

- Song 137 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Imitate Mary’s Humility”:** (10 min.)
[Play the video *Introduction to Luke.*]
Lu 1:38—She humbly accepted her assignment (ia 149 ¶12)
Lu 1:46-55—She praised Jehovah by referring to his Word (ia 150-151 ¶15-16)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Lu 1:69—What is the meaning of “a horn of salvation”? (nwtsty study note)

Lu 1:76—In what sense would John the Baptist “go ahead of Jehovah”? (nwtsty study note)

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) Lu 1:46-66

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **First Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 92
- **Local Needs:** (8 min.) As an option, review information regarding the yeartext for 2018. (w18.01 8-9 ¶4-7)
- **Organizational Accomplishments:** (7 min.) Play the *Organizational Accomplishments* video for June.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 24
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 58 and Prayer

LUKE 1 | Imitate Mary’s Humility



Jehovah chose Mary for an unparalleled privilege because she had a remarkable heart attitude.

1:38, 46-55 ✎

How do Mary’s words highlight her . . . humility?

deep faith?

knowledge of the Scriptures?

appreciation?

FOR MEDITATION:

Do I completely trust Jehovah to work matters out for me according to his will?
How can I better imitate Mary’s example?

137 Faithful Women, Christian Sisters

(Romans 16:2)

1. Sarah and Esther, Mary, Ruth, and others—
All these were capable women, loyal wives.
Godly devotion was foremost in their lives.
They were faithful women, ones we know by name.
There were others favored by Jehovah;
Nameless in the record, their faith was just the same.
2. Goodness and courage, loyal love and kindness—
Lovable qualities in all humankind,
Virtues these excellent women bring to mind.
They were fine examples we appreciate.
In the same way now our Christian sisters
Show a faithful spirit we all can imitate.
3. Mothers and daughters, sisters, wives, and widows,
Willingly laboring, glad to do your part.
Modest your bearing, submissive is your heart,
Having God's approval, may you never fear.
Christian sisters, may Jehovah keep you
Firm in your conviction, your prize is drawing near.

LUKE 1:1-24

1 Seeing that many have undertaken to compile an account of the facts that are given full credence* among us,^a **2** just as these were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses^b and attendants of the message,^c **3** I resolved also, because I have traced all things from the start with accuracy, to write them to you in logical order, most excellent The·oph'i·lus,^d **4** so that you may know fully the certainty of the things that you have been taught orally.^e

5 In the days of Herod,^{*f} king of Ju·de'a, there was a priest named Zech·a·ri'ah of the division of A·bi'jah.^g His wife was from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. **6** They both were righteous before God, walking blamelessly in accord with all the commandments and legal requirements of Jehovah.* **7** But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and they both were well along in years.

8 Now as he was serving as priest in the assignment of his division^h before God, **9** according to the established practice[#] of the priesthood it became his turn to offer incenseⁱ when he entered into the sanctuary of Jehovah.*^j **10** And the entire multitude of the people were praying outside at the hour of offering incense. **11** Jehovah's* angel appeared to him, standing at the right side of the incense altar. **12** But Zech·a·ri'ah became troubled at the sight, and he was overcome with fear. **13** However, the angel said to him: "Do not be afraid, Zech·a·ri'ah, because your supplication has been favorably heard, and

1:1 *Or "credibility." 1:5 *See Glossary. 1:6, 9, 11, 15-17 *See App. A5. 1:9 #Or "custom."

your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to name him John.^a **14** You will have joy and great gladness, and many will rejoice over his birth,^b **15** for he will be great in the sight of Jehovah.*^c But he must drink no wine or any alcoholic drink at all,^d and he will be filled with holy spirit even from before birth,^e **16** and he will turn back many of the sons of Israel to Jehovah* their God.^f **17** Also, he will go ahead of him with E·li'jah's spirit and power,^g to turn back the hearts of fathers to children^h and the disobedient ones to the practical wisdom of righteous ones, in order to get ready for Jehovah* a prepared people."ⁱ

18 Zech·a·ri'ah said to the angel: "How can I be sure of this? For I am old, and my wife is well along in years." **19** In reply the angel said to him: "I am Ga'·bri·el,^j who stands near before God,^k and I was sent to speak with you and to declare this good news to you. **20** But look! you will be silent and unable to speak until the day these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their appointed time." **21** Meanwhile, the people continued waiting for Zech·a·ri'ah, and they were surprised that he delayed so long in the sanctuary. **22** When he came out, he was unable to speak to them, and they perceived that he had just seen a supernatural sight* in the sanctuary. He kept making signs to them but remained speechless. **23** When the days of his holy service* were completed, he went off to his home.

24 Some days later Elizabeth his wife became pregnant, and

1:15 ^aOr "right from his mother's womb." 1:22 ^cOr "a vision." 1:23 ^fOr "his public service."

she kept herself secluded for five months, saying: **25** "This is how Jehovah* has dealt with me in these days. He has turned his attention to me to take away my reproach among men."^a

26 In her sixth month, the angel Ga'bri-el^b was sent from God to a city of Gal'i-lee named Naz'a-reth, **27** to a virgin^c promised in marriage* to a man named Joseph of David's house, and the name of the virgin was Mary.^d **28** And coming in, the angel said to her: "Greetings, you highly favored one, Jehovah* is with you." **29** But she was deeply disturbed at his words and tried to understand what kind of greeting this might be. **30** So the angel said to her: "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. **31** And look! you will become pregnant* and give birth to a son,^e and you are to name him Jesus.^f **32** This one will be great^g and will be called Son of the Most High,^h and Jehovah* God will give him the throne of David his father,ⁱ **33** and he will rule as King over the house of Jacob forever, and there will be no end to his Kingdom."^j

34 But Mary said to the angel: "How is this to be, since I am not having sexual relations with a man?"^k **35** In answer the angel said to her: "Holy spirit will come upon you,^l and power of the Most High will overshadow you. And for that reason the one who is born will be called holy,^m God's Son.ⁿ **36** And look! Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son, in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her, the so-called barren woman; **37** for no declaration* will be

1:25, 28, 32, 38, 45, 46 *See App. A5.
 1:27 *Or "engaged." 1:31 *Or "conceive in your womb." 1:37 *Or "nothing."

LUKE 1:25-53

impossible for God.”^a **38** Then Mary said: “Look! Jehovah’s* slave girl! May it happen to me according to your declaration.” At that the angel departed from her.

39 So Mary set out in those days and traveled with haste into the mountainous country, to a city of Judah, **40** and she entered the home of Zech·a·ri’ah and greeted Elizabeth. **41** Well, as Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the infant in her womb leaped, and Elizabeth was filled with holy spirit **42** and loudly cried out: “Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruitage of your womb! **43** So how is it that this privilege is mine, to have the mother of my Lord come to me? **44** For look! as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the infant in my womb leaped for joy. **45** Happy too is she who believed, for there will be a complete fulfillment of those things spoken to her from Jehovah.”*

46 And Mary said: “My soul[#] magnifies Jehovah,^{*b} **47** and my spirit cannot keep from being overjoyed at God my Savior,^c **48** because he has looked upon the low position of his slave girl.^d For look! from now on all generations will declare me happy,^e **49** because the powerful One has done great deeds for me, and holy is his name,^f **50** and for generation after generation his mercy is upon those who fear him.^g **51** He has acted mightily with his arm; he has scattered those who are haughty in the intention of their hearts.^h **52** He has brought down powerful men from thronesⁱ and has exalted lowly ones;^j **53** he has fully satisfied hungry ones with

1:46 [#]Or “My whole being.” See Glossary.

LUKE 1:54-2:4

good things^a and has sent away empty-handed those who had wealth. **54** He has come to the aid of Israel his servant, remembering his mercy,^b **55** just as he spoke to our forefathers, to Abraham and to his offspring,^{*c} forever.” **56** Mary stayed with her about three months and then returned to her own home.

57 The time now came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she gave birth to a son. **58** And the neighbors and her relatives heard that Jehovah* had magnified his mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her.^d **59** On the eighth day they came to circumcise the young child,^e and they were going to name him after his father, Zech·a·ri’ah. **60** But his mother said in reply: “No! but he will be called John.” **61** At this they said to her: “Not one of your relatives is called by this name.” **62** Then they asked his father by signs what he wanted him to be called. **63** So he asked for a tablet and wrote: “John is his name.”^f At this they were all amazed. **64** Instantly his mouth was opened and his tongue was set free and he began to speak,^g praising God. **65** And fear fell upon all those living in their neighborhood, and all these things began to be talked about in the whole mountainous country of Ju·de’a. **66** And all who heard noted it in their hearts, saying: “What will this young child turn out to be?” For the hand of Jehovah* was indeed with him.

