

- Song 102 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Learn From Your Mistakes”:** (10 min.)
[Play the video *Introduction to Obadiah.*]
[Play the video *Introduction to Jonah.*]
Jon 3:1-3—Jonah learned from his mistakes (ja 114 ¶22-23)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

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OBADIAH 1-JONAH 4 | Learn From Your Mistakes

The account of Jonah shows that Jehovah does not give up on us when we make mistakes. However, he does expect us to learn from our mistakes and make the necessary changes.

Jon 1:3 



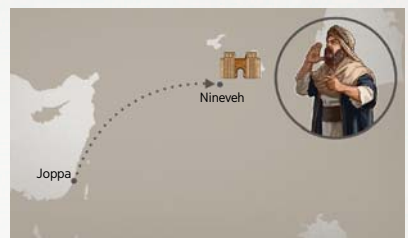
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Jon 2:1-10



What did Jonah pray about, and how did Jehovah respond?

Jon 3:1-3



How did Jonah show that he had learned from his mistakes?

102 *“Assist Those Who Are Weak”*

(Acts 20:35)

1. Many are the weaknesses
 That we all possess.
 Still Jehovah cares for us,
 Loves us nonetheless.
He is so merciful;
 His love, so powerful.
 May we show this kind of love,
 Help those in distress.

2. Some at times are weak in faith,
 Strong though they appear.
 By our reassuring words,
 We can calm their fears.
Weak ones to God belong;
 His spirit makes them strong.
 May we feel their pain and cares,
 Help them dry their tears.

3. Rather than condemn the weak,
 We should bear in mind
 How much we can strengthen them
 By our being kind.
May we be diligent,
 Give them encouragement.
 As we lend our kind support,
 Comfort they will find.

Obadiah

¹ The vision of O·ba·di'ah:

This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says regarding E'dom:

“We have heard a report from Jehovah,
An envoy has been sent among the nations:
‘Rise up, let us prepare for battle against her.’”

² “Look! I have made you insignificant among the nations;

You are utterly despised.

³ The presumptuousness of your heart has deceived you,

You who reside in the retreats of the crag,
Dwelling in the height, saying in your heart,
‘Who will bring me down to the earth?’

⁴ Even if you make your dwelling high like the eagle,
Or if you place your nest among the stars,
I would bring you down from there,” declares Jehovah.

⁵ “If thieves would come to you, robbers by night,
(How utterly you will be destroyed!)
Would they not steal only what they wanted?
Or if it were grape gatherers who would come to you,

Would they not leave some gleanings behind?

⁶ O how E'sau has been searched out!

How his hidden treasures have been sought
after!

⁷ They have driven you to the border.
All your allies have deceived you.
The men at peace with you have prevailed
against you.
Those eating bread with you will place a net
under you,
But you will not discern it.

⁸ In that day," declares Jehovah,
"Will I not destroy the wise ones out of E'dom
And discernment out of the mountainous region
of E'sau?

⁹ And your warriors will become terrified, O Te'man,
Because each one in the mountainous region of
E'sau will be destroyed in the slaughter.

¹⁰ Because of the violence done to your brother
Jacob,
Shame will cover you,
And you will perish forever.

¹¹ On the day when you stood off to the side,
On the day when strangers took his army into
captivity,
When foreigners entered his gate and cast lots
over Jerusalem,
You acted like one of them.

- ¹² You should not gloat over your brother's day on the day of his misfortune,
You should not rejoice over the people of Judah on the day of their perishing,
And you should not speak so arrogantly on the day of their distress.
- ¹³ You should not come into the gate of my people in the day of their disaster,
You should not gloat over his calamity in the day of his disaster,
And you should not lay your hands on his wealth in the day of his disaster.
- ¹⁴ You should not stand at the crossroads to slaughter his escapees,
And you should not hand over his survivors in the day of distress.
- ¹⁵ For the day of Jehovah against all the nations is near.
As you have done, so it will be done to you.
The way you treated others will come back on your own head.
- ¹⁶ For in the way that you have drunk on my holy mountain,
All the nations will keep drinking constantly.
They will drink and gulp down,
And they will be as though they had never existed.

- ¹⁷ But on Mount Zion will be those who escape,
And it will be holy;
And the house of Jacob will take possession of
the things belonging to them.
- ¹⁸ The house of Jacob will become a fire,
The house of Joseph a flame,
And the house of E'sau like stubble;
They will set them ablaze and consume them,
And there will be no survivor of the house of
E'sau,
For Jehovah himself has spoken.
- ¹⁹ They will take possession of the Neg'eb and the
mountainous region of E'sau,
Of the She·phe'lah and the land of the
Phi·lis'tines.
They will take possession of the field of
E'phra·im and the field of Sa·mar'i·a,
And Benjamin will take possession of Gil'e·ad.
- ²⁰ To the exiles of this rampart,
To the people of Israel will belong the land of the
Ca'naan·ites as far as Zar'e·phath.
And the exiles of Jerusalem, who were in
Se·phar'ad, will possess the cities of the
Neg'eb.
- ²¹ And saviors will go up on Mount Zion
To judge the mountainous region of E'sau,
And the kingship will become Jehovah's."

Jonah (1-4)

1 The word of Jehovah came to Jo'nah the son of A-mit'tai, saying: **2** "Get up, go to Nin'e-veh the great city, and proclaim judgment against her, for their wickedness has come to my attention."

3 But Jo'nah got up to run away from Jehovah to Tar'shish; he went down to Jop'pa and found a ship going to Tar'shish. So he paid the fare and went aboard to go with them to Tar'shish, away from Jehovah.

4 Then Jehovah hurled a strong wind at the sea, and there was such a violent storm on the sea that the ship was about to be wrecked. **5** The mariners were so frightened that each of them began to call on his god for help. And they began throwing the articles of the ship into the sea, to make it lighter. But Jo'nah had gone down into the inner part of the ship, where he lay down and fell fast asleep. **6** The ship captain approached and said to him: "Why are you sleeping? Get up, call out to your god! Perhaps the true God will show his concern for us, and we will not perish."

7 Then they said to one another: "Come, let us cast lots to find out who is to blame for this calamity." So they cast lots, and the lot fell to Jo'nah. **8** They said to him: "Please tell us, who is to blame for this calamity that has come upon us? What is your work, and where

do you come from? What is your country, and from what people are you?”

⁹ He replied: “I am a Hebrew, and I fear Jehovah the God of the heavens, the One who made the sea and the dry land.”

¹⁰ At this the men became even more afraid, and they asked him: “What have you done?” (The men learned that he was running away from Jehovah, because he had told them.) ¹¹ So they said to him: “What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?” For the sea was growing more and more stormy. ¹² He replied: “Lift me up and throw me into the sea, and the sea will calm down for you; for I know that it is because of me that this violent storm has come upon you.”

