

Saturday, August 14

Should we not more readily submit ourselves to the Father?

—Heb. 12:9.

One reason why we might find it a challenge to submit to Jehovah is that we all inherited sin and are imperfect. So we have rebellious tendencies. After Adam and Eve rebelled against God and ate the forbidden fruit, they set their own standards. (Gen. 3:22) Today, most of mankind still prefer to ignore Jehovah and decide for themselves what is right and what is wrong. Even those who know and love Jehovah may struggle to submit fully to him. The apostle Paul faced this challenge. (Rom. 7:21-23) Like Paul, we want to do what is right in Jehovah's eyes. But we must constantly fight the tendency to do wrong things. Another reason why it can be a challenge to submit to Jehovah is that we are influenced by the culture in which we were raised. Many human ideas are in conflict with Jehovah's will, and it can be a constant struggle to free ourselves from common ways of thinking. *w19.09 15 ¶4-6*

Sunday, August 15

Go, sell what things you have and give to the poor, . . . and come be my follower.—Mark 10:21.

We must be realistic. Each of us has a certain amount of energy. So we must be careful about what we take on. For example, we could waste energy trying to gather material possessions. Note what Jesus said to a rich young man who asked him: "What must I do to inherit everlasting life?" He must have been a decent man because Mark's Gospel

account specifically states that Jesus "felt love for him." Jesus presented the young ruler with the invitation above. The man was torn, but it appears that he could not let go of his "many possessions." (Mark 10:17-22) As a result, he rejected the yoke that Jesus had offered him and continued to slave "for Riches." (Matt. 6:24) What choice would you have made? From time to time, it is good for us to reassess our priorities in life. Why? So that we can make sure that we are using our energy wisely. *w19.09 24 ¶17-18*

Monday, August 16

In all the nations, the good news has to be preached first.

—Mark 13:10.

Our Kingdom-preaching work will not be finished until Jehovah says it is over. How much time is left for people to come to know Jehovah God and Jesus Christ? (John 17:3) We cannot say. We do know that until the great tribulation begins, any who are "rightly disposed for everlasting life" can still respond to the good news. (Acts 13:48) How can we help these people before it is too late? Through his organization, Jehovah is giving us all that we need to teach people the truth. For example, we receive training each week at the midweek meeting. This meeting helps us know what to say on initial calls and return visits. And if after a refreshing conversation with an interested person, you leave him a tract or magazine, he will be able to do further reading until you are able to contact him again. It is our personal responsibility to keep busy every month in the Kingdom-preaching work. *w19.10 9 ¶7; 10 ¶9-10*

Tuesday, August 17

Do not forget to do good and to share what you have with others, for God is well-pleased with such sacrifices.—Heb. 13:16.

Jehovah promised Simeon, a loyal older man in Jerusalem, that he would not see death before he laid eyes on the Messiah. That promise must have encouraged Simeon greatly, since he had been waiting many years for the Messiah. His faith and endurance were rewarded. One day, “under the power of the spirit,” he came into the temple. There he saw the infant Jesus, and Jehovah used Simeon to deliver a prophecy about this child who would become the Christ. (Luke 2: 25-35) Although Simeon likely did not live long enough to see Jesus carry out his earthly ministry, Simeon was grateful for the privilege he had, and the best is yet to come for him! In the new world, that faithful man will see how Jesus’ rulership will be a blessing to all the families of the earth. (Gen. 22:18) We too can be grateful for any privilege Jehovah gives us in his service. *w19.10 22 ¶7; 23 ¶12*

Wednesday, August 18

*Above all the things that you guard, safeguard your heart.
—Prov. 4:23.*

Whether we have little or much materially, we need to guard our heart. How? Do not develop a love for riches. And do not allow your secular work to take priority over your service to Jehovah. How can you know if that is happening to you? Some questions you could ask yourself are: ‘Do I often think about my secular work when I am at meetings

or in the ministry? Do I constantly worry about being financially secure in the future? Are money and material possessions causing problems for me and my mate? Would I be willing to do secular work that others look down on if it allowed me to spend more time serving Jehovah?’ (1 Tim. 6:9-12) When considering those questions, let us remember that Jehovah loves us and makes this promise to those who are devoted to him: “I will never leave you, and I will never abandon you.” That is why the apostle Paul wrote: “Let your way of life be free of the love of money.”—Heb. 13:5, 6. *w19.10 29 ¶10*

Thursday, August 19

As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens his friend.—Prov. 27:17.

When we work alongside fellow believers and observe firsthand their endearing qualities, we learn from them and draw closer to them. For example, how do you feel when you are in the ministry and you hear your friend boldly defend his faith or speak with heartfelt conviction about Jehovah and his purposes? Likely you feel drawn to him even more. Adeline, a 23-year-old sister, asked one of her friends, Candice, to go with her to preach in seldom-worked territory. “We wanted to be more motivated and to enjoy the ministry more,” she says. “We both needed a spiritual boost.” How did they benefit from working together? “At the end of each day,” says Adeline, “we discussed how we felt, what touched us about the conversations we had, and how we sensed Jehovah’s direction in our ministry. We both enjoyed these deep discussions and got to know each other even better.” *w19.11 5 ¶10-11*

Friday, August 20

Take up the large shield of faith.

—Eph. 6:16.