67 Then Zech·a·ri’ah his father was filled with holy spirit, and he prophesied, saying: **68** “Let Jehovah* be praised, the God of Israel,^h because he has turned his attention to his people and has brought them deliv-

1:55 *Lit., “seed.” 1:58, 66, 68, 76

*See App. A5.

erance.^a **69** And he has raised up a horn of salvation^{*b} for us in the house of David his servant,^c **70** just as he has spoken through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,^d **71** of a salvation from our enemies and from the hand of all those hating us;^e **72** to show mercy in connection with our forefathers and to call to mind his holy covenant,^f **73** the oath that he swore to Abraham our forefather,^g **74** to grant us, after we have been rescued from the hands of enemies, the privilege of fearlessly rendering sacred service to him **75** with loyalty and righteousness before him all our days. **76** But as for you, young child, you will be called a prophet of the Most High, for you will go ahead of Jehovah* to prepare his ways,^h **77** to give knowledge of salvation to his people by forgiveness of their sins,ⁱ **78** because of the tender compassion of our God. With this compassion a day-break will visit us from on high, **79** to give light to those sitting in darkness and death's shadow^j and to guide our feet in the way of peace."

80 And the young child grew up and became strong in spirit, and he continued in the desert until the day he showed himself openly to Israel.

2 Now in those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus for all the inhabited earth to be registered. **2** (This first registration took place when Qui-rin'i-us was governor of Syria.) **3** And all the people went to be registered, each one to his own city. **4** Of course, Joseph^k also went up from Gal-i-lee, from the city of Naz'a-reth, into Ju-de'a, to David's city, which is called Beth'le-hem,^l be-

1:69 *Or "a powerful savior." See Glossary, "Horn."

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How do Mary’s words highlight her . . . humility?

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FOR MEDITATION:

Do I completely trust Jehovah to work matters out for me according to his will?
How can I better imitate Mary’s example?

June 11-17

Treasures From God's Word

Luke 1:38—She humbly accepted her assignment

Luke 1:38 Then Mary said: “Look! Jehovah’s slave girl! May it happen to me according to your declaration.” At that the angel departed from her. [End of inserted scripture.]

(ia 149 paragraph 12) Her words, so full of simple humility and obedience, resonate for all people of faith. She said to Gabriel: “Look! Jehovah’s slave girl! May it take place with me according to your declaration.” (Luke 1:38) A slave girl was the lowliest of servants; her life was entirely in the hands of her master. That is how Mary felt about her Master, Jehovah. She knew that she was safe in his hands, that he is loyal to those who are loyal to him, and that he would bless her as she did her best with this challenging assignment.—Psalm 18:25.

Luke 1:46-55—She praised Jehovah by referring to his Word

Luke 1:46-55 And Mary said: “My soul magnifies Jehovah, and my spirit cannot keep from being overjoyed at God my Savior, because he has looked upon the low position of his slave girl. For look! from now on all generations will declare me happy, because the powerful One has done great deeds for me, and holy is his name, and for generation after generation his mercy is upon those who fear him. He has acted mightily with his arm; he has scattered those who are haughty in the intention of their hearts. He has brought down powerful men from thrones and has exalted lowly ones; he has fully satisfied hungry ones with good things and has sent away empty-handed those who had wealth. He has come to the aid of Israel his servant, remembering his mercy, just as he spoke to our forefathers, to Abraham and to his offspring, forever.” [End of inserted scripture.]

(ia 150-151 paragraphs 15-16) 15 In turn, Mary spoke. Her words are carefully preserved in God’s Word. (Read Luke 1:46-55.) It is by far Mary’s longest speech in the Bible record, and it reveals much about her. It shows her thankful, appreciative spirit as she praises Jehovah for blessing her with the privilege of serving as the mother of the Messiah. It shows the depth of her faith as she speaks of Jehovah as abasing the haughty and powerful and as helping the lowly and poor who seek to serve him. It also hints at the extent of her knowledge. By one estimate, she made over 20 references to the Hebrew Scriptures!

16 Clearly, Mary thought deeply about God’s Word. Still, she remained humble, preferring to let the Scriptures do the talking rather than speaking of her own originality. The son who was then growing in her womb would one day show the same spirit, saying: “What I teach is not mine, but belongs to him that sent me.” (John 7:16) We do well to ask ourselves: ‘Do I show such respect and reverence for God’s Word? Or do I prefer my own ideas and teachings?’ Mary’s position is clear.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Luke 1:69—What is the meaning of “a horn of salvation”?

Luke 1:69 And he has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of David his servant.

(“a horn of salvation” study note on Luke 1:69, *nwtsty*) a horn of salvation: Or “a powerful savior.” In the Bible, animal horns often represent strength, conquest, and victory. (1 Samuel 2:1; Psalm 75:4, 5, 10; 148:14; footnotes.) Also, rulers and ruling dynasties, both the righteous and the wicked, are symbolized by horns, and their achieving of conquests was likened to pushing with horns. (Deuteronomy 33:17; Daniel 7:24; 8:2-10, 20-24) In this context, the expression “a horn of salvation” refers to the Messiah as the one having power to save, a mighty savior.

Luke 1:76—In what sense would John the Baptist “go ahead of Jehovah”?

Luke 1:76 But as for you, young child, you will be called a prophet of the Most High, for you will go ahead of Jehovah to prepare his ways.

(“you will go ahead of Jehovah” study note on Luke 1:76, *nwtsty*) you will go ahead of Jehovah: John the Baptist would “go ahead of Jehovah” in the sense that he would be the forerunner of Jesus, who would *represent* his Father and come in his Father’s name.—John 5:43; 8:29; see the study note on **Jehovah** in this verse.

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

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

LUKE

Study Notes—Chapter 1

Title

Luke: The Greek form of the name is *Lou·kas'*. Luke, the writer of this Gospel and of Acts of Apostles, was a physician and a faithful companion to the apostle Paul. (Col 4:14; see also “Introduction to Luke.”) Because of his Greek name and his style of writing, some have claimed that Luke was not a Jew. Also, at Col 4:10-14, Paul first speaks of “those circumcised” and later mentions Luke. However, that runs contrary to the indication at Ro 3:1, 2, which says that the Jews “were entrusted with the sacred pronouncements of God.” Therefore, Luke may have been a Greek-speaking Jew with a Greek name.

According to Luke: None of the Gospel writers identify themselves as such in their accounts, and titles are evidently not part of the original text. In some manuscripts of Luke’s Gospel, the title appears as *Eu·ag·ge'li·on Ka·ta' Lou·kan'* (“Good News [or, “Gospel”] According to Luke”), whereas in others a shorter title, *Ka·ta' Lou·kan'* (“According to Luke”), is used. It is not clear exactly when such titles were added or began to be used. Some suggest the second century C.E., since examples of the longer title have been found in Gospel manuscripts that have been dated to the end of the second century or early third century. According to some scholars, the opening words of Mark’s book (“The beginning of the good news about Jesus Christ, the Son of God”) may have been the reason why the term “gospel” (lit., “good news”) came to be used to describe these accounts. The use of such titles along with the name of the writer may have come about for practical reasons, providing a clear means of identification of the books.

1:1

that are given full credence: The Greek expression could also be rendered “that are given full credibility.” It highlights that **the facts** had been thoroughly examined. Combining this with the expression **among us** indicates that there was full conviction among Christians that all things connected with Christ had been fulfilled and had proved true and were worthy of being accepted with confidence. Therefore, some translations use such phrases as “that have been fully believed among us.” In other contexts, forms of the same Greek word are rendered “fully convinced” and “with firm conviction.”—Ro 4:21; 14:5; Col 4:12.

1:2

attendants of the message: Or “servants of the word.” Two translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J^{18, 22} in App. C) here use the Tetragrammaton and read “servants of Jehovah’s word.”

1:3

traced: Or “carefully investigated.” Luke was not an eyewitness to the events he recorded. So in addition to being inspired by holy spirit, he evidently based his account on the following sources: (1) Written records available to him as he compiled Jesus’ genealogy. (Lu 3:23-38) (2) The inspired account penned by Matthew. (3) Personal interviews with many eyewitnesses (Lu 1:2), such as the surviving disciples and possibly Jesus’ mother, Mary. Nearly 60 percent of the material in Luke’s Gospel is unique to his account.—See “Introduction to Luke.”

in logical order: Or “in an orderly sequence.” The Greek expression *ka·the·xes'*, rendered “in logical order,” can refer to sequence of time, topic, or logic, but it does not necessarily denote strict chronological order. That Luke did not always record the events in chronological sequence is evident from Lu 3:18-21.

