

- Song 25 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “What Can We Learn From the Priests’ Garments?”: (10 min.)

Ex 28:30—We must seek Jehovah’s direction (it-2 1143)

Ex 28:36—We must remain holy (it-1 849 ¶3)

Ex 28:42, 43—We must uphold the godly standard of dignity (w08 8/15 15 ¶17)

- Digging for Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Ex 28:15-21—Where did the precious stones on the breastpiece of Israel’s high priest possibly come from? (w12 8/1 26 ¶1-3)

Ex 28:38—What were “the holy things”? (it-1 1130 ¶2)

What spiritual gems from this week’s Bible reading would you like to share regarding Jehovah, the field ministry, or something else?

- Bible Reading: (4 min. or less) Ex 27:1-21 (5)

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- Initial Call: (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then leave a jw.org contact card. (1)
- Return Visit: (4 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer a publication from our Teaching Toolbox. (2)
- Bible Study: (5 min. or less) lvs 111 ¶20-21 (13)

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 57
- “Improving Our Skills in the Ministry—Witnessing Through a Camera or an Intercom”: (15 min.) Discussion. Play and discuss video 1, and then play and discuss video 2.
- Congregation Bible Study: (30 min. or less) jy chap. 133
- Concluding Comments (3 min. or less)
- Song 46 and Prayer

EXODUS 27-28 | What Can We Learn From the Priests’ Garments?



28:30, 36, 42, 43

The garments worn by Israel’s priests remind us of the importance of seeking Jehovah’s direction, of being holy, and of displaying modesty and dignity.

- How do we seek Jehovah’s direction?
- What does it mean to be holy?
- How can we display modesty and dignity?

A Special Possession

(1 Peter 2:9)

1. God has a new creation,
His spirit-anointed sons.
He has bought them from mankind;
His approval they've won.

(CHORUS)

*A special possession,
They're a people for your name.
They love you. They praise you.
As one they declare abroad your fame.*

2. They are a holy nation,
Who handle the truth aright.
God has called them from darkness
To his wonderful light.

(Chorus)

3. Faithful to their commission,
They gather the other sheep.
To the Lamb they are loyal.
His commandments they keep.

(Chorus)

Exodus 27-28

27 “You will make the altar of acacia wood; it will be five cubits long and five cubits wide. The altar should be square and three cubits high. ² You will make horns on its four corners; the horns will be part of the altar, and you will overlay the altar with copper. ³ You will make buckets for clearing away its ashes, along with shovels, bowls, forks, and fire holders, and you will make all its utensils of copper. ⁴ You will make a grating for the altar, a network of copper, and on the network four rings of copper at its four corners. ⁵ You will set it down below the rim of the altar, and the network will extend partway down into the altar. ⁶ You will make poles of acacia wood for the altar and overlay them with copper. ⁷ The poles will be inserted into the rings so that the poles are on the two sides of the altar when it is carried. ⁸ You will make the altar in the form of a hollow chest of planks. It should be made just as He showed you on the mountain.

⁹ “You will make the courtyard of the tabernacle. For the south side, facing south, the courtyard will have hanging curtains of fine twisted linen, 100 cubits long for the one side. ¹⁰ It will have 20 pillars with 20 copper socket pedestals. The hooks of the pillars and their connectors are of silver. ¹¹ The hanging curtains for the north side will also be 100 cubits long, along with its 20 pillars and their 20 copper socket pedestals, with silver hooks and connectors for the pillars. ¹² There are to be hanging curtains on the

west side for 50 cubits across the width of the courtyard, with ten pillars and ten socket pedestals. ¹³ The width of the courtyard on the east side toward the sunrise is 50 cubits.

¹⁴ There will be 15 cubits of hanging curtains on the one side, with three pillars and three socket pedestals. ¹⁵ And for the other side, there will be 15 cubits of hanging curtains, with three pillars and three socket pedestals.

¹⁶ “The entrance of the courtyard should have a screen 20 cubits long made of blue thread, purple wool, scarlet material, and fine twisted linen woven together, with four pillars and their four socket pedestals. ¹⁷ All the pillars surrounding the courtyard will have silver fasteners and silver hooks, but their socket pedestals will be of copper.

¹⁸ The courtyard is to be 100 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 5 cubits high, made from fine twisted linen, and it should have copper socket pedestals. ¹⁹ All the utensils and the items used in the service of the tabernacle, as well as its tent pins and all the pins of the courtyard, are to be of copper.

²⁰ “You are to command the Israelites to bring you pure, beaten olive oil for the lighting, in order to keep the lamps burning constantly. ²¹ In the tent of meeting, outside the curtain that is near the Testimony, Aaron and his sons will arrange to keep the lamps lit from evening until morning before Jehovah. It is a lasting statute for all their generations to be carried out by the Israelites.

