

- Song 139 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Blessings That Restored Israel Would Enjoy”:** (10 min.)

Eze 47:1, 7-12—The restored land would be fruitful (w99 3/1 10 ¶11-12)

Eze 47:13, 14—Each family would receive an inheritance (w99 3/1 10 ¶10)

Eze 48:9, 10—Before land was allotted to the people, a special portion of the land would be “set apart” as a “contribution” to Jehovah

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
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Eze 47:6—Why is Ezekiel called “son of man”? (it-2 1001)

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EZEKIEL 46-48 | Blessings That Restored Israel Would Enjoy

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47:7-14

The vision promised organization, cooperation, and security

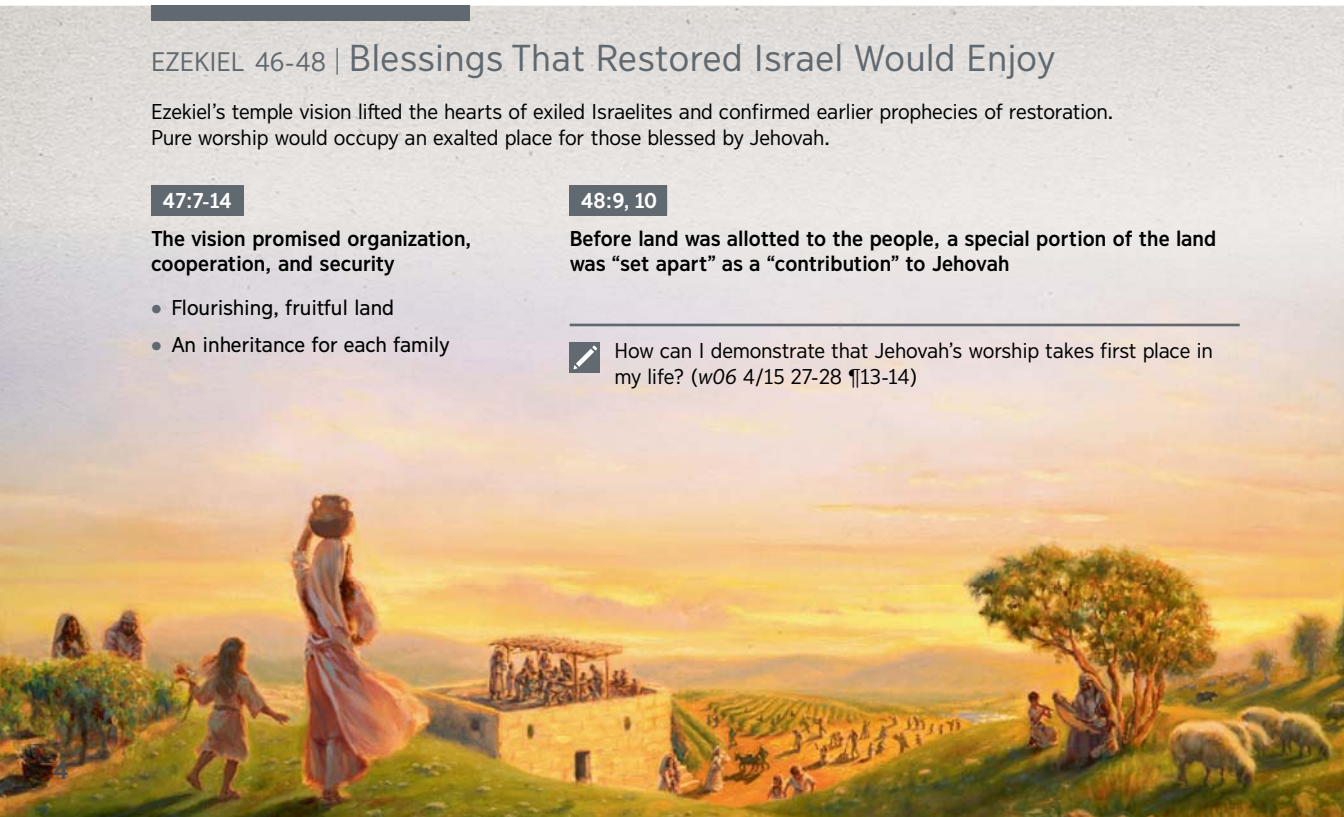
- Flourishing, fruitful land
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Before land was allotted to the people, a special portion of the land was “set apart” as a “contribution” to Jehovah



How can I demonstrate that Jehovah’s worship takes first place in my life? (w06 4/15 27-28 ¶13-14)



139 *See Yourself When All Is New* (Revelation 21:1-5)

1. Just see yourself, just see me too;
 Just see us all in a world that is new.
Think how you'll feel, how it will be,
 To live in peace, to be truly free.
No evil one will then prevail;
 Rule by our God cannot ever fail.
The time will have come for a new earthly start,
 The song of our praises
 will pour out from our heart:

(CHORUS)

*"We thank you, our God, for all you have done.
All things are new by the rule of your Son.
The fullness of our heart overflows in our song;
All glory and honor and praise to you belong."*

2. Now see yourself, and see me too;
 And look ahead to a world that is new.
No sight we see, no sound we hear
 Will cause alarm or give rise to fear.
All has come true, just as he said;
 Now over mankind, his tent is spread.
He now will awaken those sleeping in death;
 Their voices will join ours with
 ev'ry grateful breath:

(Chorus)

(See also Ps. 37:10, 11; Isa. 65:17; John 5:28; 2 Pet. 3:13.)

Ezekiel 46-48

46 “This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: ‘The gate of the inner courtyard that is facing east should remain shut for the six workdays, but on the Sabbath day and on the day of the new moon it should be opened. ² The chieftain will enter from outside by way of the porch of the gate, and he will stand by the doorpost of the gate. The priests will offer his whole burnt offering and his communion sacrifices, and he will bow down at the threshold of the gate and then go out. But the gate should not be shut until the evening. ³ The people of the land will also bow down before Jehovah at the entrance of that gate on the Sabbaths and on the new moons.

⁴ “The whole burnt offering that the chieftain will present to Jehovah on the Sabbath day should consist of six sound male lambs and a sound ram. ⁵ The grain offering will be an e'phah for the ram and whatever he is able to give for the male lambs, along with a hin of oil with each e'phah. ⁶ On the day of the new moon the offering will consist of a sound young bull of the herd, six male lambs, and a ram; they should be sound ones. ⁷ He should offer as a grain offering an e'phah for the young bull, an e'phah for the ram, and whatever he can afford for the male lambs. And he should offer a hin of oil with each e'phah.

⁸ ““When the chieftain enters, he should enter by way of the porch of the gate, and he should go out the same way. ⁹ And when the people of the land come in before Jehovah during the festivals, those who come in to worship through the north gate should go out through the south gate, and those who come in through the south gate should go out through the north gate. No one should go back by way of the gate through which he entered, for they should exit through the gate that is opposite them. ¹⁰ As for the chieftain who is among them, he should come in when they come in, and he should go out when they go out. ¹¹ During the festivals and the festal seasons the grain offering should be an e'phah for the young bull, an e'phah for the ram, and whatever he is able to give for the male lambs, along with a hin of oil with each e'phah.

¹² ““If the chieftain provides a whole burnt offering or communion sacrifices as a voluntary offering to Jehovah, the gate facing east will be opened for him, and he will provide his whole burnt offering and his communion sacrifices just as he does on the Sabbath day. After he goes out, the gate should be shut behind him.

¹³ ““Each day you should provide a sound male lamb in its first year as a whole burnt offering to Jehovah. You should do this morning by morning. ¹⁴ Along with it, each morning you should provide a sixth of an

e'phah as a grain offering, along with a third of a hin of oil for sprinkling on the fine flour as a regular grain offering to Jehovah. This is a lasting statute. ¹⁵ They must provide the male lamb, the grain offering, and the oil each morning as a regular whole burnt offering.'

¹⁶ "This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: 'If the chieftain gives a gift to each one of his sons as an inheritance, it will become the property of his sons. It is their possession by inheritance. ¹⁷ But if he gives a gift from his inheritance to one of his servants, it will be his until the year of liberty; and then it will return to the chieftain. Only the inheritance of his sons will be permanently theirs. ¹⁸ The chieftain should not take any of the inheritance of the people by forcing them off their property. He should give his sons an inheritance from his own property, so that no one among my people may be driven from his property.'"

¹⁹ Then he brought me in by the entryway that was beside the gate leading to the holy dining rooms of the priests, which faced north, and there I saw a place at the rear toward the west. ²⁰ He said to me: "This is the place where the priests will boil the guilt offering and the sin offering and where they will bake the grain offering, so that they will not carry anything out to the outer courtyard and transmit holiness to the people."

²¹ He brought me out to the outer courtyard and led me past the four corners of the courtyard, and I saw a courtyard by each corner of the outer courtyard. ²² At the four corners of the courtyard were small courtyards, 40 cubits long and 30 cubits wide. All four of them were the same size. ²³ There were ledges all around the four of them, and beneath the ledges were built places to boil the offerings. ²⁴ Then he said to me: “These are the houses where the ministers of the temple boil the sacrifice of the people.”

47 Then he brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and there I saw water flowing eastward from under the threshold of the temple, for the front of the temple was facing east. The water was flowing down from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar.

² He then led me out by way of the north gate and took me outside and around to the outer gate that is facing east, and I saw water trickling from the right side.

³ When the man went out toward the east with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off 1,000 cubits and had me pass through the water; the water was ankle deep.

⁴ Then he measured off another 1,000 and had me pass through the water, and it was up to the knees.

He measured off another 1,000 and had me pass through, and the water was up to the hips.

⁵ When he measured off another 1,000, it was a torrent that I was unable to walk across, for the water was so deep that one had to swim, a torrent of water that could not be crossed on foot.

⁶ He asked me: “Have you seen this, son of man?”

Then he had me walk and return to the bank of the stream. ⁷ When I returned, I saw that on the bank of the stream were very many trees on both sides. ⁸ Then he said to me: “This water flows toward the eastern region and continues down through the Ar'a-bah and enters the sea. When it enters the sea, the water there will be healed. ⁹ Swarms of living creatures will be able to live wherever the waters flow. There will be an abundance of fish, because this water will flow there. The seawater will be healed, and everything will live wherever the stream goes.

