

- Song 111 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Ezekiel Delighted to Declare God’s Message”:** (10 min.)
[Play the video *Introduction to Ezekiel*.]
Eze 2:9–3:2—Ezekiel ate the scroll of “dirges and mourning and wailing” (w08 7/15 8 ¶6-7; it-1 1214)
Eze 3:3—Ezekiel was grateful to serve Jehovah as a prophet (w07 7/1 12 ¶3)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Eze 1:20, 21, 26-28—What does the celestial chariot picture? (w07 7/1 11 ¶6)

Eze 4:1-7—Did Ezekiel really act out the scene depicting Jerusalem’s siege? (w07 7/1 12 ¶4)

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) Eze 1:1-14

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—Play the video *Your Family Can Be Happy—Introduction*, and offer the brochure.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) bh 143 ¶20-21—Show how to reach the heart.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 76
- **“Find Delight in Preaching the Good News”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Regain Joy Through Study and Meditation* (video category THE BIBLE).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) kr chap. 14 ¶1-7
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 122 and Prayer

EZEKIEL 1-5 | Ezekiel Delighted to Declare God’s Message

In a vision, Jehovah gave Ezekiel a scroll and told him to eat it. What was the significance of that?

2:9–3:2

- Ezekiel was to absorb fully God’s message. Meditating on the words in the scroll would affect Ezekiel’s deepest emotions and motivate him to speak

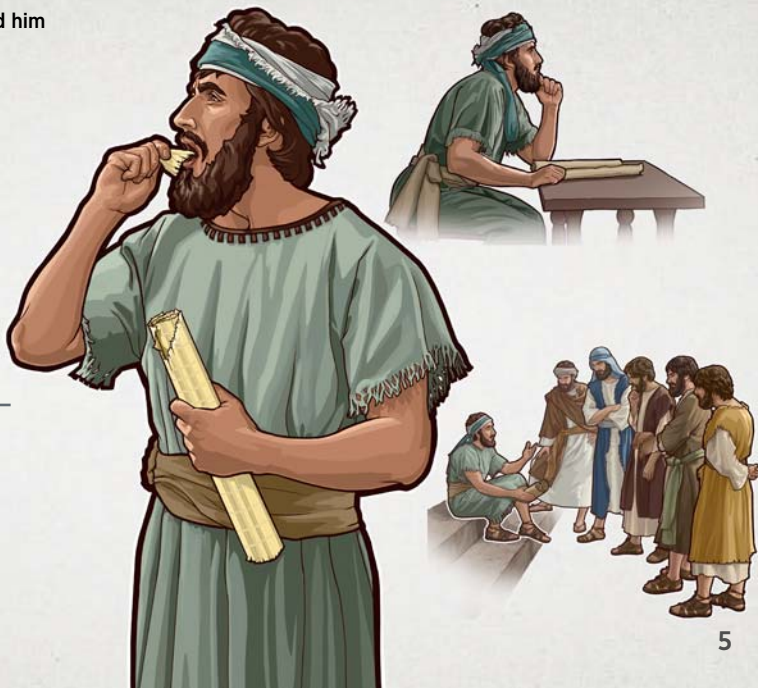
3:3

- The scroll tasted sweet because Ezekiel maintained a good attitude toward his assignment



How will prayerful Bible study and meditation affect me?

How can I cultivate a good attitude toward the preaching work?



Our Reasons for Joy

(Matthew 5:12)

1. Our reasons for joy are abundant,
Like riches increasing in worth.
Those precious to God from all nations
Are joining us in all the earth.
The joy in our heart is well-founded,
With roots reaching deep in God's Word.
We daily partake of its teachings;
Faith follows the things we have heard.
Our causes for joy are deep-seated,
Like embers that burn in our hearts.
Though troubles and trials beset us,
Endurance Jehovah imparts.

(CHORUS)

*Jehovah our God is our joy,
The work of his hands our delight.
How deep are his thoughts, how great are his works,
Abounding in goodness and might!*

Ezekiel 1-5

1 In the 30th year, on the fifth day of the fourth month, while I was among the exiled people by the river Che'bar, the heavens were opened and I began to see visions of God. **2** On the fifth day of the month—that is, in the fifth year of the exile of King Je-hoi'a-chin—**3** the word of Jehovah came to Ezekiel son of Bu'zi the priest by the river Che'bar in the land of the Chal-de'ans. There the hand of Jehovah came upon him.

4 As I was looking, I saw a tempestuous wind coming from the north, and there was a huge cloud and flashing fire surrounded by a bright light, and from the midst of the fire was something that looked like electrum. **5** Within it were what looked like four living creatures, and the appearance of each one was like that of a human. **6** Each one had four faces and four wings. **7** Their feet were straight, and the soles of their feet were like those of a calf, and they were shining like the glow of burnished copper. **8** They had human hands under their wings on all four sides, and the four of them had faces and wings. **9** Their wings were touching one another. They would not turn when they went; they would each go straight forward.

10 Their faces had this appearance: Each of the four had a man's face with a lion's face on the right, a bull's

face on the left, and each of the four had an eagle's face. ¹¹ That is how their faces were. Their wings were spread out above them. Each had two wings that were touching one another and two wings covering their bodies.

¹² They would each go straight forward, going wherever the spirit would incline them to go. They would not turn as they went. ¹³ And the living creatures had the appearance of burning coals of fire, and something that looked like torches of bright fire was moving back and forth between the living creatures, and lightning was flashing out from the fire. ¹⁴ And when the living creatures would go forth and return, their movement had the appearance of flashes of lightning.

¹⁵ As I was watching the living creatures, I saw one wheel on the earth beside each of the living creatures with four faces. ¹⁶ The wheels and their structure appeared to glow like chrys'olite, and the four of them looked alike. Their appearance and structure looked as though a wheel were within a wheel. ¹⁷ When they moved, they could go in any of the four directions without turning as they went. ¹⁸ Their rims were so high that they inspired awe, and the rims of all four were full of eyes all around. ¹⁹ Whenever the living creatures moved, the wheels would move along with them, and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth,

the wheels would also be lifted up. ²⁰ They would go where the spirit inclined them to go, wherever the spirit went. The wheels would be lifted up together with them, for the spirit operating on the living creatures was also in the wheels. ²¹ When they moved, these would move; and when they stood still, these would stand still; and when they were lifted up from the earth, the wheels would be lifted up together with them, for the spirit operating on the living creatures was also in the wheels.

²² Over the heads of the living creatures was the likeness of an expanse that sparkled like awesome ice, stretched out above their heads. ²³ Under the expanse their wings were straight, one to the other. Each one had two wings for covering one side of their bodies and two for covering the other side. ²⁴ When I heard the sound of their wings, it was like a sound of rushing waters, like the sound of the Almighty. When they moved, it was like the sound of an army. When they stood still, they would let their wings down.

²⁵ There was a voice above the expanse over their heads. (When they stood still, they would let their wings down.) ²⁶ Above the expanse that was over their heads was what looked like a sapphire stone, and it resembled a throne. Sitting on the throne up above was someone whose appearance resembled that of a human. ²⁷ I saw something glowing like electrum that

was like a fire radiating from what appeared to be his waist and upward; and from his waist down, I saw something that resembled fire. There was a brilliance all around him ²⁸ like that of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day. That was how the surrounding brilliant light appeared. It was like the appearance of the glory of Jehovah. When I saw it, I fell facedown and began to hear the voice of someone speaking.

