her princes are among the nations.  
There is no law; even her prophets find no vision  
from Jehovah.

י [*Yod*]

<sup>10</sup> The elders of the daughter of Zion sit on the ground in silence.

They throw dust on their heads and wear sackcloth.

The virgins of Jerusalem have bowed their heads down to the ground.

כ [Kaph]

<sup>11</sup> My eyes are worn out from shedding tears.

My insides are churning.

My liver has been poured out on the ground,  
because of the downfall of the daughter of my people,

Because of the children and infants fainting away  
in the public squares of the town.

ל [Lamed]

<sup>12</sup> They keep asking their mothers, “Where are grain and wine?”

As they faint away like someone wounded in the public squares of the city,

As their life ebbs away in their mothers’ arms.

מ [Mem]

<sup>13</sup> What can I use as a witness,

Or to what can I liken you, O daughter of Jerusalem?

To what can I compare you, to comfort you, O  
virgin daughter of Zion?  
For your breakdown is as vast as the sea. Who  
can heal you?

נ [Nun]

<sup>14</sup> The visions your prophets saw for you were false  
and empty,  
And they did not expose your error in order to  
turn away your captivity,  
But they kept visioning for you false and  
misleading pronouncements.

ו [Samekh]

<sup>15</sup> At you all those passing by on the road scornfully  
clap their hands.  
They whistle in amazement and shake their  
heads at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying:  
“Is this the city about which they said, ‘It is  
perfect in beauty, the joy of all the earth’?”

פ [Pe]

<sup>16</sup> At you all your enemies have opened their mouth.  
They whistle and grind their teeth and say: “We  
have swallowed her down.  
This is the day we were waiting for! It has  
arrived, and we have seen it!”

צ [Ayin]

<sup>17</sup> Jehovah has done what he intended; he has  
carried out his saying,  
What he commanded long ago.  
He has torn down without compassion.  
He has let the enemy rejoice over you; he has  
exalted the strength of your adversaries.

צ [Tsade]

<sup>18</sup> Their heart cries out to Jehovah, O wall of the  
daughter of Zion.  
Let tears stream down like a torrent day and  
night.  
Give yourself no respite, give your eye no rest.

ק [Qoph]

<sup>19</sup> Rise up! Cry out during the night, at the start of the  
watches.  
Pour out your heart like water before the face of  
Jehovah.  
Raise your hands to him for the lives of your  
children,  
Who are fainting away at every street corner  
because of famine.

ר [Resh]

<sup>20</sup> See, O Jehovah, and look upon the one with whom  
you have dealt so harshly.

Should women keep eating their own offspring,  
their own fully formed children,  
Or should priests and prophets be killed in the  
sanctuary of Jehovah?

ש [Shin]

- <sup>21</sup> Young boy and old man are lying dead on the  
ground in the streets.  
My virgins and my young men have fallen by the  
sword.  
You have killed in the day of your anger; you  
have slaughtered without compassion.

ת [Taw]

- <sup>22</sup> As if for a festival day, you summon terrors from  
every direction.  
In the day of the wrath of Jehovah, no one  
escaped or survived;  
Those whom I gave birth to and reared, my  
enemy exterminated.

א [Aleph]

- 3** I am the man who has seen affliction because of  
the rod of his fury.  
<sup>2</sup> He has driven me out and makes me walk in  
darkness, not in light.  
<sup>3</sup> Indeed, he repeatedly brings his hand against me  
all day long.

ב [*Beth*]

<sup>4</sup> He has worn away my flesh and my skin;  
He has broken my bones.

<sup>5</sup> He has besieged me; he has surrounded me with  
bitter poison and hardship.

<sup>6</sup> He has forced me to sit in dark places, like men  
who died long ago.

ג [*Gimel*]

<sup>7</sup> He has walled me in, so that I cannot escape;  
He has bound me with heavy copper fetters.

<sup>8</sup> And when I cry out desperately for help, he rejects  
my prayer.

<sup>9</sup> He has blocked up my paths with hewn stones;  
He has made my roadways crooked.

ד [*Daleth*]

<sup>10</sup> He waits to ambush me like a bear, like a lion in  
hiding.

<sup>11</sup> He has forced me off the paths and torn me to  
pieces;  
He has made me desolate.

<sup>12</sup> He has bent his bow, and he sets me up as the  
target for the arrow.

ה [*He*]



- <sup>13</sup> He has pierced my kidneys with the arrows of his quiver.
- <sup>14</sup> I have become a laughingstock to all the peoples, the theme of their song all day long.
- <sup>15</sup> He has filled me with bitter things and saturated me with wormwood.

י [*Waw*]

- <sup>16</sup> He breaks my teeth with gravel;  
He makes me cower in the ashes.
- <sup>17</sup> You deprive me of peace; I have forgotten what is good.
- <sup>18</sup> So I say: "My splendor has perished, as well as my expectation in Jehovah."

ז [*Zayin*]

- <sup>19</sup> Remember my affliction and my homeless state,  
the wormwood and the bitter poison.
- <sup>20</sup> You will surely remember and bow low over me.
- <sup>21</sup> I recall this in my heart; that is why I will show a waiting attitude.

נ [*Heth*]

- <sup>22</sup> It is because of Jehovah's loyal love that we have not come to our finish,  
For his mercies never end.

<sup>23</sup> They are new each morning; your faithfulness is abundant.

<sup>24</sup> “Jehovah is my share,” I have said, “that is why I will show a waiting attitude for him.”

ו [Teth]

<sup>25</sup> Good is Jehovah to the one hoping in him, to the person who keeps seeking him.

<sup>26</sup> Good it is to wait in silence for the salvation of Jehovah.

<sup>27</sup> Good it is for a man to carry the yoke during his youth.

י [Yod]

<sup>28</sup> Let him sit alone and keep silent when He lays it upon him.

<sup>29</sup> Let him put his mouth in the very dust; there may yet be hope.

<sup>30</sup> Let him give his cheek to the one striking him; let him have his fill of insults.

כ [Kaph]

<sup>31</sup> For Jehovah will not cast us off forever.

<sup>32</sup> Although he has caused grief, he will also show mercy according to his abundant loyal love.

<sup>33</sup> For it is not in his heart to afflict or grieve the sons of men.

ל [Lamed]

- 34 To crush beneath one's feet all the prisoners of the  
earth,  
35 To deprive a man of justice in the presence of the  
Most High,  
36 To defraud a man in his legal case  
—Jehovah does not tolerate such things.

ן [*Mem*]

- 37 Who, then, can speak and have it happen unless  
Jehovah commands it?  
38 From the mouth of the Most High,  
Bad things and good things do not go out  
together.  
39 Why should a living person complain about the  
consequences of his sin?

נ [*Nun*]

- 40 Let us examine and scrutinize our ways, and let us  
return to Jehovah.  
41 Let us lift up our hearts along with our hands to  
God in the heavens:  
42 “We have transgressed and rebelled, and you have  
not forgiven.

ו [*Samekh*]

- 43 With anger you have blocked our approach;  
You have pursued and killed us without  
compassion.

44 You have blocked approach to yourself with a  
cloud, so that our prayer may not pass through.  
45 You make us offscouring and refuse among the  
peoples.”

פ [Pe]

46 All our enemies open their mouths against us.  
47 Dread and pitfalls have become our lot, desolation  
and breakdown.  
48 Streams of water flow from my eyes over the  
breakdown of the daughter of my people.

צ [Ayin]

49 My eyes weep without ceasing, without pausing,  
50 Until Jehovah looks down and sees from heaven.  
51 My eyes have brought me grief because of all the  
daughters of my city.

צ [Tsade]

52 Without cause my enemies have hunted me down  
like a bird.  
53 They have silenced my life in the pit; they kept  
hurling stones at me.  
54 Waters flowed over my head, and I said: “I am  
finished!”