¹⁰ “Fishermen will stand beside it from En-ged'i clear to En-eg'la-im, where there will be a drying yard for dragnets. There will be an abundance of many kinds of fish, like the fish of the Great Sea.

¹¹ “It will have swampy places and marshy places, and these will not be healed. They will be abandoned to salt.

¹² “All sorts of trees for food will grow on both banks of the stream. Their leaves will not wither; nor will their fruitage fail. Each month they will bear new fruit, because the water for them flows from the sanctuary. Their fruitage will serve as food and their leaves for healing.”

¹³ This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: “This is the territory that you will assign as the land inheritance of the 12 tribes of Israel, and Joseph will have two portions. ¹⁴ You will inherit it and receive equal shares. I swore to give this land to your forefathers, and now it is assigned to you as an inheritance.

¹⁵ “This is the boundary of the land on the northern side: It goes from the Great Sea by the way to Heth'lon toward Ze'dad, ¹⁶ Ha'math, Be-ro'thah, and Sib'ra-im, which is between the territory of Damascus and the territory of Ha'math, to Ha'zer-hat'ti-con, which is by the boundary of Ha-u-ran'. ¹⁷ So the boundary will run from the sea to Ha'zar-e-non, along the boundary of Damascus to the north, and the boundary of Ha'math. This is the northern border.

¹⁸ “The eastern side runs between Ha-u-ran' and Damascus and along the Jordan between Gil'e-ad and the land of Israel. You should measure from the

boundary to the eastern sea. This is the eastern border.

¹⁹ “The southern border will be from Ta'mar to the waters of Mer'i-bath-ka'desh, then to the Wadi and to the Great Sea. This is the southern border.

²⁰ “On the western side is the Great Sea, from the boundary up to a point opposite Le'bo-ha'math. This is the western border.”

²¹ “You are to apportion this land among yourselves, among the 12 tribes of Israel. ²² You should distribute it for inheritance among yourselves and to the foreigners residing with you who have had children while living among you; and they will be like native-born Israelites to you. They will receive an inheritance among the tribes of Israel along with you. ²³ You should give the foreign resident an inheritance in the territory of the tribe where he has taken up residence,” declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah.

48 “These are the names of the tribes, starting from the northern extremity: Dan’s portion runs along the way of Heth'lon to Le'bo-ha'math to Ha'zar-e'nan, along the boundary of Damascus northward, beside Ha'math; and it extends from the eastern to the western border.

² Ash'er’s portion is on the boundary of Dan, from the eastern border to the western border. ³ Naph'ta-li’s portion is on the boundary of Ash'er, from the eastern

border to the western border. ⁴ Ma-nas'seh's portion is on the boundary of Naph'ta-li, from the eastern border to the western border. ⁵ E'phra-im's portion is on the boundary of Ma-nas'seh, from the eastern border to the western border. ⁶ Reu'ben's portion is on the boundary of E'phra-im, from the eastern border to the western border. ⁷ Judah's portion is on the boundary of Reu'ben, from the eastern border to the western border. ⁸ On the boundary of Judah, from the eastern border to the western border, the contribution that you are to set apart should be 25,000 cubits wide and correspond to the length of the other tribal portions from the eastern border to the western border. The sanctuary will be in the middle of it.

⁹ “The contribution that you are to set apart to Jehovah will be 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 wide. ¹⁰ This will be the holy contribution for the priests. It will be 25,000 cubits on the north side, 10,000 on the west, 10,000 on the east, and 25,000 on the south. The sanctuary of Jehovah will be in the middle of it. ¹¹ It will be for the sanctified priests from the sons of Za'dok, those who took care of their responsibilities toward me and did not go astray when the Israelites and the Levites went astray. ¹² They will have a portion of the contribution of the land set apart as something most holy, on the boundary of the Levites.

¹³ “Right next to the territory of the priests, the Levites will have a portion 25,000 cubits long and 10,000 wide. (The whole length will be 25,000 long and 10,000 wide.) ¹⁴ They should not sell, exchange, or transfer any of this choicest portion of the land, for it is something holy to Jehovah.

¹⁵ “The remaining area that is 5,000 cubits wide alongside the 25,000 cubit border will be for common use of the city, for housing and pasture ground. The city will be in the middle of it. ¹⁶ These are the city’s measurements: The northern border is 4,500 cubits, the southern border is 4,500, the eastern border is 4,500, and the western border is 4,500. ¹⁷ The pasture ground of the city will be 250 cubits to the north, 250 to the south, 250 to the east, and 250 to the west.

¹⁸ “The length of the remaining portion will correspond to the holy contribution, 10,000 cubits to the east and 10,000 to the west. It will correspond to the holy contribution, and its produce will provide food for those serving the city. ¹⁹ Those who are serving the city from all the tribes of Israel will cultivate it.

²⁰ “The whole contribution is 25,000 cubits square. You should set it aside as the holy contribution along with the possession of the city.

²¹ “What remains on both sides of the holy contribution and of the possession of the city will

belong to the chieftain. It will be alongside the 25,000 cubit borders that are east and west of the contribution. It will correspond to those adjoining portions, and it will be for the chieftain. The holy contribution and the sanctuary of the temple will be in the middle of it.

²² “The possession of the Levites and the possession of the city will be between what belongs to the chieftain. The chieftain’s territory will be between the boundary of Judah and the boundary of Benjamin.

²³ “As for the remaining tribes, Benjamin’s portion is from the eastern border to the western border.

²⁴ Sim'e-on's portion is by the boundary of Benjamin, from the eastern border to the western border.

²⁵ Is'sa-char's portion is by the boundary of Sim'e-on, from the eastern border to the western border.

²⁶ Zeb'u-lun's portion is by the boundary of Is'sa-char, from the eastern border to the western border. ²⁷ Gad's portion is by the boundary of Zeb'u-lun, from the eastern border to the western border. ²⁸ The southern border by the boundary of Gad will run from Ta'mar to the waters of Mer'i-bath-ka'desh, to the Wadi and on to the Great Sea.

²⁹ “This is the land that you should distribute as an inheritance to the tribes of Israel, and these will be their portions,” declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah.

³⁰ “These will be the exits of the city: The northern side will measure 4,500 cubits.

³¹ “The gates of the city will be named according to the tribes of Israel. Of the three gates on the north, there is one gate for Reu'ben, one gate for Judah, and one gate for Le'vi.

³² “The eastern side will be 4,500 cubits long, and there are three gates: one gate for Joseph, one gate for Benjamin, and one gate for Dan.

³³ “The southern side will measure 4,500 cubits, with three gates: one gate for Sim'e-on, one gate for Is'sa-char, and one gate for Zeb'u-lun.

³⁴ “The western side will be 4,500 cubits long, with three gates: one gate for Gad, one gate for Ash'er, and one gate for Naph'ta-li.

³⁵ “The perimeter will be 18,000 cubits. And the name of the city from that day on will be Jehovah Is There.”

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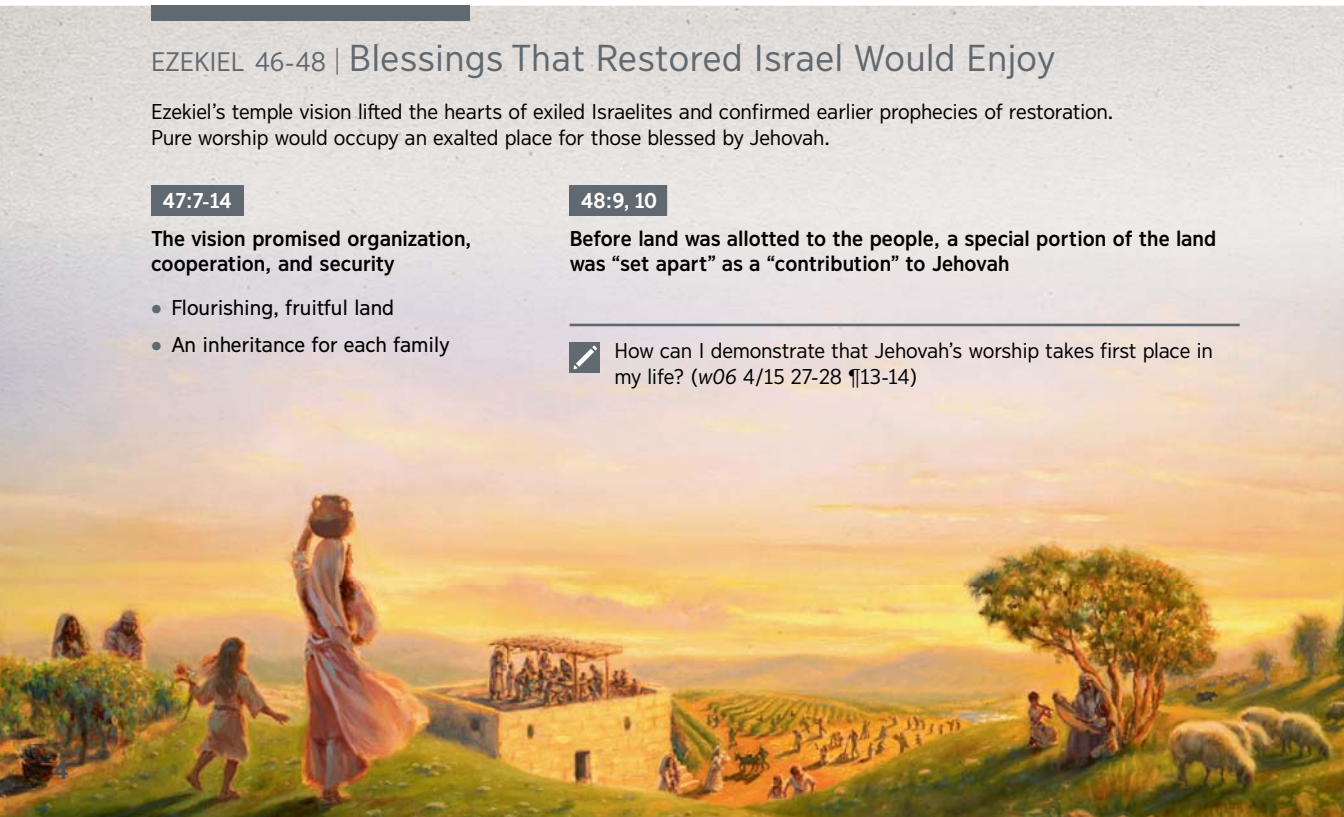
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September 11-17

Treasures From God's Word

Ezekiel 47:1, 7-12—The restored land would be fruitful

Reference: w99 3/1 10 paragraphs 11-12.