In ancient times, a soldier would feel humiliated if he returned home without his shield. The Roman historian Tacitus wrote: “To have abandoned one’s shield is the height of disgrace.” That is one reason why soldiers made sure to keep a firm hold on their shields. We keep a firm hold on our shield of faith by regularly attending Christian meetings and by speaking about Jehovah’s name and his Kingdom to others. (Heb. 10:23-25) In addition, we prayerfully read God’s Word every day and apply its counsel and direction in all that we do. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) Then, no weapon that Satan uses against us will cause us any lasting harm. (Isa. 54:17) Our “large shield of faith” will protect us. We will stand firm, shoulder to shoulder with our brothers and sisters. And we will do more than win our daily battles—we will have the honor of being on Jesus’ side when he wins the war against Satan and his followers.—Rev. 17:14; 20:10. *w19.11 19 ¶18-19*

Saturday, August 21

The way I am aiming my blows is so as not to be striking the air.

—1 Cor. 9:26.

A clear plan that you put in writing can help you turn your decisions into action. (1 Cor. 14:40) For instance, bodies of elders are directed to assign an elder to record each decision of the body of elders, including who is assigned to follow through and the suggested date for completion. Elders who follow this direction are more likely to carry out their decisions. You could try to do something similar with your per-

sonal affairs. For example, you could prepare a daily to-do list and arrange the items in the order you intend to handle them. This can help you not only to complete what you start but also to get more done in less time. But you will need to exert yourself. It takes effort to follow your plan and complete what you start. (Rom. 12:11) The apostle Paul told Timothy to “continue applying” himself and to “persevere” in becoming a better teacher. That advice applies equally to other spiritual goals.—1 Tim. 4:13, 16. *w19.11 29-30 ¶15-16*

Sunday, August 22

Jehovah spoke to Moses face-to-face, just as one man would speak to another man.—Ex. 33:11.

When Moses was asked to lead the nation of Israel out of captivity, he lacked confidence and repeatedly told Jehovah that he felt unqualified. God responded with real compassion, providing help for Moses. (Ex. 4:10-16) As a result, Moses was able to deliver powerful judgment messages to Pharaoh. Moses then saw Jehovah use His power as He saved the Israelites but destroyed Pharaoh and his forces in the Red Sea. (Ex. 14:26-31; Ps. 136:15) After Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt, they constantly found things to complain about. Even so, Moses observed Jehovah’s great patience in dealing with the people He had freed from slavery. (Ps. 78:40-43) Moses also saw Jehovah show remarkable humility when He changed His mind after Moses asked Him to do so. (Ex. 32:9-14) After the Exodus, Moses’ relationship with Jehovah became so close that it was as if he could see his heavenly Father.—Heb. 11:27. *w19.12 17 ¶7-9*

Song 89 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“All These Blessings Will . . . Overtake You”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

De 27:17—Why did Jehovah’s Law prohibit moving a neighbor’s boundary marker? (*it-1 360*)

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.) De 28:1-14 (11)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

Initial Call: (3 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Offer a publication from the Teaching Toolbox. (6)

Return Visit: (4 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Give the householder a meeting invitation, and introduce (but do not play) the video *What Happens at a Kingdom Hall?* (3)

Bible Study: (5 min.) *lvs 234 ¶121-22* (9)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 11

“How Creation Reveals God’s Love”: (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Creation Reveals Jehovah’s Love* (video category THE BIBLE).

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr chap. 12 ¶7-14*

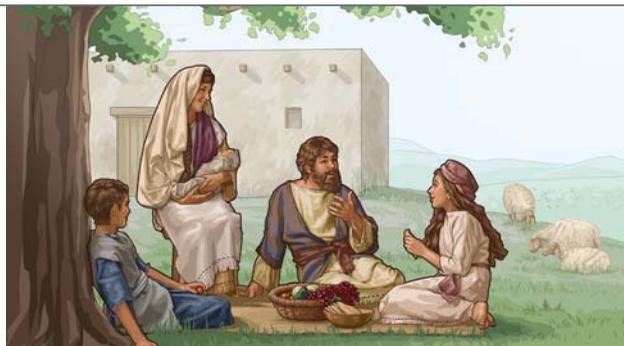
 “All These Blessings Will . . . Overtake You”

Those who listen to Jehovah’s voice receive many blessings (De 28:1, 3-6; *w10 12/15 19 ¶18*)

Jehovah’s blessings will overtake his obedient servants (De 28:2; *w01 9/15 10 ¶2*)

Jehovah wants our obedience to be “with rejoicing and joy of heart” (De 28:45-47; *w10 9/15 8 ¶4*)

Jehovah’s obedient servants enjoy his abundant blessings right now and will soon be overtaken by his promised future blessings.



Listen, Obey, and Be Blessed

(Luke 11:28)

A13sus4 A7 D Bm Gma7 Em/G A7 A#°

If we have lis - tened to Christ, will we show it? His teach - ing
 Our way of life, like a house, gives pro - tec - tion When it is
 Just as a tree root - ed deep by the wa - ters Gives of its

Bm D/A G B7b9b13

shines as it shows us the way. It makes us
 built on the rock, not on sand. If we ap -
 fruit when each sea - son ar - rives, If we o -

Em Em/D Em/C# F#7 E/G# F#7/A#

hap - py to hear and to know it, But we'll be
 ply Je - sus' lov - ing di - rec - tion, We'll build a
 bey as God's own sons and daugh - ters, We'll all be

Bm7 E7 Em11 G/A A7

blessed if we know and o - bey.
 life which on bed - rock will stand.
 blessed and en - joy end - less lives.

Listen, Obey, and Be Blessed

Chorus

D Em7 A7/E F#m7 Bm7

Lis - ten, o - bey, and be blessed

Em7 D/F# G G/A A7

When you hear God's will ex - pressed.