Therefore, all four Gospel accounts need to be examined to establish the order of events during Jesus' life and ministry. Luke generally related events in chronological order, but he evidently allowed other factors to influence his systematic presentation of events and topics.

most excellent: The Greek word for “most excellent” (*kra'ti-stos*) is used in an official sense when addressing high officials. (Ac 23:26; 24:3; 26:25) Therefore, some scholars feel that this term may indicate that **Theophilus** held a high position before becoming a Christian. Others understand the Greek term to be simply a friendly or polite form of address or an expression of high esteem. Theophilus was evidently a Christian, for he had already been “taught orally” about Jesus Christ and his ministry. (Lu 1:4) Luke's written statement would have served to assure him of the certainty of what he had previously learned by word of mouth. However, there are other views on this matter. Some feel that Theophilus was at first an interested person who later converted, whereas others feel that the name, meaning “Loved by God; Friend of God,” was used as a pseudonym for Christians in general. When addressing Theophilus at the beginning of Acts of Apostles, Luke does not use the expression “most excellent.”—Ac 1:1.

1:5

Herod: Refers to Herod the Great.—See Glossary.

Zechariah: From the Hebrew name meaning “Jehovah Has Remembered.” Some Bible translations use “Zacharias,” reflecting the Greek form of the name.

the division of Abijah: Abijah was a priestly descendant of Aaron. In King David's day, Abijah was recognized as head of one of the paternal houses of Israel. David divided the priesthood into 24 divisions, each to serve at the sanctuary in Jerusalem for

a one-week period every six months. The paternal house of Abijah was chosen by lot to head the eighth division. (1Ch 24:3-10) “The division of Abijah” did not necessarily have to do with the line of descent of Zechariah but with the priestly division with which Zechariah was assigned to serve.—See study note on Lu 1:9.

Abijah: From the Hebrew name meaning “My Father Is Jehovah.”

Elizabeth: The Greek name *E·lei·sa'bet* comes from the Hebrew name 'E·li·she'va' (Elisheba), meaning “My God Is Plenty; God of Plenty.” Elizabeth was **from the daughters of Aaron**, that is, a descendant of Aaron, so John’s parents were both of priestly descent.

1:6

Jehovah: In this translation, this is the first occurrence of the divine name in the Gospel of Luke. Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord), there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The context shows that *Ky'ri-os* is used with reference to God. The first two chapters of Luke’s account are rich with references to and allusions to expressions and passages in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. For example, the phrase **commandments and legal requirements** and similar combinations of legal terms can be found in the Hebrew Scriptures in contexts where the divine name is used or where Jehovah is speaking. (Ge 26:2, 5; Nu 36:13; De 4:40; Eze 36:23, 27) It is worth noting that these two Greek legal terms occur in the *Septuagint* at De 27:10. In an early papyrus fragment of the Greek *Septuagint* (Papyrus Fouad Inv. 266) showing parts of the verse, the divine name is written in square Hebrew characters. This fragment is dated to the first century B.C.E. The Hebrew Scripture background for these terms related to Jehovah’s standards is an indication that *Ky'ri-os* is

here used as a substitute for the divine name. A number of Bible translations use such renderings as Jehovah, Yahveh, Yahweh, יהוה (*YHWH*, or the Tetragrammaton), LORD, and ADONAI in the main text of Luke 1:6 or in footnotes and marginal notes to indicate that this is a reference to Jehovah God. A number of reference works support this view.—See App. C.

1:9

his turn to offer incense: High Priest Aaron initially offered the incense on the golden altar. (Ex 30:7) However, his son Eleazar was given oversight of the incense and other tabernacle items. (Nu 4:16) Zechariah, who was an underpriest, is here described as burning the incense, so it appears that handling this service, except on the Day of Atonement, was not restricted to the high priest. The burning of incense may have been considered the most esteemed of the daily services at the temple. It was done after the sacrifice was offered, and during that time, the people would be gathered for prayer outside the sanctuary. According to Rabbinic tradition, lots were drawn for this service but a priest who had previously officiated was not allowed to do so again unless all present had performed the service before. If this is so, a priest might have the honor only once in a lifetime.

sanctuary: In this context, the Greek word *na·os'* refers to the central temple building. When it was Zechariah's "turn to offer incense," he had to enter the Holy, the first compartment of the sanctuary, where the altar of incense was located.—See study notes on Mt 27:5; 27:51 and App. B11.

Jehovah: As mentioned in the study note on Lu 1:6, the first two chapters of Luke's account are rich with references to and allusions to passages and expressions in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri·os* (Lord) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. In the Hebrew

Scriptures, expressions corresponding to the combination “sanctuary [or “temple”] of Jehovah” often include the Tetragrammaton. (Nu 19:20; 2Ki 18:16; 23:4; 24:13; 2Ch 26:16; 27:2; Jer 24:1; Eze 8:16; Hag 2:15) The Hebrew Scripture background for this expression may be an indication that *Ky'ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name. Also, a number of Bible translations use such renderings as Jehovah, Yahveh, Yahweh, יהוה (*YHWH*, or the Tetragrammaton), LORD, and ADONAI in the main text or in footnotes and marginal notes to indicate that this is a reference to Jehovah God. A number of reference works support this view.—See App. C.

1:11

Jehovah’s angel: This expression occurs many times in the Hebrew Scriptures, starting at Ge 16:7. When it occurs in early copies of the *Septuagint*, the Greek word *ag'ge-los* (angel; messenger) is followed by the divine name written in Hebrew characters. That is how the expression is handled at Zec 3:5, 6 in a copy of the *Septuagint* found in a cave in Nahal Hever, Israel, in the Judean Desert. This fragment is dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. It is noteworthy that when later copies of the Greek *Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky'ri-os* in this and many other verses, the definite article was not included where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage. This may be another indication that *Ky'ri-os* replaces the divine name here and in similar contexts. A number of Bible translations retain the divine name when rendering the expression “Jehovah’s angel” in this verse.—See App. C.

1:13

John: The English equivalent of the Hebrew name Jehohanan or Johanan, meaning “Jehovah Has Shown Favor; Jehovah Has Been Gracious.”

1:15

in the sight of Jehovah: As mentioned in the study note on Lu 1:6, the first two chapters of Luke's account are rich with references to and allusions to passages and expressions in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. Although extant Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) in this verse, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The context shows that *Ky'ri-os* is here used with reference to God. The Greek expression *e·no'pi·on Ky·ri'ou* (lit., "in sight of [before] Lord") reflects a Hebrew idiom and occurs over 100 times in existing copies of the *Septuagint* as a translation of Hebrew phrases where the Tetragrammaton is used in the original text. (Jg 11:11; 1Sa 10:19; 2Sa 5:3; 6:5) The Hebrew Scripture background for this expression is an indication that *Ky'ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name. Also, a number of Bible translations use such renderings as Jehovah, Yahveh, Yahweh, יהוה (*YHWH*, or the Tetragrammaton), LORD, and ADONAI in the main text or in footnotes and marginal notes to indicate that this is a reference to Jehovah God. A number of reference works support this view.—See App. C.

holy spirit: Or "holy active force."—See Glossary, "Holy spirit"; "Spirit."

1:16

Jehovah: Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The angel's message to Zechariah (verses 13-17) strongly reflects language used in the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, the combination of *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) and *The·os'* (God) along with a personal pronoun (here rendered **Jehovah their God**) is common in quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures. (Compare the expression "Jehovah your God" at Lu

4:8, 12; 10:27.) In the Hebrew Scriptures, the combination “Jehovah their God” occurs over 30 times, whereas the expression “the Lord their God” is never used. Also, the term **the sons of Israel** reflects a Hebrew idiom used many times in the Hebrew Scriptures, meaning “the people of Israel” or “the Israelites.” (Ge 36:31, ftn.) A Greek expression similar to the one used here for “turn back [someone] to Jehovah” is used in the *Septuagint* at 2Ch 19:4 as a translation of the Hebrew phrase for “to bring [people] back to Jehovah.”—See App. C.

1:17

Elijah’s: From the Hebrew name meaning “My God Is Jehovah.”
to turn back the hearts of fathers to children: This expression, quoting a prophecy at Mal 4:6, is not foretelling a general reconciliation between fathers and their children. Rather, John’s message would move fathers to repent, changing their hard hearts into humble, teachable hearts, like those of obedient children. Some would become children of God. Malachi similarly foretold that the hearts of sons would turn back to fathers, meaning that repentant men would become more like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, their faithful forefathers.

Jehovah: The angel’s words to Zechariah (verses 13-17) contain allusions to such verses as Mal 3:1; 4:5, 6; and Isa 40:3, where the divine name is used. (See study notes on Lu 1:15, 16.) Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) here, the Hebrew Scripture background provides good reasons for using the divine name in the text. Additionally, an expression similar to the Greek phrase for **to get ready . . . a people** can be found in the *Septuagint* at 2Sa 7:24, where the Hebrew text reads: “You established your people Israel . . . , O Jehovah.”—See App. C.

1:19

Gabriel: From the Hebrew name meaning “A Strong (Able-Bodied) One of God.” (Da 8:15, 16) Other than Michael, Gabriel is the only angel named in the Bible and the only materialized angel to reveal his own name.

declare this good news: The Greek verb *eu-ag-ge-li'zo-mai* is related to the noun *eu-ag-ge'li-on*, “good news.” The angel Gabriel is here acting as an evangelizer.—See study notes on Mt 4:23; 24:14; 26:13.