11 Would Jehovah bless their land? The prophecy answers this question with a heartwarming picture. A stream flows from the temple, widening as it goes, becoming a torrent by the time it enters the Dead Sea. There it revives lifeless waters, and a fishing industry flourishes on a stretch of the shoreline. Along the riverbanks are many trees that bear fruit year-round, giving nourishment and healing.—Ezekiel 47:1-12.

12 To the exiles, this promise echoed and confirmed earlier restoration prophecies that they held very dear. More than once, Jehovah's inspired prophets had described a restored, repopulated Israel in paradisaic terms. Dead regions coming to life had been a recurring prophetic theme. (**Isaiah 35:1, 6, 7**; 51:3; Ezekiel 36:35; 37:1-14) So the people could expect that Jehovah's life-giving blessings would flow forth like a river from the restored temple. Consequently, a spiritually dead nation would revive. The restored people would be blessed with outstanding spiritual men—men as righteous and firm as the trees along those visionary riverbanks, men who would take the lead in rebuilding a ruined land. Isaiah too had written of "big trees of righteousness" who would

“rebuild the long-standing devastated places.” — **Isaiah 61:3, 4.**

Ezekiel 47:13-14—Each family would receive an inheritance

Reference: *w99* 3/1 10 **paragraph 10.**

How all of this must have lifted the hearts of those exiles! Each family was assured of having an inheritance in the land. (Compare Micah 4:4.) Pure worship would occupy an exalted, central place there. And notice in Ezekiel’s vision that the chieftain, like the priests, would live on land contributed by the people. (Ezekiel 45:16) So in the restored land, the people were to contribute to the work of those whom Jehovah appointed to take the lead, supporting them by cooperating with their direction. In all, this land was a picture of organization, cooperation, and security.

How can I demonstrate that Jehovah’s worship takes first place in my life?

Reference: *w06* 4/15 27-28 **paragraphs 13-14.**

13 Do you not agree that to continue enjoying divine blessings, we must resist seeking things for ourselves at the expense of Jehovah’s worship? That is so whether the activity or interest diverting our attention is the pursuit of

wealth, get-rich-quick schemes, ambitious plans for advanced education to have a desirable career in this system, or programs for personal fulfillment.

14 Such things may not be sins in themselves. However, do you not see that from the standpoint of everlasting life, those really are “dead works”? (Hebrews 9:14) In what sense? They are *spiritually* dead, vain, and fruitless. If one persists in them, such works could lead to spiritual death. It happened to some anointed Christians in the apostles’ day. (Philippians 3:17-19) It has happened to some in our time. You may know of some who were gradually distracted from Christian activities and from the congregation; now they show no inclination to return to Jehovah’s service. We certainly hope that such ones will return to Jehovah, but the fact is that pursuing “dead works” can result in the loss of Jehovah’s favor and blessing. You can see how sad a development that would be. It would mean the loss of the joy and peace that God’s spirit produces. And imagine what a loss it would be not to share in the warm Christian brotherhood!—**Galatians 1:6; 5:7, 13, 22-24.**

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Ezekiel 47:1, 8; 48:30, 32-34—Why did the Jewish exiles not expect every detail of Ezekiel’s temple vision to be fulfilled literally?

Reference: w99 3/1 11 **paragraph 14**.

Were these events the only fulfillment of Ezekiel’s vision? No; something far greater is indicated. Consider: The temple that Ezekiel saw could not really be built as described. True, the Jews took that vision seriously and even applied some details literally. However, the visionary temple as a whole was too large even to fit on Mount Moriah, the site of the former temple. In addition, Ezekiel’s temple was not in the city but some distance away on a separate tract of land, whereas the second temple was built where its predecessor had stood, in the city of Jerusalem. (**Ezra 1:1, 2**) Further, no literal river ever emerged from Jerusalem’s temple. So ancient Israel saw only a token fulfillment of Ezekiel’s prophecy. This implies that there must be a greater, spiritual fulfillment of this vision.

Ezekiel 47:6—Why is Ezekiel called “son of man”?

Reference: it-2 1001.

In the Hebrew Scriptures the most frequent occurrence of the expression is in the book of Ezekiel, where over 90 times God addresses the prophet as “son of man.” (**Ezekiel 2:1, 3,**

6, 8) The designation as so used apparently serves to emphasize that the prophet is simply an earthling, thus heightening the contrast between the human spokesman and the Source of his message, the Most High God. The same designation is applied to the prophet Daniel at Daniel 8:17.

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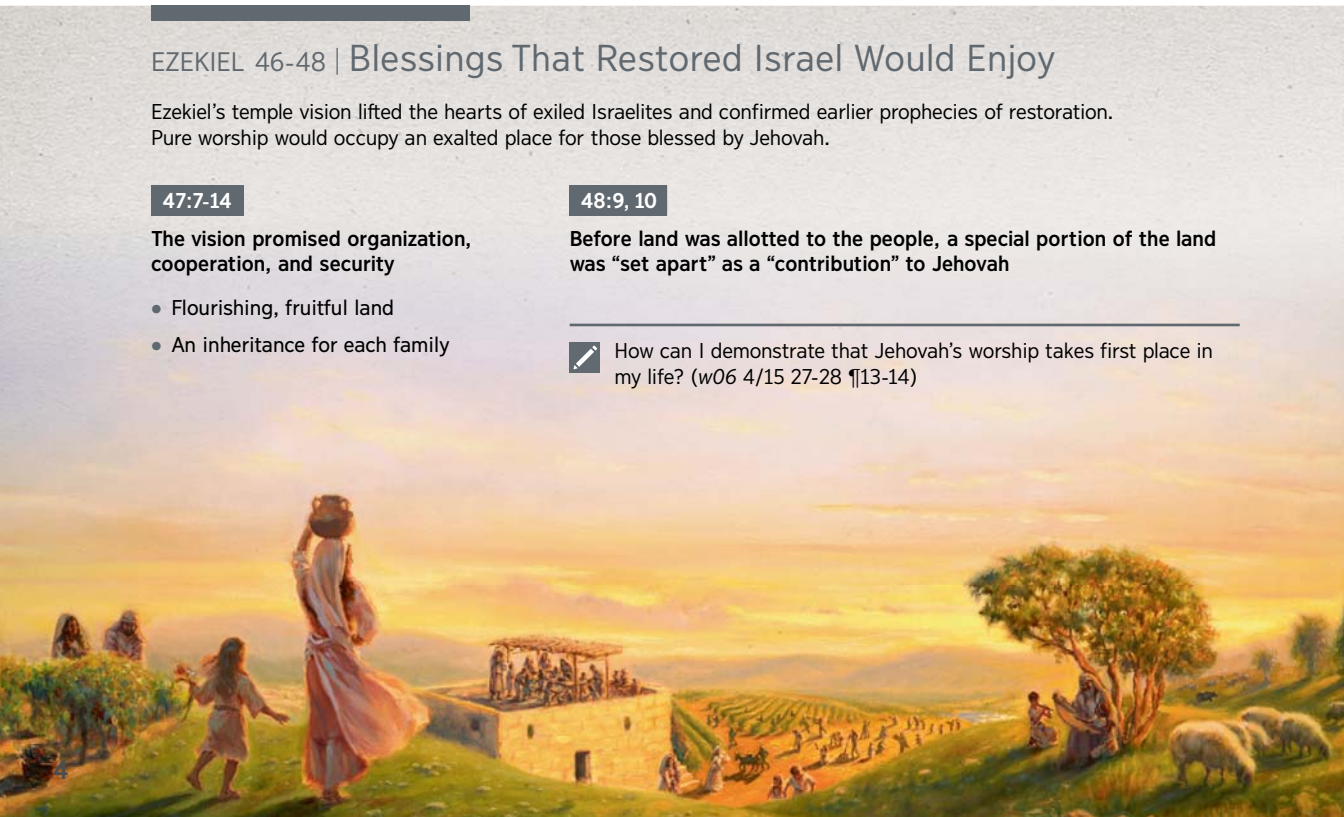
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THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



ANGELS

Are They Real? Why It Matters



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Are angels real? The Bible says:

“Praise Jehovah, all you his angels, mighty in power, who carry out his word, obeying his voice.”
—Psalm 103:20.

This issue of *The Watchtower* shows what the Bible says about angels and how they affect our life now.

ANGELS—ARE THEY REAL? WHY IT MATTERS

- 3 Angels—Can They Affect Your Life?
- 4 The Truth About Angels
- 5 Do You Have a Guardian Angel?
- 6 Are There Evil Angels?
- 7 How Angels Can Help You

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10 THE BIBLE CHANGES LIVES

For Me, God Did Not Exist

12 IMITATE THEIR FAITH | SARAH

God Called Her “Princess”

16 WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?



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Is It Necessary to Belong to an Organized Religion?

(Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > BIBLE QUESTIONS ANSWERED)

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

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

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

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COVER SUBJECT

Angels—Can They Affect Your Life?

One Sunday afternoon, Kenneth and Filomena, who live in Curaçao, went to visit a married couple with whom they were conducting a Bible study.

“When we arrived,” relates Kenneth, “the house was closed up and the car was gone. But something impelled me to call the wife’s phone.”

The woman answered the call and explained that her husband was at work. However, as soon as she realized that Kenneth and Filomena were there, she came to the door and invited them in.

They could immediately see that she had been crying. As Kenneth began the Bible study by opening with prayer, the woman started to cry again. So Kenneth and Filomena kindly asked her what was wrong.

The woman explained that she had planned to kill herself that very afternoon, and she was writing a suicide note to her husband when Kenneth’s phone call stopped her. She told them that she was suffering from depression, so they shared with her some comforting thoughts from the Bible. That encouragement proved to be a lifesaver.