D Em7 A7/E D/F# D13sus4 D7 G

If you'd be hap - py and en - ter his rest,

D/A G/A A7 D

Lis - ten, o - bey, and be blessed.

this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.^a **10** Now I have brought the firstfruits of the produce of the ground that Jehovah has given me.^b

“You must deposit it before Jehovah your God and bow down before Jehovah your God. **11** You will then rejoice over all the good that Jehovah your God has given you and your household, you and the Levite and the foreign resident who is among you.^c

12 “When you finish tithing^d the entire tenth of your produce in the third year, the year of the tenth, you will give it to the Levite, the foreign resident, the fatherless child,^e and the widow, and they will eat their fill within your cities.^e **13** You will then say before Jehovah your God, ‘I have cleared the holy portion out of my house and given it to the Levite, the foreign resident, the fatherless child, and the widow,^f just as you have commanded me. I have not violated or neglected your commandments. **14** I have not eaten of it while mourning or removed any of it while unclean or given any of it for the dead. I have obeyed the voice of Jehovah my God and have done all that you commanded me. **15** Now look down from your holy dwelling, the heavens, and bless your people Israel and the land that you have given us,^g just as you swore to our forefathers,^h the land flowing with milk and honey.’ⁱ

16 “This day Jehovah your God is commanding you to carry out these regulations and judicial decisions. You must observe them and carry them out with all your heart^j and all your soul.* **17** Today you have obtained Jehovah’s declaration that he will become your God

26:12 *Or “the orphan.” #Lit., “gates.”
26:16 *See Glossary.

CHAP. 26

a Ex 3:8
De 8:7, 8
Eze 20:6

b De 26:2

c De 12:7
De 16:14

d De 12:5, 6
De 14:22

e De 14:28, 29
Pr 14:21
1Jo 3:17

f Jas 1:27

g Ex 23:25

h Ge 15:18
Ge 26:3

i De 8:7, 8

j De 6:6
De 11:1
Ps 119:34
1Jo 5:3

Second Col.

a Le 26:46

b Ec 12:13

c Le 19:37

d De 14:2
De 29:10-13

e De 4:8

f De 7:6
De 28:1, 9

CHAP. 27

g Jos 8:30-32

h Nu 13:26, 27

i De 11:29

j Ex 20:25

k Le 3:1

l Le 7:15

m De 12:7

as you walk in his ways and observe his regulations,^a his commandments,^b and his judicial decisions,^c and as you listen to his voice. **18** And today Jehovah has obtained your declaration that you will become his people, his special property,^d just as he has promised you, and that you will observe all his commandments **19** and that he will put you high above all the other nations that he has made,^e giving you praise and fame and glory as you prove yourself a people holy to Jehovah your God,^f just as he has promised.”

27 Then Moses together with the elders of Israel commanded the people, saying: “Observe every commandment that I am giving you today. **2** And in the day when you will cross the Jordan into the land that Jehovah your God is giving you, set up large stones and cover them with plaster.^g **3** Then write on them all the words of this Law when you have crossed over, so that you may enter into the land that Jehovah your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, just as Jehovah, the God of your forefathers, has promised you.^h **4** When you have crossed the Jordan, you should set up these stones on Mount E’balⁱ and cover them with plaster,^{*} just as I am commanding you today. **5** You are also to build an altar there to Jehovah your God, an altar of stones. You should not use iron tools on them.^j **6** You should build the altar of Jehovah your God with whole stones and offer burnt offerings to Jehovah your God on it. **7** You are to offer communion sacrifices^k and eat them there,^l and you will rejoice before Jehovah your God.^m **8** And clearly write

26:18 *Or “treasured possession.”
27:2, 4 *Or “whitewash them with lime.”

on the stones all the words of this Law.”^a

9 Then Moses and the Levitical priests spoke to all Israel, saying: “Keep silent and listen, O Israel. This day you have become the people of Jehovah your God.^b **10** You must listen to the voice of Jehovah your God and carry out his commandments^c and his regulations, which I am commanding you today.”

11 On that day Moses commanded the people, saying: **12** “The following tribes will stand on Mount Ger’i-zim^d to bless the people when you have crossed the Jordan: Sim’e-on, Le’vi, Judah, Is’sa-char, Joseph, and Benjamin. **13** And the following will stand on Mount E’bal^e to pronounce the curse: Reu-ben, Gad, Ash’er, Zeb’u-lun, Dan, and Naph’ta-li. **14** And the Levites will answer every man of Israel with a loud voice:^f

15 “Cursed is the man who makes a carved image^g or a metal statue,^h a thing detestable to Jehovah,ⁱ the workmanship of the hands of a craftsman,^g and who has hidden it.’ (And all the people will respond, saying, ‘Amen!’^a)

16 “Cursed is the one who treats his father or his mother with contempt.^j (And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’)

17 “Cursed is the one who moves his neighbor’s boundary marker.^k (And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’)

18 “Cursed is the one who causes a blind person to lose his way on the road.^l (And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’)

19 “Cursed is the one who perverts the judgment^m of a foreign resident, a fatherless

27:15 *Or “molten statue.” #Or “a wood-and-metal worker.” ^Or “So be it!”