28 “You are to summon from the Israelites your brother Aaron, along with his sons, so that he may serve as priest to

me—Aaron, along with Na'dab and A-bi'hu, El-e-a'zar and Ith'a-mar, the sons of Aaron. ² You are to make holy garments for Aaron your brother, for glory and beauty. ³ You are to speak to all those who are skillful, those whom I have filled with the spirit of wisdom, and they will make Aaron's garments for his sanctification, so that he may serve as priest to me.

⁴ “These are the garments that they will make: a breastpiece, an eph'od, a sleeveless coat, a checkered robe, a turban, and a sash; they will make these holy garments for your brother Aaron and his sons, so that he may serve as priest to me. ⁵ The skilled workers will use the gold, the blue thread, the purple wool, the scarlet material, and the fine linen.

⁶ “They are to make the eph'od of gold, blue thread, purple wool, scarlet material, and fine twisted linen, and it should be embroidered. ⁷ It is to have two attached shoulder pieces that join it at its two edges. ⁸ The woven belt, which is attached to the eph'od for tying it securely in position, should be of the same materials: gold, blue thread, purple wool, scarlet material, and fine twisted linen.

⁹ “You are to take two onyx stones and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel, ¹⁰ six names on the one stone and the six remaining names on the other stone, in the order of their births. ¹¹ A stone engraver will engrave the names of the sons of Israel on the two stones as he would engrave a seal. Then you are to have them mounted in gold

settings. ¹² You are to put the two stones on the shoulder pieces of the eph'od as memorial stones for the sons of Israel, and Aaron must carry their names before Jehovah on his two shoulder pieces as a memorial. ¹³ You are to make settings of gold ¹⁴ and two chains of pure gold twisted like a cord, and you must attach the corded chains to the settings.

¹⁵ “You are to have an embroiderer make the breastpiece of judgment. It should be made like the eph'od, out of gold, blue thread, purple wool, scarlet material, and fine twisted linen. ¹⁶ It should be square when doubled, a span long and a span wide. ¹⁷ You should set in it mounted stones, four rows of stones. The first row is ruby, topaz, and emerald. ¹⁸ The second row is turquoise, sapphire, and jasper. ¹⁹ The third row is *lesh'em* stone, agate, and amethyst. ²⁰ The fourth row is chrys'o-lite, onyx, and jade. They should be mounted in settings of gold. ²¹ The stones will correspond to the names of the 12 sons of Israel. Each one should be engraved like a seal, each name representing one of the 12 tribes.

²² “You are to make wreathed chains on the breastpiece, like cords of pure gold. ²³ You are to make two rings of gold for the breastpiece and attach the two rings to the two ends of the breastpiece. ²⁴ You are to put the two cords of gold through the two rings at the ends of the breastpiece. ²⁵ You will put the two ends of the two cords through the two settings, and you must attach them to the shoulder pieces of the eph'od, at the front. ²⁶ You are to make two rings of gold and set them at the two ends on the inside edge of the

breastpiece, facing the eph'od. ²⁷ You should make two more rings of gold on the front of the eph'od, below the two shoulder pieces, close to where it is joined, above the woven belt of the eph'od. ²⁸ The breastpiece should be held in place by a blue cord, tying its rings to the rings of the eph'od. This will keep the breastpiece in place on the eph'od, above the woven belt.

²⁹ “Aaron must carry the names of the sons of Israel on the breastpiece of judgment over his heart when he comes into the Holy as a constant memorial before Jehovah. ³⁰ You will put the U'rim and the Thum'mim into the breastpiece of judgment, and they must be over Aaron's heart when he comes in before Jehovah, and Aaron must carry the means for making judgments of the Israelites over his heart before Jehovah constantly.

³¹ “You are to make the sleeveless coat of the eph'od entirely of blue thread. ³² There will be an opening at the top in the middle of it. Its opening should have a border woven all around it by a loom worker. It should be like the opening of a coat of mail, so that it will not be torn. ³³ You should make pomegranates of blue thread, purple wool, and scarlet material all around its hem, along with bells of gold in between them. ³⁴ You should alternate a bell of gold and a pomegranate, a bell of gold and a pomegranate, all around the hem of the sleeveless coat. ³⁵ It must be worn by Aaron so that he may minister, and the sound from it must be heard when he goes into the sanctuary before Jehovah and when he comes out, so that he will not die.

³⁶ “You are to make a shining plate of pure gold and engrave on it as one would engrave a seal: ‘Holiness belongs to Jehovah.’ ³⁷ You must fasten it to the turban with a blue cord; it is to remain on the front of the turban. ³⁸ It will be on Aaron’s forehead, and Aaron will bear responsibility when someone commits an error against the holy things, which the Israelites sanctify when they offer them as holy gifts. It must always remain on his forehead, so that they may gain approval before Jehovah.