2 He then said to me: “Son of man, stand up on your feet that I may speak with you.” ² When he spoke to me, spirit came into me and made me stand up on my feet so that I could hear the One speaking to me.

³ He went on to say to me: “Son of man, I am sending you to the people of Israel, to rebellious nations that have rebelled against me. They and their forefathers have transgressed against me down to this very day.

⁴ I am sending you to sons who are defiant and hardhearted, and you must say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says.’ ⁵ As for them, whether they listen or refuse to listen—for they are a rebellious house—they will certainly know that a prophet was among them.

⁶ “But you, son of man, do not be afraid of them, and do not be afraid of their words, although you are surrounded by briars and thorns and are dwelling among scorpions. Do not be afraid of their words, and do not be terrified by their faces, for they are a

rebellious house. ⁷ You must speak my words to them, whether they listen or not, for they are a rebellious people.

⁸ “But you, son of man, listen to what I am telling you. Do not become rebellious like this rebellious house. Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you.”

⁹ When I looked, I saw a hand stretched out to me, and in it I saw a written scroll. ¹⁰ When he spread it out before me, it had writing on both front and back. Dirges and mourning and wailing were written on it.

3 Then he said to me: “Son of man, eat what is before you. Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.”

² So I opened my mouth, and he made me eat this scroll. ³ He went on to say to me: “Son of man, eat this scroll that I am giving you, and fill your stomach with it.” So I began to eat it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth.

⁴ He said to me: “Son of man, go in among the house of Israel and speak my words to them. ⁵ For you are not being sent to a people who speak an unintelligible language or an unknown tongue, but to the house of Israel. ⁶ You are not being sent to many peoples speaking an unintelligible language or an unknown tongue, whose words you cannot understand. If I would send you to them, they would listen to you. ⁷ But the

house of Israel will refuse to listen to you, for they do not want to listen to me. All those of the house of Israel are hardheaded and hardhearted. ⁸ Look! I have made your face exactly as hard as their faces and your forehead exactly as hard as their foreheads. ⁹ I have made your forehead like a diamond, harder than flint. Do not be afraid of them or be terrified by their faces, for they are a rebellious house.”

¹⁰ He went on to say to me: “Son of man, take to heart and listen to all my words that I speak to you. ¹¹ Go in among the exiles of your people and speak to them. Tell them, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says,’ whether they listen or refuse to listen.”

¹² A spirit then carried me along and I heard behind me a great rumbling sound that said: “May the glory of Jehovah be praised from his place.” ¹³ There was the sound of the wings of the living creatures as they were brushing against one another, and the sound of the wheels next to them, and the sound of a great rumbling. ¹⁴ And the spirit carried me along and took me, and I went in bitterness and in the rage of my spirit, and the hand of Jehovah rested strongly on me. ¹⁵ So I went to the exiled people at Tel-a'bib, who were dwelling by the river Che'bar, and I stayed there where they were dwelling; and in a dazed condition, I stayed among them for seven days.

¹⁶ At the end of seven days the word of Jehovah came to me:

¹⁷ “Son of man, I have appointed you as a watchman to the house of Israel; and when you hear a word from my mouth, you must warn them from me. ¹⁸ When I say to someone wicked, ‘You will surely die,’ but you do not warn him, and you fail to speak in order to warn the wicked one to turn from his wicked course so that he may stay alive, he will die for his error because he is wicked, but I will ask his blood back from you. ¹⁹ But if you warn someone wicked and he does not turn back from his wickedness and from his wicked course, he will die for his error, but you will certainly save your own life. ²⁰ But when someone righteous abandons his righteousness and does what is wrong, I will put a stumbling block before him and he will die. If you did not warn him, he will die for his sin and his righteous acts will not be remembered, but I will ask his blood back from you. ²¹ But if you have warned the righteous one not to sin, and he does not sin, he will surely keep alive because he was warned, and you will have saved your own life.”

²² The hand of Jehovah came upon me there, and he said to me: “Get up, go to the valley plain, and I will speak with you there.” ²³ So I got up and went to the valley plain, and look! the glory of Jehovah was there, like the glory that I saw by the river Che'bar, and I fell

facedown. ²⁴ Then spirit entered into me and made me stand up on my feet, and he spoke to me and said:

“Go, shut yourself inside your house. ²⁵ As for you, son of man, they will put ropes on you and tie you with them so that you cannot go out among them. ²⁶ And I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth, and you will become mute, unable to reprove them, because they are a rebellious house. ²⁷ But when I speak with you I will open your mouth, and you must say to them, ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says.’ Let the one listening listen, and let the one refusing to listen refuse, because they are a rebellious house.

4 “And you, son of man, take a brick and put it in front of you. Engrave on it a city—Jerusalem. ² Lay siege to it, build a siege wall against it, raise up a siege rampart against it, set up camps against it, and surround it with battering rams. ³ Take an iron griddle and place it as an iron wall between you and the city. Then set your face against it, and it will be under siege; you are to besiege it. This is a sign to the house of Israel.

⁴ “Then you should lie on your left side and lay the guilt of the house of Israel on yourself. You will carry their guilt for the number of days that you lie on your side. ⁵ And I will impose on you 390 days, corresponding to the years of their guilt, and you will

carry the guilt of the house of Israel. ⁶ And you must complete them.

“Then for a second time you will lie down, on your right side, and you will carry the guilt of the house of Judah for 40 days. A day for a year, a day for a year, is what I have given you. ⁷ And you will turn your face toward the siege of Jerusalem with your arm bared, and you must prophesy against it.

⁸ “Look! I will tie you with ropes so that you cannot turn from your one side to your other side until you have completed the days of your siege.

⁹ “And you should take wheat, barley, broad beans, lentils, millet, and spelt and put them in one container and make them into bread for yourself. For the number of the days that you are lying on your side, 390 days, you will eat it. ¹⁰ You will weigh out and eat 20 shekels of food per day. You will eat it at set times.

¹¹ “And you will drink water by measure, a sixth of a hin. You will drink it at set times.

¹² “You will eat it as you would a round barley loaf; you will bake it before their eyes, using dried human excrement as fuel.” ¹³ Jehovah went on to say: “This is how the Israelites will eat their bread—unclean—among the nations where I will disperse them.”

¹⁴ I then said: “Not that, Sovereign Lord Jehovah! From my youth until now, I have not been defiled by

eating meat from an animal found dead or a torn animal, and no unclean meat has entered my mouth.”

¹⁵ So he said to me: “All right, I will allow you to use cattle manure instead of human excrement, and you will bake your bread over it.” ¹⁶ He then said to me: “Son of man, here I am cutting off your food supply in Jerusalem, and with great anxiety they will eat their bread ration by weight, and in horror they will drink their water ration by measure. ¹⁷ This will happen so that lacking bread and water, they may look in shock at one another and waste away because of their error.

5 “As for you, son of man, take a sharp sword for yourself to use as a barber’s razor. Shave your head and your beard, and then take scales to weigh and divide the hair into portions. ² You will burn a third of it in the fire inside the city when the days of the siege are completed. Then you will take another third and strike it with the sword all around the city, and the last third you will scatter to the wind, and I will draw a sword to chase after them.