¹³ However, the men rowed hard to bring the ship back to dry land, but they could not, because the sea grew more and more stormy around them.

¹⁴ Then they called out to Jehovah and said: “Ah, now, O Jehovah, please, may we not perish because of this man! Do not hold us responsible for innocent blood, since you have done as you pleased, O Jehovah.” ¹⁵ Then they lifted Jo'nah up and threw him into the sea; and the sea ceased its raging. ¹⁶ Then the men were struck with great fear of Jehovah, and they offered a sacrifice to Jehovah and made vows.

¹⁷ Jehovah now sent a huge fish to swallow Jo'nah, so that Jo'nah came to be in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights.

2 Then Jo'nah prayed to Jehovah his God from the belly of the fish, ² and he said:

“Out of my distress I called out to Jehovah, and he answered me.

Out of the depths of the Grave I cried for help.
You heard my voice.

³ When you threw me to the depths, into the heart of the open sea,

Then the currents engulfed me.

All your breakers and waves swept over me.

⁴ And I said, ‘I have been driven away from your sight!

How will I gaze again upon your holy temple?’

⁵ Waters engulfed me and threatened my life;

The watery deep closed in on me.

Weeds were wrapped around my head.

⁶ To the bottoms of the mountains I sank down.

The bars of the earth were closing upon me forever.

But out of the pit you brought up my life, O Jehovah my God.

⁷ When my life was ebbing away, Jehovah was the One whom I remembered.

Then my prayer came in to you, into your holy temple.

⁸ Those who are devoted to the worthless idols forsake their source of loyal love.

⁹ But as for me, with the voice of thanksgiving I will sacrifice to you.

What I have vowed, I will pay.

Salvation is from Jehovah.”

¹⁰ In time Jehovah commanded the fish, and it vomited Jo'nah out onto the dry land.

3 Then the word of Jehovah came to Jo'nah a second time, saying: ² “Get up, go to Nin'e-veh the great city, and proclaim to her the message that I tell you.”

³ So Jo'nah got up and went to Nin'e-veh in obedience to the word of Jehovah. Now Nin'e-veh was a very large city—a walking distance of three days.

⁴ Then Jo'nah entered the city, and walking a day's journey, he was proclaiming: “In just 40 days more, Nin'e-veh will be overthrown.”

⁵ And the men of Nin'e-veh put faith in God, and they proclaimed a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. ⁶ When the message reached the king of Nin'e-veh, he rose up from his throne and took off his royal garment and covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the ashes.

⁷ Furthermore, he issued a proclamation throughout Nin'e-veh,

“By the decree of the king and his nobles: No man or beast, herd or flock, should eat anything at all. They should not take food, nor should they drink any water.

⁸ Let them be covered with sackcloth, both man and beast; and let them call out earnestly to God and turn from their evil ways and from the violence they practice. ⁹ Who knows whether the true God may reconsider what he intends to do and turn from his burning anger, so that we may not perish?”

¹⁰ When the true God saw what they did, how they had turned back from their evil ways, he reconsidered the calamity that he said he would bring on them, and he did not bring it.

4 But this was highly displeasing to Jo'nah, and he became hot with anger. ² So he prayed to Jehovah: “Ah, now, Jehovah, was this not my concern when I was in my own land? That is why I tried to flee to Tar'shish in the first place; for I knew that you are a compassionate and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in loyal love, one who feels grieved over calamity. ³ Now, O Jehovah, please take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live.”

⁴ Jehovah asked: “Is it right for you to be so angry?”

⁵ Jo'nah then went out of the city and sat down east of the city. He made a shelter for himself there and sat in its shade to see what would happen to the city.

⁶ Jehovah God then provided a bottle-gourd plant to grow up over Jo'nah, to give him shade for his head and to relieve his misery. And Jo'nah was very pleased with the bottle-gourd plant.

⁷ But the true God sent a worm at the break of dawn on the next day, and it attacked the bottle-gourd plant, and it withered. ⁸ When the sun began to shine, God also sent a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on Jo'nah's head, and he grew faint. He kept asking to die, and he kept saying, "It is better for me to die than to live."

⁹ God asked Jo'nah: "Is it right for you to be so angry over the bottle-gourd plant?"

At that he said: "I have a right to be angry, so angry that I want to die." ¹⁰ But Jehovah said: "You felt sorry for the bottle-gourd plant, which you did not work for, nor did you make it grow; it grew in one night and perished in one night. ¹¹ Should I not also feel sorry for Nin'e-veh the great city, in which there are more than 120,000 men who do not even know right from wrong, as well as their many animals?"

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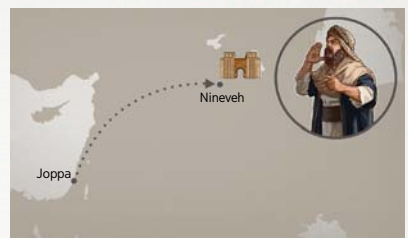
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November 13-19

Treasures From God's Word

Jonah 3:1-3—Jonah learned from his mistakes

Reference: ia 114 **paragraphs 22-23**.

22 What about Jonah? Did he learn to show his gratitude to Jehovah through obedience? He did. After three days and three nights, the fish brought Jonah right to the shore and “vomited out Jonah onto the dry land.” (Jonah 2:10)

Imagine—after all that, Jonah did not even have to swim ashore! Of course, he did have to find his way from that beach, wherever it was. Before long, though, his spirit of gratitude was put to the test. **Jonah 3:1, 2**, says: “Then the word of Jehovah occurred to Jonah the second time, saying: ‘Get up, go to Nineveh the great city, and proclaim to her the proclamation that I am speaking to you.’” What would Jonah do?

23 Jonah did not hesitate. We read: “At that, Jonah got up and went to Nineveh in accord with the word of Jehovah.” (Jonah 3:3) Yes, he obeyed. Clearly, he had learned from his mistakes. In this too we need to imitate Jonah’s faith. We all sin; we all make mistakes. (**Romans 3:23**) But do we give up, or do we learn from our mistakes and turn to a course of obedient service to God?

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Obadiah 10—How did Edom “perish forever”?

Reference: w07 11/1 13 **paragraph 5**.

As foretold, the nation of Edom, with a government and people in a specific region of the earth, became extinct. Babylonian King Nabonidus conquered Edom about the middle of the sixth century B.C.E. By the fourth century B.C.E., Edom’s territory was inhabited by the Nabataeans, and the Edomites had to take up residence in the southern part of Judea, the area of the Negeb that later came to be known as Idumea. After the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in 70 C.E., the Edomites ceased to exist.