ק [Qoph]

55 I called out your name, O Jehovah, from the depths  
of the pit.

56 Hear my voice; do not shut your ear to my cry for  
help, for relief.

57 You drew near in the day that I called you. You  
said: "Do not be afraid."

ר [*Resh*]

58 You have defended my cause, O Jehovah, you  
have redeemed my life.

59 You have seen, O Jehovah, the wrong done to me;  
please grant me justice.

60 You have seen all their vengeance, all their  
schemes against me.

ש [*Sin*] or [*Shin*]

61 You have heard their taunts, O Jehovah, all their  
schemes against me,

62 The lips of my opposers and their whispering  
against me all day long.

63 Look at them; whether they sit or stand, they mock  
me in their songs!

ת [*Taw*]

64 You will repay them, O Jehovah, according to their  
deeds.

65 You will make them hardhearted, as your curse to  
them.

<sup>66</sup> You will pursue them in your anger and annihilate them from under the heavens of Jehovah.

א [*Aleph*]

4 How the shining gold has grown dim, the fine gold!  
How the holy stones lie scattered at every street corner!

ב [*Beth*]

<sup>2</sup> As for the precious sons of Zion, who were weighed against refined gold,  
How they have been regarded as earthenware jars,  
The work of a potter's hands!

ג [*Gimel*]

<sup>3</sup> Even jackals offer the udder to nurse their young,  
But the daughter of my people has become cruel, like ostriches in the wilderness.

ד [*Daleth*]

<sup>4</sup> The tongue of the nursing infant sticks to its palate because of thirst.  
Children beg for bread, but no one gives them any.

ה [*He*]

<sup>5</sup> Those who used to eat delicacies lie famished in the streets.

Those who were brought up wearing scarlet  
have embraced ash heaps.

י [Waw]

<sup>6</sup> The punishment of the daughter of my people is  
greater than the punishment for the sin of  
Sod'om,  
Which was overthrown in a moment, with no  
hand to help her.

ז [Zayin]

<sup>7</sup> Her Naz'i-rites were purer than snow, whiter than  
milk.  
They were more ruddy than corals; they were  
like polished sapphires.

ח [Heth]

<sup>8</sup> Their appearance has become darker than soot;  
They are not recognized in the streets.  
Their skin has shriveled over their bones; it has  
become like dry wood.

ט [Teth]

<sup>9</sup> Those slain with the sword are better off than those  
slain by famine,  
Those who waste away, who are pierced through  
for lack of food from the field.

י [Yod]

<sup>10</sup> The hands of compassionate women have boiled  
their own children.  
They have become their food of mourning during  
the breakdown of the daughter of my people.

כ [Kaph]

<sup>11</sup> Jehovah has expressed his wrath;  
He has poured out his burning anger.  
And he starts a fire in Zion that consumes her  
foundations.

ל [Lamed]

<sup>12</sup> The kings of the earth and all the inhabitants of the  
productive land did not believe  
That the adversary and the enemy would enter  
the gates of Jerusalem.

מ [Mem]

<sup>13</sup> It was because of the sins of her prophets, the  
errors of her priests,  
Who shed the blood of righteous ones in her  
midst.

נ [Nun]

<sup>14</sup> They have wandered blindly in the streets.  
They are polluted with blood,  
So that none are able to touch their garments.

ס [Samekh]



<sup>15</sup> “Go away! Unclean!” they call out to them. “Go away! Go away! Do not touch us!”  
For they have gone homeless and wander about.  
People have said among the nations: “They cannot stay here with us.

פ [Pe]

<sup>16</sup> The face of Jehovah has scattered them;  
He will no longer look favorably on them.  
Men will show no respect for the priests, no favor to the elders.”

צ [Ayin]

<sup>17</sup> Even now our eyes are worn out from looking in vain for help.  
We looked and looked for help from a nation that could not save us.

צ [Tsade]

<sup>18</sup> They have hunted us down at every step so that we could not walk in our public squares.  
Our end has drawn near; our days have finished, for our end has come.

ק [Qoph]

<sup>19</sup> Our pursuers were swifter than the eagles of the sky.

They chased us on the mountains; they  
ambushed us in the wilderness.

ר [*Resh*]

<sup>20</sup> The breath of our nostrils, the anointed one of  
Jehovah, has been captured in their large pit,  
The one of whom we said: "In his shade we will  
live among the nations."

ש [*Sin*]

<sup>21</sup> Exult and rejoice, O daughter of E'dom, living as  
you do in the land of Uz.  
But to you also the cup will be passed, and you  
will become drunk and expose your  
nakedness.

ת [*Taw*]

<sup>22</sup> The punishment for your error, O daughter of Zion,  
has come to its finish.  
He will not carry you off into exile again.  
But he will turn his attention to your error, O  
daughter of E'dom.  
He will uncover your sins.

**5** Remember, O Jehovah, what has befallen us.  
Look and see our disgrace.

<sup>2</sup> Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers,  
our houses to foreigners.

- <sup>3</sup> We have become orphans without a father; our mothers are like widows.
- <sup>4</sup> We must pay to drink our own water, and our own wood comes at a price.
- <sup>5</sup> Those pursuing us are at our neck;  
We are weary, but we are given no rest.
- <sup>6</sup> We hold out our hand to Egypt and to As·syr'i·a, to get enough bread to eat.
- <sup>7</sup> Our forefathers who sinned are no more, but we must bear their errors.
- <sup>8</sup> Servants now rule over us; there is no one to snatch us from their hand.
- <sup>9</sup> We bring in our bread at the risk of our life, because of the sword of the wilderness.
- <sup>10</sup> Our skin has become as hot as a furnace, because of the pangs of hunger.
- <sup>11</sup> The wives in Zion they have humiliated, the virgins in the cities of Judah.
- <sup>12</sup> Princes were hanged by their hand, and elders were shown no respect.
- <sup>13</sup> Young men carry the hand mill, and boys stumble under loads of wood.
- <sup>14</sup> The elders are gone from the city gate; young men do not play their music.
- <sup>15</sup> The joy is gone from our heart; our dancing has turned into mourning.

- <sup>16</sup> The crown has fallen from our head. Woe to us,  
because we have sinned!
- <sup>17</sup> Because of this our heart is sick,  
And because of these things our eyes have  
grown dim,
- <sup>18</sup> Because of Mount Zion, which is desolate; foxes  
now roam on it.
- <sup>19</sup> As for you, O Jehovah, you sit enthroned forever.  
Your throne is for generation after generation.
- <sup>20</sup> Why do you forget us forever and abandon us for  
so long a time?
- <sup>21</sup> Bring us back to yourself, O Jehovah, and we will  
readily return to you.  
Renew our days as in those of old.
- <sup>22</sup> However, you have utterly rejected us.  
You remain intensely angry with us.

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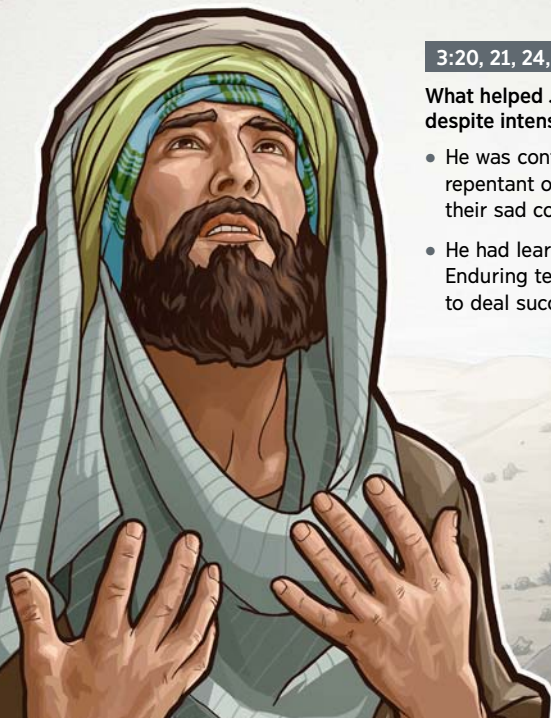
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**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 91
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LAMENTATIONS 1-5 | A Waiting Attitude Helps Us to Endure



**3:20, 21, 24, 26, 27**

What helped Jeremiah to endure with a good attitude despite intense suffering?