³⁹ “You are to weave the checkered robe of fine linen, make a turban of fine linen, and make a woven sash.

⁴⁰ “You will also make robes, sashes, and headgear for Aaron’s sons, for glory and beauty. ⁴¹ You will clothe your brother Aaron and his sons with him, and you are to anoint them and install them and sanctify them, and they will serve as priests to me. ⁴² Also make linen shorts for them to cover their naked flesh. These are to extend from the hips to the thighs. ⁴³ These must be worn by Aaron and his sons when they come into the tent of meeting or when they approach the altar to minister in the holy place, so that they may not incur guilt and die. It is a permanent statute for him and his offspring after him.

- Song 25 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“What Can We Learn From the Priests’ Garments?”:** (10 min.)

Ex 28:30—We must seek Jehovah’s direction (it-2 1143)

Ex 28:36—We must remain holy (it-1 849 ¶3)

Ex 28:42, 43—We must uphold the godly standard of dignity (w08 8/15 15 ¶17)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)

Ex 28:15-21—Where did the precious stones on the breastpiece of Israel’s high priest possibly come from? (w12 8/1 26 ¶1-3)

Ex 28:38—What were “the holy things”? (it-1 1130 ¶2)

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EXODUS 27-28 | What Can We Learn From the Priests’ Garments?



28:30, 36, 42, 43

The garments worn by Israel’s priests remind us of the importance of seeking Jehovah’s direction, of being holy, and of displaying modesty and dignity.

- How do we seek Jehovah’s direction?
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September 21-27 / Exodus 27-28

- Song 25 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 minute)

Treasures From God's Word

"What Can We Learn From the Priests' Garments?": (10 minutes)

Exodus 28:30, 36, 42, 43

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Picture: The high priest and a Levite priest wearing special garments for their duties.

Exodus 28:30—We must seek Jehovah's direction

Exodus 28:30: You will put the Urim and the Thummim into the breastpiece of judgment, and they must be over Aaron's heart when

he comes in before Jehovah, and Aaron must carry the means for making judgments of the Israelites over his heart before Jehovah constantly.

it-2 1143

A number of Bible commentators believe that the Urim and the Thummim were lots. They are called "the sacred lots" in James Moffatt's translation of Exodus 28:30. Some suppose that they consisted of three pieces, one inscribed with the word "yes," one with "no," and the other blank. These would be drawn, giving the answer to the question propounded, unless the blank piece was drawn, in which case no answer was forthcoming. Others think that they may have been two flat stones, white on one side and black on the other. When thrown down, two white sides up would mean "yes," two black sides "no," and a black and a white would mean no answer. On one occasion, when Saul had inquired through the priest as to whether to resume an attack on the Philistines, he received no answer. Feeling that someone among his men had sinned, he petitioned: "O God of Israel, do give Thummim!" Saul and Jonathan were taken from among those present; after that, lots were cast to decide between the two. In this account the appeal, "Do give Thummim," seems to be separate from the lot casting, though it may give indication that there was some connection between the two.—1 Samuel 14:36-42.

Exodus 28:36—We must remain holy

Exodus 28:36: “You are to make a shining plate of pure gold and engrave on it as one would engrave a seal: ‘Holiness belongs to Jehovah.’”

it-1 849 paragraph 3

Israel's High Priest. In Israel the high priest's turban had on its front, over the priest's forehead, a gold plate, “the holy sign of dedication,” upon which were inscribed “with the engravings of a seal” the words “Holiness belongs to Jehovah.” (Exodus 28:36-38; 39:30) As Israel's chief representative of Jehovah's worship, it was fitting that the high priest keep his office holy, and this inscription would also serve as a reminder to all Israel of the need of constant holiness in the service of Jehovah. It also served as a suitable picture of the great High Priest, Jesus Christ, and his being dedicated by Jehovah to this priestly service that upholds God's holiness.—Hebrews 7:26.

Exodus 28:42, 43—We must uphold the godly standard of dignity

Exodus 28:42, 43: Also make linen shorts for them to cover their naked flesh. These are to extend from the hips to the thighs. These

must be worn by Aaron and his sons when they come into the tent of meeting or when they approach the altar to minister in the holy place, so that they may not incur guilt and die. It is a permanent statute for him and his offspring after him.

w08 8/15 15 paragraph 17

Special attention should be given to displaying dignity when we approach Jehovah in worship. "Guard your feet whenever you go to the house of the true God," says Ecclesiastes 5:1. Both Moses and Joshua were commanded to remove their sandals when in a holy place. (Exodus 3:5; Joshua 5:15) They were to do this as a gesture of respect or reverence. Israelite priests were obliged to wear linen drawers "to cover the naked flesh." (Exodus 28:42, 43) This prevented indecent exposure when they served at the altar. Every member of a priest's family was to uphold the godly standard of dignity.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Exodus 28:15-21—Where did the precious stones on the breastpiece of Israel's high priest possibly come from?