Obadiah 12—What lesson can we learn from God’s condemnation of Edom?

Reference: jd 112 **paragraphs 4-5**.

4 You can find a lesson in God’s condemnation of Edom, a land near Israel: “You ought not to watch the sight in the day of your brother, in the day of his misfortune; and you ought not to rejoice at the sons of Judah in the day of their perishing.” (Obadiah 12) The Tyrians may have been “brothers” as to commercial activities, but the Edomites were in a real sense “brothers” to Israel, for they had descended from Esau, Jacob’s twin. Even Jehovah called the Edomites Israel’s “brothers.” (Deuteronomy 2:1-4) Hence, it

was truly hateful of the Edomites to rejoice when the Jews met calamity at the hands of the Babylonians.—Ezekiel 25:12-14.

5 Clearly, God did not approve of how the Edomites dealt with their Jewish brothers. We might ask, though, ‘How would God evaluate the way I deal with my brothers?’ One area of concern is how we view and treat a brother when things have not gone smoothly. For example, imagine that a Christian offended you or had a problem with one of your relatives. If you have “a cause for complaint,” will you harbor resentment, not putting the matter behind you or not attempting to settle it? (**Colossians 3:13; Joshua 22:9-30; Matthew 5:23, 24**) Doing so could affect your actions toward the brother; you might act coolly, avoiding his company or speaking negatively about him. Extending the example, imagine that this brother later erred, perhaps even needing counsel or correction from the congregation elders. (Galatians 6:1) Would you reflect the Edomites’ spirit and rejoice over the brother’s difficulty? How would God want you to act?

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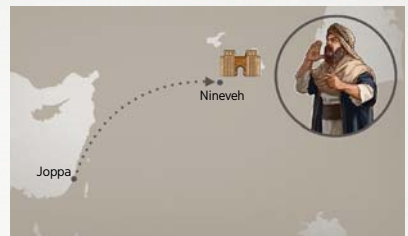
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THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



What Is the
Best Gift of All?



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Who is the greatest gift-giver in the universe?

“Every good gift and every perfect present is from above, coming down from the Father of the celestial lights.”—James 1:17.

This issue of *The Watchtower* helps us to appreciate one gift from God that is the best of all.

WHAT IS THE BEST GIFT OF ALL?

- 3 “It Was the Best Gift I Had Ever Received”
- 4 The Quest for the Best Gift
- 6 What Is the Best Gift of All?

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10 A PROPER VIEW OF MISTAKES

12 THE BIBLE—WHY SO MANY?

15 OUR READERS ASK . . .

Is Christmas for Christians?

16 WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?



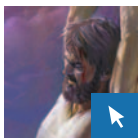
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Do Jehovah's Witnesses Believe in Jesus?

(Look under ABOUT US > FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS)



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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

“It Was the Best Gift I Had Ever Received”

That is how one 13-year-old girl felt when she received a pet dog as a gift. A successful businesswoman said that a computer her father gave her when she was in high school was a gift that changed her life. And a newlywed husband felt that his wife’s handmade first-anniversary card was the best gift he had ever received.

Each year, many people spend time and effort searching for that “best” gift for a friend or a relative on a special occasion. And most would love to hear a response like those mentioned at the outset. What about you? Would you like to be able to give or receive gifts that are truly appreciated?

That prospect can be very appealing, not only because of the effect a gift can have on the receiver but also because of the way it can make the giver feel. After all, the Bible says: “There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.” (Acts 20:35) Of course, the happiness gained from giving may be enhanced if the gift is highly valued by the receiver.

How, then, can you make your gift-giving a source of true happiness for you and for the receiver? And if giving the “best” gift is not possible, what can you do so that your gift will be truly appreciated?



The **Quest** for the Best Gift

Coming up with what might be considered the ideal gift for someone is not an easy task. After all, the value of the gift will be determined by the receiver. And what one recipient considers best might not be so for another.

For instance, a teenager may feel that the latest electronic gadget would be a perfect gift. An adult, on the other hand, may deeply treasure receiving a gift of sentimental value, such as a family heirloom. In some cultures, the preferred gift for young and old alike is money, allowing the receiver to use it for whatever he or she wants.

Despite the challenge, many thoughtful individuals continue in their quest for a gift most suitable for someone special. While finding such a gift may not always be possible, keeping in mind certain factors would likely increase the chances for success. Let us consider four that can contribute to satisfaction on the part of the receiver.

The recipient's desires. A man in Belfast, Northern Ireland, called a racing bike he received

when he was 10 or 11 years old the best present ever. Why? "Because I really wanted it," he explained. That remark reveals that a person's desire has much to do with whether he will cherish a gift or not. So think about the person to whom you intend to give a gift. Try to identify what he may value, because a person's values often influence his desires. For example, grandparents often *value* spending time with family. They may *desire* to see their children and grandchildren as frequently as possible. A family vacation including the grandparents would likely be more appreciated than any other gift for them.

A key to being aware of a person's desires is to be a good listener. The Bible encourages us to "be quick to listen, slow to speak." (James 1:19) As you engage in everyday conversation with your friends or relatives, listen closely for clues that indicate their likes and dislikes. Then you may be in a better position to give a gift that they will enjoy.

The recipient's needs. A recipient may highly cherish even the simplest gift if it fills a particular need. But how can you know what someone else might need?

It may seem that the easiest way to find out is to ask what the person needs—or, for that matter, wants. However, for many gift-givers, this takes away part of the joy of giving, as they much prefer to surprise the receiver with just the right gift. Furthermore, while some people may talk freely about their likes or dislikes, often they can be rather private regarding their needs.

Therefore, be observant and take special note of the person's circumstances. Is he or she young, old, single, married, divorced, widowed, employed, or retired? Then give thought to what gifts may address a need the person has.

To gain insight into the needs of the intended recipient of your gift, consult with others who have been in similar circumstances. They may be able to tell you about special needs that are not widely known by others. With such input, you may now be able to give a gift that fills a need that others would not think of.

The timing. The Bible states: "A word spoken at the right time—how good it is!" (Proverbs 15:23) This scripture shows that the timing of our words can make a big difference. It is similar with our actions. Just as words spoken at the right time can be very pleasing to the hearer, a gift given at the right time or on the appropriate occasion can contribute greatly to the receiver's happiness.

A friend is getting married. A youth is soon to graduate from school. A married couple is expecting a baby. These are but a few of the many occasions for which gifts are often given. Some find it practical to keep a list of such special events that will take place in the coming year. In

this way they can plan ahead for the gift that would be best for each occasion.*

Of course, you need not limit gift-giving to special occasions. The joy of giving can be experienced at any time. However, a word of caution might be in order. For example, if a man were to give a woman a gift when there is no apparent reason for doing so, she might conclude that the gift was an indication of his interest in getting to know her better. Unless that is the true and appropriate intention, such a gift may lead to misunderstandings or complications. This underscores the need to consider another important factor—the giver's motives.