³ “You must also take a few strands of them and wrap them up in the folds of your garment. ⁴ And take some more of them and throw them into the fire and incinerate them. From this a fire will spread to all the house of Israel.

⁵ “This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: ‘This is Jerusalem. I have set her in the middle of the nations, with lands all around her. ⁶ But she has rebelled against my judicial decisions and my statutes, acting more wickedly than the nations and the lands all around her. For they have rejected my judicial decisions, and they did not walk in my statutes.’

⁷ “Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: ‘Because you were more troublesome than the nations all around you and you did not walk in my statutes or carry out my judicial decisions but, instead, you followed the judicial decisions of the nations all around you, ⁸ this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: “Here I am against you, O city, and I myself will execute judgment in your midst before the eyes of the nations. ⁹ I will do in you what I have never done before, and the likes of which I will not do again, because of all your detestable practices.

¹⁰ ““So fathers among you will eat their sons, and sons will eat their fathers, and I will execute judgment among you and scatter all the rest of you in every direction.””

¹¹ ““Therefore as surely as I am alive,’ declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, ‘because it was my sanctuary that you defiled with all your disgusting idols and with all your detestable practices, I will also reject you; my eye will not feel sorry, and I will show no compassion.

¹² A third of you will die by the pestilence or perish in your midst by famine. Another third will fall all around you by the sword. And I will scatter the last third in every direction, and I will draw a sword to chase after them. ¹³ Then my anger will come to an end, and my wrath against them will subside, and I will be satisfied. And they will have to know that I, Jehovah, have spoken in my insistence on exclusive devotion, when I have finished unleashing my wrath against them.

¹⁴ “I will make you a devastated place and an object of reproach among the surrounding nations and in the eyes of everyone passing by. ¹⁵ You will become an object of reproach and scorn, a warning example and a horror to the nations around you, when I execute judgment on you in anger and in wrath and with furious punishments. I, Jehovah, have spoken.

¹⁶ “I will send against them the deadly arrows of famine to destroy them. The arrows that I send will bring you to ruin. I will make the famine worse for you by cutting off your food supply. ¹⁷ I will send against you famine and vicious wild beasts, and they will bereave you of children. Pestilence and bloodshed will overwhelm you, and I will bring a sword against you. I, Jehovah, have spoken.”

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- **“Ezekiel Delighted to Declare God’s Message”:** (10 min.)
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In a vision, Jehovah gave Ezekiel a scroll and told him to eat it. What was the significance of that?

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- Ezekiel was to absorb fully God’s message. Meditating on the words in the scroll would affect Ezekiel’s deepest emotions and motivate him to speak

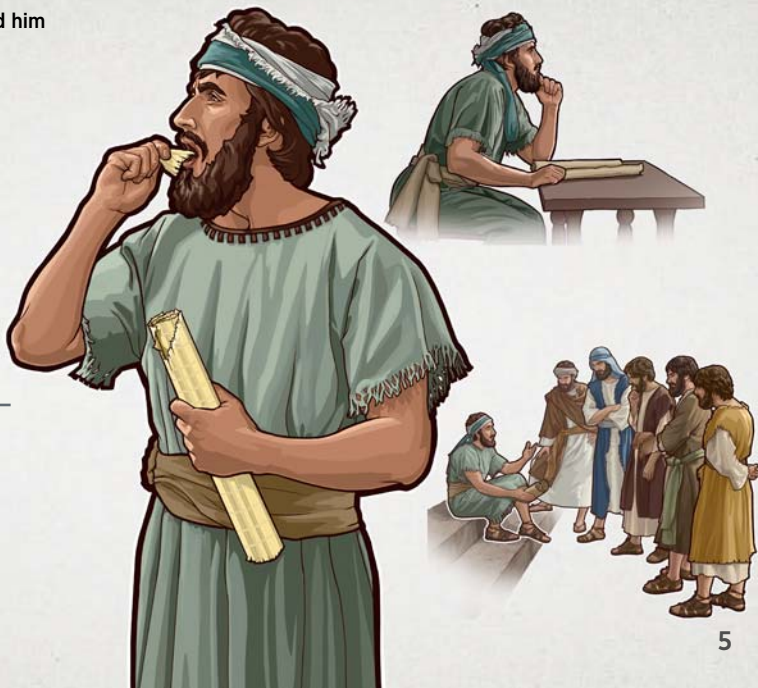
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- The scroll tasted sweet because Ezekiel maintained a good attitude toward his assignment



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June 19-25

Treasures From God's Word

Ezekiel 2:9–3:2—Ezekiel ate the scroll of “dirges and mourning and wailing”

Reference: w08 7/15 8 paragraphs 6-7

6 The book of Ezekiel reveals something else that can help us to speak with boldness. In a vision, Jehovah gave Ezekiel a scroll written on both sides with “dirges and moaning and wailing” and told him to eat it, saying: “Son of man, you should cause your own belly to eat, that you may fill your very intestines with this roll that I am giving you.” What did this vision mean? Ezekiel was to absorb fully the message he was to deliver. It was to become part of him, as it were, affecting his inmost feelings. The prophet goes on to relate: “I began to eat it, and it came to be in my mouth like honey for sweetness.” Declaring God’s message in public was a delight—like tasting honey—for Ezekiel. He felt highly privileged to represent Jehovah and to fulfill this God-given assignment, even though that meant delivering a strong message to an unreceptive people.—Read **Ezekiel 2:8–3:4, 7-9**.

7 This vision contains a valuable lesson for God’s servants today. We too have a strong message to deliver to people who are not always appreciative of our efforts. For us to

continue to view the Christian ministry as a God-given privilege, we must be well-nourished spiritually. Superficial or haphazard study habits will not be sufficient for us to absorb God's Word fully. Could you improve the quality or regularity of your personal Bible reading and Bible study? Could you more often meditate on what you read?—**Psalm 1:2, 3**.

Reference: *it-1* 1214

Intestines

Physical food is assimilated by the intestines. This fact was metaphorically used to represent mental or spiritual digestion when, in vision, Ezekiel was told to eat a scroll, filling his intestines (Hebrew, *me'im'*) with it. Ezekiel was to gain spiritual strength by meditating upon and storing in his memory the words written in the scroll. He was thereby nourished spiritually and provided with a message to speak.—**Ezekiel 3:1-6**; compare **Revelation 10:8-10**.

Ezekiel 3:3—Ezekiel was grateful to serve Jehovah as a prophet

Reference: w07 7/1 12 **paragraph 3**

Why did the scroll of dirges and moaning taste sweet to Ezekiel? What made the scroll sweet-tasting to Ezekiel was his attitude toward his commission. Ezekiel was grateful to serve Jehovah as a prophet.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Ezekiel 1:20, 21, 26-28—What does the celestial chariot picture?

Reference: w07 7/1 11 **paragraph 6**

The chariot represents the heavenly part of Jehovah's organization made up of faithful spirit creatures. Its source of power is Jehovah's holy spirit. The Rider of the chariot, who represents Jehovah, is indescribably glorious. His calmness is illustrated by a lovely rainbow.

Ezekiel 4:1-7—Did Ezekiel really act out the scene depicting Jerusalem's siege?