- He was confident that Jehovah would “bow low” over repentant ones among His people and lift them out of their sad condition
- He had learned “to carry the yoke during his youth.” Enduring tests of faith while young prepares a person to deal successfully with challenges later in life



How can I prepare for future challenges?

How can I show a waiting attitude?



**June 12-18**

## **Treasures From God's Word**

**Lamentations 3:20, 21, 24**—Jeremiah showed a waiting attitude and relied on Jehovah

Reference: w12 6/1 14 **paragraphs 3-4**

Amid the sorrow, Jeremiah is filled with hope. He cries out to Jehovah: “Without fail your soul [Jehovah himself] will remember and bow low over me.” (Verse 20) Jeremiah has no doubt. He knows that Jehovah will not forget him—or repentant ones among His people. What, though, will the almighty God do?—Revelation 15:3.

Jeremiah is certain that Jehovah will “bow low” over those who truly repent. Another translation says: “O remember, and stoop down to me.” Those words evoke a tender mental picture. Jehovah, “the Most High over all the earth,” will stoop down, so to speak, and lift his worshippers up out of their debased condition and restore them to his favor. (Psalm 83:18) Anchored by this hope, Jeremiah finds true comfort for his wounded heart. The faithful prophet is determined to wait patiently until Jehovah's due time to deliver His repentant people.—Verse 21.

Reference: w11 9/15 8 **paragraph 8**

The Levites as a *tribe* were to have Jehovah as their share. It is noteworthy, though, that individual Levites used the phrase “Jehovah is my share” to express devotion to God and reliance on him. (**Lamentations 3:24**) One such Levite was a singer and composer. We will refer to him as Asaph, though he could have been a member of the house of Asaph, the Levite who led the singers in the days of King David. (**1 Chronicles 6:31-43**) In Psalm 73 we read that Asaph (or one of his descendants) became perplexed. He envied the wicked who were leading a prosperous life and went to the point of saying: “Surely it is in vain that I have cleansed my heart and that I wash my hands in innocence itself.” He apparently lost sight of his privilege of service; he failed to appreciate that Jehovah was his share. He was spiritually troubled “until [he] proceeded to come into the grand sanctuary of God.” —**Psalm 73:2, 3, 12, 13, 17.**

**Lamentations 3:26, 27**—Enduring tests of faith will help us to deal with future challenges

Reference: w07 6/1 11 **paragraphs 4-5**

**Lamentations 3:21-26, 28-33.** How can we endure even intense suffering? Jeremiah tells us. We should not forget that Jehovah is abundant in acts of loving-kindness and that many are his mercies. We should also remember that our being alive is reason enough not to give up hope and that we need to be patient and wait silently, without complaining, upon Jehovah for salvation. Moreover, we should “put [our] mouth in the very dust,” that is, humbly submit to trials, recognizing that what God allows to happen is permitted for good reason.

**Lamentations 3:27.** Facing up to tests of faith during youth may mean enduring hardship and ridicule. But it is ‘good for an able-bodied man to carry the yoke during his youth.’ Why? Because learning to bear a yoke of suffering while young prepares a person to deal with challenges in his later years.



## Digging for Spiritual Gems

**Lamentations 2:17**—What particular “saying” did Jehovah carry out in connection with Jerusalem?

Reference: w07 6/1 9 **paragraph 4**

The reference here is apparently to Leviticus 26:17, which states: “I shall indeed set my face against you, and you will certainly be defeated before your enemies; and those who hate you will just tread down upon you, and you will actually flee when no one is pursuing you.”

**Lamentations 5:7**—Does Jehovah hold people accountable for the errors of their forefathers?

Reference: w07 6/1 11 **paragraph 1**

No, Jehovah does not directly punish people for the sins of their ancestors. “Each of us will render an account for himself to God,” says the Bible. (Romans 14:12) However, consequences of errors can linger on and be experienced by later generations. For example, ancient Israel’s turning to idolatry made it difficult even for the faithful Israelites of later times to adhere to the course of righteousness.—Exodus 20:5.

- Song 143 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD**

- **“A Waiting Attitude Helps Us to Endure”:** (10 min.) [Play the video *Introduction to Lamentations.*] La 3:20, 21, 24—Jeremiah showed a waiting attitude and relied on Jehovah (w12 6/1 14 ¶3-4; w11 9/15 8 ¶8)  
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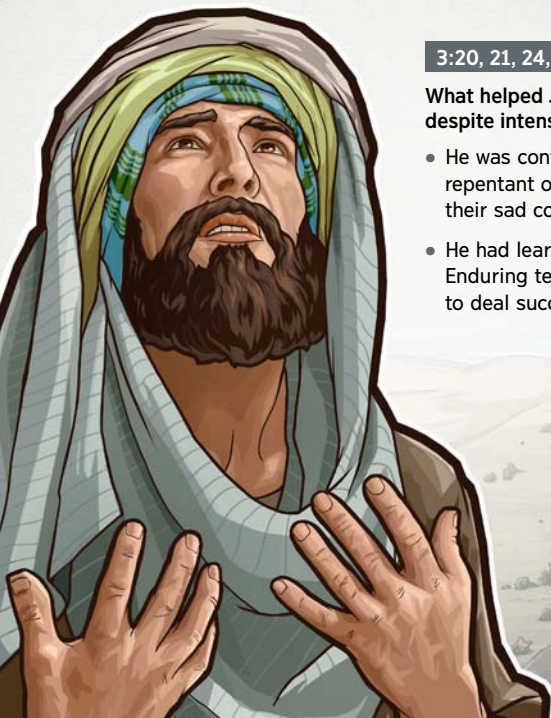
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Is the Bible *Really*  
**FROM GOD?**

## 3 COVER SUBJECT The Bible—Is It Truly “Inspired of God”?

*Is the Bible from God? Or is it a book that contains purely thoughts from men?*

*This issue of “Awake!” considers three lines of evidence that the Bible really is from God.*

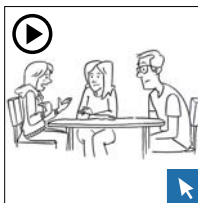
## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- 8 HELP FOR THE FAMILY  
The Importance of Chores
- 10 The Enteric Nervous System  
—Your Body’s “Second Brain”?
- 12 INTERVIEW  
A Software Designer Explains His Faith
- 14 THE BIBLE’S VIEWPOINT  
Angels
- 16 WAS IT DESIGNED?  
The Sea Otter’s Fur



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### VIDEOS



#### WHITEBOARD ANIMATIONS **How Can I Earn More Freedom?**

You think you are ready to be treated more like an adult, but your parents may disagree. What steps can you take to gain their trust?

(Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > TEENAGERS)



#### BIBLE TEACHINGS **Who Is the Author of the Bible?**

If it was written by men, can it rightly be called the Word of God?

(Look under PUBLICATIONS > VIDEOS, under the category “The Bible”)

# THE BIBLE

## Is It Truly “Inspired of God”?

DO YOU believe that the Bible is from God? Or do you think that it is a book that contains purely thoughts from men?