Exodus 28:15-21: "You are to have an embroiderer make the breastpiece of judgment. It should be made like the ephod, out of gold, blue thread, purple wool, scarlet material, and fine twisted linen. It should be square when doubled, a span long and a span

wide. You should set in it mounted stones, four rows of stones. The first row is ruby, topaz, and emerald. The second row is turquoise, sapphire, and jasper. The third row is *leshem* stone, agate, and amethyst. The fourth row is chrysolite, onyx, and jade. They should be mounted in settings of gold. The stones will correspond to the names of the 12 sons of Israel. Each one should be engraved like a seal, each name representing one of the 12 tribes.

w12 8/1 26 paragraphs 1-3

After the Israelites left Egypt and entered the wilderness, God gave them orders to make this breastpiece. (Exodus 28:15-21) The breastpiece had stones of ruby, topaz, emerald, turquoise, sapphire, jasper, *leshem*, agate, amethyst, chrysolite, onyx, and jade. Did the Israelites really have access to those types of gems?

In Bible times, people prized precious stones and traded them. The ancient Egyptians, for example, obtained gemstones from as far away as what is now modern-day Iran, Afghanistan, and possibly even India. Egyptian mines produced a number of different precious stones. The Egyptian monarchs had a monopoly on mineral extraction in the territories they controlled. The patriarch Job described how his contemporaries used shafts and underground galleries to search for treasures. Among other items dug from the ground, sapphire and topaz are specifically mentioned by Job.—Job 28:1-11, 19.

The Exodus account states that the Israelites “stripped the Egyptians” of their valuables when leaving the land. (Exodus 12:35, 36) So it is possible that the Israelites obtained from Egypt the stones used on the high priest’s breastpiece.

Exodus 28:38—What were “the holy things”?

Exodus 28:38: It will be on Aaron’s forehead, and Aaron will bear responsibility when someone commits an error against the holy things, which the Israelites sanctify when they offer them as holy gifts. It must always remain on his forehead, so that they may gain approval before Jehovah.

it-1 1130 paragraph 2

Animals and Produce. The firstborn males of cattle, sheep, and goats were counted as holy to Jehovah and were not to be redeemed. They were to be sacrificed, and a portion went to the sanctified priests. (Numbers 18:17-19) The firstfruits and the tithe were holy, as were all sacrifices and all gifts sanctified to the service of the sanctuary. (Exodus 28:38) All things holy to Jehovah were sacred and could not be considered lightly or used in a common, or profane, way. An example is the law regarding the tithe. If a man set aside the portion to be tithed, say, of his wheat crop, and then he or one of his household unintentionally took some of it for home use,

such as cooking, the man was guilty of violating God's law respecting holy things. The Law required that he make compensation to the sanctuary of an equal amount plus 20 percent, besides offering up a sound ram of the flock as a sacrifice. Thus, great respect was engendered for the holy things belonging to Jehovah.—Leviticus 5:14-16.

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Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Conversations

▲ The high priest enters the Most Holy

● INITIAL CALL

Question: How does God feel about those who sincerely seek him?

Scripture: 1Pe 5:6, 7

Link: To what extent does God pay attention to us as individuals?

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



● wp20.3 16;
bhs 116 ¶4

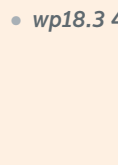
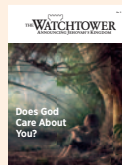
● RETURN VISIT

Question: To what extent does God pay attention to us as individuals?

Scripture: Mt 10:29-31

Link: How do we know that God understands us?

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



● wp18.3 4

we will avoid doing these things. Why? Because we deeply respect the gift of life. Such habits can shorten our life, damage our health, and harm the people around us. Many people try to stop these bad habits for the sake of their health. However, as Jehovah's friends, we have the best reason to stop—our love for God. One young woman said: "With Jehovah's help, I cleaned up my life and broke free from my addictions. . . . I think it would have been impossible for me to make these changes on my own." Let's discuss five Bible principles that will help someone to stop harmful habits.

20 "Since we have these promises, beloved ones, let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." (2 Corinthians 7:1) Jehovah wants us to be free of unclean habits that could damage our mind or body.