Reference: w07 7/1 12 **paragraph 4**

Ezekiel's appeal for the change of cooking fuel and Jehovah's granting him his request indicate that the prophet actually acted out the scene. Lying on the left side was for the 390 years of error of the ten-tribe kingdom—from its beginning in 997 B.C.E. to the destruction of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E. Lying on the right side was for Judah's 40 years of sin, spanning the period from Jeremiah's appointment as a prophet in 647 B.C.E. to 607 B.C.E. During the entire 430-day period, Ezekiel existed on a meager supply of food and water, prophetically indicating that there would be a famine during the siege of Jerusalem.

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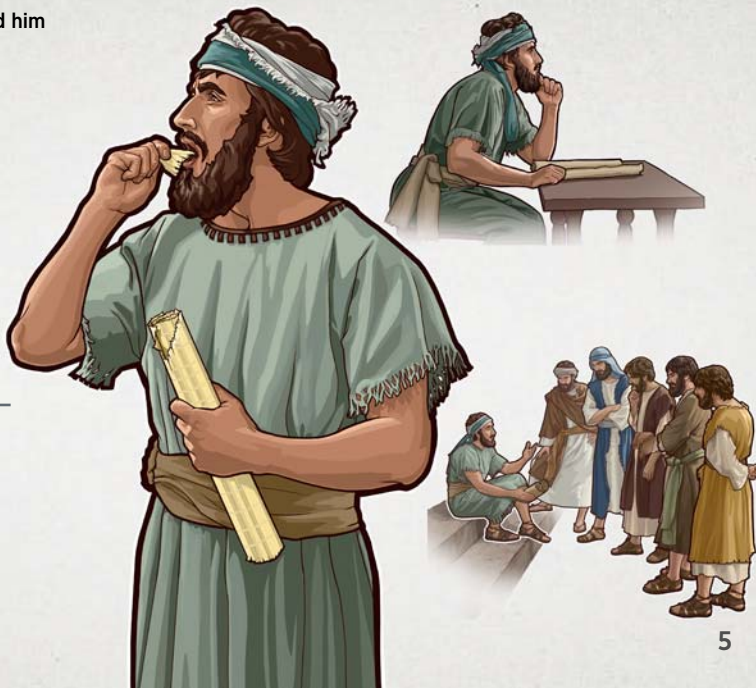
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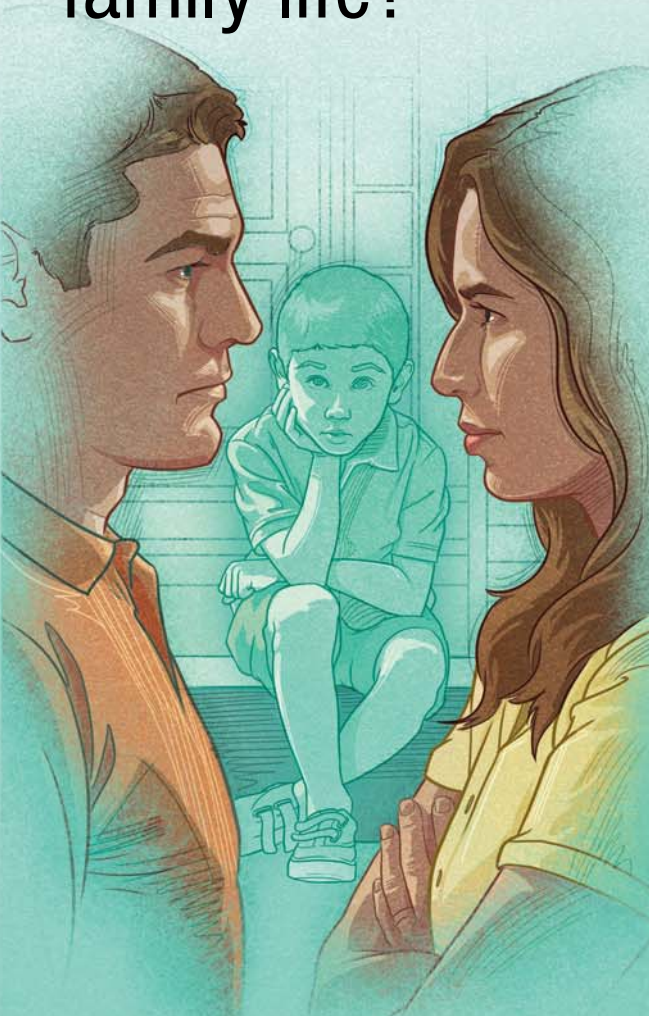


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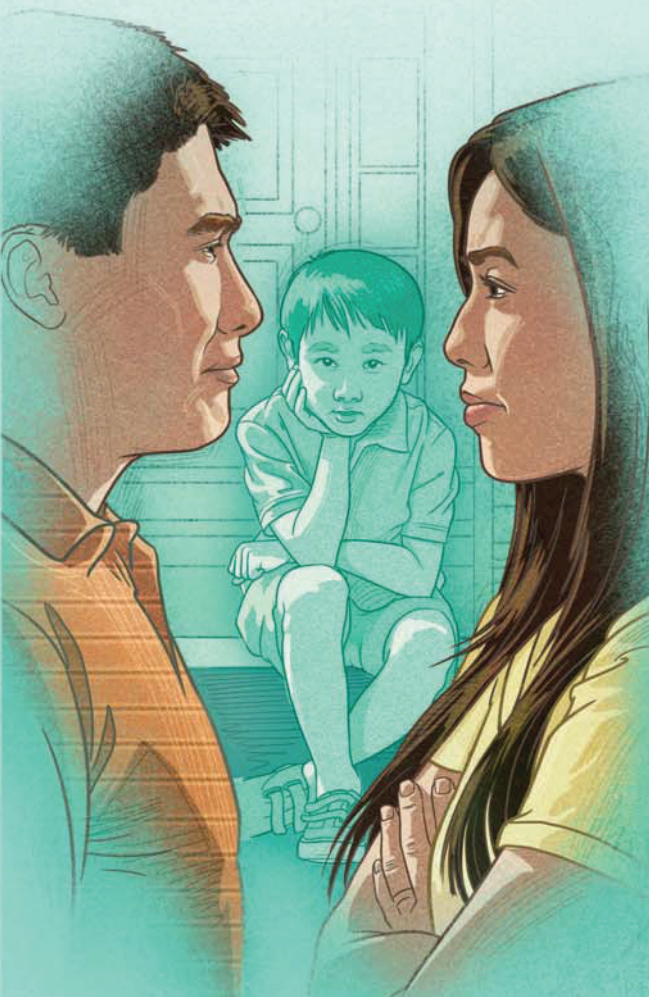
What is the key to happy family life?



Do you think it is . . .

- love?
- money?
- something else?

家庭幸福 主要靠什么？



你觉得要靠……

- 爱？
- 金钱？
- 其他？

Ni nini siri ya kuwa na familia yenye furaha?