“We thanked Jehovah for letting us help this distraught lady,” says Kenneth, “and especially for

moving us—perhaps by an angel or by His holy spirit—to make that phone call!”*

Are Kenneth and Filomena right to believe that God intervened, whether by means of an angel or by His holy spirit, or active force? Or was Kenneth’s timely phone call simply a happy coincidence?

We cannot say for sure. But what we do know is that God uses his angels to help people spiritually. For example, the Bible says that God used an angel to direct the Christian evangelizer Philip to help an Ethiopian official who was looking for spiritual guidance.—Acts 8:26-31.

Various religions promote belief in supernatural spirit creatures, some of whom are portrayed as benevolent creatures who carry out God’s will or act as personal guardians. Many people believe not only that angels exist but also that those spirits affect them in some meaningful way. However, many other people do not believe in angels at all.

Are angels real? If so, what is their origin? What is the truth about angels? Can they affect your life? Let us examine the evidence.

* Jehovah is the name of God as found in the Bible.—Psalm 83:18.



The Truth About Angels

Would you like to know the truth about angels—who they are, how they came into existence, and what they do? There is no better place to look for the answers than in God’s inspired Word, the Bible. (2 Timothy 3:16) What does the Bible tell us?

- ▶ Just as God is a Spirit, angels too are invisible spirits who do “not have flesh and bones.” The loyal angels reside in the heavens and have direct access to God’s heavenly presence.—Luke 24:39; Matthew 18:10; John 4:24.
- ▶ Angels have at times appeared in human form to care for God-given assignments on earth and then dematerialized after completing their assignments.—Judges 6:11-23; 13:15-20.
- ▶ Although angels are presented in the Bible as males and have always materialized as males, there is no male or female distinction among them. They do not marry and reproduce their own kind. Moreover, angels did not first come into existence as humans on earth—whether as babies, children, or adults. Angels were created by Jehovah; thus the Bible calls them “sons of the true God.”—Job 1:6; Psalm 148:2, 5.
- ▶ The Bible speaks of “the tongues of men and of angels,” indicating that spirit persons have language and speech. Although God has used angels to communicate with humans, he does not permit us to worship angels or pray to them.—1 Corinthians 13:1; Revelation 22:8, 9.
- ▶ There are myriads upon myriads of angels, perhaps numbering into the billions.*—Daniel 7:10; Revelation 5:11.
- ▶ Angels are “mighty in power”—much more powerful than humans—and they have super-human intelligence. They evidently can travel at tremendous speeds, far exceeding the limits of the physical world.—Psalm 103:20; Daniel 9:20-23.
- ▶ Despite their higher mental and spiritual powers, angels have limitations, and there are some things they do not know.—Matthew 24:36; 1 Peter 1:12.
- ▶ Angels were created with personalities, divine qualities, and free will. Hence, like humans, they can choose to do right or wrong. Sadly, some angels chose to rebel against God.—Jude 6.

* A myriad is 10,000. One myriad times one myriad is 100 million. Yet, Revelation speaks of “myriads of myriads” of angels. That is hundreds of millions, perhaps billions, of spirit creatures!



HOW ARE GOD'S ANGELS ORGANIZED?

The archangel, Michael, is the chief angel in terms of power and authority. The Scriptures clearly indicate that Michael is another name for Jesus Christ.—1 Thessalonians 4:16; Jude 9.

Seraphs rank very high among the angels in privileges and honor, and they are in attendance around God's throne.—Isaiah 6:1-3.

Cherubs too have high rank and care for special responsibilities that are intimately associated with the Almighty's glorious personage. They are often shown to be in attendance upon him.—Genesis 3:24; Ezekiel 9:3; 11:22.

The myriads of other angelic messengers serve as the Most High's agents and deputies in carrying out the divine will.*—Hebrews 1:7, 14.

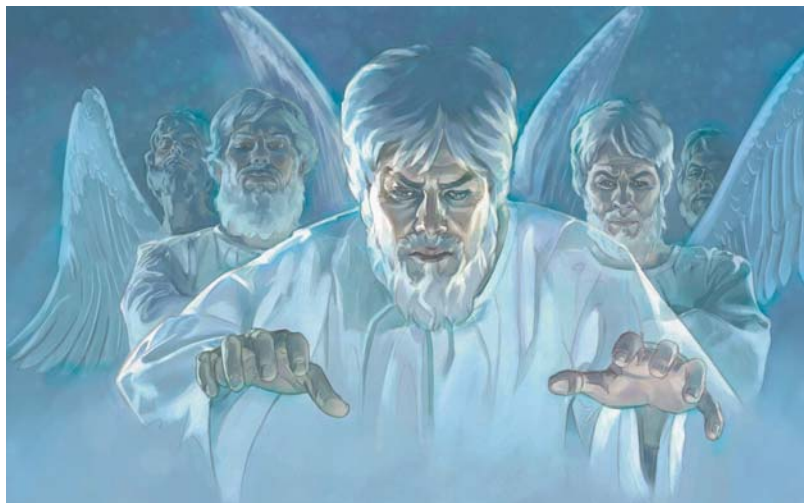
* For more information on angels, see chapter 10 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* as well as the related appendix article "Who Is Michael the Archangel?" published by Jehovah's Witnesses. Also available at www.jw.org.

Do You Have a Guardian Angel?

The Bible does not teach that each individual has a guardian angel. True, Jesus once said: "See that you do not despise one of these little ones [Christ's disciples], for I tell you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 18:10) However, rather than implying that each person has a guardian angel, Jesus was simply saying that angels take an active interest in each of his disciples. Hence, true worshippers do not take unwise and careless risks, presuming that God's angels will protect them.

Does that mean that angels do not help hu-

mans? No. (Psalm 91:11) Some feel quite strongly that God has provided them with angelic protection and guidance. Kenneth, mentioned in the opening article, is one who feels that way. Though we cannot be dogmatic, he may be correct. Jehovah's Witnesses frequently see evidence of angelic intervention as they engage in their preaching work. However, because angels are invisible, we cannot say to what extent God uses them in helping individuals with various matters. Nevertheless, we cannot go wrong by thanking the Almighty for whatever support he may have provided.—Colossians 3:15; James 1:17, 18.



Are There Evil Angels?

Yes, there are evil angels. Where did they come from? Recall that God created angels with the gift of free will. Shortly after the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, were created, a perfect spirit creature abused his freedom of choice and instigated rebellion on earth. He succeeded in getting Adam and Eve to rebel against God. (Genesis 3: 1-7; Revelation 12:9) The Bible does not specify what this spirit creature's name was or what rank he held in heaven before he rebelled. But after his rebellion, the Bible appropriately calls him Satan, which means "Resister," and the Devil, which means "Slanderer."—Matthew 4:8-11.

Sadly, the ungodly rebellion did not end there. In Noah's day an unspecified number of angels "forsook their own proper dwelling place" in God's heavenly family. They came down to the earth and took on fleshly bodies to pursue a depraved and immoral course, deviating from the purpose of their existence.—Jude 6; Genesis 6: 1-4; 1 Peter 3:19, 20.

What became of those evil angels? When God brought a global deluge to sweep the earth clean, they dematerialized and returned to the spirit realm. However, God did not permit the disgraced angels to return to "their original posi-

tion." Instead, he confined them to a debased condition of "dense [spiritual] darkness," known as Tartarus. (Jude 6; 2 Peter 2:4) These demons have placed themselves under the control of Satan the Devil, "the ruler of the demons," who "keeps disguising himself as an angel of light."—Matthew 12:24; 2 Corinthians 11:14.

The Bible teaches that God's Messianic Kingdom, a heavenly government, was established in 1914.* Following that momentous event, Satan and his demons were ousted from heaven and confined to the vicinity of the earth. The rampant wickedness and gross immorality that plague our planet are evidence of their vengeful and destructive influence.—Revelation 12:9-12.

However, the increase in depravity and shocking violence confirm that the end of their reign of terror is near. Soon, these tyrannical spirit creatures will be taken out of action. After God's Kingdom has ruled over a paradise earth for 1,000 years, those wicked spirits will have one brief, final opportunity to test humankind. Then they will be destroyed forever.—Matthew 25:41; Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10.

* For more information regarding God's Kingdom, see chapter 8 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah's Witnesses. Also available at www.jw.org.

How Angels Can Help You

Faithful angels are keenly interested in human affairs and are actively involved in carrying out Jehovah’s will. When God created the earth, the angels “joyfully cried out together, and all the sons of God began shouting in applause.” (Job 38:4, 7) Throughout the course of history, angels have desired “to peer” into prophetic utterances regarding future events on earth.—1 Peter 1:11, 12.

The Bible shows that in order to accomplish God’s will, angels have at times provided a measure of protection for true worshippers. (Psalm 34:7) For example:

- ▶ When Jehovah brought destruction on the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, angels helped righteous Lot and his family to flee.—Genesis 19:1, 15-26.
- ▶ In ancient Babylon when three young Hebrews were condemned to die in a fiery furnace, God “sent his angel and rescued his servants.”—Daniel 3:19-28.
- ▶ After the righteous man Daniel spent the night in a den of ravenous lions, he explained that he had survived because “God sent his angel and shut the mouth of the lions.”—Daniel 6:16, 22.

THE ANGELS SUPPORTED THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION

At times, God’s angelic messengers intervened in the activities of the early Christian congregation when that was necessary to fulfill Jehovah’s purpose. For example:

- ▶ An angel opened the doors of a prison and directed the apostles imprisoned there to continue preaching in the temple.—Acts 5:17-21.
- ▶ An angel instructed the evangelizer Philip to go to the desert road that ran from Jerusalem

to Gaza and preach to an Ethiopian who had gone to Jerusalem to worship.—Acts 8:26-33.

- ▶ When it was God’s time for non-Jews to become Christians, an angel appeared to the Roman army officer Cornelius in a vision and instructed him to summon the apostle Peter to his home.—Acts 10:3-5.
- ▶ When the apostle Peter was imprisoned, an angel appeared to him and led him out of the prison.—Acts 12:1-11.