That is an ongoing debate even among professed Christians. For instance, in 2014 a Gallup poll in the United States revealed that the majority of nominal Christians agreed that “the Bible is connected in some way to God.” On the other hand, about 1 in 5 polled viewed the Bible as a book of “ancient fables, legends, history, and precepts written by man.” This controversy puts the spotlight on the real meaning of the term “inspired” with regard to the Bible.—2 Timothy 3:16.

### “INSPIRED”—WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The Bible is made up of 66 small books, which were written by some 40 writers over a period of about 1,600 years. But if the Bible was written by men, how can it be “inspired of God”? Simply stated, the expression “inspired of God” means that the *Source* of the information in those

writings is God. The Bible puts it this way: “Men spoke from God as they were moved by holy spirit.” (2 Peter 1:21) In other words, God used his invisible energizing force, holy spirit, to transmit his message to the writers of the Bible books. This can be likened to a businessman dictating a letter to his secretary. The letter’s author is, not the one doing the writing, but the one doing the dictating.

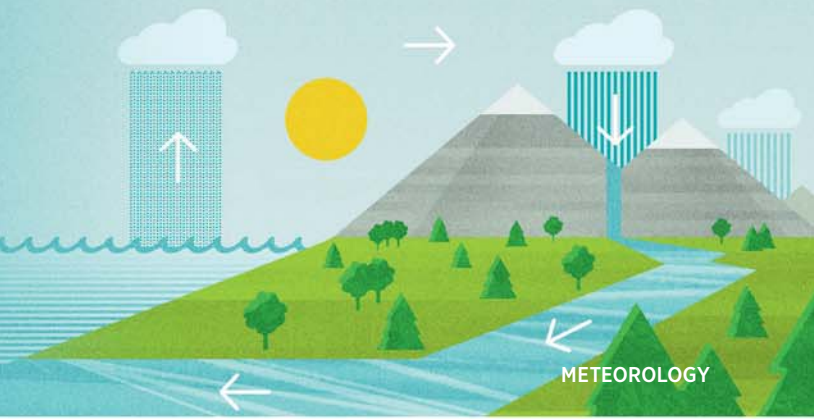
Some Bible writers actually heard God’s message conveyed audibly by an angel. Others saw visions from God. In some cases, God communicated his message in the form of dreams. While God at times allowed the writers to use their own words to record his message, at other times he gave them precise wording. In any event, human writers conveyed God’s thoughts and not their own.

How can we be sure that it was God who inspired the Bible writers? Consider three lines of evidence that build confidence in the Bible’s divine origin.



# THE BIBLE

## Accurate in All Respects



## Scientifically Accurate

ALTHOUGH the Bible is not a science textbook, it is accurate when it discusses the natural world. Consider examples from the fields of meteorology and genetics.

### METEOROLOGY—FORMATION OF RAIN

The Bible states: “[God] draws up the drops of water; they condense into rain from his mist; then the clouds pour it down.”—Job 36:27, 28.

Here the Bible describes the three main steps of the hydrologic cycle. God—the Source of solar heat—“draws up the drops of water” by (1) *evaporation*. Then, by means of (2) *condensation*, the uplifted water vapor forms clouds that pour water down as rain or some other form of (3) *precipitation*. Even now, meteorologists do not fully understand all the details of the phenomenon of rain. Interestingly, the Bible asks: “Can anyone understand the layers of clouds?” (Job 36:29) The Creator, however, does understand the rain cycle and saw to it that a human writer would include the facts accurately in the Bible. And he did this long before men could explain the basic process scientifically.

### GENETICS—DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN EMBRYO

The Bible writer King David said to God: “Your eyes even saw me as an embryo; *all its parts were written in your book.*” (Psalm 139:16) In poetic language, David speaks of an embryo developing according to the directions written in a preexisting “book,” or plan. Amazingly, this was written some 3,000 years ago!

Yet, it was not until the mid-1800’s that Austrian botanist Gregor Mendel discovered the basic principles of genetics. And only in April 2003 did researchers finish sequencing the human genome, which contains all the genetic information needed to build a living human body. Scientists have described the genetic chemical code as being like a dictionary filled with words made up of the letters of an alphabet. The words form the genetic instructions. Based on these instructions, the embryo’s parts—such as the brain, heart, lungs, and limbs—develop in precise sequence and with perfect timing. Fittingly, the genome has been described by scientists as “the book of life.” How was the Bible writer David able to be so accurate? He humbly admitted: “The spirit of Jehovah spoke through me; his word was on my tongue.”\* —2 Samuel 23:2.

\* In the Bible, God is identified by his personal name, Jehovah.—Psalm 83:18.



GENETICS

HISTORY

## Accurately Predicts the Future

IT IS very difficult—if not impossible—to know when, how, and to what extent kingdoms and cities will rise or fall. Yet, the Bible foretold the destruction of mighty rulerships and cities in great detail. Consider just two examples.

### THE FALL AND DESOLATION OF BABYLON

Ancient Babylon was the hub of a powerful empire that exerted influence over western Asia for centuries. At one time it was the world's largest city. Yet, some 200 years in advance, God inspired the Bible writer Isaiah to prophesy that a conqueror by the name of Cyrus would overthrow Babylon and that it would end up uninhabited forever. (Isaiah 13:17-20; 44:27, 28; 45:1, 2) Is this what really happened?

In one night, in October 539 B.C.E., Cyrus the Great conquered Babylon. In time, the canals that had once irrigated the surrounding fertile region choked up from neglect. By 200 C.E., the site was said to have been deserted. Today, Babylon remains in ruins. Precisely as the Bible foretold, Babylon has “become utterly desolate.”—Jeremiah 50:13.

Where did the Bible writer get such accurate historical foresight? The Bible reveals that this was “a pronouncement against Babylon that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw in vision.”—Isaiah 13:1.

### NINEVEH—“AS DRY AS A DESERT”

Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, was considered to be an architectural wonder. The city boasted wide streets, public gardens, temples, and massive palaces. Nevertheless, the prophet Zephaniah foretold that this magnificent city would become “desolate, as dry as a desert.”—Zephaniah 2:13-15.

Nineveh was completely destroyed by the combined forces of the Babylonians and the Medes in the seventh century B.C.E. According to one reference, the vanquished city then “passed into oblivion for 2500 years.” For a period of time, people doubted whether Nineveh had ever existed! Only in the mid-19th century did archaeologists excavate Nineveh's ruins. Today the site suffers from decay and vandalism, causing the Global Heritage Fund to warn: “Nineveh's ancient remains could again be buried forever.”

Where did Zephaniah get his advance information? He acknowledged that it was “the word of Jehovah that came to [him].” —Zephaniah 1:1.



## The Bible Answers Life's Big Questions

THE Bible provides satisfying answers to life's big questions. Consider the following examples.

### **WHY IS THERE SO MUCH EVIL AND SUFFERING IN THE WORLD?**

The matter of evil and suffering is covered extensively throughout the Scriptures. The Bible explains:

1. *"Man has dominated man to his harm."*  
—Ecclesiastes 8:9.

Incompetent and corrupt human rule has brought untold suffering.

2. *"Time and unexpected events overtake them all."*—Ecclesiastes 9:11.

Unforeseen events—such as serious illnesses, accidents, or disasters—can strike anyone, anywhere, at any time.

3. *"Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin."*  
—Romans 5:12.

Human imperfection and death did not exist in the beginning, when man and woman were first created. Sin "entered into the world" when they deliberately disobeyed their Creator.

The Bible does more than explain why people suffer. It promises that God will eradicate evil and "will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore."—Revelation 21:3, 4.