CHAP. 27

- a Ex 24:12
b Ex 19:5
De 26:18
c 1Ki 2:3
Mt 19:17
1Jo 5:3
d De 11:29
e Jos 8:33
f De 33:10
g Ex 20:4
De 4:15, 16
Isa 44:9
h Ex 34:17
Le 19:4
i De 7:25
De 29:17
j Ex 20:12
De 21:18-21
Pr 20:20
Pr 30:17
Mt 15:4
k De 19:14
Pr 23:10
l Le 19:14
m De 16:20
Pr 17:23
Mic 3:11

Second Col.

- a Ex 22:21, 22
De 10:17, 18
Mal 3:5
Jas 1:27
b Le 18:8
1Co 5:1
c Ex 22:19
Le 18:23
Le 20:15
d Le 18:9
Le 20:17
e Le 18:17
Le 20:14
f Ex 20:13
Ex 21:12
Nu 35:31
g Mt 27:3, 4
h De 28:15
Ga 3:10

CHAP. 28

- i De 26:18, 19
j Le 26:3, 4
Pr 10:22
Isa 1:19
k De 11:14
l Le 26:9
Ps 127:3
Ps 128:3

child,^{*} or a widow.^a (And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’)

20 “Cursed is the one who lies down with his father’s wife, for he has dishonored his father.’^b (And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’)

21 “Cursed is the one who lies down with any animal.^c (And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’)

22 “Cursed is the one who lies down with his sister, the daughter of his father or the daughter of his mother.^d (And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’)

23 “Cursed is the one who lies down with his mother-in-law.^e (And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’)

24 “Cursed is the one who ambushes and kills his neighbor.^f (And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’)

25 “Cursed is the one who accepts a bribe to kill^{*} an innocent person.^g (And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’)

26 “Cursed is the one who will not uphold the words of this Law by carrying them out.^h (And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’)

28 “And if you will without fail listen to the voice of Jehovah your God by being careful to do all his commandments that I am commanding you today, Jehovah your God will certainly put you high above all other nations of the earth.ⁱ **2** All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you,^j because you keep listening to the voice of Jehovah your God:

3 “Blessed you will be in the city, and blessed you will be in the field.^k

4 “Blessed will be your children^l and the fruit of your

27:19 *Or “an orphan.” 27:20 *Lit., “uncovered the skirt of his father.” 27:25 *Or “strike down.” #Or “a soul of innocent blood.” 28:4 *Lit., “the fruit of your womb.”

ground and the offspring of your livestock, your young cattle and sheep.^a

5 "Blessed will be your basket^b and your kneading bowl.^c

6 "Blessed you will be when you come in, and blessed you will be when you go out.

7 "Jehovah will cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you.^d They will attack you from one direction, but they will flee from you in seven different directions.^e

8 Jehovah will decree for you a blessing on your storehouses^f and every undertaking of yours, and he will certainly bless you in the land that Jehovah your God is giving you. 9 Jehovah will establish you as a holy people to himself,^g just as he swore to you,^h because you continue to keep the commandments of Jehovah your God and walk in his ways. 10 All the peoples of the earth will have to see that Jehovah's name has been called upon you,ⁱ and they will be afraid of you.^j

11 "Jehovah will make you overflow with many children and much livestock and fruitful ground^k in the land that Jehovah swore to your forefathers to give you.^l 12 Jehovah will open up to you his good storehouse, the heavens, to give your land rain in its season^m and to bless all that you do. You will lend to many nations, while you yourself will not need to borrow.ⁿ 13 Jehovah will make you the head, and not the tail; and you will be on top,^o and not on the bottom, if you keep obeying the commandments of Jehovah your God that I am commanding you today to observe and to do. 14 You must not deviate from all the words that I am commanding you today, to the right or to the left,^p to walk after other gods to serve them.^q

CHAP. 28

- a De 7:13
b De 26:2
c Ex 23:25
d De 32:30
Jos 10:11
e De 7:23
2Ch 14:13
f Le 26:10
Pr 3:9,10
Mal 3:10
g De 7:6
h Ex 19:6
i Isa 43:10
Da 9:19
Ac 15:17
j Nu 22:3
De 11:25
Jos 5:1
k De 30:9
Ps 65:9
l Ge 15:18
m Le 26:4
De 11:14
n De 15:6
o 1Ki 4:21
p De 5:32
Jos 1:7
Isa 30:21
q Le 19:4

Second Col.

- a Le 26:16, 17
Da 9:11
b 1Ki 17:1
c De 26:2
d Le 26:26
e La 2:11, 19
La 4:10
f Le 26:20, 22
g Jos 23:16
h Le 26:25
Jer 24:10
i Le 26:16
j Le 26:33
k Am 4:9
l Le 26:19
De 11:17
1Ki 17:1
m Le 26:14, 17
1Sa 4:10
n Jer 29:18
Lu 21:24

15 "But if you will not listen to the voice of Jehovah your God by taking care to do all his commandments and his statutes that I am commanding you today, all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.^a

16 "Cursed you will be in the city, and cursed you will be in the field.^b

17 "Cursed will be your basket^c and your kneading bowl.^d

18 "Cursed will be your children^e and the fruit of your ground and your young cattle and sheep.^f

19 "Cursed you will be when you come in, and cursed you will be when you go out.