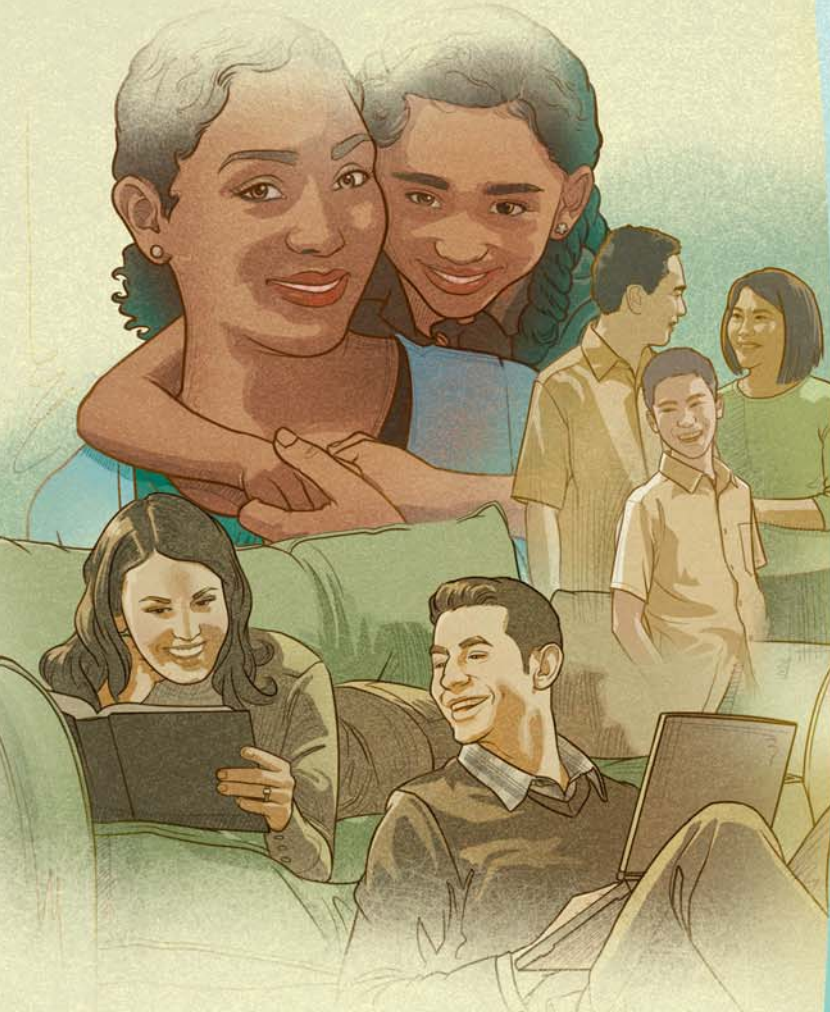


Je, unafikiri ni . . .

- upendo?
- pesa?
- jambo lingine?

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.)

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*Why Study
the Bible?*



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worship Jehovah, and this led to a lot of trouble. (Genesis 34:1, 2) Think of how the family could be hurt if one of its members were to become involved in sexual immorality!—Proverbs 17:21, 25.

THE KEY TO FAMILY HAPPINESS

²⁰ Family problems are easier to cope with when Bible counsel is applied. In fact, applying such counsel is the key to family happiness. So husbands, love your wife, and treat her as Jesus treats his congregation. Wives, submit to the headship of your husband, and follow the example of the capable wife described at Proverbs 31:10-31. Parents, train your children. (Proverbs 22:6) Fathers, ‘preside over your household in a fine manner.’ (1 Timothy 3:4, 5; 5:8) And children, obey your parents. (Colossians 3:20) None in the family are perfect, for all make mistakes. So be humble, asking one another for forgiveness.

²¹ Truly, the Bible contains a wealth of valuable counsel and instruction regarding family life.

20. To enjoy happy family life, what must each family member do?

21. What wonderful prospects lie ahead, and how can we enjoy happy family life now?

Moreover, it teaches us about God's new world and an earthly paradise filled with happy people who worship Jehovah. (Revelation 21:3, 4) What wonderful prospects lie ahead! Even now, we can enjoy happy family life by applying God's instructions found in his Word, the Bible.

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES

- Husbands need to love their wives as their own bodies.—Ephesians 5:25-29.
- Wives should love their family and respect their husbands.—Titus 2:4, 5.
- Parents need to love, teach, and protect their children.—Deuteronomy 6:4-9.
- Children need to obey their parents.—Ephesians 6:1-3.

76 *How Does It Make You Feel?*

(Hebrews 13:15)

1. How does it make you feel
 when you preach and teach with zeal,
When you know you've done your part
 to reach an honest heart?
Knowing you've done your best;
 then our God will do the rest.
Honest hearts he surely knows—
 all those to him disposed.

(CHORUS)

*It makes us glad, and we rejoice
 to give our heart and mind and voice.
So may our sacrifice of praise
 continue all our days.*

2. How does it make you feel
 when the words you speak appeal
To the ones whose heart is right
 for everlasting life?
Some people turn away,
 others might be led astray.
Still we're glad to bear his name
 and witness just the same.

(Chorus)

3. How does it make you feel,
knowing God's support is real,
And that he's entrusted you
to do the work we do?
Proudly we preach and teach,
using bold but gracious speech,
Searching out deserving ones;
this work will soon be done.

(Chorus)

- Song 111 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Ezekiel Delighted to Declare God’s Message”:** (10 min.)
[Play the video *Introduction to Ezekiel*.]
Eze 2:9–3:2—Ezekiel ate the scroll of “dirges and mourning and wailing” (w08 7/15 8 ¶6-7; it-1 1214)
Eze 3:3—Ezekiel was grateful to serve Jehovah as a prophet (w07 7/1 12 ¶3)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Eze 1:20, 21, 26-28—What does the celestial chariot picture? (w07 7/1 11 ¶6)

Eze 4:1-7—Did Ezekiel really act out the scene depicting Jerusalem’s siege? (w07 7/1 12 ¶4)

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) Eze 1:1-14

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—Play the video *Your Family Can Be Happy—Introduction*, and offer the brochure.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) bh 143 ¶20-21—Show how to reach the heart.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 76
- **“Find Delight in Preaching the Good News”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Regain Joy Through Study and Meditation* (video category THE BIBLE).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) kr chap. 14 ¶1-7
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 122 and Prayer

EZEKIEL 1-5 | Ezekiel Delighted to Declare God’s Message

In a vision, Jehovah gave Ezekiel a scroll and told him to eat it. What was the significance of that?

2:9–3:2

- Ezekiel was to absorb fully God’s message. Meditating on the words in the scroll would affect Ezekiel’s deepest emotions and motivate him to speak

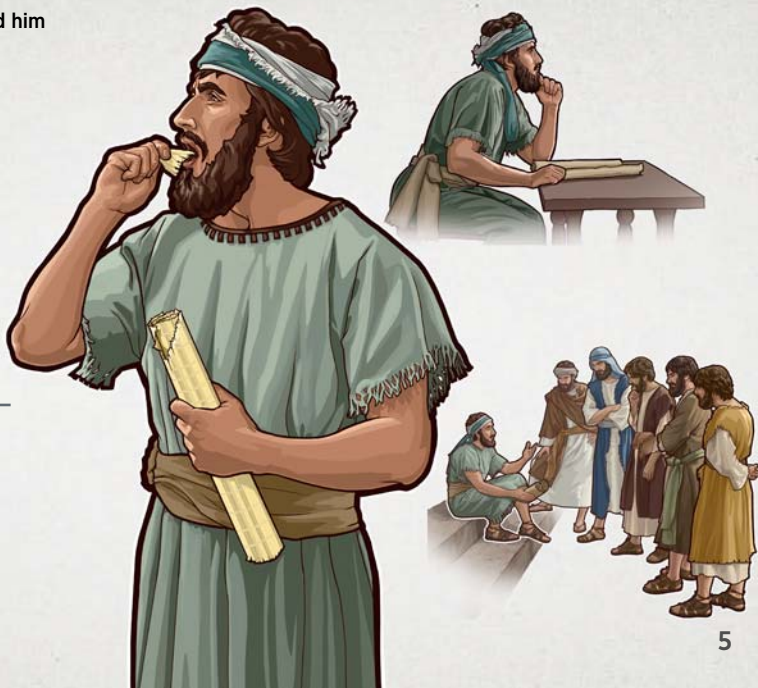
3:3

- The scroll tasted sweet because Ezekiel maintained a good attitude toward his assignment



How will prayerful Bible study and meditation affect me?