### **WHAT HAPPENS TO US WHEN WE DIE?**

The Bible explains that death is a state of absolute unconsciousness and inactivity. "For the living know that they will die," states Ecclesiastes 9:5, "but the dead know nothing at all." At death, our very "thoughts perish." (Psalm 146:4) So all brain activity—including the function of our sensory organs—ceases when we die. Hence, we cannot act, feel, or think after death.

However, the Bible does more than explain the condition of the dead. It holds out the happy prospect that people will be awakened from the deep sleep of death by means of the resurrection.—Hosea 13:14; John 11:11-14.

### **WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE?**

According to the Bible, Jehovah God created man and woman. (Genesis 1:27) The first man, Adam, is thus described as a "son of God." (Luke 3:38) Man was created for a purpose—to build a friend-





ship with his heavenly Father and to live happily and productively on earth forever. To that end, all humans are endowed with a spiritual capacity, that is, a natural desire to want to learn about God. Hence, the Bible states: “Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need.”—Matthew 5:3.

Furthermore, the Bible says: “Happy are those hearing the word of God and keeping it!” (Luke 11:28) The Bible not only teaches us about God but helps us to live happier lives and gives us hope for the future.

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## The Divine Author and You

AFTER examining the evidence, millions of people around the world have concluded that the Bible is more than an ancient piece of literature. They are convinced that the Bible is God’s inspired Word, his communication with mankind—including you! It contains God’s invitation to you to get to know him and become his friend. “Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you,” promises the Bible.—James 4:8.

Digging into the Bible opens up a thrilling prospect. What is it? Just as reading a book gives you a glimpse into the mind of the author, reading the Bible reveals the thoughts and feelings of its divine Author, God. Think of what that can mean for you. You can get to know the sentiments and emotions of your Creator! In addition, the Bible reveals:

- ▶ God’s name, nature, and marvelous qualities.
- ▶ God’s purpose for man.
- ▶ How you can develop a relationship with God.

Would you be interested in learning more? Jehovah’s Witnesses will be glad to assist you. They can arrange for you to study the Bible free of charge. This can help you draw ever closer to the divine Author of the Bible—Jehovah God. ■



This article examined some of the evidence that the Bible is an inspired book. For more information, see chapter 2 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah’s Witnesses and available at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org) or scan this code

You may also watch the video *Who Is the Author of the Bible?* available at [www.jw.org](http://www.jw.org)  
Look under PUBLICATIONS > VIDEOS

w11 9/15 9-10 ¶11-13

<sup>11</sup> Andrew is an example. When he and his wife learned about Jehovah, they resolved to serve him. Andrew took much pride in his job but left it. Why? Because he was working for a nonneutral organization and was determined to put first God's righteousness. When Andrew left that job, he had two children, no income, and enough money to last just a few months. From a human standpoint, it may have seemed that he had no 'inheritance.' He searched for a job, trusting in God. Looking back, he and his family can confirm that Jehovah's hand is not short. (Isa. 59:1) By keeping their life simple, Andrew and his wife have even had the privilege of being in full-time service. "There have been times when finances, housing, health, and just growing older have made us anxious," he says. "But Jehovah has always stood by us. . . . We can say without a hint of doubt that serving Jehovah is, without question, the most noble and rewarding human endeavor."—Eccl. 12:13.

<sup>12</sup> Jesus told his disciples: "If you have faith the size of a mustard grain, you will say to this mountain, 'Transfer from here to there,' and it will transfer, and nothing will be impossible for you." (Matt. 17:20) Would you be able to put God's standards foremost if that would result in difficulties? If you are uncertain whether

you could do so, speak with other members of the congregation. You will no doubt find it spiritually refreshing to hear their experiences.

### **Appreciating Jehovah's Spiritual Provisions**

<sup>13</sup> If you treasure your privilege of serving Jehovah, you can be sure that he will supply your physical and spiritual needs, just as he provided sustenance for the Levites. Think about David. Though he was in a cave, he could count on God to provide for him. We too can rely on Jehovah even when we see no way out. Recall that when Asaph came "into the grand sanctuary of God," he gained insight into what was distressing him. (Ps. 73:17) Similarly, we need to turn to the divine Source of our spiritual nourishment. Thus we show appreciation for our privilege of serving God no matter what our circumstances may be. We are thereby letting Jehovah be our share.

1. Jehovah, this is the day;

Now from our hearts, we want to pray.  
How you have honored us, favored us,  
More than words can say!

Upon our labor of love,

We've seen your blessing from above.  
And now a building stands, by our hands,  
As the proof thereof.

*(CHORUS)*

*Jehovah God, it was a priv'lege*

*For us to build this place for you.*

*May we continue in your service throughout our days*

*And bring you praise in all we do.*

2. What happy faces we see,

And what good friends we've come to be!  
And how we'll cherish these memories  
For eternity!

We saw your spirit, O Lord,

In how we worked with one accord.  
And how we've added fame to your name;  
What a grand reward!

*(Chorus)*

- Song 143 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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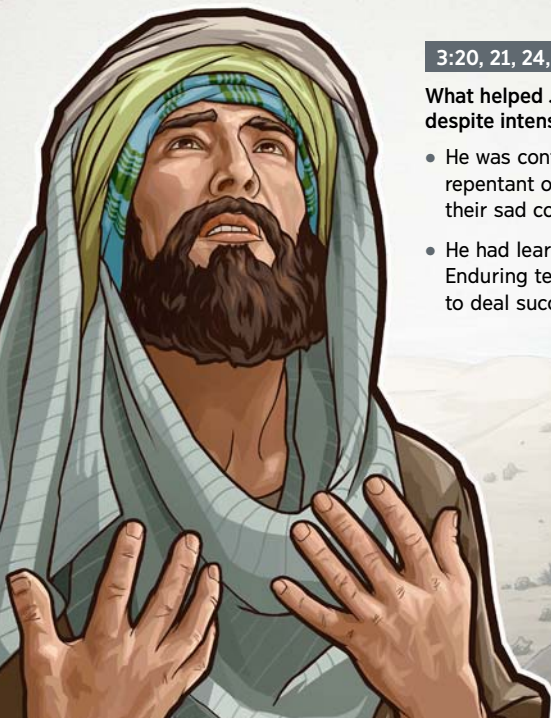
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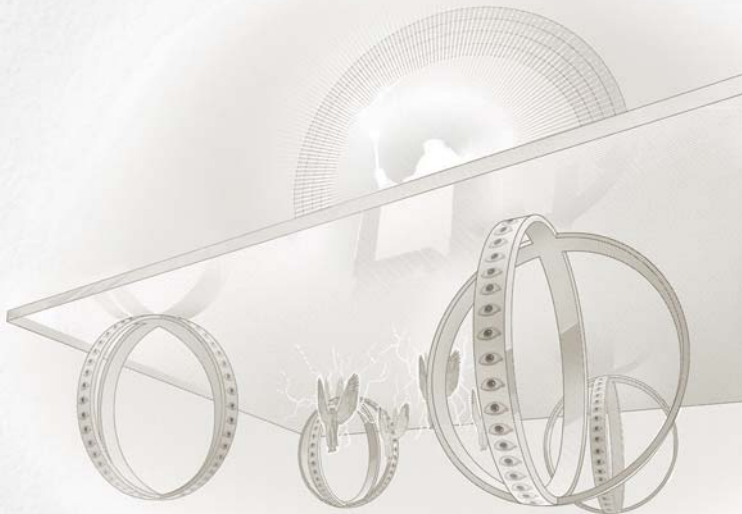
# A Letter From the Governing Body

Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Back in the seventh century B.C.E., the prophet Ezekiel was given an amazing vision. He saw a gigantic vehicle, a celestial chariot, under the control of the Sovereign of the universe. Most impressive about that vehicle was the way it moved. It swept along at lightning speed, even when changing direction—which it could do without slowing down or even turning! —Ezek. 1:4, 9, 12, 14, 16-27.