20 "Jehovah will send upon you the curse, confusion and punishment in every undertaking of yours until you have been annihilated and have quickly perished, because of your bad practices and your forsaking me.^g 21 Jehovah will cause the disease to cling to you until he has exterminated you from the land you are going to take possession of.^h 22 Jehovah will strike you with tuberculosis, burning fever,ⁱ inflammation, feverish heat, the sword,^j scorching blight, and mildew;^k and they will pursue you until you have perished. 23 The skies over your head will be copper, and the earth beneath you, iron.^l 24 Jehovah will make the rain of your land powder and dust that will come down on you from the heavens until you have been annihilated. 25 Jehovah will cause you to be defeated before your enemies.^m You will attack them from one direction, but you will flee from them in seven different directions; and you will become an object of horror to all the earth's kingdoms.ⁿ 26 And your carcasses will become food for every bird

28:18 *Lit., "the fruit of your womb."

of the sky and animal of the ground, with no one to frighten them away.^a

27 "Jehovah will strike you with the boils of Egypt, piles, eczema, and skin lesions, from which you cannot be healed. **28** Jehovah will strike you with madness and blindness^b and confusion.* **29** You will grope about at midday, just as a blind man gropes about in darkness,^c and you will not succeed in anything you do; and you will be constantly defrauded and robbed, with no one to save you.^d **30** You will become engaged to a woman, but another man will rape her. You will build a house, but you will not live in it.^e You will plant a vineyard, but you will not begin to use it.^f **31** Your bull will be slaughtered before your eyes, but you will not eat any of it. Your donkey will be stolen right in front of you, but it will not return to you. Your sheep will be given to your enemies, but you will have no savior. **32** Your sons and your daughters will be given to another people^g while you look on, and you will always long for them, but your hands will be powerless. **33** The fruitage of your ground and all that you produce will be eaten by a people whom you have not known,^h and you will always be defrauded and crushed. **34** You will be driven mad by what your eyes see.

35 "Jehovah will strike you with painful and incurable boils on your knees and legs, from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head. **36** Jehovah will drive you and the king whom you set up over yourself to a nation that you and your forefathers have not known,ⁱ and there you will serve other gods, gods of wood and of stone.^j **37** And you

28:28 *Or "bewilderment of heart."

CHAP. 28

a Jer 7:33

b Ex 4:11

c Isa 59:10

d Jg 3:14

Jg 6:1-5

Ne 9:27

e Isa 5:9

La 5:2

f Am 5:11

Mic 6:15

g 2Ch 29:9

h Ne 9:37

Isa 1:7

i 2Ki 17:6

2Ki 25:7

2Ch 33:11

2Ch 36:5, 6

j Jer 16:13

Second Col.

a 1Ki 9:8

2Ch 7:20

Jer 24:9

Jer 25:9

b Isa 5:10

Hag 1:6

c Zep 1:13

d 2Ki 24:14

Jer 52:15, 30

e Pr 22:7

f Ezr 9:7

g De 28:15

De 29:27

h 2Ki 17:20

Jer 24:10

i De 11:26-28

j 1Co 10:11

k De 12:7

Ne 9:35

l 2Ch 12:8, 9

Jer 5:19

m Jer 44:27

will become an object of horror and of scorn,* and a cause for ridicule among all the peoples to whom Jehovah drives you.^a

38 "You will take much seed out into the field, but you will gather little,^b because the locust will devour it. **39** Vineyards you will plant and cultivate, but you will drink no wine and gather nothing,^c because the worm will consume it. **40** You will have olive trees in all your territory, but you will rub no oil on yourself, because your olives will drop off. **41** Sons and daughters you will bear, but they will not remain yours, because they will go off into captivity.^d **42** Swarms of insects* will overwhelm all your trees and the fruitage of your ground. **43** The foreign resident who is in your midst will keep ascending higher and higher over you, while you yourself will keep descending lower and lower. **44** He will lend to you, but you will not lend to him.^e He will become the head, while you yourself will become the tail.^f

45 "All these curses^g will certainly come upon you and pursue you and overtake you until you have been annihilated,^h because you did not listen to the voice of Jehovah your God by keeping his commandments and his statutes that he commanded you.ⁱ **46** And they will continue on you and your offspring as a permanent sign and portent,^j **47** because you did not serve Jehovah your God with rejoicing and joy of heart when you had such an abundance of everything.^k **48** Jehovah will send your enemies against you, and you will serve them^l while you are hungry^m and thirsty and poorly clothed and lacking everything. He will put

28:37 *Lit., "a proverb." 28:42 *Or "Whirring insects."

an iron yoke on your neck until he has annihilated you.

49 "Jehovah will raise up against you a distant nation,^a from the end of the earth; it will pounce like an eagle,^b a nation whose language you will not understand,^c **50** a nation fierce in appearance that will show no regard to the old or favor to the young.^d **51** They will eat the offspring of your livestock and the fruitage of your ground until you have been annihilated. They will not leave any grain, new wine or oil, young cattle or sheep for you until they have destroyed you.^e **52** They will besiege you, shutting you up inside all your cities* throughout your land until your high and fortified walls that you are trusting in fall down. Yes, they will certainly besiege you within all your cities throughout your land that Jehovah your God has given you.^f **53** Then you will have to eat your own children,* the flesh of your sons and your daughters^g whom Jehovah your God has given you, because of the severity of the siege and the distress your enemy inflicts on you.

54 "Even the most delicate and sensitive man among you will have no pity on his brother or his cherished wife or his sons who remain, **55** and he will not share with them any of the flesh of his sons that he will eat, because he has nothing else on account of the severity of the siege and the distress your enemy inflicts on your cities.^h **56** And the delicate and sensitive woman among you who would not even think of putting the sole of her foot on the ground because she is so delicateⁱ will show no pity to her cherished husband or her son or her daughter, **57** even toward the afterbirth that comes

28:52 *Lit., "gates." 28:53 *Lit., "the fruit of your womb."