Angels help declare the good news throughout the earth

HOW ANGELS CAN HELP YOU

There is no evidence that God is now using angels to help people miraculously in the ways described in the Bible. However, regarding our time, Jesus said: “This good news of the Kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.” (Matthew 24:14) Did you know that Christ’s disciples are doing this work under the supervision of the angels?

The book of Revelation indicates that angels would be diligently helping people earth wide to learn about Jehovah God and his purpose for mankind. The apostle John wrote: “I saw another angel flying in midheaven, and he had everlasting good news to declare to those who dwell on the earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people. He was saying in a loud voice: ‘Fear God and give him glory, because the hour of judgment by him has arrived, so worship the One who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and the springs of water.’” (Revelation 14:6, 7) Many modern-day experiences give evidence that angels are supporting the worldwide Kingdom-preaching work. Indeed, when even one sinner repents and turns to Jehovah, “joy arises among the angels of God.”—Luke 15:10.

What will happen when the preaching work is completed? Then angelic “armies in heaven” will support Jesus Christ, the King of kings, in fighting “the war of the great day of God the Almighty” at Armageddon. (Revelation 16:14-16; 19:14-16) Powerful angels will serve as executioners of divine judgment as the Lord Jesus “brings vengeance on those who . . . do not obey the good news about our Lord Jesus.”—2 Thessalonians 1: 7, 8.

Be assured, therefore, that the angels are personally interested in you. They have deep concern for the welfare of those who desire to serve God, and Jehovah has repeatedly used them to strengthen and protect his faithful servants on earth.—Hebrews 1:14.

Each one of us, then, has a crucial choice to make. Will we listen to and obey the good news that is being proclaimed earth wide? Jehovah’s Witnesses in your community will be happy to assist you to benefit from the loving help of God’s mighty angels. ■



For more information on what the Bible says about loyal and disloyal angels, see chapter 10 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah’s Witnesses, available on jw.org or by scanning this code.

righteous “new earth” is a society of people who receive God’s approval.

¹⁶ Jesus promised that in the coming new world, those approved by God would receive the gift of “everlasting life.” (Mark 10:30) Please open your Bible to John 3:16 and 17:3, and read what Jesus said we must do to receive everlasting life. Now consider from the Bible the blessings that will be enjoyed by those who qualify for that wonderful gift from God in the coming earthly Paradise.

¹⁷ *Wickedness, warfare, crime, and violence will be gone.* “The wicked one will be no more . . . But the meek ones themselves will possess the earth.” (Psalm 37:10, 11) Peace will exist because ‘God will make wars cease to the ends of the earth.’ (Psalm 46:9; Isaiah 2:4) Then “the righteous one will sprout, and the abundance of peace until the moon is no more”—and that means forever!—Psalm 72:7.

16. What is a priceless gift from God to those whom he approves, and what must we do to receive it?

17, 18. How can we be sure that there will be peace and security everywhere on earth?

The New Song

(Psalm 98)

1. Sing to God a song, A song of praise that's bold and new.
Tell of all the great things He's done and yet will do.
Praise his mighty arm; He is the God of victory.
In the cause of justice,
He judges righteously.

*(CHORUS)**Sing, sing, sing!**The new song, let it ring!**Sing, sing, sing!**Jehovah is our King.*

2. Make a joyful shout, A joyful cry to God, our King!
Laud his name, give honor; A joyful anthem sing.
Join the mighty crowd, And sing aloud before the Lord.
Harp and horn and trumpet
Sound praise in full accord.

(Chorus)

3. Let the mighty sea And all that fills it give him praise.
Join with earth's creation, And joyful voices raise.
Let the land rejoice, And let the rivers clap their hands.
Mountains, hills, and valleys
Sing praise in all the lands.

(Chorus)

- Song 139 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Blessings That Restored Israel Would Enjoy”:** (10 min.)

Eze 47:1, 7-12—The restored land would be fruitful (w99 3/1 10 ¶11-12)

Eze 47:13, 14—Each family would receive an inheritance (w99 3/1 10 ¶10)

Eze 48:9, 10—Before land was allotted to the people, a special portion of the land would be “set apart” as a “contribution” to Jehovah

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Eze 47:1, 8; 48:30, 32-34—Why did the Jewish exiles not expect every detail of Ezekiel’s temple vision to be fulfilled literally? (w99 3/1 11 ¶14)

Eze 47:6—Why is Ezekiel called “son of man”? (it-2 1001)

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 48:13-22

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) wp17.5 cover—Lay the groundwork for a return visit.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) wp17.5—The magazine was placed on the preceding visit. Demonstrate a return visit, and introduce one of our Bible study publications.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) bh 34 ¶17—Invite the person to the meeting.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 62
- **Local Needs:** (8 min.) As an option, discuss the lessons learned from the *Yearbook*. (yb17 64-65)
- **Organizational Accomplishments:** (7 min.) Play the *Organizational Accomplishments* video for September.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) kr chap. 17 ¶19-20, box on pp. 188-191, review box on p. 187
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 49 and Prayer

EZEKIEL 46-48 | Blessings That Restored Israel Would Enjoy

Ezekiel’s temple vision lifted the hearts of exiled Israelites and confirmed earlier prophecies of restoration. Pure worship would occupy an exalted place for those blessed by Jehovah.


47:7-14

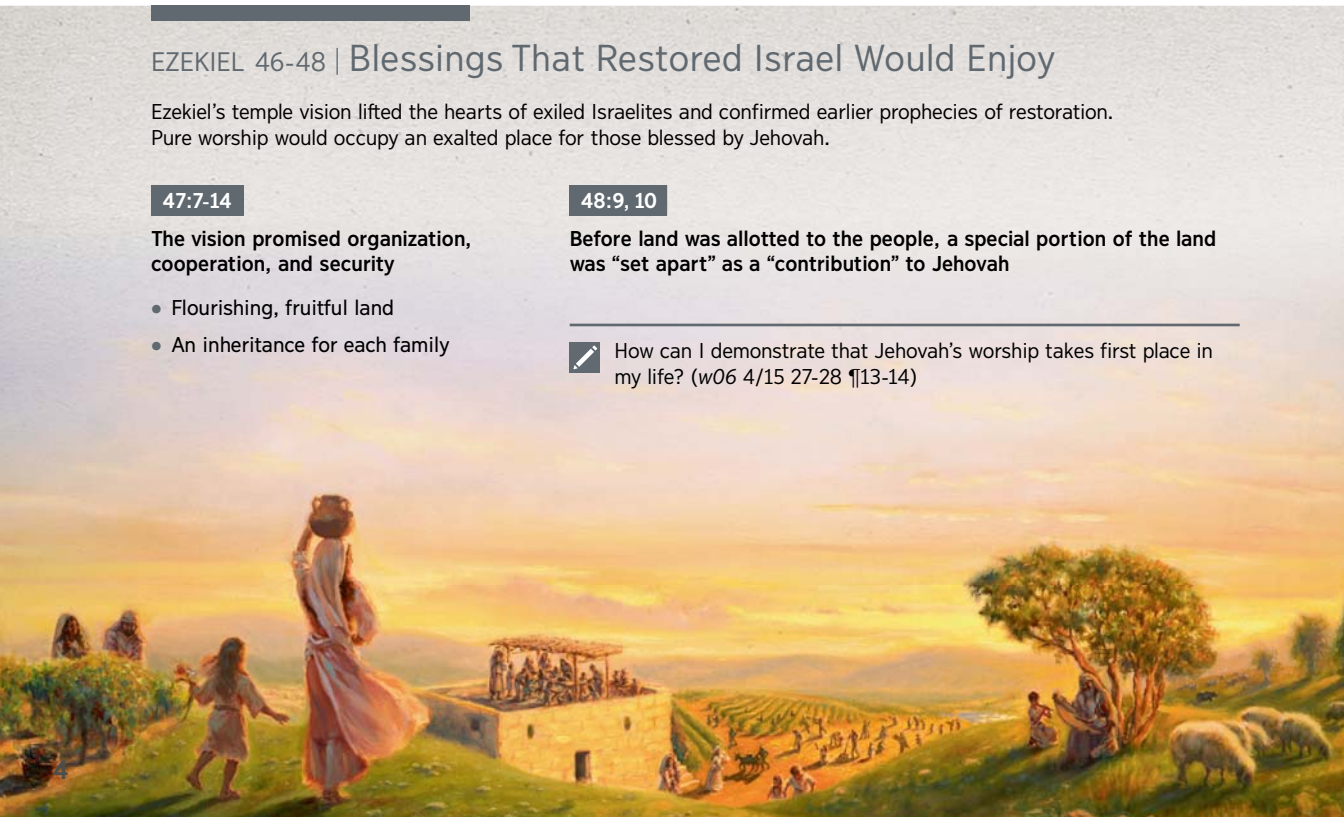
The vision promised organization, cooperation, and security

- Flourishing, fruitful land
- An inheritance for each family

48:9, 10

Before land was allotted to the people, a special portion of the land was “set apart” as a “contribution” to Jehovah

 How can I demonstrate that Jehovah’s worship takes first place in my life? (w06 4/15 27-28 ¶13-14)



Thanks From a Government Official

The brothers in **Mongolia** actively participate in special metropolitan public witnessing even when temperatures dip to 20 degrees below zero Fahrenheit. One government official picked up publications from the cart and then wrote a thank-you note. It read: "I am a Buddhist. But I have looked into many other fields, for I stick to the principle that we should not follow just one road but explore others. After reading some of the publications that you have provided for mankind, I have decided to write a letter to express my feelings. I can clearly see that you have invested a lot of time and energy to provide information that is practical and helpful. One thing I learned from your publications is that the Bible is a book one must read. This book has the truth. The Bible provides true guidance for our lives. I wish to thank all those who put great effort into translating the literature into Mongolian. Also, I would like to thank all those who hand out literature to help people whether it is extremely hot or cold outside."

His Prayer Was Heard

In **Hong Kong**, a pioneer brother named Brett approached a young man in his late 20's and offered him the tract *What Is the Key to Happy Family Life?* Upon seeing the tract, the young man was moved to tears. He explained that he had been raised in the truth, but when he was 16 years old, he ran away from home. For the next five years, he lived on the streets and became addicted to drugs until he was found and helped by a charity organization.