How can I cultivate a good attitude toward the preaching work?



Find Delight in Preaching the Good News



Which disposition would you like to have in the ministry?
How can you reflect joy?

Have you ever found it difficult to preach? Many of us would answer yes to that question. Why? Maybe we regularly face apathy or hostility in our territory or we fear talking to strangers. Certainly, these things can dampen our joy. Yet, we worship the happy God who wants us to serve him with rejoicing. (Ps 100:2; 1Ti 1:11) What are three good reasons to delight in preaching?

First, we declare a message of hope. Although hope is diminishing in society today, we can fill people’s hearts with “good news of something better.” (Isa 52:7) But the good news of God’s Kingdom can also fill us with joy. Before going out to preach, meditate on the blessings that God’s Kingdom will bring to the earth.

Second, the good news we preach benefits people physically and spiritually. They learn to abandon harmful practices and gain the prospect of everlasting life. (Isa 48:17, 18; Ro 1:16) We can imagine ourselves in a search-and-rescue work. Even though some people do not want to be rescued, we keep on searching for those who do.—Mt 10:11-14.

Third, and most important, our preaching honors Jehovah. He highly values our witnessing work. (Isa 43:10; Heb 6:10) Furthermore, he generously gives us his holy spirit to accomplish this work. Therefore, beg Jehovah for joy, a product of holy spirit. (Ga 5:22) With his help, we can overcome our anxieties and preach with boldness. (Ac 4:31) Then, regardless of the response in our territory, we will find delight in our assignment to preach.—Eze 3:3.

WATCH THE VIDEO *REGAIN JOY THROUGH STUDY AND MEDITATION*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

Why must we give priority to our spiritual eating habits, even if we spend many hours preaching each month?

In what way should we imitate Mary?

When do you make time to meditate on God’s Word?

What brings you delight when preaching the good news?



14 Loyally Supporting God's Government and No Other

FOCUS OF CHAPTER

Out of loyalty to the Kingdom, God's people remain no part of the world

JESUS stood before Pilate, the Jewish nation's most powerful secular judge, and stated a principle that has guided His genuine followers down to our day. "My Kingdom is no part of this world," he said. "If my Kingdom were part of this world, my attendants would have fought that I should not be handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my Kingdom is not from this source." (John 18:36) Pilate had Jesus executed, but the victory was short-lived. Jesus was resurrected. Emperors of the mighty Roman Empire tried to crush Christ's followers, but their efforts were futile. Christians spread the Kingdom message throughout the ancient world.—Col. 1:23.

² After the Kingdom was established in 1914, some

- 1, 2. (a) What principle has guided Jesus' followers down to our day?
(b) How have enemies tried to conquer us, and with what result?**

of the strongest military powers in history tried to wipe out God's people. But none have conquered us. Many governments and political factions tried to force us to take sides in their conflicts. They did not succeed in dividing us. Today, subjects of the Kingdom live in virtually every nation on earth. Even so, we are united in a genuine global brotherhood, remaining strictly neutral as to the world's political affairs. Our unity provides compelling evidence that God's Kingdom rules and that the King Jesus Christ continues to direct, refine, and protect his subjects. Consider how he has done so, and note just some of the faith-strengthening legal victories he has given us as we continue to remain "no part of the world."
—John 17:14.

An Issue Thrust to the Fore

³ Following the Kingdom's birth, war raged in heaven, and then Satan was cast down to the earth. **(Read Revelation 12:7-10, 12.)** A war also raged on earth, one that tested the resolve of God's people.

3, 4. (a) What events took place at the time of the Kingdom's birth? (b) Have God's people always fully understood the issue of neutrality? Explain.

They were determined to follow Jesus' example and be no part of the world. But at first they did not fully understand how much it would require of them to keep out of all political matters.

⁴ For example, Volume VI of the *Millennial Dawn* series,^{*[1]} which was published in 1904, encouraged Christians to avoid participation in war. However, it reasoned that if a Christian was conscripted, he should strive to obtain some form of noncombatant service. If that failed and he was sent into combat, he should ensure that he did not commit murder. Commenting on the situation at that time, Herbert Senior, who lived in Britain and was baptized in 1905, said: "There was a lot of confusion among the brothers and no clear advice as to whether it would be right to join the army as a soldier but only for noncombatant work."

⁵ However, *The Watch Tower* of September 1, 1915, began to refine our understanding of this issue.

^{*[1]} This volume is also known by the title *The New Creation*. Later, the *Millennial Dawn* volumes were called *Studies in the Scriptures*.

5. How did *The Watch Tower* of September 1, 1915, begin to refine our understanding?

Regarding the recommendations made in *Studies in the Scriptures*, it said: “We wonder if such a course would not mean compromise.” But what if a Christian were threatened with being shot for refusing a uniform and military service? The article reasoned: “Would it be any worse to be shot because of loyalty to the Prince of Peace and refusal to disobey His order than to be shot while under the banner of these earthly kings and apparently giving them support and, in appearance at least, compromising the teachings of our Heavenly King? Of the two deaths we would prefer the former—prefer to die because of faithfulness to our Heavenly King.” Despite that forceful statement, the article concluded: “We are not urging this course. We are merely suggesting it.”

⁶ Some brothers saw the issue clearly and met it head-on. Herbert Senior, quoted earlier, said: “To me, there was no difference in principle between unloading shells from a ship [noncombatant service] and putting those shells into a gun to be fired.” (Luke 16:10) As a result of his conscientious objec-

6. What have you learned from the example of Brother Herbert Senior?

tion to military service, Brother Senior was sent to prison. He and 4 other brothers were among a group of 16 conscientious objectors, including men from other religious denominations, who served some of their time at Richmond prison in Britain and later became known as the Richmond 16. At one point, Herbert and others like him were secretly shipped to the front lines in France. There, they were sentenced to be shot. He and a number of others were lined up in front of a firing squad, but they were not killed. Instead, their sentence was commuted to ten years in prison.

⁷ By the time World War II broke out, Jehovah's people as a whole had come to see more clearly what it meant to be neutral and what was required if they were to follow Jesus' example. (Matt. 26:51-53; John 17:14-16; 1 Pet. 2:21) For instance, the November 1, 1939, issue of *The Watchtower* carried the landmark article entitled "Neutrality," which stated: "The rule by which Jehovah's covenant people must now be governed is that of strict neutrality between the nations at war." Regarding that article, Simon Kraker,

7. By the start of World War II, what had God's people come to see?

who later served at headquarters, in Brooklyn, New York, said: “I learned to appreciate that God’s people were to be at peace with everyone, even amid threats of war.” That spiritual food was provided at the proper time and helped to brace God’s people for an unprecedented assault on their loyalty to the Kingdom.