CHAP. 28

a Jer 6:22
Hab 1:6

b Jer 4:13
Ho 8:1

c Jer 5:15

d 2Ch 36:17
Isa 47:6
Lu 19:44

e Le 26:26
Jer 15:13

f 2Ki 17:5
2Ki 25:1
Lu 19:43

g 2Ki 6:28
La 4:10
Eze 5:10

h Jer 52:6

i La 4:5

Second Col.

a Ex 24:7
De 31:26

b De 10:17
Ps 99:3

c Ex 3:15
Ex 6:3
Ex 20:2
Ps 83:18
Ps 113:3
Isa 42:8

d Le 26:21
Da 9:12

e De 10:22

f De 4:27

g Le 26:33
Ne 1:8
Lu 21:24

h De 4:27, 28

i Am 9:4

j Eze 12:19

k Le 26:16, 36

from between her legs and toward the sons she bears, for she will secretly eat them because of the severity of the siege and the distress your enemy inflicts on your cities.

58 "If you will not carefully observe all the words of this Law that are written in this book^a and you do not fear this glorious and awe-inspiring name,^b that of Jehovah^c your God, **59** Jehovah will inflict very severe plagues on you and your offspring, great and enduring plagues,^d and grievous and enduring sicknesses. **60** He will bring back upon you all the diseases of Egypt that you used to fear, and they will certainly cling to you. **61** Moreover, Jehovah will even bring upon you every sickness or plague not written in the book of this Law until you have been annihilated. **62** Although you have become as numerous as the stars of the heavens,^e very few of your number will be left,^f because you did not listen to the voice of Jehovah your God.

63 "And just as Jehovah once delighted to make you prosper and to multiply you, so Jehovah will delight to destroy you and to annihilate you; and you will be torn from the land you are about to possess.

64 "Jehovah will scatter you among all the nations, from the one end of the earth to the other end of the earth,^g and there you will have to serve gods of wood and of stone, which you and your forefathers have not known.^h **65** You will have no peace among those nationsⁱ nor a place of rest for the sole of your foot. Rather, Jehovah will give you there an anxious heart^j and failing eyes and a feeling of despair.^{*k} **66** Your life will be in great peril, and you will feel dread night and day; and you

28:65 *Or "and despair of soul."

will be uncertain of your survival. **67** In the morning you will say, 'If only it were evening!' and in the evening you will say, 'If only it were morning!' because of the dread you will feel in your heart and because of what your eyes will see. **68** And Jehovah will certainly bring you back to Egypt by ship, by the way that I told you, 'You will never see it again,' and there you will have to sell yourselves to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer."

29 These are the words of the covenant that Jehovah commanded Moses to make with the people of Israel in the land of Mo'ab, in addition to the covenant that he made with them at Ho'reb.^a

2 Moses then called together all Israel and said to them: "You have seen all that Jehovah did before your eyes in the land of Egypt to Phar'ao and all his servants and all his land.^b **3** the great judgments* that your eyes saw, those great signs and miracles.^c **4** But Jehovah has not given you a heart to understand and eyes to see and ears to hear, down to this day.^d **5** 'While I kept guiding you for 40 years in the wilderness,^e your garments did not wear out on you and your sandals did not wear out on your feet.^f **6** You did not eat bread, and you did not drink wine or anything alcoholic, so that you would know that I am Jehovah your God.'^g **7** You eventually came to this place, and Si'hon the king of Hesh'-bon^g and Og the king of Ba'shan^h came out to meet us in battle, but we defeated them.ⁱ **8** After that we took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the Reu'-ben-ites, the Gad'ites, and the half tribe of the Ma-nas'sites.^j

29:3 *Or "trials."

CHAP. 29

- a Ex 24:8
- b Ex 19:4
Jos 24:5
- c De 4:34
Ne 9:10
- d Ro 11:8
- e De 1:3
De 8:2
- f De 8:4
Ne 9:21
Mt 6:31
- g Nu 21:26
- h Nu 21:33
- i Ps 135:10, 11
- j Nu 32:33
De 3:12, 13

Second Col.

- a De 4:6
De 8:18
Jos 1:7, 8
1Ki 2:3
Ps 103:17, 18
Lu 11:28
- b Ne 8:2
- c Ex 12:38
- d De 1:3
De 29:1
- e Ex 19:5
De 7:6
De 28:9
- f Ex 6:7
Ex 29:45
- g Ge 17:1, 7
Ge 22:16, 17
- h Ge 26:3
- i Ge 28:13
- j De 2:4
- k Nu 25:1, 2

- l De 11:16
Heb 3:12

- m Heb 12:15

9 Therefore, observe the words of this covenant and obey them, so that everything you do will turn out well.^a

10 "All of you are stationed today before Jehovah your God, the heads of your tribes, your elders, your officers, every man of Israel, **11** your children, your wives,^b and your foreign resident^c who is in the midst of your camp, from the one gathering your wood to the one drawing your water. **12** You are here in order to enter into the covenant of Jehovah your God and his oath, which Jehovah your God is making with you today^d **13** in order that he may establish you today as his people^e and that he may be your God,^f just as he has promised you and just as he swore to your forefathers, Abraham,^g Isaac,^h and Jacob.ⁱ

14 "Now it is not with you alone that I am making this covenant and this oath, **15** but it is with those standing here with us today before Jehovah our God and with those who are not here with us today. **16** (For you well know how we lived in the land of Egypt and how we passed through the midst of various nations on our journey.^j **17** And you used to see their detestable things and their disgusting idols^{*k} of wood and stone, silver and gold, that were among them.) **18** Beware that there may not be a man or a woman, a family or a tribe among you today whose heart turns away from Jehovah our God to go serve the gods of those nations,^l that there may not be a root among you producing poisonous fruit and wormwood.^m

19 "But if someone hears the words of this oath and boasts in his heart, saying, 'I will have

29:17 *The Hebrew term may be related to a word for "dung" and is used as an expression of contempt.