Mongolia: Public witnessing in cold weather

He went on to say that the morning he met this brother, he had prayed, “If the religion of my youth is correct, please show me a sign today.” He felt that his prayer had been answered. The two went to a nearby coffee shop where they considered material from the brochure *Return to Jehovah*. Because the young man had to return to France that evening, they exchanged contact information. Later, the young man wrote to Brett: “My dear brother, Jehovah has answered my prayers. I will go to the nearest hall on Sunday.” He made contact with Witnesses in France and began to study the Bible and attend meetings.

¹⁸ All of God's people have benefited from the Kingdom Ministry School. How so? When elders and ministerial servants apply what they have learned at the school, they, like Jesus, are a source of refreshment to their fellow believers. Do you not appreciate a kind word, a listening ear, or an encouraging visit from a caring elder or ministerial servant? (1 Thess. 5:11) Such qualified men are a real blessing to their congregations!

¹⁹ **Other theocratic schools.** The Teaching Committee of the Governing Body supervises other schools that provide training for brothers in positions of responsibility within the organization. Those schools are designed to help responsible brothers—congregation elders, traveling overseers, and Branch Committee members—to become more effective in fulfilling their many responsibilities. The Bible-based courses encourage the brothers to maintain their own spirituality and to apply Scriptural principles in their

18. How do all of God's people benefit from the Kingdom Ministry School?

19. What other schools does the Teaching Committee supervise, and what are those schools designed to do?

dealings with the precious sheep that Jehovah has entrusted to their care.—1 Pet. 5:1-3.

²⁰ Clearly, the Messianic King has made sure that his followers are well-trained. All of the training has come from the top down: Jehovah trained his Son, and the Son has trained his followers. Hence, Jesus could say that we are all “taught by Jehovah.” (John 6:45; Isa. 54:13) Let us be determined to take full advantage of the training that our King has made available to us. And let us remember that the main purpose of all this training is to help us keep spiritually strong so that we may fully accomplish our ministry.

20. Why could Jesus say that all of us are “taught by Jehovah,” and what are you determined to do?

How Real Is the Kingdom to You?

- What training did Jesus receive from his Father?
- How has the King trained his followers to be evangelizers?
- How have qualified brothers been trained to fulfill their responsibilities?
- How can you show that you appreciate the training that the King has provided?

SCHOOLS THAT TRAIN KINGDOM MINISTERS

OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE AND MINISTRY

Purpose: To train publishers to be effective preachers and teachers of the good news.

Duration: Continuous.

Location: Local Kingdom Hall.

Enrollment: All may be enrolled who are actively associating with the congregation, who agree with the teachings of the Bible, and whose lives are in harmony with Christian principles. To join, speak to the Life and Ministry Meeting overseer.

Benefits: The midweek meeting teaches us to research and present information logically. We also learn to listen to others and focus on their spiritual needs, not just our own.

Arnie, a longtime traveling overseer, comments: *“I grew up a stutterer and had trouble making eye contact with others. This [meeting] has helped me to gain confidence. With Jehovah’s help, through this training I have learned breathing and concentration techniques. I am very grateful for the ability to praise God in the congregation and in my ministry.”*

SCHOOL FOR CONGREGATION ELDERS*^[1]

Purpose: To help elders deepen their spirituality and care for their responsibilities in the congregation.

*^[1] This school is not yet operating in every country.

Duration: Five days.

Location: Decided by the branch office; usually a nearby Kingdom Hall or an Assembly Hall.

Enrollment: The branch office invites elders.

Benefits: Note some comments from brothers in the 92nd class of this school at Patterson, New York, U.S.A.:

“The school has benefited me greatly, helping me to look at myself and see how I can take care of Jehovah’s sheep.”

“I will carry this training with me for the rest of my life.”

PIONEER SERVICE SCHOOL

Purpose: To help pioneers “fully accomplish” their ministry.
—2 Tim. 4:5.

Duration: Six days.

Location: Decided by the branch office; usually a nearby Kingdom Hall.

Enrollment: Those who have been a regular pioneer for at least one year are enrolled automatically and notified of the school by their circuit overseer. Some longtime pioneers who have not attended in the past five years may be invited to attend again.

Benefits: *“The school has helped me to deal with challenges in the ministry and in my life,”* says Lily. *“The way I study, the way I teach, and the way I use the Bible have improved greatly. I am better prepared to help others, support the elders, and contribute to the growth of the congregation.”*

Brenda, who has attended the school twice, notes: *“The school allowed me to be more absorbed in spiritual things, strengthen my conscience, and focus on helping others. Clearly, Jehovah is generous!”*

BETHEL ENTRANTS’ SCHOOL

Purpose: This school is designed to help new arrivals to make a success of their Bethel service.

Duration: Four days for four hours each day.

Location: Bethel.

Enrollment: Permanent members of the Bethel family and long-term temporary volunteers (a year or longer) are enrolled automatically.

Benefits: Demetrius, who attended this school in the 1980’s, says: *“This course improved my study habits and helped prepare me for a long Bethel career. The instructors, curriculum, and practical counsel convinced me of Jehovah’s loving concern and of his desire for me to succeed in my Bethel service.”*

SCHOOL FOR KINGDOM EVANGELIZERS*^[1]

Purpose: To give those who are in full-time service (married couples, single brothers, and single sisters) specialized training so that they can be used more fully by Jehovah and his organization. Many graduates will be assigned to serve where there is a greater need in their home country. Graduates under 50 might serve as temporary special pioneers to open up and expand the work in isolated areas.

Duration: Two months.

Location: Decided by the branch office; usually at a Kingdom Hall or an Assembly Hall.

Enrollment: Those between 23 and 65 years of age who are in full-time service, who are in good health, who have the circumstances to serve wherever there is a greater need, and who have the attitude “Here I am! Send me!” may be enrolled. (Isa. 6:8) All who attend the school, single brothers and sisters as well as married couples, must have been in the full-time service for at least two years without interruption. Couples must have been married for at least two years. Brothers must have served as either an elder or a ministerial servant for at least two consecutive years. If this school is available in your branch territory, a meeting will be held at the regional convention to provide information for those interested in enrolling.

Benefits: Many positive comments have been received from those who have attended the Bible School for Single Brothers and the Bible School for Christian Couples. In 2013, the Governing Body approved combining those two schools into one called the School for Kingdom Evangelizers. Now the benefits of the course will be experienced by many more faithful pioneers, including single sisters.

WATCHTOWER BIBLE SCHOOL OF GILEAD

Purpose: Graduates may be assigned as traveling overseers, as field missionaries, or as Bethelites. By putting their training to good use, graduates help to strengthen and stabilize the field and branch organization.

Duration: Five months.

Location: Watchtower Educational Center, Patterson, New York.

Enrollment: Married couples, single brothers, and single sisters, who are already serving in some form of special full-time service. Field missionaries who were not previously graduates of Gilead, as well as special pioneers, Bethelites, or traveling overseers and their wives, may be invited by their Branch Committee to apply. Applicants must speak and write English.

Benefits: Lade and Monique, a married couple from the United States who have been in their assignment for several years, offer the following comments:

“Gilead school prepared us to go anywhere in the world, roll up our sleeves, and work with our dear brothers,” says Lade.

Monique adds: *“As I apply what I’ve learned from God’s Word, I find great joy in my assignment. I see that joy as proof of Jehovah’s love.”*

KINGDOM MINISTRY SCHOOL

Purpose: To train traveling overseers, elders, and ministerial servants to care for their oversight and organizational responsibilities. (Acts 20:28) Current situations, trends, and immediate needs of the congregations are covered. This school is held every few years, as decided by the Governing Body.

Duration: In recent years this school has been conducted for varying lengths of time.

Location: Usually a nearby Kingdom Hall or an Assembly Hall.

Enrollment: The circuit overseer notifies elders and ministerial servants. The branch office invites traveling overseers.

Benefits: *“The school, though compact and precise, invigorates elders to maintain joy and carry on in a manly way in Jehovah’s service. Both new and longtime elders learn to shepherd effectively and be united in the same line of thought.”—Quinn.*

“This training was balanced—building our spiritual appreciation, warning us of dangers, and providing us with practical suggestions to care for the flock.”—Michael.

SCHOOL FOR CIRCUIT OVERSEERS AND THEIR WIVES*^[1]

Purpose: To help circuit overseers serve congregations more effectively, “work hard in speaking and teaching,” and shepherd those in their charge.—1 Tim. 5:17; 1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

Duration: One month.

Location: Determined by the branch office.

Enrollment: The branch office invites circuit overseers and their wives.

Benefits: *“Our appreciation for Jesus’ headship over the organization was enhanced. We saw the need to encourage the brothers we serve and to fortify the unity of each congregation. The course further impressed on our minds that while the traveling overseer offers advice and even correction on occasion, his main goal is to help the brothers to see that Jehovah loves them.”—Joel and Connie, first class, 1999.*

SCHOOL FOR BRANCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND THEIR WIVES

Purpose: To help Branch Committee members care better for the work of supervising Bethel homes, give attention to service

matters affecting congregations, and oversee circuits in their respective territories.—Luke 12:48b.

Duration: Two months.

Location: Watchtower Educational Center, Patterson, New York.

Enrollment: The Service Committee of the Governing Body invites members of Branch or Country Committees and their wives.

Benefits: Lowell and Cara were part of the 25th class. They now serve in Nigeria.

“I was reminded that no matter how busy I am or what work I have been given, the key to pleasing Jehovah is spirituality,” says Lowell.

Cara recalls a lesson she took away from the school: *“If I cannot state a point simply, I need to study the subject better before trying to teach it to others.”*

49 *Making Jehovah's Heart Glad*

(Proverbs 27:11)

1. Great God, we've vowed to do your will;
 In wisdom your work we'll fulfill,
 For then we know we'll have a part
 In making glad your loving heart.
2. Your slave, your steward here on earth,
 Declares your greatness and your worth
 And feeds us nourishment when due,
 To strengthen us your will to do.
3. Impart to us your active force,
 That we may keep a faithful course
 And bring forth fruitage to your praise.
 May we make glad your heart each day.