Threatened by a “River” of Opposition

⁸ The apostle John prophesied that after the Kingdom’s birth in 1914, the dragon, Satan the Devil, would attempt to wipe out the supporters of God’s Kingdom by spewing out a symbolic river from its mouth.*^[2] (**Read Revelation 12:9, 15.**) How was John’s prophecy fulfilled? From the 1920’s onward, there was a surge of opposition against God’s people. Like many other brothers who lived in North America during the second world war, Brother Kraker was thrown into prison for his loyalty to God’s Kingdom. In fact, during the war, Jehovah’s Witnesses made up more than two thirds of all inmates who because of

*^[2] For a discussion of this prophecy, see the publication *Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!*, chapter 27, pages 184-186.

8, 9. How was the apostle John’s prophecy fulfilled?

1. Nations are troubled as never before.
People are fearful of what lies in store.
Firm and immovable we need to be,
Serving our God faithfully.

(CHORUS)

*Steadfast we all need to be;
Far from this world we keep free,
Standing firm to the end,
Unending life we'll see.*

2. Snares of the world and temptations abound.
We can resist if our thinking is sound.
Hating what's bad while we love what is true
Makes us immovable too.

(Chorus)

3. Give to God worship that comes from the heart.
In the Lord's service may we have a part.
Preach the good news, always holding it fast.
Soon the last days will have passed.

(Chorus)

APRIL 2017

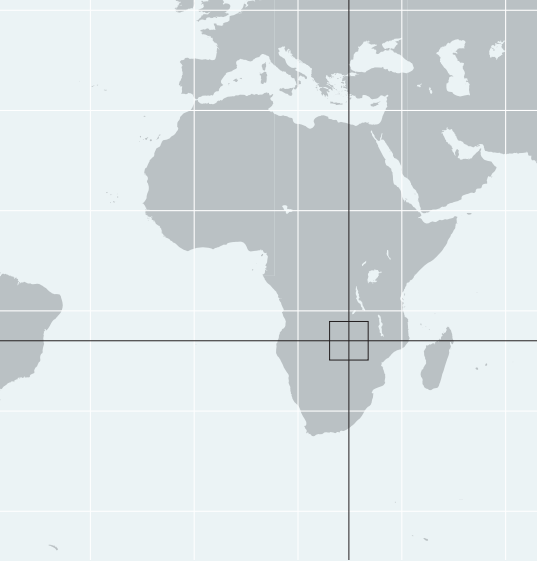
THE WATCHTOWER

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.

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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ATTENDANCE (2016)

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Scripture quotations are
from the modern-language
New World Translation
of the Holy Scriptures.

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.

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.

5

God's Wondrous Works

(Psalm 139)

1. O God, you know my rest and waking,
When I lie down and when I rise anew.
You search my thoughts, my inmost inclination,
The words I speak, the ways I walk,
you know them too.
You saw when I was made in secret,
My very bones not hidden from your sight.
You saw my form; its parts were down in writing.
I love the wonder of your ways
and praise your might.
Your knowledge, God, is wondrous, awe-inspiring;
Of this my soul is very well-aware.
If I should fear that darkness might enfold me,
Your spirit, God, would find me, even there.
Where could I hide from you, Jehovah,
Or be concealed, be hidden from your face?
Not in the Grave nor in the highest heaven,
Not in the dark nor in the sea;
there is no place.



SONGS:
5, 46

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

Deuteronomy 32:4

1 Peter 5:5

Matthew 6:14

Do You Share Jehovah’s Sense of Justice?

*“I will declare the name of
Jehovah . . . , a God of faithfulness
who is never unjust.”—DEUT. 32:3, 4.*

IMAGINE the scene. A man is falsely accused of a capital offense. To the shock and dismay of his family and friends, he is convicted on the basis of false

1, 2. (a) What injustice did Naboth and his sons experience? (b) What two qualities will we consider in this article?

testimony presented by witnesses who are known to be good-for-nothing men. A sick feeling overwhelms lovers of justice as they witness the execution of that innocent man and his sons. This is not an imaginary account. This was the experience of a faithful servant of Jehovah named Naboth, who lived during the reign of King Ahab of Israel.—1 Ki. 21:11-13; 2 Ki. 9:26.

² In this article, we will consider not only Naboth's experience but also that of a faithful elder in the first-century Christian congregation who made an error in judgment. In considering these Bible examples, we will learn that humility is essential if we are to demonstrate that we share Jehovah's sense of justice. We will also learn how a willingness to forgive when we observe injustices in the congregation can reflect Jehovah's view of justice.

A PERVERSION OF JUSTICE

³ Naboth was faithful to Jehovah at a time when most Israelites were following the bad example of King Ahab and his wife, wicked Queen Jezebel. Those Baal worshippers had no respect for Jehovah or appreciation for his standards. On the other

3, 4. What kind of man was Naboth, and why did he refuse to sell his vineyard to King Ahab?

hand, Naboth valued his relationship with Jehovah even more than life itself.

4 Read 1 Kings 21:1-3. When Ahab offered to purchase Naboth's vineyard or to give him a better vineyard in its place, Naboth refused. Why? He respectfully explained: "It is unthinkable, from Jehovah's standpoint, for me to give you the inheritance of my forefathers." Naboth's refusal was based on Jehovah's law to the nation of Israel that forbade the permanent sale of one's tribal inheritance. (Lev. 25:23; Num. 36:7) Clearly, Naboth had Jehovah's view of matters.

5 Sadly, Naboth's refusal triggered a series of reprehensible acts on the part of both King Ahab and his wife. In order to obtain the vineyard for her husband, Jezebel orchestrated the false accusation against Naboth, which resulted in the execution of both Naboth and his sons. How would Jehovah deal with this tragic injustice?

GOD'S RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT

6 Jehovah swiftly dispatched Elijah to confront

5. What role did Jezebel play in Naboth's murder?

6, 7. How did Jehovah show that he is a lover of justice, and why would this have been of comfort to Naboth's relatives and friends?

Ahab. Elijah rightly judged Ahab as a murderer and a thief. What was Jehovah’s verdict in this case? Ahab, his wife, and his sons would suffer the same fate as did Naboth and his sons.—1 Ki. 21:17-25.

⁷ Although Naboth’s family and friends were saddened by Ahab’s murderous actions, they no doubt found some measure of comfort in knowing that Jehovah was aware of the injustice and that he quickly addressed the wrongdoing. However, their humility and their trust in Jehovah were likely put to the test by an unexpected turn of events.

⁸ When Ahab learned of Jehovah’s adverse judgment, “he ripped his garments apart and put sackcloth on his body; and he went on a fast and kept lying down in sackcloth and walking despondently.” Ahab humbled himself! With what result? Jehovah told Elijah: “Because he has humbled himself before me, I will not bring the calamity during his lifetime. I will bring the calamity upon his house in the days of his son.” (1 Ki. 21:27-29; 2 Ki. 10:10, 11, 17) Jehovah, “the examiner of hearts,” extended a measure of mercy to Ahab.—Prov. 17:3.