21 A powerful reason to "cleanse ourselves of every defilement" is stated at 2 Corinthians 6:17, 18. Jehovah tells us: "Quit touching the unclean thing." Then he promises: "I will take you in. And I will become a father to you, and you will become sons and daughters to me." Yes, Jehovah will love us as a father does his children if we avoid anything that would make us unclean or impure to him.

22 "You must love Jehovah your God with your

20, 21. What kind of habits does Jehovah want us to be free of?

22-25. What Scriptural principles can help us to avoid unclean habits?

57 *Preaching to All Sorts of People*

(1 Timothy 2:4)

1. We really want to imitate our God,
To be impartial, as we know he is.
To save all sorts of people is his will;
He welcomes all to come and to be his.

(CHORUS)

*It's the person, not the place;
It's the heart and not the face.
God's message to all people we extend.
So because we really care,
We keep preaching ev'rywhere:
"All sorts of people can become God's friend."*

2. It doesn't matter where they may be found
Or what at first they might appear to be.
What really counts is what they are at heart—
The inner self, the one Jehovah sees.

(Chorus)

3. Jehovah welcomes all who make the choice
To leave the world and all its ways behind.
This we have learned, and this we want to share,
And so we preach to people of all kinds.

(Chorus)

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IMPROVING OUR SKILLS IN THE MINISTRY

Witnessing Through a Camera or an Intercom



WHY IMPORTANT: Advances in technology and the increase of crime have made home security cameras and intercoms more common. We may feel intimidated when trying to share the good news with someone that we cannot see but who can see us. The following reminders will help us to witness through a camera or an intercom with more confidence.

HOW TO DO IT:

- Be positive. Many householders who have a camera or an intercom are willing to converse with us
- Remember that some cameras begin recording before you ring the bell and that the householder may be watching and listening to you as soon as you enter the property
- When the householder answers, talk to the intercom or camera as if you were talking to him in person. Smile and gesture naturally. Say the same thing you had planned to say if he had come to the door. If there is a camera, do not put your face too close. If the householder does not answer, do not leave a message
- After the conversation concludes, remember that the householder may still be observing or listening to you

**TRY THIS**

Practice by recording yourself speaking into the camera on your phone, and then watch the recording to see how you appear



JESUS' BODY IS PREPARED AND BURIED

MATTHEW 27:57–28:2 MARK 15:42–16:4
LUKE 23:50–24:3 JOHN 19:31–20:1

- JESUS' BODY IS TAKEN DOWN FROM THE STAKE
 - THE BODY IS PREPARED FOR BURIAL
 - WOMEN FIND AN EMPTY TOMB
-

It is getting late on Friday afternoon, Nisan 14. At sundown, the Sabbath of Nisan 15 will begin. Jesus is already dead, but the two robbers alongside him are still alive. According to the Law, dead bodies “should not remain all night on the stake” but, rather, should be buried “on that day.”—Deuteronomy 21:22, 23.

Furthermore, Friday afternoon is called Preparation because people prepare meals and complete any other tasks that cannot wait until after the Sabbath. At sunset, a double, or “great,” Sabbath will begin. (John 19:31) This is so because Nisan 15 will be the first day of the seven-day Festival of Unleavened Bread, the first day of which is always a Sabbath. (Le-

viticus 23:5, 6) This time that first day coincides with the weekly Sabbath, the seventh day.

So the Jews ask Pilate to hasten the death of Jesus and the two robbers alongside him. How? By having their legs broken. That will make it impossible for them to use their legs to raise their bodies so as to breathe. The soldiers come and break the legs of the two robbers. But Jesus appears to be dead, and thus they do not break his legs. This fulfills Psalm 34:20: “He is guarding all his bones; not one of them has been broken.”

To remove any doubt that Jesus is truly dead, a soldier jabs a spear into his side, piercing the region of his heart. ‘Immediately blood and water come out.’ (John 19:34) This fulfills another scripture: “They will look to the one whom they pierced.”—Zechariah 12:10.

Joseph from the city of Arimathea, “a rich man” and reputable member of the Sanhedrin, is also present at the execution. (Matthew 27:57) He is described as “a good and righteous man,” who is “waiting for the Kingdom of God.” In fact, as “a disciple of Jesus but a secret one because of his fear of the Jews,” he did not support the court’s judgment of Jesus. (Luke 23:50;



Mark 15:43; John 19:38) Joseph takes courage and asks Pilate for Jesus' body. Pilate summons the army officer in charge, who confirms that Jesus is dead. Thereupon, Pilate grants Joseph's request.

Joseph buys clean, fine linen and takes Jesus' body down from the stake. He wraps the corpse in the linen in preparation for burial. Nicodemus, "who had come to [Jesus] in the night the first time," helps with the preparation. (John 19:39) He brings about a hundred Roman pounds (72 modern pounds) of a costly mixture of myrrh and aloes. Jesus' body is wrapped in bandages containing these spices, according to the Jews' burial custom.