JULY 2017

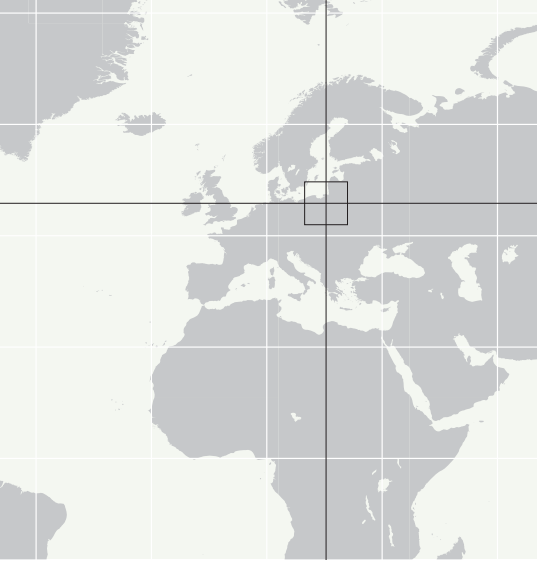
THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
AUGUST 28–SEPTEMBER 24, 2017

LARGE
PRINT
EDITION



COVER IMAGE:
POLAND

In an apple orchard in Grójec,
a publisher shares the Bible's
message with one of the workers

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New World Translation
of the Holy Scriptures.

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1. Praise Jah with me;
Come! Let us sing!
He gives us life, breath, and ev'ry good thing.
Each day and night,
His name we bless,
Praising his love and his almightiness.
We sing his praise, and his name we confess.
2. Praise Jah with me;
He satisfies.
He hears our prayers as our needs he supplies.
His mighty arm
Strengthens the weak;
His holy spirit sustains all the meek.
His name we praise; Of his power we speak.
3. Praise Jah with me;
Our God is just.
He brings us comfort, in him we can trust.
Wrongs he will right;
Hearts he will heal.
Rich Kingdom blessings all mankind will feel.
Come let us praise him with joy and with zeal!



“Praise Jah!”—Why?

“Praise Jah! . . . How pleasant and fitting it is to praise him!”—PS. 147:1.

WHEN someone has done well at an assigned task or has displayed a remarkable Christian quality, he deserves praise. If that is true of humans, how much more do we have reason to praise Jehovah God! We can praise him because of his immense power, as

1-3. (a) Apparently, when was Psalm 147 written? (b) What can we learn from studying Psalm 147?

SONGS:
59, 3

**HOW DOES
PSALM 147
HELP YOU TO . . .**

appreciate
Jehovah’s personal
interest in you?

have confidence
that God will
rescue you?

see how Jehovah
sustains his people
with his Word?

seen in the wonders of his creation, or because of his warm dealings with humankind, as evidenced by his provision of the ransom sacrifice of his own Son.

² The writer of the 147th Psalm was moved to praise Jehovah. He also encouraged others to join him in giving God praise.—Read Psalm 147:1, 7, 12.

³ We do not know who wrote this psalm, but the psalmist apparently lived about the time when Jehovah restored the Israelites to Jerusalem from Babylonian exile. (Ps. 147:2) The restoration of God’s people to their place of true worship would certainly have moved the psalmist to praise Jehovah. Still, he stated additional reasons to do so. What were they? What reasons do you have to cry out “Hallelujah!” in your own life?—Ps. 147:1, ftn.

JEHOVAH HEALS THE BROKENHEARTED

⁴ Imagine how the exiled Israelites must have felt in Babylon. Their captors jeered: “Sing for us one of the songs of Zion.” By then Jerusalem, their greatest reason to rejoice in Jehovah, had been desolated. (Ps. 137:1-3, 6) The Jews did not feel

4. When King Cyrus liberated the exiled Israelites, how must they have felt, and why?

like singing. Their hearts were broken, and they needed comfort and consolation. However, true to God’s prophetic word, deliverance came through Cyrus, king of Persia. He conquered Babylon and proclaimed: “Jehovah . . . has commissioned me to build him a house in Jerusalem . . . Whoever there is among you of all his people, may Jehovah his God be with him, and let him go up.” (2 Chron. 36: 23) What a comforting effect this development must have had on the Israelites dwelling in Babylon!

⁵ Jehovah gave comfort not only to the nation of Israel as a whole but also to each individual. The same is true today. The psalmist wrote of God: “He heals the brokenhearted; he binds up their wounds.” (Ps. 147:3) Yes, Jehovah cares for those who are having problems—whether physical or emotional. Today, Jehovah is eager to comfort us and to soothe our emotional wounds. (Ps. 34: 18; Isa. 57:15) He gives us wisdom and strength so that we can cope with any troubles we may face. —Jas. 1:5.

⁶ The psalmist then turns his attention to the

-
5. What does the psalmist observe about Jehovah’s healing power?
 6. How can we benefit from the psalmist’s seeming change of subject at Psalm 147:4? (See opening picture.)

heavens above, telling us that Jehovah “counts the number of the stars” and “calls all of them by name.” (Ps. 147:4) Why the seeming change of subject and reference to heavenly bodies? Consider this: The psalmist could see the stars with his physical eyes, but he had no idea of how many there really are. Over the years, the number of stars that we can see has increased tremendously. Some think that there are billions of stars in our Milky Way galaxy alone. And there may be trillions of galaxies in the universe! To us, stars are indeed without number! But the Creator gives all of them a *name* or a designation. This means that each star is unique to Jehovah. (1 Cor. 15:41) What about his human creatures on earth? The God who knows where each star is at any given time also knows you as an individual—exactly where you are, precisely how you feel, and specifically what you need at any given moment!

⁷ Not only is Jehovah interested in you as a person but he also has the power and empathy needed to help you with life’s problems. (Read Psalm

7, 8. (a) When Jehovah saves his people from their trials, what does he take into consideration? (b) Illustrate how compassionate Jehovah is in helping imperfect humans.

147:5.) You may feel that your situation is too difficult and the load too heavy for you to carry. God understands your limitations, ‘remembering that you are dust.’ (Ps. 103:14) Being imperfect, we make the same mistakes again and again. Oh, how we regret that slip of the tongue, those fleshly tendencies that flare up every now and then, or those inclinations to envy what others have! Jehovah does not experience such shortcomings himself; yet, his understanding of us is immeasurable, unsearchable!—Isa. 40:28.

⁸ You may already have experienced how Jehovah’s mighty hand helped you to recover from some trial. (Isa. 41:10, 13) Take, for example, Kyoko, a pioneer sister who became very discouraged after moving to a new assignment. How did Jehovah show his understanding of her problems? In her new circumstances, Kyoko found herself surrounded by individuals who could understand her feelings. She felt that Jehovah was telling her: “I love you, not just because you are a pioneer, but because you are my daughter and dedicated to me. I want you to enjoy your life as one of my Witnesses!” In your case, how has the Almighty shown that “his understanding is beyond measure”?

JEHOVAH PROVIDES WHAT WE NEED

⁹ Sometimes your needs may be physical. For instance, you may worry that you will not have enough food to eat. However, it is Jehovah who created the natural cycle needed to grow food, even for young ravens that call out for it! (Read **Psalm 147:8, 9.**) If he continues to feed the ravens, you can trust that Jehovah will provide your material necessities too.—Ps. 37:25.

¹⁰ Most important, Jehovah provides spiritual sustenance, giving us “the peace of God that surpasses all understanding.” (Phil. 4:6, 7) Consider, for example, Mutsuo and his wife, who experienced Jehovah’s sustaining power following the 2011 Japan tsunami. By climbing to the roof of their house, they barely escaped the tsunami. However, that day they lost almost everything they owned. They spent the dark, cold night in a room on the second floor of their battered home. In the morning, they looked for some spiritual encouragement. The only book they could find was the *2006 Yearbook of Jehovah’s Witnesses*. Immediately, the heading “The Deadliest Tsunamis Ever Recorded”

9, 10. What comes first when Jehovah extends help to us? Illustrate.

caught Mutsuo's eye. It was about an earthquake in Sumatra that in 2004 triggered the most devastating tsunamis in recorded history. Mutsuo and his wife wept as they read through the experiences. They felt God's warm, loving care in providing the right spiritual encouragement just when they needed it. Jehovah also lovingly provided for them materially. Through their spiritual brothers, they received relief supplies. But what strengthened them most were the visits made to the congregation by the representatives of God's organization. Mutsuo says: "I felt that Jehovah was right next to each one of us and caring for us. What comfort!" God provides spiritual sustenance first, and then he satisfies our physical needs.

BENEFIT FROM GOD'S SAVING POWER

¹¹ Jehovah is always ready to step in and 'raise up the meek.' (Ps. 147:6a) But how can we benefit from his readiness to act in our behalf? We have to have a good relationship with him. To have that, we need to cultivate meekness. (Zeph. 2:3) Meek ones wait on God to correct any wrongs and to

11. What is required of those who hope to benefit from God's saving power?

undo the injuries inflicted on them. Jehovah looks on such ones with his smile of approval.

¹² On the other hand, God “hurls the wicked to the ground.” (Ps. 147:6b) These are strong words! To benefit from Jehovah’s loyal love and to avoid his wrath, we have to hate what he hates. (Ps. 97:10) For instance, we are to hate sexual immorality. This means that we have to stay away from anything that could lead us into such wrongdoing, including pornography. (Ps. 119:37; Matt. 5:28) This may be a hard fight, but having Jehovah’s blessing is worth any effort we must put forth.

¹³ In fighting this battle, we need to rely on Jehovah, not on ourselves. Will he be pleased if we try to save ourselves with “the power of the horse,” that is, where humans turn for help? No! Neither are we to rely on “the strong legs of a man,” acting as if we or some other human could bring salvation. (Ps. 147:10) Rather, we must approach Jehovah, begging for his help. Unlike human counselors, he never gets tired of hearing our petitions, even when we ask for his help over and over. “Jehovah finds pleasure in those who fear him, in

12, 13. (a) To benefit from God’s help, what should we avoid?
(b) With whom does Jehovah find pleasure?

those waiting for his loyal love.” (Ps. 147:11) We can trust that in his loyal love, he will stick with us and help us to conquer our wrong desires.