The giver's motives. As the previous example shows, it is good to consider whether the recipient might misinterpret the giver's motives. On the other hand, *the giver* would do well to examine his or her *own* motives. While most people would like to think that their motives for gift-giving are honorable, many give gifts during certain times of the year because they feel pressured to do so. Still others give in hopes of receiving preferential treatment or something in return.

What can you do to ensure that your gift-giving is done with good motives? The Bible says: "Let everything you do be done with love." (1 Corinthians 16:14) If your giving is motivated by genuine love and concern for the recipients, your gifts will likely be received with joy and you will experience the greater happiness that comes from true generosity. When you give from the heart, you also make our heavenly Father rejoice. The apostle Paul commended the Christians in ancient Corinth when they generously and happily

* Many people also give gifts during birthday and holiday celebrations. However, these occasions often involve practices that are in conflict with what the Bible teaches. See the article "Our Readers Ask—Is Christmas for Christians?" in this magazine.

supported relief work for their fellow Christians in Judea. “God loves a cheerful giver,” Paul told them.—2 Corinthians 9:7.

Giving attention to the factors we have discussed can contribute greatly toward your giving

gifts that make others happy. These factors—and more—have played a part in God’s arrangement for mankind to receive the greatest gift of all. We invite you to consider what this grand gift is by reading the next article.

What Is the Best Gift of All?

“Every good gift and every perfect present is from above, coming down from the Father of the celestial lights.” (James 1:17) That scripture, of course, refers to the generosity of our heavenly Father, Jehovah God. Yet, of the many gifts that God has given mankind, there is one that is greater than all the rest. What is it? Jesus’ well-known words, recorded at John 3:16, tell us: “God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, so that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life.”

The gift of God’s only-begotten Son—that would certainly be the greatest gift that any one of us could ever receive, for thereby we can be freed from the bondage to sin, old age, and death. (Psalm 51:5; John 8:34) Try as we may, on our own there is nothing we can do to be released from that bondage. However, in his great love, God provided what is needed to bring about that release. By giving his only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, as the ransom, Jehovah God gave obedient mankind the prospect of life everlasting. But what exactly is the ransom? Why is it necessary? And how can we benefit from it?

A ransom is a price paid to buy back something forfeited or to bring about release from bondage. The Bible explains that our first parents, Adam and Eve, were created sinless, with the prospect of enjoying life forever on a paradise earth along with the offspring they would later produce. (Genesis 1:26-28) Sadly, they forfeited

all of that by choosing to disobey God—thus becoming sinners. What was the result? The Bible answers: “Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because they had all sinned.” (Romans 5:12) Instead of passing on perfect life to his offspring, Adam passed on sin and its consequence, death.

In the case of a ransom, what is paid must be equal to what was lost. When Adam deliberately disobeyed God, he sinned, and the result was the loss of a perfect human life—Adam’s life. According to the Bible, that caused Adam’s offspring to become enslaved to sin and death. Hence, it took the surrendering of another perfect human life—Jesus’ life—given as a sacrifice to make release from bondage possible. (Romans 5:19; Ephesians 1:7) It is only because God lovingly paid this ransom that mankind has the prospect of enjoying what Adam and Eve lost—life forever on a paradise earth.—Revelation 21:3-5.

In view of what it accomplishes, there is no doubt that God’s gift of the ransom, which makes everlasting life possible, is the greatest gift of all. To appreciate what a “perfect present” it is, let us see how, in surpassing ways, it satisfies the factors that help us to make gifts worthwhile, as discussed in the preceding article.

Satisfies our desire. We humans have a strong innate desire to keep on living. (Ecclesiastes 3:11) Although on our own we are unable to satisfy that

desire, the ransom makes it possible for us to do so. The Bible says: “For the wages sin pays is death, but the gift God gives is everlasting life by Christ Jesus our Lord.”—Romans 6:23.

Fills our need. Humans could not provide the ransom. The Bible explains: “The ransom price for their life is so precious that it is always beyond their reach.” (Psalm 49:8) Therefore, we were in desperate need of divine assistance in order to be released from bondage to sin and death. But “through the release by the ransom paid by Christ Jesus,” God has provided just what is needed.—Romans 3:23, 24.

Is perfectly timed. The Bible tells us: “While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8) Because it was given “while we were yet sinners,” the ransom provides assurance of the depth of God’s love for us despite our sinful state. And it gives us much to look forward to, even though we have to endure the consequences of sin.

Reveals a motive noble and selfless. The Bible points out what moved God to offer his Son as the ransom: “By this the love of God was revealed

in our case, that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world so that we might gain life through him. The love is in this respect, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us.”—1 John 4:9, 10.

How can you show that you appreciate the greatest gift of all? Recall that Jesus’ words at John 3:16 point out that only those “exercising faith” in him will be saved. Faith, according to the Bible, is “the assured expectation of what is hoped for.” (Hebrews 11:1) To have that assurance, accurate knowledge is essential. For this reason, we urge you to take time to learn about Jehovah God, the Giver of this “perfect present,” and to find out what you must do to enjoy the everlasting life that Jesus’ ransom sacrifice has made possible for you.

You can learn all of this by examining the Scriptural information available online at www.jw.org. Jehovah’s Witnesses are happy to help you. We are confident that as you learn about and benefit from this greatest gift, you will be moved to exclaim: “Thanks to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!”—Romans 7:25. ■



God’s gift of the ransom, which makes everlasting life possible, is the best gift of all



Most in Noah's time did what was bad.
Genesis 6:5



Noah listened to God and built an ark.
Genesis 6:13, 14, 18, 19, 22

98 *The Scriptures—Inspired of God*

(2 Timothy 3:16, 17)

1. God's Word shines like a brilliant light,
 Guides our feet through earth's dark night.
If we follow it faithfully,
 Surely its truth will set us free.
2. He provides us with words inspired,
 Helps us learn what is required.
Holy writings can motivate,
 Show how to teach and set things straight.
3. By these words from our God above,
 We have come to know his love.
As we read in it ev'ry day,
 God's Word will keep us on the way.