Song 89 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“All These Blessings Will . . . Overtake You”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

De 27:17—Why did Jehovah’s Law prohibit moving a neighbor’s boundary marker? (it-1 360)

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.) De 28:1-14 (11)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

Initial Call: (3 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Offer a publication from the Teaching Toolbox. (6)

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Bible Study: (5 min.) lvs 234 ¶21-22 (9)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 11

“How Creation Reveals God’s Love”: (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Creation Reveals Jehovah’s Love* (video category THE BIBLE).

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) rr chap. 12 ¶7-14

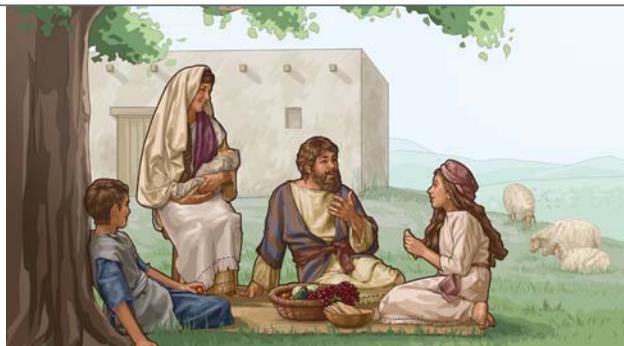
 “All These Blessings Will . . . Overtake You”

Those who listen to Jehovah’s voice receive many blessings (De 28:1, 3-6; w10 12/15 19 ¶18)

Jehovah’s blessings will overtake his obedient servants (De 28:2; w01 9/15 10 ¶2)

Jehovah wants our obedience to be “with rejoicing and joy of heart” (De 28:45-47; w10 9/15 8 ¶4)

Jehovah’s obedient servants enjoy his abundant blessings right now and will soon be overtaken by his promised future blessings.



August 16-22 / Deuteronomy 27-28

Song 89 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 minute)

Treasures From God's Word

"All These Blessings Will . . . Overtake You": (10 minutes)

Those who listen to Jehovah's voice receive many blessings

Deuteronomy 28:1: "And if you will without fail listen to the voice of Jehovah your God by being careful to do all his commandments that I am commanding you today, Jehovah your God will certainly put you high above all other nations of the earth.

Deuteronomy 28:3-6: "Blessed you will be in the city, and blessed you will be in the field. "Blessed will be your children and the fruit of your ground and the offspring of your livestock, your young cattle and sheep. "Blessed will be your basket and your kneading bowl. "Blessed you will be when you come in, and blessed you will be when you go out.

w10 12/15 19 paragraph 18

Listening certainly includes taking to heart what is said in God's Word and the spiritual food that he provides. (Matthew 24:45) It also means obeying God and his Son. Jesus said: "Not everyone saying to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but the one *doing the will of my Father* who is in the heavens will." (Matthew 7:21) And listening to God means willingly submitting oneself to the arrangement he has set in place, the Christian congregation with appointed elders, "gifts in men."—Ephesians 4:8.

Jehovah's blessings will overtake his obedient servants

Deuteronomy 28:2: All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you, because you keep listening to the voice of Jehovah your God:

w01 9/15 10 paragraph 2

The Hebrew verb rendered "keep listening" at Deuteronomy 28:2 denotes continuous action. Jehovah's people must not simply listen to him occasionally; they must keep listening as a way of life. Only then will divine blessings overtake them. The Hebrew verb translated "overtake" has been identified as a hunting term most often meaning "to catch up with" or "to reach."

Jehovah wants our obedience to be “with rejoicing and joy of heart”

Deuteronomy 28:45-47: “All these curses will certainly come upon you and pursue you and overtake you until you have been annihilated, because you did not listen to the voice of Jehovah your God by keeping his commandments and his statutes that he commanded you. And they will continue on you and your offspring as a permanent sign and portent, because you did not serve Jehovah your God with rejoicing and joy of heart when you had such an abundance of everything.

w10 9/15 8 paragraph 4

With what attitude were the Israelites to be obedient? God’s Law stated that he would be displeased if his people failed to serve him “with rejoicing and joy of heart.” (Read Deuteronomy 28:45-47.) Jehovah deserves more than mechanical obedience to specific orders, such as can be performed even by animals or demons. (Mark 1:27; James 3:3) Genuine obedience to God is an expression of love. It is marked by joy that stems from faith that Jehovah’s commandments are not burdensome and that “he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him.”—Hebrews 11:6; 1 John 5:3.

Jehovah’s obedient servants enjoy his abundant blessings right now and will soon be overtaken by his promised future blessings.

[Image:] An Israelite family sitting under a tree outside their home and conversing happily. Sheep graze nearby.

[Image:] Brothers and sisters of various races eating a meal together after attending a convention.

Spiritual Gems

Deuteronomy 27:17—Why did Jehovah’s Law prohibit moving a neighbor’s boundary marker?

Deuteronomy 27:17: “‘Cursed is the one who moves his neighbor’s boundary marker.’ (And all the people will say, ‘Amen!’)