1:23

holy service: Or “public service.” The Greek word *lei-tour-gi'a*, used here, and the related words *lei-tour-ge'o* (to render public service) and *lei-tour-gos'* (public servant, or worker) were used by the ancient Greeks and Romans to refer to work or service for the State or for civil authorities and done for the benefit of the people. For example, at Ro 13:6, the secular authorities are called God’s “public servants” (plural form of *lei-tour-gos'*) in the sense that they provide beneficial services for the people. The term as used here by Luke reflects the usage found in the *Septuagint*, where the verb and noun forms of this expression frequently refer to the temple service of the priests and Levites. (Ex 28:35; Nu 8:22) Service performed at the temple included the idea of a public service for the benefit of the people. However, it also included holiness, since the Levitical priests taught God’s Law and offered sacrifices that covered the sins of the people.—2Ch 15:3; Mal 2:7.

1:25

how Jehovah has dealt with me: Or “what Jehovah has done for me.” Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. Here Elizabeth expresses her gratitude in

a way that may bring to mind Sarah's experience as described at Ge 21:1, in which verse the divine name occurs. To describe Jehovah's dealings with humans, the Hebrew Scriptures often use the corresponding Hebrew verb for "has dealt with me" (or, "has done for me") along with the divine name. (Ex 13:8; De 4:34; 1Sa 12:7; 25:30) Also, before *Ky'ri-os* there is no Greek definite article where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky'ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. (For additional support for the use of the divine name, see App. C; see also study note on Mr 5:19.) Elizabeth's comment about how her **reproach** of being childless has been taken away echoes the words of Rachel, recorded at Ge 30:23.

1:26

In her sixth month: That is, the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, as shown by the context, verses 24 and 25. Lit., "In the sixth month."

1:27

promised in marriage: Among the Hebrews, to be "promised in marriage," or engaged, was a binding arrangement. An engaged couple was viewed as already married, although the man and the woman did not begin living together as husband and wife until the wedding formalities were completed.

Mary: Corresponding to the Hebrew name "Miriam." Six women in the Christian Greek Scriptures are named Mary: (1) Mary the mother of Jesus, (2) Mary Magdalene (Mt 27:56; Lu 8:2; 24:10), (3) Mary the mother of James and Joses (Mt 27:56; Lu 24:10), (4) Mary the sister of Martha and Lazarus (Lu 10:39; Joh 11:1), (5) Mary the mother of John Mark (Ac 12:12), and (6) Mary of Rome (Ro 16:6). In Jesus' day, Mary was one of the most common female names.

1:28

Jehovah is with you: This and similar phrases that include the divine name often occur in the Hebrew Scriptures. (Ru 2:4; 2Sa 7:3; 2Ch 15:2; Jer 1:19) The angel's greeting to Mary is similar to the words used when Jehovah's angel addressed Gideon at Jg 6:12: "Jehovah is with you, you mighty warrior." Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) at Lu 1:28, the Hebrew Scripture background for this expression is an indication that *Ky'ri-os* is here a substitute for the divine name. A number of Bible translations also use such renderings as Jehovah, Yahveh, Yahweh, יהוה (*YHWH*, or the Tetragrammaton), LORD, and ADONAI in the main text or in footnotes and marginal notes to indicate that this is a reference to Jehovah God. A number of reference works support this view.—See App. C.

1:31

Jesus: Corresponds to the Hebrew name Jeshua or Joshua, a shortened form of Jehoshua, meaning "Jehovah Is Salvation."

1:32

Jehovah God: As mentioned in the study note on Lu 1:6, the first two chapters of Luke's account are rich with references to and allusions to passages and expressions in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. Although existing Greek manuscripts use the expression *Ky'ri-os ho The-os'*, literally, "Lord the God," there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The angel's words about **the throne of David** are an allusion to the promise at 2Sa 7:12, 13, 16, where Jehovah is speaking to David through the prophet Nathan and where the Tetragrammaton occurs several times in the immediate context. (2Sa 7:4-16) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the expression here rendered "Jehovah God" and similar combinations occur mainly in quotes from the Hebrew

Scriptures or in passages reflecting Hebrew language style. (See study note on Lu 1:16.) “Jehovah God,” not “the Lord God,” is the standard combination used in the Hebrew Scriptures, and this expression occurs about 40 times. Including such similar combinations as “Jehovah [my; our; your; his; their] God” or “Jehovah the God of . . .” would bring the number of occurrences to over 800. It is true that later copies of the *Septuagint* used the combination *Ky'ri-os ho The-os'* (Lord the God) as the equivalent of the Hebrew expression for “Jehovah God.” A vellum leaf dated to the third century C.E. containing a portion of the *Septuagint* translation of Genesis (Papyrus Oxyrhynchus vii. 1007) renders the divine name in the expression “Jehovah God” at Ge 2:8, 18, not by *Ky'ri-os*, but by an abbreviation of the Tetragrammaton in the form of a doubling of the Hebrew letter *yod* written as ##. It is also interesting to note that when the combinations “Jehovah your God” and “Jehovah his God” occur at De 18:5, 7 in an early fragment of the *Septuagint* (Papyrus Fouad Inv. 266), the divine name is written in square Hebrew characters within the Greek text. This fragment is dated to the first century B.C.E. So in view of the Hebrew Scripture background, the divine name has been used in the main text.—See App. C.

1:36

your relative: This form of the Greek term (spelled *syg·ge·nis'*) occurs only once in the Christian Greek Scriptures, but another spelling (*syg·ge·nes'*) of the word is used in other verses. (Lu 1:58; 21:16; Ac 10:24; Ro 9:3) Both terms refer to a relative in general, someone belonging to the same extended family or clan. So Mary and Elizabeth were related, but the exact relationship is not specified. Zechariah and Elizabeth were of the tribe of Levi and Joseph and Mary were of the tribe of Judah, so the relationship may not have been close.

1:37

no declaration will be impossible for God: Or “no word from God will ever fail.” Or possibly, “nothing will be impossible for God.” The Greek word *rhe'ma*, rendered “declaration,” can refer to “a word; a saying; a declaration.” Or it can refer to “a thing; the thing spoken of,” whether an event, an action described, or the result of what has been declared. Although the Greek text could be rendered in different ways, the overall meaning remains the same, namely, that nothing is impossible as far as God is concerned or with respect to any of his promises. The wording here is similar to the *Septuagint* rendering of Ge 18:14, where Jehovah assured Abraham that his wife, Sarah, would give birth to Isaac in her old age.

1:38

Look! Jehovah's slave girl!: With these words, Mary echoes expressions of other servants of Jehovah mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, Hannah says in her prayer recorded at 1Sa 1:11: “O Jehovah of armies, if you look upon the affliction of your servant [or, “slave girl”].” At 1Sa 1:11, the *Septuagint* uses the same Greek word for “slave girl” as is used in Luke's account. Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) at Lu 1:38, the divine name is used in the main text of this verse in view of the context (*Ky'ri-os* refers to God) and the Hebrew Scripture background. Additionally, scholars have noted that the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky'ri-os* where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky'ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. This is another indication that *Ky'ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name.—See App. C.

1:39

traveled . . . into the mountainous country: From Mary's home in Nazareth, this trip into the Judean hills might have taken three or four days, depending on where the city of Zechariah and Elizabeth was located. The distance may have been 100 km (60 mi) or more.

1:45

from Jehovah: The things spoken to Mary by the angel had their origin with Jehovah God. The Greek expression *pa·ra' Ky·ri'ou*, here rendered "from Jehovah," occurs in existing copies of the *Septuagint* as a translation of Hebrew expressions in which the divine name is typically used. (Ge 24:50; Jg 14:4; 1Sa 1:20; Isa 21:10; Jer 11:1; 18:1; 21:1) As in other occurrences of *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) in Luke chapter 1, scholars have noted that the unexpected absence of a definite article before *Ky'ri-os* makes the term tantamount to a proper name. Also, when the equivalent of this Greek expression occurs at De 18:16 in an early fragment of the Greek *Septuagint* (Papyrus Fouad Inv. 266), the divine name is written in square Hebrew characters within the Greek text. This fragment is dated to the first century B.C.E. Although existing Greek manuscripts of Luke's Gospel use the word *Ky'ri-os* here, the context and the Hebrew Scripture background provide good reasons for using the divine name in the main text.

1:46

And Mary said: Mary's words of praise that follow in verses 46-55 contain well over 20 references to or allusions to the Hebrew Scriptures. Many of her expressions echo words of the prayer of Hannah, Samuel's mother, who also received a blessing from Jehovah in the matter of childbirth. (1Sa 2:1-10) Some other examples of expressions referred to or alluded to can be found at Ps 35:9; Hab 3:18; Isa 61:10 (vs. 47); Ge 30:13; Mal 3:12

(vs. 48); De 10:21; Ps 111:9 (vs. 49); Job 12:19 (vs. 52); Ps 107:9 (vs. 53); Isa 41:8, 9; Ps 98:3 (vs. 54); Mic 7:20; Isa 41:8; 2Sa 22:51 (vs. 55). Mary's words give evidence of her spirituality and her knowledge of the Scriptures. They show her appreciative attitude. Her words also reveal the depth of her faith, as she spoke of Jehovah as abasing the haughty and powerful and as helping the lowly and poor who seek to serve him.