- Song 102 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Learn From Your Mistakes”:** (10 min.)
[Play the video *Introduction to Obadiah.*]
[Play the video *Introduction to Jonah.*]
Jon 3:1-3—Jonah learned from his mistakes (ja 114 ¶22-23)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Ob 10—How did Edom “perish forever”? (w07 11/1 13 ¶5)

Ob 12—What lesson can we learn from God’s condemnation of Edom? (jd 112 ¶4-5)

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) Jon 3:1-10

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) wp17.6 cover—Lay the groundwork for a return visit.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) wp17.6—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) Id 12-13—Select which pictures to consider.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 98
- **“Lessons From the Book of Jonah”:** (15 min.)
Discuss the article after playing the video *Family Worship: Jonah—Learning From Jehovah’s Mercy* (video category FAMILY).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.)
kr chap. 21 ¶8-14
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 150 and Prayer

OBADIAH 1-JONAH 4 | Learn From Your Mistakes

The account of Jonah shows that Jehovah does not give up on us when we make mistakes. However, he does expect us to learn from our mistakes and make the necessary changes.

Jon 1:3 



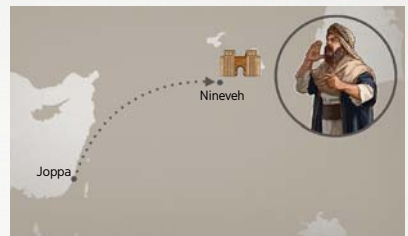
What mistake did Jonah make when he received his assignment from Jehovah?

Jon 2:1-10



What did Jonah pray about, and how did Jehovah respond?

Jon 3:1-3



How did Jonah show that he had learned from his mistakes?

Lessons From the Book of Jonah

In his Word, Jehovah has preserved the life stories of men and women of faith in order to teach us valuable lessons. (Ro 15:4) What did you learn from the book of Jonah? Watch the video *Family Worship: Jonah—Learning From Jehovah’s Mercy*, and then answer the following questions:

What challenges did the three publishers in the video face?

How can the book of Jonah encourage us if we have been disciplined or have lost privileges of service? (1Sa 16:7; Jon 3:1, 2)

How can Jonah’s account help us to maintain a positive view of our territory? (Jon 4:11; Mt 5:7)

How can Jonah’s experience comfort us when we are experiencing chronic health problems? (Jon 2:1, 2, 7, 9)

What did you learn from this video about the value of Bible reading and meditation?



will occur at this point during the great tribulation. Jesus stated: “On account of the chosen ones those days will be cut short.” (**Read Matthew 24:21, 22.**) Jesus’ words were fulfilled on a small scale in 66 C.E. when Jehovah “cut short” the Roman army’s attack on Jerusalem. (Mark 13:20) That action allowed Christians in Jerusalem and Judea to be saved. What will then happen on a global scale during the coming great tribulation? Jehovah, by means of our King, will “cut short” the United Nations’ attack on religion so that the true religion will not be destroyed with the false. Thus, while all false religious organizations will be torn down, the one true religion will survive. (Ps. 96:5) Let us now consider what events will occur after this part of the great tribulation has passed.

Events Leading Up to Armageddon

⁸ Jesus’ prophecy about the last days indicates that several significant developments will take place during the time leading up to Armageddon. The first two events that we will consider are both mentioned

8, 9. To what phenomena may Jesus have referred, and how will people react to what they observe?

WHAT THE NEAR FUTURE HOLDS

Before the Kingdom comes to put an end to its enemies, several significant events will take place. God's Word reveals what lies ahead of us (See paragraph 2)

Precursor of the Great Tribulation	The Great Tribulation Begins	Events Leading Up to Armageddon
<p>Pronouncement of peace and security (1 Thess. 5:2, 3) (See paragraphs 3, 4)</p>	<p>Attack on religion (Rev. 17:16) (See paragraphs 5, 6)</p>	<p>Celestial phenomena (Matt. 24:29) (See paragraph 9)</p>
<p>Final sealing of the remnant of anointed Christians (Rev. 7:1-3) (See paragraph 15)</p>	<p>Attack cut short (Matt. 24:21, 22) (See paragraph 7)</p>	<p>Judgment of sheep and goats (Matt. 25:31-33) (See paragraph 10)</p>
		<p>Attack of Gog of Magog (Ezek. 38:2, 11, 15) (See paragraphs 12-14)</p>

**Jehovah sends his King
to defend all loyal ones
(Ezek. 38:18)
(See paragraphs 13, 16-18)**

**Finale of the
Great Tribulation**



ARMAGEDDON

**(Matt. 25:46; Rev. 16:16)
(See paragraphs 16, 17)**

**Gathering to
heaven of the
remaining
anointed ones
(Matt. 24:31)
(See paragraph 15)**

WHAT THE NEAR FUTURE HOLDS

Before the Kingdom comes to put an end to its enemies, several significant events will take place. God's Word reveals what lies ahead of us (See paragraph 2)

Jehovah sends his King to defend all loyal ones (Ezek. 38:18)
(See paragraphs 13, 16-18)

BEGINNING OF A PERIOD OF UNKNOWN LENGTH

Precursor of the Great Tribulation



Pronouncement of peace and security (1 Thess. 5:2, 3)
(See paragraphs 3, 4)

Final sealing of the remnant of anointed Christians (Rev. 7:1-3)
(See paragraph 15)

The Great Tribulation Begins



Attack on religion (Rev. 17:16)
(See paragraphs 5, 6)

Attack cut short (Matt. 24:21, 22)
(See paragraph 7)

Events Leading Up to Armageddon



Celestial phenomena (Matt. 24:29)
(See paragraph 9)



Judgment of sheep and goats (Matt. 25:31-33)
(See paragraph 10)



Attack of Gog of Magog (Ezek. 38:2, 11, 15)
(See paragraphs 12-14)



Gathering to heaven of the remaining anointed ones (Matt. 24:31)
(See paragraph 15)

Finale of the Great Tribulation

ARMAGEDDON

(Matt. 25:46; Rev. 16:16)

(See paragraphs 16, 17)

THE GREAT TRIBULATION AND BEYOND [w13 7/15 p. 4]

MODERN FULFILLMENT

United Nations (“disgusting thing”) will attack Christendom (“holy place”) and the rest of false religion (Rev. 17:16-18)



Jehovah will “cut short” the attack on false religion; God’s people will be saved



Jesus will judge people of all nations as sheep or goats (Matt. 25:31-46) (See paragraphs 12, 13)

Jesus will appoint the faithful slave over “all his belongings” (Matt. 24:46, 47) (See paragraph 18)

Destruction of the nations (Rev. 16:16)



THE LAST DAYS

← DESTRUCTION OF FALSE RELIGION

OF UNKNOWN

LENGTH INTERVAL →

ARMAGEDDON →

CHRIST’S MILLENNIAL RULE BEGINS

CORRESPONDING EVENTS IN THE FIRST CENTURY

Roman army (“disgusting thing”) attacked Jerusalem and its temple (“holy place”)

Roman army cut short its attack; Christians in Jerusalem and Judea fled

Jerusalem’s destruction

“The disgusting thing . . . standing in a holy place” (Matt. 24:15, 16) (See paragraph 6)