¹⁴ Jehovah gives us a basis for being convinced that he will help his people when they are in need. In thinking about the restoration of Jerusalem, the psalmist sang about Jehovah: “He makes the bars of your city gates strong; he blesses your sons within you. He brings peace to your territory.” (Ps. 147:13, 14) How reassuring it was for the psalmist to know that God would strengthen the city’s gates to provide protection for his worshippers!

¹⁵ You may face difficulties that cause you to become anxious. Jehovah can give you the wisdom to cope. The psalmist said of his God that “he sends his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly.” Then, referring to Jehovah as ‘sending the snow, scattering the frost, and hurling down the hailstones,’ the psalmist asks: “Who can withstand his cold?” He adds that Jehovah “sends out his word, and they melt.” (Ps. 147:15-18) Our all-wise, all-powerful God, the one who controls the hail and

14. What conviction strengthened the psalmist?

15-17. (a) How might we at times feel about our trials, but how does Jehovah use his Word to help us? (b) Illustrate how ‘God’s word runs swiftly.’



How can God's Word help when we feel overwhelmed by trials?
(See paragraphs 15-17)

the snow, can help you to surmount any obstacles that you encounter.

¹⁶ Today, Jehovah guides us with his Word, the Bible. And “his word runs swiftly” in that he readily gives us spiritual direction when we need it. Think about how you benefit from reading the Bible, examining the publications of “the faithful and discreet slave,” watching JW Broadcasting, visiting jw.org, talking with the elders, and associ-

ating with fellow Christians. (Matt. 24:45) Have you not seen that Jehovah is swift to provide you with his guidance?

¹⁷ Simone has experienced the power of God's Word. She had very low self-worth, to the point of doubting that she was the kind of person God would approve of. However, during times of discouragement, she persevered in prayer, turning to Jehovah for his help. She also kept busy in her personal study of the Bible. She says, "I have never been in a situation where I have not felt Jehovah's strength and his guidance." This has helped her to try to remain as positive as possible.

¹⁸ The psalmist knew how favored God's ancient people were. They were the only nation given God's "word" and "his regulations and judgments." (Read Psalm 147:19, 20.) Today, we are blessed to be the only ones on earth called by God's name. Knowing Jehovah and having his Word at work in our lives, we have come to enjoy a privileged relationship with him. Like the writer of Psalm 147, do you not have many good reasons to cry out "Praise Jah!" and to encourage others to do the same?

18. Why do you feel favored by God, and what reasons do you have to cry out "Praise Jah!"?

3

Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

(Proverbs 14:26)

1. O Jehovah, you have given us
a hope that we hold dear.
It's a hope we find so thrilling
we want the world to hear.
But at times this life's anxieties
are the cause of fears within,
And the hope that burned so brightly
has suddenly grown dim.

(CHORUS)

*You're our strength, you're our hope,
you're our confidence.*

Whatever we lack, you supply.

*When we preach, when we teach,
we have confidence*

because it's on you we rely.

2. So Jehovah, please instill in us
a heart that won't forget,
For you've always been our comfort
when troubled times we've met.
And these thoughts that lift and strengthen us
can revive that dying flame,
For they fill our hearts with courage
to speak about your name.

(Chorus)

cause of his demonstrating that a perfect man can keep integrity in spite of the Devil, God raised Jesus from the dead, "exalted him to a superior position."—1 Corinthians 15:3-8; Philippians 2:5-11.

Since Pentecost God has been calling and preparing a "bride", a "little flock", a body of 144,000 "purchased from the earth" to share heavenly life and rulership "as kings with [Christ] for the thousand years". These, Christ and his bride, constitute the "kingdom of the heavens".—Matthew 5:10; Luke 12:32; Acts 2; Revelation 14:1-3; 20:5, 6; 21:9.

However, Jesus also died for his "other sheep", of which there will be many. (Matthew 20:28; John 10:16) To such sheeplike ones the call now goes forth: "Seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye will be hid in the day of Jehovah's anger," the day when "all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of [God's] jealousy", known as "Armageddon". Not the literal earth, of course, for it "abideth for ever", but this wicked system of things or world of which Satan is the god. (Ecclesiastes 1:4; Zephaniah 2:3; 3:8; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 16:16) Concerning it, Jesus said: "My kingdom is no part of this world," and the disciple James warned: "Friendship with the world is enmity with God." (John 18:36; James 4:4) Therefore Jehovah's witnesses shun it.

Christ's Second Presence and the New World

The present generation is seeing the sign marking Christ's second presence: "Nation will rise against nation . . . there will be food shortages and earthquakes . . . you will be hated by all the nations . . . And this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth." (Matthew 24) After de-



stroying this old world like a potter's vessel, Christ will usher in the new world wherein "righteousness is to dwell".—Psalm 2:9; 2 Peter 3:13.

Then no more war, fear or want. (Isaiah 65:21; Micah 4:3, 4) Even the dead will be remembered, for "there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous". All pain, sorrow and crying will be wiped out, and even the enemy death will be destroyed. The earth will be made one vast paradise. Thus Jehovah will be vindicated as his purpose regarding the earth is fully realized.—Acts 24:15; 1 Corinthians 15:26; Revelation 21:4.

This, in brief, is what Jehovah's witnesses understand the Bible to teach and what they believe.

Scriptures quoted herein are from the "American Standard Version" or the "New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures".


"Let God Be True"

"Let God be found true, though every man be found a liar." (Romans 3:4) So wrote the apostle Paul, and Jehovah's witnesses today adhere strictly to that principle, even as evinced by the foregoing. For further proof see the Bible study aid "Let God Be True", which discusses such subjects as Jehovah, the Messiah, Satan the Devil, man, the soul, prayer, the sabbath, baptism, salutes and politics, images, etc. Contains 320 pages, with scripture and subject indexes. Bound in beautiful green cover, gold-leaf stamped. Available on a contribution of 50 cents. Write to address given below.

WATCHTOWER

117 ADAMS ST. BROOKLYN 1, N.Y.

6



**WHAT
DO
Jehovah's
Witnesses
BELIEVE?**

Would you ask prejudiced scribes and
Pharisees what Jesus believed?
Then why listen to prejudiced sources
on what the witnesses believe?
Let the witnesses themselves tell you!

WHAT DO JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES BELIEVE?

From time to time a religious writer discusses the beliefs of Jehovah's witnesses. However, in view of the unfriendly and critical tone of these discussions, it would be a mistake to expect to obtain from such discussions an accurate picture of what Jehovah's witnesses really do believe. We would not expect to obtain from the scribes and Pharisees a correct picture of what Jesus believed, would we?

Jehovah God and Christ Jesus

Since "there are many 'gods' and many 'lords'", the true God has a personal name to distinguish him from all other gods: "Thou alone, whose name is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth." And referring to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, God said to Moses: "But by my name Jehovah I was not known to them." Jesus made this name known to his followers: "I have made your name manifest to the men you gave me." Jehovah's witnesses today likewise make known Jehovah's name: "Ye are my witnesses, saith Jehovah, and I am God."—Exodus 6:3; Psalm 83:18; Isaiah 43:10-12; John 17:6; 1 Corinthians 8:5.

Jehovah's first creation was his Son: "the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation by God," "the firstborn of all creation." (Colossians 1:15; Revelation 3:14) Before coming to earth he was known as the Word or *Logos*, and "apart from him not even one thing came into existence". (John 1:1, 3) Far from claiming to be equal with his Father, he said: "I cannot do a single thing of my own in-



itiative" and "the Father is greater than I am". (John 5:30; 14:28) In view of the foregoing, Jehovah's witnesses have no alternative but to reject the doctrine of the trinity as being unscriptural.

Adam and His Penalty

After preparing the earth for man's habitation, "Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Note, man did not receive an immortal soul, he *became*, he then was, a living soul. God commanded man to "be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it"; also to take care of the garden and not to eat of the fruit of a certain tree.—Genesis 1:26-28; 2:7, 15-17.

Adam's life depended upon his obedience. If he disobeyed, "in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam and Eve disobeyed and so they were sentenced. Sentenced to what?

To eternal torment? No, to death: "for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." "The wages sin pays is death." Death is the absence of life. In *sheol* or the grave "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom".—Genesis 2:17; 3:19; Ecclesiastes 9:10; Romans 6:23.

Adam was a soul; Adam died. Adam the "living soul" died? Yes, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." "He poured out his soul unto death," foretold the prophet of Jesus. (Isaiah 53:12; Ezekiel 18:4, 20) According to the Scriptures the lower animals also are souls, and so we read: "That which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befall-



eth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath." There is no misunderstanding these plain statements. (Genesis 1:30, *margin*; Numbers 31:28; Ecclesiastes 3:19) Therefore Jehovah's witnesses do not believe in the doctrines of eternal torment and immortality of the human soul.

The Issue of Supremacy

To guide and protect man God provided an "anointed cherub that covereth", a guardian angel. This cherub became ambitious to be worshiped like Jehovah God and so turned traitor and caused man to disobey God. (Genesis 3:1-6; Ezekiel 28:13-19; Matthew 4:9) This immediately raised the question: Whose fault was it that man sinned? Had Jehovah God made man weak and yet required of him perfect obedience if he would live? So the Devil contended, boasting that he could turn all men away from God. See Job, chapters 1 and 2.

Jehovah's name and supremacy thus became involved. To prove his supremacy, to prove the Devil a liar, to prove that he could put men on earth that would remain faithful to him in spite of all that the Devil could do, Jehovah permitted the first human pair and the Devil to live. He knew that some of their offspring would remain faithful to him and thus witness to his supremacy. From Abel on Jehovah had had witnesses on earth.—Proverbs 27:11; Hebrews 11.

Christ's Ransom Sacrifice

That his name might be vindicated, that his purpose regarding the earth might be realized, and that men who kept integrity might get life, Jehovah sent his Son into the world: "to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many," and to "bear witness to the truth". (Matthew 20:28; John 17:4; 18:37) Conceived by a virgin, "the Word became flesh," being "produced out of a woman"; thus he was an actual flesh-and-blood creature. (John 1:14; Galatians 4:4) Be-