8. How did Ahab respond to Jehovah’s judgment message, and with what result?

HUMILITY—A PROTECTION

⁹ How did this decision affect those who knew of Ahab's terrible crime? This seeming reversal may have tested the faith of Naboth's family and friends. If so, humility would have protected them, prompting them to continue faithful in their worship of Jehovah, confident that their God is incapable of injustice. (Read Deuteronomy 32:3, 4.) Naboth, his sons, and their families will experience perfect justice when Jehovah resurrects the righteous ones. (Job 14:14, 15; John 5:28, 29) Furthermore, a humble person remembers that "the true God will judge every deed, including every hidden thing, as to whether it is good or bad." (Eccl. 12:14) Yes, when rendering judgment, Jehovah takes into consideration factors that are unknown to us. Thus, humility protects innocent ones from spiritual disaster.

¹⁰ How will you respond if the elders make a decision that you do not understand or perhaps do not agree with? For example, what will you do if you or someone you love loses a cherished privi-

9. Why would humility have been a protection to Naboth's family and friends?

10, 11. (a) Under what circumstances might our personal sense of justice be tested? (b) In what ways will humility protect us?

lege of service? What if your marriage mate, your son or daughter, or your close friend is disfellowshipped and you do not agree with the decision? What if you believe that mercy was mistakenly extended to a wrongdoer? Such situations can test our faith in Jehovah and in his organizational arrangement. How will humility protect you if you face such a test? Consider two ways.

¹¹ First, humility will move us to acknowledge that we do not have all the facts. No matter how much we know of a situation, only Jehovah can read a person's figurative heart. (1 Sam. 16:7) Our

How will you respond if the elders announce a decision that you do not agree with?

(See paragraphs 10, 11)



awareness of this undeniable truth will prompt us to be humble, to recognize our limitations, and to adjust our view of the matter. Second, humility will help us to be submissive and patient as we wait on Jehovah to correct any true injustice. It is as the wise man wrote: “It will turn out well for those who fear the true God . . . , but it will not turn out well for the wicked one, nor will he prolong his days.” (Eccl. 8:12, 13) Certainly, a humble response is in the best spiritual interests of all concerned.—Read 1 Peter 5:5.

A CASE OF HYPOCRISY

¹² The first-century Christians in Syrian Antioch faced a situation that tested not only their humility but also their willingness to forgive. Let us consider that account and see how it will help us to examine our attitude about forgiveness and deepen our understanding of how forgiveness relates to Jehovah’s view of justice.

¹³ The apostle Peter was a well-known elder in the Christian congregation. He was a personal associate of Jesus and had been entrusted with sig-

12. What account will we now consider, and why?

13, 14. What privileges did the apostle Peter enjoy, and how did he demonstrate courage?

nificant responsibilities. (Matt. 16:19) For example, in 36 C.E., Peter had the privilege of sharing the good news with Cornelius and his household. This occasion was noteworthy, since Cornelius was an uncircumcised Gentile. When Cornelius and his household received holy spirit, Peter acknowledged: “Can anyone deny water to prevent these from being baptized who have received the holy spirit just as we have?”—Acts 10:47.

¹⁴ In 49 C.E., the apostles and the elders in Jerusalem met to consider whether circumcision would be required of Gentiles who converted to Christianity. At this meeting, Peter spoke boldly, reminding the brothers that some years earlier, uncircumcised Gentiles had received the gift of the holy spirit. Peter’s eyewitness testimony was very helpful to the first-century governing body in making a decision. (Acts 15:6-11, 13, 14, 28, 29) Likely, both Jewish and Gentile Christians appreciated Peter’s fearlessness in presenting the facts. How easy it must have been to have confidence in such a spiritually mature man!—Heb. 13:7.

¹⁵ Shortly after the meeting in 49 C.E., Peter

15. What error did Peter make while in Syrian Antioch? (See opening picture.)

visited Syrian Antioch. While there, he freely associated with his Gentile brothers. No doubt, they benefited from Peter's knowledge and experience. We can imagine their surprise and disappointment, though, when Peter suddenly stopped eating with them. Other Jewish members of the congregation, even Barnabas, were wrongly influenced by Peter to do the same. What prompted a mature Christian elder to make such an error in judgment—one that could have divided the congregation? More important, what can we learn from Peter's error that will help us if we are hurt by the words or actions of an elder?

¹⁶ **Read Galatians 2:11-14.** Peter gave in to the snare of fear of man. (Prov. 29:25) Despite his firsthand knowledge of Jehovah's thinking on the matter, Peter feared the opinion of the circumcised Jewish members of the congregation in Jerusalem. The apostle Paul, who was also present at that meeting in Jerusalem in 49 C.E., confronted Peter in Antioch and exposed his hypocrisy. (Acts 15:12; Gal. 2:13, ftn.) How would the Gentile Christians who were personally affected by Peter's mistake respond to the injustice? Would they allow them-

16. How was Peter corrected, and what questions arise?

selves to be stumbled? Would Peter lose precious privileges because of his mistake?

BE FORGIVING

¹⁷ Evidently, Peter humbly accepted Paul's corrective counsel. There is no indication in the Scriptures that he lost his privileges. In fact, he was later inspired to write two letters that became part of the Bible. Notably, in his second letter, Peter refers to Paul as "our beloved brother." (2 Pet. 3:15) Although Peter's error in judgment may have been painful for the Gentile members of the congregation, Jesus, who is head of the congregation, continued to use him. (Eph. 1:22) Members of the congregation thus had an opportunity to imitate Jesus and his Father by extending forgiveness. It is to be hoped that no one allowed himself to be stumbled by an imperfect man's mistake.

¹⁸ As was true in the first century, there are no perfect elders in the modern-day Christian congregation, "for we all make mistakes many times." (Jas. 3:2, ftn.) We may readily acknowledge this fact, but the challenge is when we are personally

17. How did Peter benefit from Jehovah's forgiveness?

18. Under what circumstances may we need to reflect Jehovah's sense of justice?

affected by the imperfections of a brother. In such a situation, will we reflect Jehovah's view of justice? For example, how will you respond if an elder makes a remark that hints at a degree of prejudice? Will you allow yourself to be stumbled if an elder thoughtlessly makes a statement that offends or hurts you? Rather than quickly concluding that the brother no longer qualifies as an elder, will you patiently wait on Jesus, the head of the congregation? Will you put forth the effort to see the bigger picture, perhaps reflecting on the brother's many years of faithful service? If a brother who sins against you continues to serve as an elder or even receives additional privileges, will you rejoice with him? Your willingness to forgive may well reflect Jehovah's view of justice.—Read Matthew 6: 14, 15.

¹⁹ Lovers of justice long for the day when Jehovah will completely erase all the injustice inflicted on humans by Satan and his wicked system. (Isa. 65:17) Until then, may each of us be determined to reflect Jehovah's view of justice by humbly acknowledging our personal limitations and generously forgiving those who sin against us.

19. What should be our determination?

We Thank You, Jehovah

(1 Thessalonians 5:18)

1. We thank you, Jehovah, each day and each night,
That you shed upon us your precious light.
We thank you that we have the priv'lege of prayer,
That we can approach you with ev'ry care.
2. We thank you, Jehovah, for your loving Son,
Who conquered the world; by his faith he won.
We thank you for guidance in doing your will.
You lovingly help us our vows fulfill.
3. We thank you, our God, for the honor to preach
About your great name and the truth to teach.
We thank you that soon all earth's woes will be past,
While your Kingdom blessings forever last.