“On account of the chosen ones those days will be cut short” (Matt. 24:22) (See paragraph 7)

“Immediately after the tribulation of those days . . .” (Matt. 24:29-31) (See paragraph 8)

in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke.—**Read Matthew 24:29-31; Mark 13:23-27; Luke 21:25-28.**

9 Celestial phenomena. Jesus foretells: “The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven.” Certainly the religious leaders will not be looked to for light—they will no longer be identified as such. Was Jesus also referring to a supernatural manifestation in the heavens? Perhaps he was. (Isa. 13:9-11; Joel 2:1, 30, 31) How will people react to what they observe? They will be in “anguish” because of “not knowing the way out.” (Luke 21:25; Zeph. 1:17) Yes, enemies of God’s Kingdom—from ‘kings to slaves’—will grow “faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming” and will run for cover. Yet, they will find no hiding place secure enough for them to escape the wrath of our King.—Luke 21:26; 23:30; Rev. 6:15-17.

10 Pronouncement of judgment. All enemies of God’s Kingdom will then be forced to witness an event that will intensify their agony. Jesus states: “They will see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great pow-

10. What judgment will be pronounced by Jesus, and how will supporters and opposers of God’s Kingdom react to it?

er and glory.” (Mark 13:26) This supernatural display of power will signal that Jesus has come to pronounce judgment. In another part of this same prophecy about the last days, Jesus gives more details about the judgment that will be pronounced at this time. We find that information in the parable of the sheep and the goats. **(Read Matthew 25:31-33, 46.)** Loyal supporters of God’s Kingdom will be judged as “sheep” and will “lift up [their] heads,” realizing that their “deliverance is getting near.” (Luke 21:28) However, Kingdom opposers will be judged as “goats” and will “beat themselves in grief,” realizing that “everlasting cutting-off” awaits them.—Matt. 24:30; Rev. 1:7.

¹¹ After Jesus pronounces his judgment on “all the nations,” several significant events are still to occur before the war of Armageddon begins. (Matt. 25:32) We will consider two of those events: the attack of Gog and the gathering of anointed ones. As we examine those two events, we need to keep in mind that God’s Word does not reveal the exact timing of

11. What should we keep in mind as we consider coming events?

these events. In fact, it seems likely that one will overlap the other to some extent.

¹² **An all-out attack.** Gog of Magog will attack the remaining anointed ones and their other sheep companions. (**Read Ezekiel 38:2, 11.**) This attack against established Kingdom rule will be Satan’s last battle in a war that he has been waging against the anointed remnant since his expulsion from heaven. (Rev. 12:7-9, 17) Especially since the anointed ones began to be gathered into the restored Christian congregation, Satan has tried to destroy their spiritual prosperity—but to no avail. (Matt. 13:30) However, at the time when all false religious organizations are gone and God’s people are seemingly living “unprotected by walls, bars, or gates,” Satan will see a golden opportunity. He will incite his wicked enforcers to move in for an all-out attack on those who are Kingdom supporters.

¹³ Ezekiel describes what will happen. Regarding Gog, the prophecy states: “You will come from your place, from the remotest parts of the north, you and

12. What will be Satan’s all-out battle against the Kingdom?

13. How will Jehovah intervene in behalf of his people?

many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great assembly, a vast army. Like clouds covering the land, you will come against my people.” (Ezek. 38:15, 16) What will be Jehovah’s response to this seemingly unstoppable invasion? “My great rage will flare up,” declares Jehovah. “I will call for a sword.” (Ezek. 38:18, 21; **read Zechariah 2:8.**) Jehovah will intervene in behalf of his servants on earth. That intervention is the war of Armageddon.

¹⁴ Before we move forward in time to consider how Jehovah will defend his people during the war of Armageddon, let us pause for a moment and examine another significant event. This one will occur at some point between the beginning of Satan’s all-out attack and the beginning of Jehovah’s intervention at Armageddon. As noted in paragraph 11, this second event is the gathering of the remaining ones of the anointed remnant.

¹⁵ **Gathering of anointed ones.** Both Matthew and Mark recorded Jesus’ statement about the “chosen ones”—spirit-anointed Christians—as part of a series

14, 15. What other event will occur at some point after the beginning of Satan’s all-out attack?

of events that will occur before the outbreak of Armageddon. (See paragraph 7.) Speaking about himself as King, Jesus prophesies: “Then he will send out the angels and will gather his chosen ones together from the four winds, from earth’s extremity to heaven’s extremity.” (Mark 13:27; Matt. 24:31) To what act of gathering is Jesus here referring? He is not speaking about the final sealing of the remnant of anointed Christians, which will occur just *before* the great tribulation *begins*. (Rev. 7:1-3) Instead, Jesus refers to an event that will take place *during* the coming great tribulation. Thus, apparently at some point after the start of Satan’s all-out attack on God’s people, anointed ones who still remain on earth will be gathered to heaven.

¹⁶ How does this gathering of the anointed remnant relate to the event that will occur next, Armageddon? The timing of the gathering indicates that all anointed ones will be in heaven before God’s war of Armageddon begins. In heaven, the 144,000 co-rulers with Christ will receive authority to share

16. What share will the resurrected anointed ones have in the war of Armageddon?

150 *Seek God for Your Deliverance*

(Zephaniah 2:3)

1. Nations align as one,
 Opposing Jehovah's Son.
Their time of human rulership
 By God's decree now is done.
Rulers have had their day;
 God's Kingdom is here to stay.
Soon Christ will crush earthly enemies.
 No more will there be delay.

(CHORUS)

*Seek God for your deliverance,
 Yes, look to him with confidence.
Seek his righteousness,
 Show your faithfulness,
For his sov'reignty, take your stand.
 Then see our God deliver you
By his mighty hand.*

2. People on earth now choose,
 Responding to this good news.
We offer to all men the choice
 To hear or proudly refuse.
Trials, although severe,
 Need not fill our hearts with fear.
Jehovah cares for his loyal ones;
 Our cries for help he will hear.

(Chorus)

(See also 1 Sam. 2:9; Ps. 2:2, 3, 9; Prov. 2:8; Matt. 6:33.)

SEPTEMBER 2017

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
OCTOBER 23–NOVEMBER 26, 2017

**LARGE
PRINT
EDITION**



COVER IMAGE:

EL SALVADOR

Two couples share in public witnessing, using carts in front of one of the biggest malls in San Salvador

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4 WEEK OF OCTOBER 23-29

Cultivate Self-Control

Jehovah is the supreme example of self-control. How can humans imitate him in exercising this quality? And what practical steps can you take to strengthen your self-control?