That vision reminds us that the celestial part of Jehovah's universal organization is always on the move. And the earthly part? The past service year has clearly shown that Jehovah is moving his organized people on earth at an amazing pace as well!

Here in the United States, members of the Bethel family have been busy moving out of Brooklyn and into the new world headquarters, at Warwick, New York, as well as to other complexes and into the field. Bethelites at a number of other branches around the world are likewise busy with building, remodeling, consolidating, or moving to new locations. What about you? Even if you have not been busy moving physically, you have no doubt been on the move in other ways.



The celestial part of Jehovah's organization is always on the move

The Governing Body is deeply touched and encouraged to see that God's people around the world have been busier than ever as they keep pace with Jehovah's organization. Many have moved to serve where the need is greater. Others have moved into a new avenue of service, such as a foreign-language field. Many have tried a form of witnessing that was new and unfamiliar to them. Many more have expanded their service in yet other ways. And all faithful Christians, including the elderly and the infirm, are loyally running the race for life—keeping on the move in Jehovah's service and thus helping to expose Satan for the liar he is! —1 Cor. 9:24.

Be assured that the spirit you show does not go unnoticed by Jehovah. (Heb. 6:10) Your willing attitude

makes us think of Abraham and Sarah. In his 70s, Abraham moved out of the Chaldean city of Ur and led his family to faraway Canaan, where he would live in tents for the remaining hundred years of his life. What a willing spirit he and his dear wife showed! —Gen. 11:31; Acts 7:2, 3.

Are you showing that spirit? All of you who are enduring faithfully in these challenging times are doing what Jesus told us to do. He said: “Go, therefore, and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit.”—Matt. 28:19.

Even Jesus’ use of the word “go” suggests that we must be moving, active. How gratifying it is to see how much has been accomplished by Christ’s zealous followers during the past year! It is easy to see that Jehovah’s mighty hand of blessing has been on the work of declaring the Kingdom good news in all nations. —Mark 13:10.

Many are responding to the message. The peak number of publishers this past year was 8,340,847, while our Bible studies averaged 10,115,264 each month. Clearly, the celestial chariot is on the move, and so are you! Keep up your fine work in the short period of time left before Jehovah closes the door to salvation.

How fitting that our yeartext for 2017 is “**Trust in Jehovah and do what is good**”! (Ps. 37:3) When you obey those words, doing what is good by rendering sacred service to Jehovah, you are showing your trust in him. Please always keep in mind that you are never



## “Trust in Jehovah and do what is good”

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alone. Jesus’ words will ever hold true: “Look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things.”—Matt. 28:20.

Rest assured that Jehovah will continue to bless your faithful service. Whether your contribution is small or great, what matters to Jehovah is that it represents your best and is given with the right motive. All such gifts touch his heart and bring his smile of approval. (2 Cor. 9:6, 7) So continue drawing close to your loving Father through regular prayer, study of God’s Word, attendance at Christian meetings, and active participation in the ministry.

Until this “short period of time” allotted to the Devil runs out, that wicked rebel is bent on using every means at his disposal to divert us from our course of remaining steadfast in our integrity to Jehovah. (Rev. 12:12) Stay close to Jehovah, and the Devil will fail in his every attempt. (Ps. 16:8) Please know that we love you very much and appreciate your assistance in caring for the Lord’s Kingdom interests in these last days.

Your brothers,

*Governing Body of Jehovah’s Witnesses*

## **“Jehovah Is My Helper”**

<sup>33</sup> Our review of some legal battles proves that Jesus has lived up to his promise: “I will give you words and wisdom that all your opposers together will not be able to resist or dispute.” (**Read Luke 21:12-15.**) At times, Jehovah has evidently raised up modern-day Gamaliels to protect his people or has moved courageous judges and lawyers to stand up for justice. Jehovah has blunted the weapons of our opposers. (**Read Isaiah 54:17.**) Opposition cannot stop God’s work.

<sup>34</sup> Why are our legal victories so remarkable? Consider this: Jehovah’s Witnesses are not prominent or influential. We do not vote, support political campaigns, or lobby politicians. Moreover, those of us drawn into high court cases generally are considered “uneducated and ordinary.” (Acts 4:13) So, humanly speaking, the courts have little incentive to rule against our powerful religious and political opposers and to come to our aid. Nevertheless, courts have

**33. What do we learn from this brief review of a few court cases?**

**34. Why are our legal victories so remarkable, and what do they prove? (See also the box “Noteworthy High Court Victories That Advanced Kingdom Preaching.”)**

repeatedly decided in our favor! Our legal victories prove that we walk “in the sight of God and in company with Christ.” (2 Cor. 2:17) Hence, with the apostle Paul, we declare: “Jehovah is my helper; I will not be afraid.”—Heb. 13:6.

## **How Real Is the Kingdom to You?**

- How did the courts establish that we are ministers, not troublemakers, seditionists, or peddlers?
- How do we still benefit from past legal victories?
- When our preaching work is banned, how do we respond?
- From a human viewpoint, why is it remarkable that Jehovah's people have won so many landmark court cases?
- How has this review of legal battles strengthened your faith?

## **NOTEWORTHY HIGH COURT VICTORIES THAT ADVANCED KINGDOM PREACHING**

**DECISION** November 11, 1927

**COUNTRY** Switzerland

**ISSUE** Freedom of belief.

**FACTS** A police officer stops Brother Adolf Huber in his preaching work, claims that our brother is disturbing religious peace, and confiscates his Bible leaflets.

**RULING** Before the Federal Supreme Court, Brother Huber challenges the police officer's actions. The Court finds that confiscating religious tracts is a violation of "freedom of belief."

**IMPACT** The ruling stops police interference with the Bible Students' ministry.

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**DECISION** July 9, 1935

**COUNTRY** Romania

**ISSUE** Freedom of expression.

**FACTS** Six Witnesses are arrested for distributing books that are "*against public order and state security.*" The brothers are sentenced to 15 days in jail.

**RULING** The High Court of Cassation and Justice (Supreme Court) finds that the Witnesses carry out their activities peacefully, that their literature is no danger to

public order, and that they have the right to share their opinion.

**IMPACT** This ruling, along with others among 530 Witness cases heard from 1933 to 1939, guaranteed constitutional rights that allowed the brothers to keep preaching. Currently, our preaching work can be carried out freely.

---

**DECISION** March 17, 1953

**COUNTRY** Netherlands

**ISSUE** Freedom of expression and of press.

**FACTS** Brother Pieter Havenaar is arrested for violating an ordinance that allows the offering of literature only on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

**RULING** The Supreme Court finds the restriction too far-reaching.

**IMPACT** This decision invalidates any ordinance that limits the right to offer printed material to the extent that it becomes virtually impossible to engage in that activity.

---

**DECISION** October 6, 1953

**COUNTRY** Canada

**ISSUE** Freedom of worship and of expression.

**FACTS** A Quebec City bylaw prohibits distributing literature without a police permit. Traveling overseer Brother Laurier Saumur spends three months in jail for violating this bylaw.

**RULING** The Supreme Court finds the application of the bylaw to the Witnesses illegal. The Court recognizes that the public distribution of printed Bible messages is part of the Christian worship of Jehovah's Witnesses, which is constitutionally protected from censorship.

**IMPACT** The decision dismisses over 1,600 bylaw charges in the province of Quebec.

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**DECISION** July 13, 1983

**COUNTRY** Serbia

**ISSUE** Freedom of expression and of press.

**FACTS** Two sisters are arrested for distributing Bible literature. They are charged with "offences against Public Order and Peace" and are imprisoned for five days.