My soul: Or "My whole being." The Greek word *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered "soul," here refers to a person's entire being. In this context, "my soul" can also be rendered "I."—See Glossary, "Soul."

My soul magnifies Jehovah: Or "My soul praises (proclaims) the greatness of Jehovah." These words of Mary may echo passages in the Hebrew Scriptures, such as Ps 34:3 and 69:30, where the divine name is used in the same verse or in the context. (Ps 69:31) In these verses, the same Greek word for "magnify" (*me-ga-ly'no*) is used in the *Septuagint*. It is worth noting that one fragment of a parchment roll (Papyrus Vindobonensis Greek 39777, dated to the third or fourth century C.E.) contains, according to Symmachus' Greek translation, part of Ps 69 (68 in the *Septuagint*). At Ps 69:13, 30, 31, this fragment renders the divine name using, not *Ky'ri-os*, but the Tetragrammaton written in archaic Hebrew characters (### or ###). This evidence, along with the Hebrew Scripture background, supports using the divine name at Lu 1:46.—See study note on **And Mary said** in this verse and study notes on Lu 1:6, 25, 38 and App. C.

1:58

Jehovah: The first two chapters of Luke's account are rich with references to and allusions to expressions and passages in the Hebrew Scriptures where the divine name occurs. (See study notes on Lu 1:6, 9, 11, 15, 16, 17, 25, 28, 32, 38, 45, 46.) The

expression rendered **that Jehovah had magnified his mercy to her** reflects the wording of verses in the Hebrew Scriptures, including Ge 19:18-20, where Lot addresses Jehovah by saying: “Jehovah! . . . You are showing great kindness to me [lit., “You are magnifying your kindness”].” Although existing Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) here, the divine name is used in this verse in view of the context (*Ky'ri-os* refers to God) and the Hebrew Scripture background.—See App. C.

1:66

hand: This term is often used figuratively for “power.” Since the hand applies the power of the arm, “hand” may also convey the idea of “applied power.”

hand of Jehovah: This phrase is often found in the Hebrew Scriptures as a combination of the Hebrew word for “hand” and the Tetragrammaton. (Ex 9:3; Nu 11:23; Jg 2:15; Ru 1:13; 1Sa 5:6, 9; 7:13; 12:15; 1Ki 18:46; Ezr 7:6; Job 12:9; Isa 19:16; 40:2; Eze 1:3) Although existing Greek manuscripts of Luke’s Gospel use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) in this verse, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text in view of this Hebrew Scripture background. In connection with Lu 1:66, scholars have noted that the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky'ri-os* where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky'ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. This is noteworthy because even though the earliest copies of the *Septuagint* contained the divine name, when later copies of the *Septuagint* replaced the divine name with *Ky'ri-os*, the definite article was in a similar way often not included where standard grammatical usage would call for it. This unexpected absence of the definite article before *Ky'ri-os* is another indication that *Ky'ri-os* is here used as a substitute for the divine name. The Greek expression rendered “hand of Jehovah” also occurs at Ac

11:21; 13:11.—See study notes on Lu 1:6, 9; Ac 11:21; 13:11 and App. C.

1:68

Let Jehovah be praised: Or “Blessed be Jehovah.” This expression of praise is common in the Hebrew Scriptures, where it is often used with the divine name. (1Sa 25:32; 1Ki 1:48; 8:15; Ps 41:13; 72:18; 106:48) Although extant Greek manuscripts use the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) here, there are good reasons for using the divine name in the main text. The context shows that *Ky'ri-os* is used with reference to **the God of Israel**. This fact together with the Hebrew Scripture background of this phrase is an indication that *Ky'ri-os* (Lord) is used here as a substitute for the divine name.—See App. C.

1:69

a horn of salvation: Or “a powerful savior.” In the Bible, animal horns often represent strength, conquest, and victory. (1Sa 2:1; Ps 75:4, 5, 10; 148:14; ftns.) Also, rulers and ruling dynasties, both the righteous and the wicked, are symbolized by horns, and their achieving of conquests was likened to pushing with horns. (De 33:17; Da 7:24; 8:2-10, 20-24) In this context, the expression “a horn of salvation” refers to the Messiah as the one having power to save, a mighty savior.—See Glossary, “Horn.”

1:74

rendering sacred service to him: The Greek verb *la-treu'o* basically denotes serving. As used in the Scriptures, it refers to rendering service to God or in connection with the worship of him (Mt 4:10; Lu 2:37; 4:8; Ac 7:7; Ro 1:9; Php 3:3; 2Ti 1:3; Heb 9:14; 12:28; Re 7:15; 22:3) or to rendering service at the sanctuary or temple (Heb 8:5; 9:9; 10:2; 13:10). Thus, in some contexts the expression can also be rendered “to worship.” In a few cases, it

is used in connection with false worship—rendering service to, or worshipping, created things.—Ac 7:42; Ro 1:25.

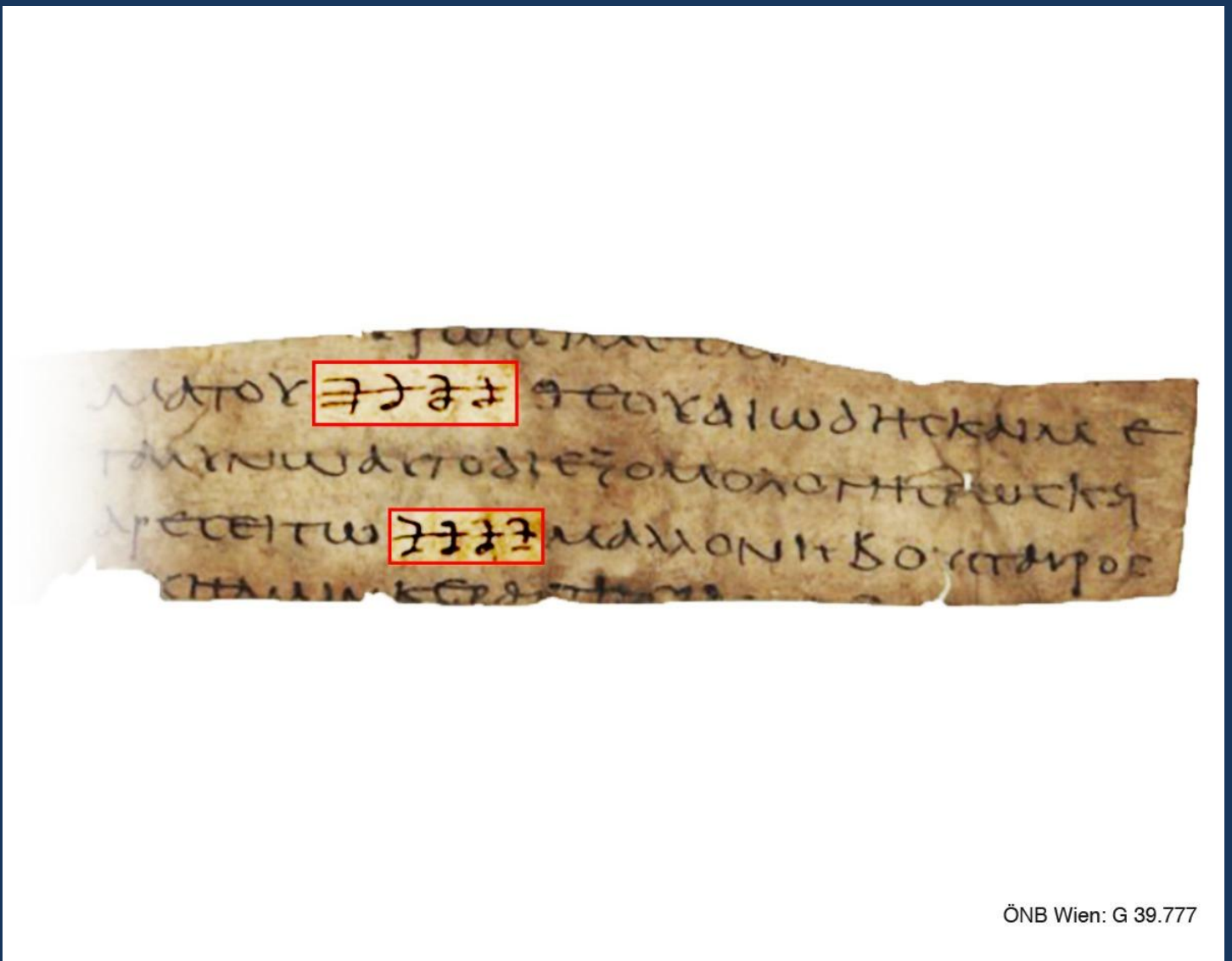
1:76

Jehovah: The prophetic words of Zechariah in the second part of this verse reflect the wording of Isa 40:3 and Mal 3:1, where the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text. In view of the Hebrew Scripture background, the divine name has been used in the main text, although existing Greek manuscripts use *Ky'ri-os* (Lord). (See study notes on Lu 1:6, 16, 17; 3:4 and App. C.) Additionally, it is noteworthy that in this verse, as in many other occurrences of *Ky'ri-os* in Luke chapter 1, the Greek definite article was not included before *Ky'ri-os* where it would be expected according to standard grammatical usage, making *Ky'ri-os* tantamount to a proper name. Also, a number of Bible translations use such renderings as Jehovah, Yahveh, Yahweh, יהוה (*YHWH*, or the Tetragrammaton), LORD, and ADONAI in the main text or in footnotes and marginal notes to indicate that this is a reference to Jehovah God. A number of reference works support this view.—See App. C.