16 WEEK OF OCTOBER 30–NOVEMBER 5

Imitate Jehovah's Compassion

What does it mean to be compassionate? Both Jehovah and Jesus have set perfect examples of exercising this quality. In what practical ways, though, can we imitate their examples? And what good results can we obtain from doing so?

PUBLISHERS

41,084

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42,813

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New World Translation
of the Holy Scriptures.

28 WEEK OF NOVEMBER 6-12

“The Word of Our God Endures Forever”

40 WEEK OF NOVEMBER 13-19

“The Word of God . . . Exerts Power”

Why is it significant that the Bible continues to be available in more and more languages? And how can we show our appreciation for having access to God’s Word in a language we can understand? These articles will deepen our gratitude for the Bible as well as our love for its Author.

53 WEEK OF NOVEMBER 20-26

“Be Courageous . . . and Go to Work”

Courage is essential for Christians. How can we benefit from the example of those who in the past displayed this quality? How can young ones, parents, older sisters, and baptized brothers show that they are courageous and ready to perform good works?

96 *God's Own Book—A Treasure*

(Proverbs 2:1)

1. There is a book that by its many pages,
 Brings peace and joy and hope to humankind.
Its wondrous thoughts are charged with such great power;
 It brings life to the “dead,” sight to the “blind.”
That precious book is God's own Holy Bible.
 Its words were penned by men whom God inspired,
By men who truly loved their God Jehovah,
 And by his holy spirit they were fired.
2. They wrote a record true of God's creations,
 How by his might this universe appeared.
They also told how man at first was sinless
 But how his Paradise then disappeared.
They further told about a certain angel
 Who challenged God and spurned his sov'reignty.
That challenge led to sin and man's great sorrow,
 But soon will come Jehovah's victory.
3. The time has come with reason for rejoicing:
 Jehovah rules by his anointed King.
So now we preach the good news of the Kingdom
 And share the hope of blessings it will bring.
Within his book are found these cheerful tidings;
 A sacred banquet feast on which to feed.
It offers peace beyond all human thinking;
 This Living Treasure beckons all to read.

(See also 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21.)



SONGS:

96, 94

**HOW CAN YOU
UNLEASH THE
POWER OF GOD'S
WORD . . .**

in your
personal life?

in the ministry?

when teaching
from the platform?

“The Word of God . . . Exerts Power”

“The word of God is alive and exerts power.”—HEB. 4:12.

AS Jehovah’s people, we have no doubt that God’s word, his message to humans, “is alive and exerts power.” (Heb. 4:12) Many of us are living proof of the Bible’s power to change lives. Some of our brothers and sisters were formerly thieves,

1. Why can there be no doubt that God’s Word exerts power? (See opening picture.)

drug addicts, or sexually immoral. Others enjoyed a measure of success in this system of things but felt that something was missing in their life. (Eccl. 2:3-11) Time and again, individuals who seemed hopelessly lost found their way to the path of life by means of the Bible's transforming power. You have likely read and greatly enjoyed a number of these experiences as published in *The Watchtower* in the series "The Bible Changes Lives." And you have seen that even after accepting the truth, Christians continue to make spiritual progress with the help of the Scriptures.

² Should we be surprised that many in modern times have made remarkable changes as a result of studying God's Word? Not at all! Such experiences remind us of our first-century brothers and sisters, who had the heavenly hope. (Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.) After listing a number of types of people who will not inherit God's Kingdom, the apostle Paul added: "That is what some of you were." But they had changed with the help of the Scriptures and of God's holy spirit. Even after

2. How did God's Word exert power in the first century?

accepting the truth, some had to overcome serious spiritual problems. The Bible mentions one anointed Christian in the first century who had to be disfellowshipped; later, he was reinstated. (1 Cor. 5:1-5; 2 Cor. 2:5-8) Do we not find it encouraging to consider the range of problems that our fellow believers have faced and that they have overcome by means of God's Word?

³ Because God's Word is such a powerful tool and we have it at our disposal, we surely want to make the best use of it. (2 Tim. 2:15) In this article, we will therefore consider how we may more fully unleash the power of God's Word (1) in our personal life, (2) when we share in the ministry, and (3) when we teach from the platform. These reminders will help us to show our love and gratitude to our loving heavenly Father, who teaches us to benefit ourselves.—Isa. 48:17.

IN OUR PERSONAL LIFE

⁴ If God's Word is to have an effect on us, we need to read it regularly—daily if possible. (Josh.

3. What will we consider in this article?

4. (a) What is needed if God's Word is to have an effect on us?
(b) How do you make time for Bible reading?

1:8) Of course, most of us lead very busy lives. Still, we cannot afford to let anything—even legitimate responsibilities—disrupt our Bible reading routine. (Read Ephesians 5:15, 16.) Many of Jehovah’s people have found creative ways to make time for daily Bible reading, whether at the start of their day or at the end or somewhere in between. They feel as did the psalmist, who wrote: “How I do love your law! I ponder over it all day long.”—Ps. 119:97.

⁵ In addition to reading the Bible, it is important for us to meditate on what we read. (Ps. 1:1-3) Only then will we be able to make the best personal application of its timeless wisdom. Whether reading God’s Word in printed or electronic form, our goal should be to get it off the page and into our heart.

⁶ How can we meditate effectively? Many have found it helpful to pause after reading a portion of the Scriptures and consider such questions as the following: ‘What does this tell me about

5, 6. (a) Why is meditation important? (b) How can we meditate effectively? (c) How have you personally benefited from reading God’s Word and meditating on it?

FURTHER UNLEASH THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD

in your personal life:

- Read it regularly
- Meditate on it
- Apply what you learn



Jehovah? In what ways am I already applying in my life the principle contained in this portion of God's Word? In what areas could I improve?' As we prayerfully meditate on God's Word, we will feel motivated to apply its counsel even more fully. Indeed, we will to a greater extent unleash its power in our own life.—2 Cor. 10:4, 5.

in the ministry:


- Make liberal use of the Scriptures
- Isolate and explain key portions of a passage
- Introduce texts in a way that increases respect for God's Word



IN THE MINISTRY

⁷ What can help us to make good use of God's Word in our ministry? A first step is to use it liberally when we preach and teach. One brother expressed the matter this way, "If you were

7. How should we make good use of God's Word in our ministry?



**when teaching
from the platform:**

- **Make the Scriptures the backbone of your talk**
- **Do not let experiences, illustrations, or your delivery overshadow the Bible**
- **Take time to explain, illustrate, and apply verses that you read**

preaching from house to house with Jehovah himself, would you do all the talking or would you let him speak?” His point was: When we read directly from God’s Word in the ministry, we are letting Jehovah speak to the householder. A well-chosen scripture will likely be much more powerful than anything we might say. (1 Thess. 2:13) Ask your-

self, ‘Do I look for every opportunity to share a portion of God’s Word with those to whom I bring the good news?’