Joseph owns an unused tomb carved in rock nearby, and Jesus' body is laid in it. Then a large stone is rolled in front of the tomb. This is hastily done, before the Sabbath begins. Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James the Less may have been helping with the preparation of Jesus' body. They now hurry home "to prepare spices and perfumed oils" to treat Jesus' body further after the Sabbath.—Luke 23:56.

The next day, the Sabbath, the chief priests and Pharisees go to Pilate and say: "We recall what that

impostor said while he was still alive, ‘After three days I am to be raised up.’ Therefore, command that the grave be made secure until the third day, so that his disciples may not come and steal him and say to the people, ‘He was raised up from the dead!’ Then this last deception will be worse than the first.” Pilate replies: “You may have a guard. Go make it as secure as you know how.”—Matthew 27:63-65.

Very early Sunday morning, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and other women bring spices to the tomb to treat Jesus’ body. They say to one another: “Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb for us?” (Mark 16:3) But an earthquake has occurred. Moreover, God’s angel has rolled the stone away, the guards are gone, and the tomb appears empty!

- ◇ Why is Friday called Preparation, and why is this a “great” Sabbath?
- ◇ What do Joseph and Nicodemus have to do with Jesus’ burial, and what is their relationship to Jesus?
- ◇ What do the priests want done, but what occurs early Sunday morning?

We Thank You, Jehovah

(1 Thessalonians 5:18)

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

JULY 2020

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



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COVER PICTURE:

When David met Goliath’s challenge, he turned what seemed to be a disadvantage into an opportunity to see God’s power at work (See study article 29, paragraph 11)

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“This Is the Way”

(Isaiah 30:20, 21)

1. There is a way of peace,
The way you’ve come to know.
It is the way you learned,
The way of long ago,
The way that Jesus taught you
When his voice you heard.
This is the way of peace,
Found in Jehovah’s Word.

(CHORUS)

*This is the way to life; This is the way.
Don’t look aside; Not for a moment stray!
God’s voice is calling: ‘This is the way;
Do not look back, for yes, this is the way.’*

2. There is a way of love,
No need to look around.
God’s voice has shown the way
He lets himself be found.
His love is full and good;
His love is warm and true.
This is the way of love;
It touches all we do.

(Chorus)

3. There is a way of life,
No need to look behind.
Our God has promised us:
No better way we'll find,
No higher way to peace,
No finer way to love.
This is the way to life,
Thanks to our God above.

(CHORUS)

*This is the way to life; This is the way.
Don't look aside; Not for a moment stray!
God's voice is calling: 'This is the way;
Do not look back, for yes, this is the way.'*

Keep Walking in the Truth

“No greater joy do I have than this: that I should hear that my children go on walking in the truth.”—3 JOHN 4.

SONG 54

“This Is the Way”

PREVIEW

We live in a world dominated by the father of the lie, Satan. So we face a constant struggle to walk in the truth. Christians living at the end of the first century C.E. had the same challenge. In order to help them and us, Jehovah inspired the apostle John to write three letters. The contents of those letters will help us identify the obstacles we face and learn how to overcome them.

CAN you imagine how happy the apostle John felt when he heard that those whom he had helped to learn the truth were continuing to serve Jehovah faithfully? They faced many problems, and John was working hard to strengthen the faith of these loyal Christians whom he viewed as his spiritual children. Similarly, we feel happy when our children, whether natural or spiritual, dedicate themselves to Jehovah and persevere in serving him.—**Read 3 John 3, 4.**

² In 98 C.E., John was likely living in or near Ephesus. He may have moved there after being released from exile on the island of Patmos. About that time, Jehovah’s holy spirit moved him to write three letters. The purpose of those letters was to motivate loyal Christians to maintain their faith in Jesus and to keep on walking in the truth.

³ John was the last living apostle, and he was concerned about the effect that false teachers were having on the congregations.* (1 John 2:18, 19, 26) Those apostates claimed to know God, but they did not obey Jehovah’s commands. Let us consider the inspired counsel John gave. As we do, we will answer three

* See the box “The Background to John’s Letters.”

1. As indicated at 3 John 3, 4, what makes us happy?
2. What was the purpose of the letters that John wrote?
3. What questions will we answer?

questions: What does it mean to walk in the truth? What obstacles do we face? And how can we help one another to remain in the truth?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO WALK IN THE TRUTH?