you will go ahead of Jehovah: John the Baptist would “go ahead of Jehovah” in the sense that he would be the forerunner of Jesus, who would *represent* his Father and come in his Father’s name.—Joh 5:43; 8:29; see the study note on **Jehovah** in this verse.

1:80

the day he showed himself openly to Israel: Referring to the time when John the Baptist began his public ministry, that is, during the spring of 29 C.E.—See study notes on Mr 1:9; Lu 3:1, 23.



ÖNB Wien: G 39.777

Symmachus' Greek Translation Containing the Hebrew Tetragrammaton

Shown here is a portion of a third or fourth century C.E. parchment fragment of Symmachus' Greek translation of Ps 69:30, 31 (Ps 68:31, 32, *Septuagint*). Symmachus produced the original translation in the second century C.E. This fragment is known as Papyrus Vindobonensis Greek 39777 and is now in the Austrian National Library in Vienna. The part shown here contains two occurrences of the divine name written in archaic Hebrew characters (or) within the Greek text. The words of Mary at Lu 1:46 may echo the thought of Ps 69:30, 31, where the divine name also occurs in the original Hebrew text. The Hebrew Scripture background of Mary's expression of praise as well as the use of the Tetragrammaton in this Greek translation provides support for using the divine name in the main text of Lu 1:46.—See study note on Lu 1:46 and App. C.

Related Scripture(s) Lu 1:46



▲
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Writing Tablets

Zechariah, who wrote in Hebrew “John is his name,” may have used a wooden tablet similar to the one shown here. Such tablets were in use for centuries throughout the ancient Middle East. The recessed portion of this type of tablet was filled with a thin layer of wax. Using a stylus made of iron, bronze, or ivory, a writer made notes on the soft surface. A typical stylus was pointed on one end and flattened into a chisel shape on the other. The flattened end was used to erase the writing and smooth the wax. Two or more tablets were sometimes held together by small strips of leather. Businessmen, scholars, students, and tax collectors used tablets for records that needed to be kept only temporarily. The tablets shown in the photo date from the second or third century C.E. and were discovered in Egypt.

Related Scripture(s) Lu 1:63

- Song 137 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Imitate Mary’s Humility”:** (10 min.)
[Play the video *Introduction to Luke.*]
Lu 1:38—She humbly accepted her assignment (ia 149 ¶12)
Lu 1:46-55—She praised Jehovah by referring to his Word (ia 150-151 ¶15-16)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Lu 1:69—What is the meaning of “a horn of salvation”? (nwtsty study note)

Lu 1:76—In what sense would John the Baptist “go ahead of Jehovah”? (nwtsty study note)

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) Lu 1:46-66

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **First Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 92
- **Local Needs:** (8 min.) As an option, review information regarding the yeartext for 2018. (w18.01 8-9 ¶4-7)
- **Organizational Accomplishments:** (7 min.) Play the *Organizational Accomplishments* video for June.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 24
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 58 and Prayer

LUKE 1 | Imitate Mary’s Humility



Jehovah chose Mary for an unparalleled privilege because she had a remarkable heart attitude.

1:38, 46-55 ✎

How do Mary’s words highlight her . . . humility?

deep faith?

knowledge of the Scriptures?

appreciation?

FOR MEDITATION:

Do I completely trust Jehovah to work matters out for me according to his will?
How can I better imitate Mary’s example?



Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Conversations

▲ Parents in South Africa studying with their children

●○○ INITIAL CALL

Question: How can we know what the future holds?

Scripture: Isa 46:10

Link: What Bible prophecies are we seeing fulfilled today?



●●○ FIRST RETURN VISIT

Question: What Bible prophecies are we seeing fulfilled today?

Scripture: Mt 24:6, 7, 14

Link: What will happen after “the end”?



○○● SECOND RETURN VISIT

Question: What will happen after “the end”?

Scripture: Re 21:4

Link: Where will this Bible prophecy be fulfilled?

92 *A Place Bearing Your Name*

(1 Chronicles 29:16)

1. How great is the honor, Jehovah,
 To build you a place for your name!
We offer it now with rejoicing
 To add to your glory and fame.
Whatever the things we may give you,
 They rightly were yours from the start.
Our labor, our skill, our possessions,
 We joyfully give from the heart.

(CHORUS)

*May we present this place to you,
 And here may your name be known.
We dedicate this place to you;
 Please accept it as your own.*

2. And now may we honor you, Father,
 By filling this place with your praise.
May glory ascend with the increase
 Of those who are learning your ways.
Committing this place to your worship,
 We give it our generous care.
And long may it stand as a witness,
 Supporting the message we bear.

(Chorus)

- Song 137 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Imitate Mary’s Humility”:** (10 min.)
[Play the video *Introduction to Luke.*]
Lu 1:38—She humbly accepted her assignment (ia 149 ¶12)
Lu 1:46-55—She praised Jehovah by referring to his Word (ia 150-151 ¶15-16)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Lu 1:69—What is the meaning of “a horn of salvation”? (nwtsty study note)

Lu 1:76—In what sense would John the Baptist “go ahead of Jehovah”? (nwtsty study note)

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) Lu 1:46-66

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **First Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 92
- **Local Needs:** (8 min.) As an option, review information regarding the yeartext for 2018. (w18.01 8-9 ¶4-7)
- **Organizational Accomplishments:** (7 min.) Play the *Organizational Accomplishments* video for June.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 24
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 58 and Prayer

LUKE 1 | Imitate Mary’s Humility



Jehovah chose Mary for an unparalleled privilege because she had a remarkable heart attitude.

1:38, 46-55 ✎

How do Mary’s words highlight her . . . humility?

deep faith?

knowledge of the Scriptures?

appreciation?

FOR MEDITATION:

Do I completely trust Jehovah to work matters out for me according to his will?
How can I better imitate Mary’s example?

congregation meetings, and engaging in the field ministry—just as Satan hopes they will do.

³ The Devil well knows that our being fully engaged in Christian activities can strengthen us, and he does not want us to be strong. When you feel physically and emotionally drained, then, do not cut yourself off from Jehovah. Draw ever closer to him, for “he will make you firm, he will make you strong.” (1 Pet. 5:10; Jas. 4:8) In this article, we will consider two situations that could cause us to slow down in our service to God and we will discuss how applying Bible principles can help us to cope. But first, let us focus on Jehovah’s ability to strengthen us, as shown at Isaiah 40:26-31.

THOSE HOPING IN JEHOVAH WILL REGAIN POWER

⁴ **Read Isaiah 40:26.** No one has been able to count all the stars in the universe. Scientists believe that our Milky Way galaxy alone may contain up to 400 billion stars. Yet, Jehovah gives a name or a designation to each star. The lesson for us? If Jehovah takes a personal interest in his inanimate

3. (a) How can we frustrate Satan’s goal to weaken us? (b) What will we discuss in this article?

4. What lesson can we learn from Isaiah 40:26?

creation, imagine how he feels about you who serve him, not because you have been programmed to do so, but because you love him! (Ps. 19:1, 3, 14) Our dear Father knows you through and through. “Even the hairs of your head are all numbered” by him. (Matt. 10:30) And the psalmist assures us: “Jehovah is aware of what the blameless go through.” (Ps. 37:18) Yes, he takes notice of the trials you face, and he can give you the strength to endure each one of them.

⁵ **Read Isaiah 40:28.** Jehovah is the Source of dynamic energy. Consider, for example, the amount of energy that he supplies just to our sun. Science writer David Bodanis observed: “The mass our Sun is exploding into energy each second is equivalent to [billions of atomic] bombs.” Another researcher calculated that the sun “currently radiates . . . sufficient energy in one second to meet mankind’s needs for 200,000 years”! Can anyone doubt that the One who “fuels” the sun can give us the strength we need to cope with any problem?