**RULING** The Supreme Court finds no violation of law and no basis for the claim that they are disturbing the peace.

**IMPACT** After this legal victory, arrests and confiscation of literature decrease.

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**DECISION** May 26, 1986

**COUNTRY** Turkey

**ISSUE** Freedom of belief.

**FACTS** After three Witness families apply to register their religion as Jehovah's Witnesses, 23 brothers and sisters are imprisoned for trying to change the social or political order.

**RULING** The Supreme Court annuls the convictions, exonerates the Witnesses, and upholds the right of freedom of belief for Jehovah's Witnesses.

**IMPACT** The decision eliminates arrests for Christian activity and expands religious liberty in Turkey for all citizens.

---

**DECISION** May 25, 1993

**COUNTRY** Greece

**ISSUE** Freedom to manifest one's religion.

**FACTS** In 1986, for the 18th time, Brother Minos Kokkinakis is convicted of proselytism. From 1938 to 1992, the Greek law prohibiting proselytism was the basis for over 19,000 arrests of Jehovah's Witnesses.

**RULING** The European Court of Human Rights finds violation of freedom of thought, conscience, and religion; finds unjustified interference with freedom to manifest one's religion; and upholds the status of Jehovah's Witnesses as a "known religion."

**IMPACT** The Greek government directs all judicial authorities not to violate the *Kokkinakis* decision, eliminating further convictions for proselytism.

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**DECISION** June 17, 2002

**COUNTRY** United States

**ISSUE** Freedom of expression.



**FACTS** The village of Stratton in the state of Ohio issues an ordinance that requires anyone engaging in door-to-door activity to obtain a permit. Federal trial and appeals courts hold that the ordinance is constitutional.

**RULING** The Supreme Court strikes down the ordinance as unconstitutional and reaffirms the right to free exercise of religion and the right to freedom of expression. The Court notes that the Witnesses explained that they “derive their authority to preach from Scripture.”

**IMPACT** Hundreds of municipalities desist from applying similar ordinances to the ministry of Jehovah’s Witnesses.

# We Are Jehovah's Army!

(Joel 2:7)

1. We are Jehovah's army,  
Under Christ, his Son.  
Though we're opposed by Satan,  
We are marching as one.  
We keep serving faithfully,  
Preaching far and near;  
We remain determined  
With no hint of fear.

*(CHORUS)*

*We are Jehovah's army;  
With his Christ we're one,  
Joyfully declaring,  
"God's rule has begun."*

2. We are Jehovah's servants,  
Searching for his sheep,  
Those who are lost and scattered,  
Those who sigh and who weep.  
These we try to find and feed  
With repeated calls;  
These we keep inviting  
To our Kingdom Halls.

*(Chorus)*

3. We are Jehovah's army,  
Under Christ's command,  
Fully equipped for battle,  
Each one firmly will stand.  
Cautious though we need to be,  
Upright we remain.  
In the face of danger,  
Truth we will maintain.

*(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

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### **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.

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### **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.

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## 31 WEEK OF JUNE 12-18

“The Judge of All the Earth”  
Always Does What Is Right

## 42 WEEK OF JUNE 19-25

Do You Share Jehovah’s Sense of Justice?

When we believe that we have personally experienced or observed an injustice, our faith, humility, and loyalty may be tested. These articles examine three Bible accounts that will assist us to have Jehovah’s view of justice.

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## 53 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.

# 12

## *Great God, Jehovah*

(Exodus 34:6, 7)

1. Great God, Jehovah, you are deserving,  
Worthy of the highest praise,  
Good and just in all your ways.  
You have such power, deep love, and wisdom.  
You are God to endless days.
2. Father, we feel your tender compassion.  
We are dust, and still you care;  
Graciously you hear our prayer.  
How you sustain us, teach us, and guide us!  
Help from you is always there.
3. Heaven and earth now sing of your glory.  
Joyfully with voices raised,  
We exalt you all our days.  
Great God, Jehovah, you are deserving.  
Please accept our heartfelt praise.



## “The Judge of All the Earth” Always Does What Is Right

*“The Rock, perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice.”—DEUT. 32:4.*

“WILL the Judge of all the earth not do what is right?” (Gen. 18:25) With that question, Abraham expressed confidence that Jehovah would render perfect justice in the case of Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham was convinced that

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1. How did Abraham express confidence in Jehovah’s sense of justice? (See opening picture.)

**SONGS:**  
12, 135

**HOW WILL REMEMBERING THESE VERSES HELP US IF WE EXPERIENCE INJUSTICE?**

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Micah 7:7

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Proverbs 19:3

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Matthew 18:15



Jehovah would never act unjustly by “putting the righteous man to death with the wicked one.” Such an act was “unthinkable” to Abraham. Some 400 years later, Jehovah said of himself: “The Rock, perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness who is never unjust; righteous and upright is he.”—Deut. 31:19; 32:4.

<sup>2</sup> Why could Abraham express confidence that Jehovah would always render a righteous judgment? Because Jehovah is the greatest example of justice and righteousness. In fact, the Hebrew words rendered “justice” and “righteousness” often appear together in the Hebrew Scriptures. Basically, there is no distinction between what is just and what is right. Logically, since Jehovah is the ultimate standard of righteousness, his view of matters will always be just. Further, according to his own written Word, “he loves righteousness and justice.”—Ps. 33:5.

<sup>3</sup> Honesthearted ones are comforted by the knowledge that Jehovah is always just, for the world is saturated with injustice. As a result, individuals have at times become the victims of gross wrongs. For example, some people have been unjustly convicted and

- 
2. Why can it be said that Jehovah is incapable of injustice?
  3. Relate an example of injustice in today’s world.

imprisoned. Only with the introduction of DNA evidence in a review of the case have some been freed after spending decades in prison for crimes they did not commit. While such wrongful imprisonments are a cause of frustration and even anger, Christians may find another type of injustice even more difficult to bear.

## IN THE CONGREGATION

<sup>4</sup> Christians expect to experience some injustice outside the Christian congregation. However, our faith may be put to the test if we observe or experience what seems to be an injustice inside the congregation. How will you react if you believe that you have experienced some wrong in the congregation or in your dealings with a fellow Christian? Will you allow that to be a cause for stumbling?

<sup>5</sup> Because all of us are imperfect and subject to sin, we realize that there is a possibility that we could either experience injustice ourselves or be the cause of it for someone else in the congregation. (1 John 1:8) Although such instances are rare, faithful Christians are not surprised or stumbled when

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4. How might a Christian's faith be tested?

5. Why should it come as no surprise if a Christian observes or experiences injustice in the congregation?

injustices do occur. For good reason, Jehovah has provided practical advice in his Word to assist us to maintain our integrity, even if we experience wrongs at the hands of fellow believers.—Ps. 55:12-14.

<sup>6</sup> Consider the experience of Willi Diehl. Beginning in 1931, Brother Diehl served faithfully at the Bethel home in Bern, Switzerland. In 1946, he attended the eighth class of Gilead School in New York, U.S.A. After graduation, he was eventually assigned to the circuit work in Switzerland. In his life story, Brother Diehl related: “In May 1949, I informed headquarters in Bern that I planned to marry.” The response from the Bern office? “No privileges other than regular pioneering.” Brother Diehl went on to explain: “I was not permitted to give talks . . . Many no longer greeted us, treating us like disfellowshipped persons.”

<sup>7</sup> How did Brother Diehl handle that situation? He stated: “We knew, however, that getting married was not unscriptural, so we took refuge in prayer and put our trust in Jehovah.” Eventually, the mistaken view regarding marriage that prompted the injustice was corrected, and Brother Diehl’s privileges of service were restored. His loyalty to Jehovah was re-

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6, 7. What injustice did one brother experience in the congregation, and what qualities helped him to handle the matter properly?

warded.\* We do well to ask ourselves: ‘Would I demonstrate a similar spiritual outlook if I experienced such injustice? Would I patiently wait on Jehovah, or would I be inclined to take matters into my own hands?’—Prov. 11:2; read Micah 7:7.