⁸ Of course, more is needed than merely reading Bible texts to those we are conversing with. Why? Because many have little or no understanding of the Bible. That was true in the first century, and it is true today. (Rom. 10:2) So we should not assume that a person will grasp the point of a verse simply because we read it. We need to take time to isolate portions of the verse—perhaps re-reading key words—and explain their meaning. Doing so can go a long way in helping the message of God’s Word to reach the mind and heart of our listeners.—Read Luke 24:32.

⁹ We also do well to introduce scriptures in a way that engenders respect for the Bible. For example, we might say, “Let’s see what our Creator says on this topic.” When speaking with someone from a non-Christian background, we could say, “Notice what the Holy Writings tell us.” Or if we

8. Why do we need to do more than merely read scriptures when preaching?

9. How can we introduce scriptures in a way that engenders respect for the Bible? Give an example.

are preaching to someone who is secular-minded, we might ask, “Have you ever heard this ancient proverb?” Yes, we consider each person as an individual and adapt our approach accordingly. —1 Cor. 9:22, 23.

¹⁰ Many have found that using God’s Word in the ministry can have a profound impact on those to whom they preach. Consider an example. A brother made a return visit on an elderly gentleman who had read our magazines for a number of years. Instead of simply presenting the latest issue of *The Watchtower*, the brother decided to read a scripture found in that issue. He read 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4, which says: “The Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort . . . comforts us in all our trials.” The householder was so moved by those words that he asked our brother to read the scripture a second time. The man mentioned how much he and his wife needed comfort, and he now showed interest in the Bible’s message. Would you not agree that God’s Word exerts power in our ministry?—Acts 19:20.

10. (a) Relate the experience one brother had. (b) How have you witnessed the power of God’s Word in your ministry?

WHEN TEACHING FROM THE PLATFORM

¹¹ We all enjoy attending our Christian meetings as well as assemblies and conventions. Primarily, we attend to worship Jehovah. We also derive great benefit from the spiritual instruction we receive. Brothers who speak from the platform on these occasions enjoy a great privilege. At the same time, they should recognize that they have a weighty responsibility. (Jas. 3:1) They must always make sure that what they teach is solidly based on God's Word. If you are assigned to teach from the platform, how can you unleash the power of the Bible in your presentation?

¹² Make sure that the Scriptures form the backbone of your talk. (John 7:16) What does that involve? For one thing, be careful that nothing—experiences, illustrations, or even your manner of delivery—overshadows or draws attention away from the Bible verses you use. Also, remember that simply *reading* a number of scriptures does not in itself constitute *teaching* from the Bible. In

11. What responsibility do brothers who teach from the platform have?

12. How can a speaker make sure that the Scriptures form the backbone of his talk?

fact, using too many scriptures could result in none of them standing out in the mind of your listeners. So select your key scriptures carefully, and take time to read, explain, illustrate, and apply them well. (Neh. 8:8) When a talk is based on an outline provided by the organization, study the outline and the scriptures it uses. Try to understand the connection between the statements in the outline and the cited scriptures. Then use selected scriptures to teach the points in the outline. (You can find practical suggestions in studies 21 to 23 of *Benefit From Theocratic Ministry School Education*.) Above all, prayerfully ask for Jehovah's help to convey the precious thoughts contained in his Word.—Read **Ezra 7:10; Proverbs 3:13, 14.**

¹³ A sister in Australia was deeply affected by the use of scriptures at a Christian meeting. Despite having had a tragic upbringing, she had responded to the Bible's message and had dedicated her life to Jehovah. Even so, she found it a challenge to accept Jehovah's love for her. In time,

13. (a) How was one sister affected by the use of scriptures at a Christian meeting? (b) How have you benefited from Scriptural teaching presented at our meetings?

though, she became convinced that God loved her. What helped her to reach that conclusion? A turning point came when she meditated on a scripture that was used at one of our meetings and that she connected with other Bible verses.* Have you similarly been affected by the use of God’s Word at meetings, assemblies, and conventions?—Neh. 8:12.

¹⁴ Are we not grateful to Jehovah for his written Word, the Bible? He not only lovingly provided it for the human family but also fulfilled his promise that it would endure. (1 Pet. 1:24, 25) Surely, we do well to read God’s Word regularly, apply it in our own life, and use it when helping others. We thereby show our love and appreciation not only for this divine treasure but, most important, for its Author, Jehovah God.

* See the box “A Turning Point.”

14. How can we show our appreciation for Jehovah’s Word?

“A TURNING POINT”

For many years after learning the truth, Victoria struggled to accept that God could love her. How was she finally helped to begin feeling truly loved by God? Victoria relates:

“A turning point came about 15 years after I was baptized. During a talk at the Kingdom Hall . . . , the speaker referred to James 1:23, 24. Those verses liken God’s Word to a mirror in which we can see ourselves the way Jehovah sees us. I began to wonder if what I saw in myself was different from what Jehovah saw. At first, I resisted this new idea. I still felt that loving me was too much to expect of Jehovah.

“A few days later, I read a scripture that changed my life. The verse was Isaiah 1:18, where Jehovah is quoted as saying: ‘Come, now, you people, and let us set matters straight between us. . . . Though the sins of you people should prove to be as scarlet, they will be made white just like snow.’ I felt as if Jehovah were speaking to me, saying: ‘Come on, Vicky, let’s set matters straight between us. I know you, I know your sins, I know your heart—and I love you.’

“I was unable to sleep that night. I still doubted that Jehovah could love me, but I began thinking about Jesus’ ransom sacrifice. All of a sudden, it dawned on me that Jehovah had been patient with me for so long, showing me that he loved me in so many ways. Yet, I was, in effect, saying to him: ‘Your love is not great enough to reach me. Your Son’s sacrifice is not enough to cover me.’ It was as if I had been throwing the ransom back at Jehovah. But now, at last, by meditating on this gift of the ransom, I began to feel loved by Jehovah.”

Grateful for God's Word

(Philippians 2:16)

1. Jehovah, our Father, we want to express
How grateful we are that your Word we possess!
All Scripture is inspired;
its truth has set us free.
Its light gives us knowledge; the truth we can see.
2. Your Word has the power to reach deep inside.
Our thoughts and intentions, it helps to divide.
Your laws are clear and perfect,
your judgments ever true.
Your principles guide us in all that we do.
3. Your Word, O Jehovah, has human appeal.
Your prophets were like us; they felt what we feel.
Please help us build a strong faith
that follows what is heard.
We thank you, Jehovah, for your precious Word!