⁶ **Read Isaiah 40:29.** Serving Jehovah brings much joy. Jesus said to his disciples: “Take my

5. How can we be sure that Jehovah is able to strengthen us?

6. In what sense is Jesus’ yoke kindly, and how should knowing that affect us?

yoke upon you.” And he added: “You will find refreshment for yourselves. For my yoke is kindly, and my load is light.” (Matt. 11:28-30) How true that statement is! At times, we may feel exhausted when we leave home to attend a congregation meeting or to engage in the field ministry. But how do we feel when we return? Refreshed—and better prepared to deal with life’s trials. Jesus’ yoke is kindly indeed!

⁷ A sister whom we will call Kayla has had to battle with chronic fatigue syndrome, depression, and migraine headaches. Understandably, she has sometimes found it difficult to attend congregation meetings. However, after she made the effort to attend a public meeting, she wrote: “The talk was about discouragement. The information was presented in such an empathetic and concerned way that I was moved to tears. I was reminded that the meetings are where I need to be.” How happy she was that she made the effort to attend!

⁸ **Read Isaiah 40:30.** No matter how qualified we may be, we are limited in what we can accomplish in our own strength. That is a lesson we all must

7. Relate an experience that illustrates the truthfulness of Matthew 11:28-30.

8, 9. What did the apostle Paul mean when he wrote: “When I am weak, then I am powerful”?

24

EXPANDING HIS MINISTRY IN GALILEE

MATTHEW 4:23-25 MARK 1:35-39 LUKE 4:42, 43

- JESUS TOURS GALILEE WITH FOUR DISCIPLES
 - HIS PREACHING AND WORKS BECOME WIDELY KNOWN
-

Jesus' day in Capernaum with his four disciples has been a busy one. In the evening, the people of Capernaum bring him their sick ones to be cured. Jesus has had little time for privacy.

Now, early the following morning while it is still dark, Jesus gets up and goes outside by himself. He finds a lonely place where he can pray to his Father in private. But Jesus' privacy is short-lived. When they realize that he is missing, "Simon and those with him" hunt for Jesus. Peter may be taking the lead because Jesus had been at his home.—Mark 1:36; Luke 4:38.

When they find Jesus, Peter says: "Everyone is looking for you." (Mark 1:37) Understandably, the people of Capernaum want Jesus to stay. They tru-



ly appreciate what he has done, so they try “to keep him from going away from them.” (Luke 4:42) However, did Jesus come to earth primarily to perform such miraculous healings? And is he to limit his activities just to this locality? What does he say about this?

Jesus answers his disciples: “Let us go somewhere else, into the towns nearby, so that I may preach there also, for this is why I have come.” In fact, Jesus even tells the people who want him to stay: “I must also declare the good news of the Kingdom of God to other cities, because for this I was sent.” —Mark 1:38; Luke 4:43.

Yes, a major reason why Jesus has come to earth is to preach about God’s Kingdom. That Kingdom will sanctify his Father’s name and permanently solve all human ills. Jesus gives evidence that he is sent by God by performing miraculous healings. In a similar way, centuries earlier, Moses performed outstanding works to establish his credentials as one sent by God.—Exodus 4:1-9, 30, 31.

So Jesus leaves Capernaum to preach in other cities, and his four disciples go with him. These four

are Peter and his brother Andrew as well as John and his brother James. The week before, they had been invited to be Jesus' first traveling coworkers.

Jesus' preaching tour of Galilee with these four disciples is a wonderful success! In fact, word about Jesus reaches far and wide. "The report about him spread throughout all Syria," into the region of the ten cities called the Decapolis, and over to the other side of the Jordan River. (Matthew 4:24, 25) Great crowds from those areas, as well as from Judea, follow Jesus and his disciples. Many bring to him those seeking a cure. Jesus does not disappoint them—he cures the sick and expels wicked spirits from those who are demon-possessed.

- ◇ What happens early in the morning after Jesus' busy day in Capernaum?
- ◇ Why was Jesus sent to earth, and what purpose do his miracles serve?
- ◇ Who go with Jesus on his preaching tour of Galilee, and what is the response to his activities?

58 *Searching for Friends of Peace*

(Luke 10:6)

1. Jesus commanded: 'Let the truth be heard.'

In summer heat, on dusty roads,

He let all hear Jehovah's word.

He loved God's sheep and called to ev'ryone.

He searched the land from the sunrise

'til the day was done.

From door to door and in the street,

We share with ev'ryone we meet

The news that soon man's troubles all will be gone.

(CHORUS)

Searching the world

For friends of peace in ev'ry nation,

Searching to find

A heart inclined toward salvation,

Wanting to leave

No stone unturned.

2. Time waits for no one, so the search goes on.

A million hearts, a million lives,

We give our all to save just one.

Love is the force that makes us call again.

A wounded heart can be healed,

and broken lives can mend.

We search the towns and city squares,

And when we find someone who cares,

The joy we feel inspires us to go on.

(Chorus)

APRIL 2018

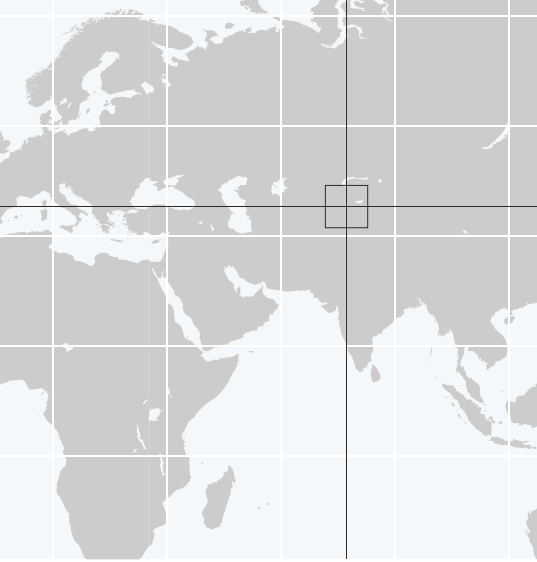
THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
JUNE 4–JULY 8, 2018

LARGE
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EDITION



COVER IMAGE:

KYRGYZSTAN

A special pioneer couple preach in a remote area near the city of Balykchy

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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.



SONGS:
49, 73

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

In what ways has Jehovah's spirit liberated us?

How can we avoid misusing our God-given freedom?

What can we do to make wise use of our freedom?

Serve Jehovah, the God of Freedom

“Where the spirit of Jehovah is, there is freedom.”—2 COR. 3:17.

PEOPLE of the Roman world, among whom the early Christians lived, prided themselves on being champions of law, justice, and freedom. Yet, much of the power and glory of the Roman Empire was built on the backs of slaves.

1, 2. (a) Why were people in the apostle Paul's day concerned with slavery and freedom? (b) To whom did Paul direct people so that they could gain true freedom?

At one point, some 30 percent of the population were slaves. Undoubtedly, slavery and freedom were topics on the minds of the common people, including Christians.

² The letters of the apostle Paul have much to say about freedom. However, the objective of his ministry was not social or political reform, the very thing people of that day were seeking. Rather than looking to any human ruler or agency for freedom, Paul and his fellow Christians worked hard to help others learn the good news of God's Kingdom and the incomparable value of the ransom sacrifice of Christ Jesus. Paul directed his fellow believers to the Source of true freedom. In his second letter to the Corinthian Christians, for example, he clearly stated: "Jehovah is the Spirit, and where the spirit of Jehovah is, there is freedom."—2 Cor. 3:17.

³ Earlier in this letter to the Corinthians, Paul spoke of the glory of Moses when he descended from Mount Sinai after being in the presence of an angel of Jehovah. Upon seeing Moses, the people became fearful, and Moses put a veil over his face. (Ex. 34: 29, 30, 33; 2 Cor. 3:7, 13) "But," Paul explained,

3, 4. (a) What led up to Paul's statement found at 2 Corinthians 3: 17? (b) What must we do to enjoy the freedom that comes from Jehovah?

**“when one turns to Jehovah, the veil is taken away.”
(2 Cor. 3:16) What do Paul’s words mean?**

⁴ As we learned in the preceding article, Jehovah, the Creator of all things, is the only Person who enjoys absolute and unlimited freedom. It stands to reason that in the presence of Jehovah and “where the spirit of Jehovah is,” there is freedom. To enjoy and benefit from that freedom, however, we must ‘turn to Jehovah,’ that is, come into a personal relationship with him. The Israelites in the wilderness did not view Jehovah’s dealings with them in a spiritual way. It was as if their hearts and minds were veiled and hardened, focused only on using their newfound freedom from Egypt in a physical, or fleshly, way.—Heb. 3:8-10.