<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, you could mistakenly conclude that you have been a victim of injustice or that another member of the congregation has been. This could happen because of our imperfect view of matters or because we do not have all the facts. In either case, whether our understanding of matters is accurate or mistaken, prayerful reliance on Jehovah, combined with loyalty, will prevent us from ever becoming “enraged against Jehovah.”—Read Proverbs 19:3.

<sup>9</sup> Let us reflect on three examples of injustice that occurred among Jehovah’s people in Bible times. In this article, we will consider Abraham’s great-grandson Joseph and his experience with his brothers. In the next article, we will examine Jehovah’s dealings with Israel’s King Ahab as well as the

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\* See Willi Diehl’s life story, “Jehovah Is My God, in Whom I Will Trust,” in the November 1, 1991, issue of *The Watchtower*.

8. Why might you mistakenly conclude that you have been a victim of injustice or that someone else has been?

9. What examples will we consider in this article and in the next?

apostle Peter's experience in Syrian Antioch. As we discuss these examples, look for lessons that will help you maintain your spiritual focus and preserve your relationship with Jehovah, especially when you believe that you have experienced injustice.

## JOSEPH—VICTIM OF INJUSTICE

<sup>10</sup> Joseph, a faithful servant of Jehovah, experienced injustice, not only at the hands of outsiders but also, more painfully, at the hands of his fleshly brothers. When Joseph was in his late teens, his brothers kidnapped him and sold him as a slave. Against his will, he was taken to Egypt. (Gen. 37:23-28; 42:21) After some time in that foreign country, he was falsely accused of attempted rape and was imprisoned without a trial. (Gen. 39:17-20) His ordeal as a slave and a prisoner lasted for about 13 years. What lessons can we learn from Joseph's experience that will help us if we face injustice at the hands of a fellow believer?

<sup>11</sup> Joseph had an opportunity to present his case to a fellow prisoner. That prisoner was the former chief cupbearer of the king. During the time that Joseph and the cupbearer were imprisoned together,

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10, 11. (a) What injustices did Joseph experience? (b) What opportunity presented itself while Joseph was in prison?

the cupbearer had a dream, which Joseph interpreted. Joseph explained that the cupbearer would be restored to his former position in Pharaoh's court. When Joseph shared this divinely inspired interpretation, he took advantage of the opportunity to explain his own situation. We can learn valuable lessons not only from what Joseph said but also from what he did not say.—Gen. 40:5-13.

<sup>12</sup> **Read Genesis 40:14, 15.** Notice that Joseph described himself as having been “kidnapped.” The original-language term literally means that he had been “stolen.” Clearly, he was the victim of injustice. Joseph also stated that he was not guilty of the crime for which he was imprisoned. On that basis, he asked the cupbearer to mention him to Pharaoh. Why? He explained his goal: “In order to get me out of this place.”

<sup>13</sup> Were Joseph's words those of a man who passively accepted his situation? Certainly not. He was keenly aware that he was the victim of many injustices. He clearly explained the facts to the cupbearer, who perhaps would be in a position to assist him. Note, however, that there is nothing in

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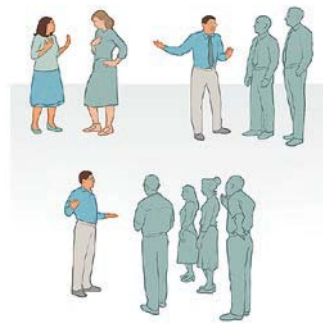
**12, 13.** (a) How did Joseph's words to the cupbearer show that he did not passively accept the injustices he suffered? (b) What details did Joseph evidently not include in his conversation with the cupbearer?

the Scriptures to indicate that Joseph ever told anyone—not even Pharaoh—that his brothers were his kidnappers. In fact, when his brothers came to Egypt and were reconciled with Joseph, Pharaoh welcomed them and invited them to make their home in Egypt and to enjoy “the best of all the land.” —Gen. 45:16-20.

<sup>14</sup> When a Christian believes that he is the victim of injustice, he should be careful not to engage in harmful gossip. Of course, it is entirely proper to seek assistance from the elders and to inform them if a member of the congregation is guilty of a serious wrong. (Lev. 5:1) However, in many cases that do not involve serious wrongdoing, it may be possible to resolve a difference without involving anyone else, not even the elders. (Read Matthew 5:23, 24; 18:15.) May we loyally handle such matters in line with Bible principles. In some cases, we may come to realize that we were not the victim of an injustice after all. How grateful we would be that we did not make a situation worse by slandering a fellow Christian! Remember, whether we are right or wrong, engaging in hurtful speech will never improve a situation. Loyalty to Jehovah and to our brothers will

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14. What will protect us from the trap of negative speech even if we experience injustice in the congregation?



Negative speech may cause a problem to get out of control  
(See paragraph 14)



protect us from making such a mistake. Speaking of “the one who is walking faultlessly,” the psalmist said that “he does not slander with his tongue, he does nothing bad to his neighbor, and he does not defame his friends.”—Ps. 15:2, 3; Jas. 3:5.

## REMEMBER YOUR MOST IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIP

<sup>15</sup> We find a more important lesson in Joseph’s relationship with Jehovah. Throughout his 13-year ordeal, Joseph demonstrated that he had Jehovah’s

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15. How did Joseph’s relationship with Jehovah prove to be a blessing to him?



view of matters. (Gen. 45:5-8) He never blamed Jehovah for his situation. Although he did not forget the wrongs he suffered, he did not become embittered by them. Most important, he did not allow the imperfections and wrong actions of others to separate him from Jehovah. Joseph's loyalty gave him the opportunity to see Jehovah's hand in correcting the injustices and in blessing him and his family.

<sup>16</sup> In a similar way, we must cherish and guard our relationship with Jehovah. Never should we allow the imperfections of our brothers to separate us from the God we love and worship. (Rom. 8:38, 39) Instead, if we experience injustice at the hands of a fellow worshipper, let us be like Joseph and draw even closer to Jehovah, striving to have his view of matters. When we have done all that we Scripturally can to remedy the situation, we need to leave the matter in Jehovah's hands, confident that he will correct it in his own time and way.

## **TRUST "THE JUDGE OF ALL THE EARTH"**

<sup>17</sup> As long as we live in this system of things, we can expect to experience injustices. On rare occa-

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16. Why should we draw even closer to Jehovah if we experience injustice in the congregation?

17. How can we show that we have confidence in "the Judge of all the earth"?

sions, you or someone you know may experience or observe what seems to be an injustice in the congregation. Do not let yourself be stumbled. (Ps. 119: 165) Instead, as faithful servants of God, we loyally and prayerfully rely on him. At the same time, we modestly acknowledge that we likely do not have all the facts. We are keenly aware that the fault may lie in our imperfect view of matters. As we learned from the example of Joseph, we want to avoid negative speech, knowing that such speech only makes a bad situation worse. Finally, rather than taking matters into our own hands, let us be determined to be loyal and wait patiently on Jehovah to correct matters. Such an approach is sure to bring Jehovah's approval and blessing, just as it did in the case of Joseph. Yes, we can be certain that Jehovah, "the Judge of all the earth," will always do what is right, "for all his ways are justice."—Gen. 18:25; Deut. 32:4.

<sup>18</sup> In the next article, we will consider two additional instances of unjust treatment that occurred among Jehovah's people in Bible times. A review of these accounts will highlight how humility and a willingness to forgive are related to Jehovah's view of justice.

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18. What will we consider in the next article?

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

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

*(CHORUS)*

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

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

*(Chorus)*