⁴ To walk in the truth, we need to know the truth found in God’s Word, the Bible. In addition, we must “observe [Jehovah’s] commandments,” that is, we need to obey them. (Read 1 John 2:3-6; 2 John 4, 6.) Jesus set the perfect example of obeying Jehovah. So one important way that we obey Jehovah is by following Jesus’ steps as closely as possible.—John 8:29; 1 Pet. 2:21.

⁵ To keep walking in the truth, we must be convinced that Jehovah is the God of truth, that everything he tells us in his Word, the Bible, is true. And we must also be convinced that Jesus is the promised Messiah. Many today doubt that Jesus has been anointed as King of God’s Kingdom. John warned that there were “many deceivers,” who could mislead those who were not prepared to defend the truth about Jehovah and Jesus. (2 John 7-11) John wrote: “Who is the liar but the one who denies that Jesus is

4. According to 1 John 2:3-6 and 2 John 4, 6, what is involved in walking in the truth?

5. Of what must we be convinced?

The Background to John's Letters

When the apostle John wrote his letters, he was concerned about false teachers who had come into the congregations and were trying to mislead Christ's followers. Both the apostle Paul and the apostle Peter had warned that this would happen. (Acts 20:29, 30; 2 Pet. 2:1-3) These false teachers may have been influenced by Greek philosophy. Some apparently claimed to have received a special, mystical knowledge from God.* But their teaching contradicted Jesus' message and encouraged selfishness and a lack of love. So John calls these teachers antichrists, or those who teach against Christ.—1 John 2:18.

* See the article "The Antichrist Exposed" in the December 1, 2006, issue of *The Watchtower*.

the Christ?" (1 John 2:22) The only way we can avoid being deceived is by studying God's Word. Only if we do that will we come to know Jehovah and Jesus. (John 17:3) And only then will we be convinced that we have the truth.

WHAT OBSTACLES DO WE FACE?

⁶ All Christians must be on guard against being misled by *human philosophy*. (1 John 2:26) Young Christians in particular need to beware of this trap. Alexia,* a 25-year-old French sister, says: “When I was younger, I was troubled by the world’s reasonings, such as the theory of evolution and human philosophy. At times, those teachings appealed to me. But I felt that I could not just listen to what I was being taught in school and not give Jehovah a chance to speak.” Alexia studied the book *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?* Within a few weeks, her doubts vanished. Alexia says: “I proved to myself that the Bible contains the truth. And I realized that living by its standards would give me joy and peace.”

⁷ All Christians, young and old, must resist the pressure to live a double life. John pointed out that we cannot be walking in the truth and at the same time be living an immoral life. (1 John 1:6) If we are to have God’s approval now and in the future, we need to behave as if everything we do were under a spotlight. In a sense, there is no such thing as a secret sin

* Some names have been changed.

6. What is one obstacle that young Christians face?
7. What pressure must we resist, and why?

because everything we do is visible to Jehovah.—Heb. 4:13.

⁸ We have to reject *the world's view of sin*. The apostle John wrote: “If we make the statement, ‘We have no sin,’ we are misleading ourselves.” (1 John 1:8) In John’s day, apostates claimed that a person could deliberately follow a course of sin and still have a relationship with God. Today, we are living among people who have a similar view. Many claim to believe in God, but they do not agree with Jehovah’s view of sin, especially when it involves the subject of sex. What Jehovah views as sinful conduct they call a personal preference, or an alternative lifestyle.

⁹ Young Christians in particular may feel pressured to adopt their classmates’ or workmates’ views of immoral conduct. That is what happened to Aleksandar. He recalls: “Some girls at school tried to pressure me into having sex with them. They said that since I did not have a girlfriend, I must be a homosexual.” If you face similar tests, remember that when you stick to your Bible-based convictions, you protect your self-respect, your health, your emotional well-being, and your relationship with Jehovah. And each time you

8. What must we reject?

9. How do young ones benefit by sticking to their Bible-based convictions?



resist temptation, it will get easier for you to do what is right. Remember, too, that this world's twisted view of sex originates with Satan. So when you refuse to compromise, you 'conquer the wicked one.'—1 John 2:14.

¹⁰ We acknowledge that Jehovah has the right to define what is sinful conduct. And we do our best not to commit a sin. But when we do sin, we confess our wrongdoing to Jehovah in prayer. (Read 1 John 1:9.) And if we commit a serious sin, we seek the help of the elders, whom Jehovah has appointed to care for us. (Jas. 5:14-16) However, we should not be con-

10. How does 1 John 1:9 help us to serve Jehovah with a clean conscience?



Youths, strengthen your Bible-based convictions about what is right and what is wrong morally so that you can defend your faith (See paragraph 9)

sumed by feelings of guilt over past mistakes. Why not? Because our loving Father provided the ransom sacrifice of his Son so that our sins can be forgiven. When Jehovah says that he will forgive repentant sinners, he means what he says. So there is nothing to stop us from serving Jehovah with a clean conscience.—1 John 2:1, 2, 12; 3:19, 20.