⁵ The freedom that is associated with the spirit of Jehovah, however, is more than liberation from physical slavery. Far beyond what human efforts can hope to achieve, the spirit of Jehovah brings liberation from enslavement to sin and death, as well as from slavery to false worship and its practices. (Rom. 6:23; 8:2) What a glorious freedom that is! A person can enjoy the benefits of such freedom even

5. (a) What sort of freedom does Jehovah’s spirit bring? (b) How do we know that physical bondage need not diminish the freedom Jehovah provides? (c) What questions do we need to answer?

when imprisoned or enslaved. (Gen. 39:20-23) This was certainly true of Sister Nancy Yuen and Brother Harold King, both of whom endured years of imprisonment for their faith. You can see and hear them relate their experiences on JW Broadcasting. (Look under INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES > ENDURING TRIALS.) We need to consider, though, how can we show that we treasure our freedom? And what can we do to make wise use of this freedom?

VALUING OUR GOD-GIVEN FREEDOM

⁶ When we realize the true value of a costly gift, we are moved to show our gratitude to the giver. The Israelites did not appreciate the freedom that Jehovah bestowed upon them when he delivered them from slavery in Egypt. Within a few months of their deliverance, they began to long for the food and drink they once had in Egypt and complained about Jehovah's provisions, even wanting to return to Egypt. Just imagine, they put 'fish, cucumbers, watermelons, leeks, onions, and garlic' above their God-given freedom to worship the true God, Jehovah. Is it any wonder that Jehovah became very

6. How did the Israelites show a lack of appreciation for the freedom that Jehovah gave them?

angry with his people? (Num. 11:5, 6, 10; 14:3, 4)
What a lesson for us!

⁷ The apostle Paul urged all Christians not to take for granted the freedom that Jehovah has kindly given us through his Son, Jesus Christ. (Read **2 Corinthians 6:1**.) Recall the misery and pain of conscience that Paul suffered because of feeling captive to sin and death. Yet, he gratefully declared: “Thanks to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!” Why? He explained to his fellow Christians: “For the law of the spirit that gives life in union with Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.” (Rom. 7:24, 25; 8:2) Following Paul’s example, we too should never take for granted that Jehovah liberated us from the bondage of sin and of death. By means of the ransom, we can serve our God with a clean conscience and find real delight in doing so.—Ps. 40:8.

⁸ In addition to expressing gratitude, however, we should be mindful of never misusing our precious freedom. The apostle Peter warned against using our freedom as an excuse for catering to our fleshly desires. (Read **1 Peter 2:16**.) Does that warning

7. How did Paul act in harmony with his counsel found at 2 Corinthians 6:1, and how can we do likewise?

8, 9. (a) What warning did the apostle Peter give about using our freedom? (b) What dangers confront us today?

not remind you of what befell the Israelites in the wilderness? And the danger is still with us, perhaps even more so. Satan and his world offer ever more alluring choices in dress and grooming, food and drink, recreation and entertainment, and a host of other things. Clever advertisers often feature attractive people deceptively promoting as must-haves many things we really do not need. How easy it is to fall prey to these ploys and to misuse our freedom!

⁹ The counsel by Peter also applies to more serious aspects of life, such as a person's choice of education, employment, or career. For example, young people in school today are under much pressure to qualify for enrollment in elite institutions of higher education. They are led to believe that advanced education opens the door to high-paying and prestigious jobs, and statistics are often presented to show the gap in earnings between graduates from such institutions and those who completed only basic schooling. Faced with choices that can deeply affect their entire life course, young people may find all of this very enticing. What should they and their parents bear in mind?

¹⁰ Some individuals may feel that since choices

10. What do we need to bear in mind when exercising our freedom to make personal choices?



Are you using your freedom of choice to advance the Kingdom work or your own interests?

(See paragraphs 8-10)

in these matters are personal, they should have the freedom to choose what they please as long as their conscience permits it. Perhaps they have in mind Paul's words to the Corinthian Christians about food: "Why should my freedom be judged by another person's conscience?" (1 Cor. 10:29) While it is true that we have the freedom to make personal choices regarding our education and career, we need to remember that our freedom is relative and



that all decisions we make have consequences. For that reason, Paul prefaced his statement with these words: “All things are lawful [or, “permissible,” ftn.], but not all things are advantageous. All things are lawful, but not all things build up.” (1 Cor. 10:23) That certainly helps us to see that there are far more important factors to consider than our own preferences when it comes to exercising personal freedom in all aspects of our life.

WISELY USING OUR FREEDOM TO SERVE GOD

¹¹ In his warning against the misuse of freedom, Peter also pointed out the objective. He urged us to use our freedom “as slaves of God.” Thus, the real purpose for which Jehovah, through Jesus, has freed us from the law of sin and of death is for us to live a life of dedication “as slaves of God.”

¹² The best way to protect ourselves from misusing our freedom and thus becoming enslaved again by worldly ambitions and desires is to be fully absorbed in spiritual pursuits. (Gal. 5:16) Consider, for example, the patriarch Noah and his family. They lived in a violent and immoral world. Yet, they kept free from being entangled in the desires and pursuits of the people around them. How did they manage to do that? They chose to keep busy in all that Jehovah had assigned them to do—build the ark, store up food for themselves and the animals, and sound the warning to others. “Noah did according to all that God had commanded him. He did just so.” (Gen. 6:22) The result? Noah and his family survived the end of that world.—Heb. 11:7.

11. For what purpose have we been set free?

12. What example did Noah and his family set for us?

13 What has Jehovah commanded us to do today? As disciples of Jesus, we are well-acquainted with our God-given commission. (Read Luke 4:18, 19.) Today, the vast majority of people are still blinded by the god of this system of things and are in bondage—religious, economic, and social. (2 Cor. 4:4) It is our privilege to follow Jesus' example of helping people to come to know and worship Jehovah, the God of freedom. (Matt. 28:19, 20) That is not an easy work, and there are many challenges. In some lands, people are becoming more indifferent, some even hostile. The question that each of us should consider is, 'Can I use my freedom to give greater support to the Kingdom work?'

14 It is most encouraging to see that many have sensed the urgency of our times and have simplified their lives so as to share in the full-time ministry. (1 Cor. 9:19, 23) Some of them serve within their local territories; others move to where the need is greater. Records show that in the last five years, the average number of regular pioneers has grown to over 1,100,000 and more than a quarter of a million worldwide have been added to the ranks of full-time

13. What commission did Jesus receive and in turn pass on to his followers?

14, 15. What kind of response to the preaching work is seen among Jehovah's people? (See opening picture.)

preachers. What a splendid result of making wise use of the freedom to serve Jehovah!—Ps. 110:3.

¹⁵ What helped these brothers and sisters to make wise use of their freedom? Consider John and Judith, who for the past 30 years have served in a number of countries. They recall that when the Pioneer Service School began in 1977, the emphasis was placed on being willing to move and serve where the need was greater. To keep their focus on this goal, John says that he changed jobs many times in order to maintain a simple lifestyle. Eventually, when they arrived in a foreign country, they found that praying to Jehovah and relying on him helped them to overcome such obstacles as learning a new language, adjusting to a new culture, and enduring difficult climates. How did those years of service affect them? “I felt that I was immersed in the best activity I’ve ever known or experienced,” John says. “Jehovah became more real to me, as a loving father would be. Now I understood better what James 4:8 means: ‘Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you.’ I knew I had found what I was looking for, a satisfying purpose in life.”

¹⁶ Unlike John and Judith, others have circum-

16. How have thousands with limited circumstances used their freedom wisely?

stances that allow them to serve full-time for only a short period. Nonetheless, many seize the opportunity to volunteer in theocratic construction projects around the world. For example, when world headquarters was being built at Warwick, New York, some 27,000 brothers and sisters offered their services—anywhere from two weeks to a year or longer. Many of them put their life on hold to serve there. What a wonderful example of using their God-given freedom to praise and honor Jehovah, the God of freedom!

¹⁷ We are grateful that we have come to know Jehovah and can enjoy the freedom that true worship brings. May we show by the choices we make that we treasure that freedom. Instead of squandering or misusing it, let us use our freedom and the opportunities it brings to serve Jehovah to the fullest extent possible. If we do so, we can look forward to enjoying the blessings Jehovah has promised when the words of this prophecy are fulfilled: “The creation itself will also be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God.”—Rom. 8:21.

17. What glorious future awaits those who now use their God-given freedom wisely?

Grant Us Boldness

(Acts 4:29)

1. As we tell about the Kingdom,
As we witness for your name,
There are many who oppose us
And who try to bring us shame.
But instead of fearing men,
It's really you we must obey.
So we beg you now for your spirit;
O Jehovah, hear what we pray.

(CHORUS)

*Grant us boldness as we witness;
Help us overcome our fear.
Give us confidence and courage
So that all the world may hear.
Armageddon draws ever near,
But until that great day is here,
Grant us boldness as we witness.
This is our prayer.*

2. Even though we may be fearful,
You remember we are dust.
Your assurance to support us
Is a promise we can trust.
Give attention to the threats
Of those who persecute and blame.
May you help us all to continue
As we boldly speak in your name.

(Chorus)