¹¹ We must reject *apostate teachings*. Since the beginning of the Christian congregation, the Devil has been using many deceivers to plant doubts in the minds of God’s faithful servants. As a result, we need to know how to discern the difference between facts

11. How can we protect our mind from teachings that could harm our faith?

and lies.* Our enemies may use the Internet or social media to try to undermine our trust in Jehovah and our love for our brothers. Remember who is behind such propaganda, and reject it!—1 John 4:1, 6; Rev. 12:9.

¹² To resist Satan’s attacks, we need to deepen our trust in Jesus and in the role he plays in God’s purpose. We also need to trust in the only channel that Jehovah is using today. (Matt. 24:45-47) We deepen our trust by regularly studying God’s Word. Then our faith will be like a tree that has roots that go deep into the ground. Paul made a similar point when writing to the Colossian congregation. He said: “Just as you have accepted Christ Jesus the Lord, go on walking in union with him, being rooted and built up in him and being stabilized in the faith.” (Col. 2:6, 7) There is nothing that Satan or those influenced by him can do that will destabilize a Christian who has strengthened his own faith.—2 John 8, 9.

¹³ We must expect to be hated by the world. (1 John 3:13) John reminds us that “the whole world is lying

* See the study article “Do You Have the Facts?” in the August 2018 issue of *The Watchtower*.

12. Why should we deepen our appreciation for the truths we have learned?

13. What should we expect, and why?

in the power of the wicked one.” (1 John 5:19) As this system draws to an end, Satan’s anger grows hotter. (Rev. 12:12) He uses more than subtle forms of attack, such as the lure of immorality or the lies of apostates. He will also use brute force. Satan knows that he has only a short period of time left to try to stop our preaching work or to break our faith. It is no surprise, then, that our work is restricted or banned in a number of countries. Even so, our brothers and sisters in those lands are enduring. They are proving that no matter what the wicked one throws at us, we can be victorious!

HELP ONE ANOTHER TO REMAIN IN THE TRUTH

¹⁴ To help our brothers and sisters to remain in the truth, we must *show compassion*. (1 John 3:10, 11, 16-18) We need to love one another not only when things are going well but also when problems arise. For example, do you know someone who has lost a loved one in death and needs to be comforted or helped in practical ways? Or have you heard that fellow believers suffered loss from a natural disaster and need help to rebuild their Kingdom Halls or homes? We show the depth of our love and compassion for our brothers

14. What is one way we can help our brothers and sisters to remain in the truth?

and sisters not only by what we say but, more important, by what we do.

¹⁵ We imitate our loving heavenly Father when we show love for one another. (Read 1 John 4:7, 8.) An important way that we show love is by *forgiving one another*. For example, someone might hurt us but then apologize. We show love by forgiving him and putting his error behind us. (Col. 3:13) A brother named Aldo faced this test when he heard a brother whom he respected make a hurtful comment about his ethnic background. Aldo says, “I constantly prayed to Jehovah to help me not to have negative feelings toward this brother.” But Aldo did something else. He decided to ask the brother to go out in service with him. As they worked together, Aldo explained how he was affected by the remark. “When the brother heard how I felt about his hurtful comment,” says Aldo, “he apologized. From the tone of his voice, I could sense how much he regretted what he had said. We parted as friends and put the problem behind us.”

¹⁶ The apostle John felt a deep, loving concern for the spiritual welfare of his brothers, and that feeling is clearly reflected in the counsel he gave in his three inspired letters. How encouraging it is to know that

15. As stated at 1 John 4:7, 8, what do we need to do?

16-17. What should be our determination?

men and women, like him, are anointed to be corulers with Christ!—1 John 2:27.

¹⁷ May we take to heart the counsel we have discussed. Let us be determined to walk in the truth, obeying Jehovah in all aspects of our life. Study his Word, and put your trust in it. Build strong faith in Jesus. Reject human philosophies and apostate teachings. Resist the pressure to live a double life and to give in to sin. Live by Jehovah's high moral standards. And let us help our brothers remain strong by forgiving those who hurt us and helping those in need. Then, despite the struggles we face, we will keep walking in the truth.

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Pages 48-49: While in school, a young sister is bombarded with homosexual propaganda. (In some cultures, rainbow colors are used to signify homosexuality.) Later, she takes time to do research to fortify her Christian beliefs. This helps her to handle a difficult challenge.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- What does it mean to walk in the truth?
- What obstacles do we face?
- How can we help our brothers and sisters remain in the truth?

SONG 49

Making Jehovah's Heart Glad

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.