***it-1* 360**

Jehovah’s law prohibited the moving back of boundary marks. (Deuteronomy 19:14; see also Proverbs 22:28.) In fact, cursed was the one moving back “the boundary mark of his fellowman.” (Deuteronomy 27:17) Since landholders generally were dependent upon the produce of their plots of ground, moving back a boundary mark would mean depriving another person of some of his means of sustenance. Doing this was equivalent to theft and was so viewed in ancient times. (Job 24:2) But there were unscrupulous persons who were guilty of such abuses, and princes of Judah in Hosea’s time were likened to those moving back a boundary.—Hosea 5:10.

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 minutes) Deuteronomy 28:1-14 (*th* study 11)

Song 89 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

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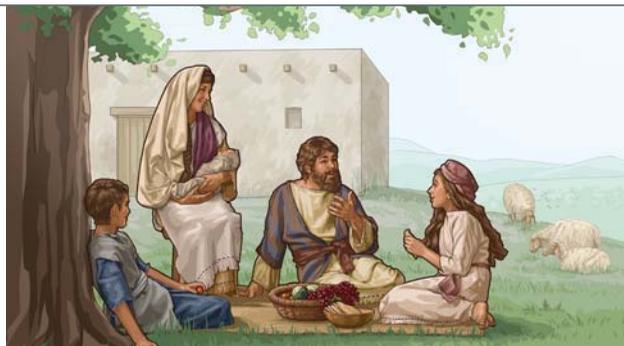
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Being Courageous Is Not Too Difficult



Courage is the quality of being strong, bold, and valiant. It does not mean never being afraid. Rather, it means taking action *in spite of* our fears. Jehovah is the Source of true courage. (Ps 28:7) How can young ones demonstrate courage?

WATCH THE VIDEO DRAMATIZATION *IMITATE, NOT THE COWARDS, BUT THE COURAGEOUS!* AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- What situations faced by youths require courage?

- What Bible accounts inspire courage?

- How do we and observers benefit from our displaying courage?



SAMPLE CONVERSATIONS

Initial Call

Question: How do we know that our suffering is not punishment from God?

Scripture: **Jas 1:13**

Link: Why do we suffer?

► FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



• **bhs 9 ¶7**

Return Visit

Question: Why do we suffer?

Scripture: **1Jo 5:19**

Link: How does God feel about our suffering?

► FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



• **bhs 117 ¶7**



your mind focused on your hope. Satan wants you to lose hope and to feel that Jehovah's promises will never come true. But you cannot give in to negative thinking! If you notice that your hope is becoming less real to you, ask Jehovah for help. Remember the words found at Philippians 4:6, 7: "Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving, let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus."

21 Regularly take time to meditate on the exciting future ahead. Soon, everyone alive will worship Jehovah. (Revelation 7:9, 14) Just think about life in the new world. It will be better than anything we can imagine! Satan, his demons, and all wickedness will be gone. You will not get sick, and you will not die. Instead, you will wake up each day full of energy and happy to be alive. Everyone will work together to make the earth into a paradise. All will have good food and a safe place to live. People will not be cruel or violent but will be genuinely kind to one another. In time, all humans on earth will enjoy "the glorious freedom of the children of God."—Romans 8:21.

22 Jehovah wants you to make him your best Friend. So do all you can to obey Jehovah and to draw closer to him each day. Yes, may all of us remain in God's love forever!—Jude 21.

21, 22. (a) What is Jehovah's purpose for the earth? (b) What are you resolved to do?

Creation Praises God

(Psalm 19)

G13sus4 G7 C C#°

Your glo - ry, God, your might - y works a -
 True wis - dom starts with whole - some fear of
 By know - ing you, our life is not in

Dm G7

bound,
 you
 vain,
 In skies a - bove,
 And guards our way
 And by your word,
 their
 in
 our

C G13sus4 G7

praise for you re - sounds.
 all we say and do.
 life will be sus - tained.
 Cre - a - tion
 Your wise com -
 The great - est

C E+5 F

speaks with - out a voice or word;
 mands en - light - en young and old—
 hon - or an - y - one can gain

Creation Praises God

F#° C/G Fm/D C/G F/G G7

In all the earth, its mes - sage can be
 A trea - sure far ex - ceed - ing fin - est
 Will come to all who sanc - ti - fy your

Am Em/G Fma7 Em Dm11 C

heard. Cre - a - tion speaks with -
 gold. Your wise com - mands en -
 name. The great - est hon - or

E+5 F F#°

out a voice or word; In all the
 light - en young and old— A trea - sure
 an - y - one can gain Will come to

C/G Fm/D C/G F/G G7 C

earth, its mes - sage can be heard.
 far ex - ceed - ing fin - est gold.
 all who sanc - ti - fy your name.

Song 89 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

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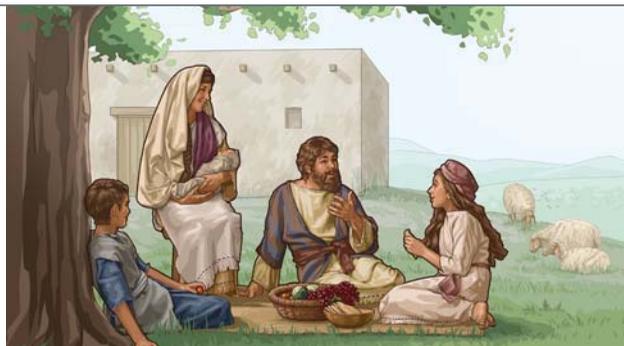
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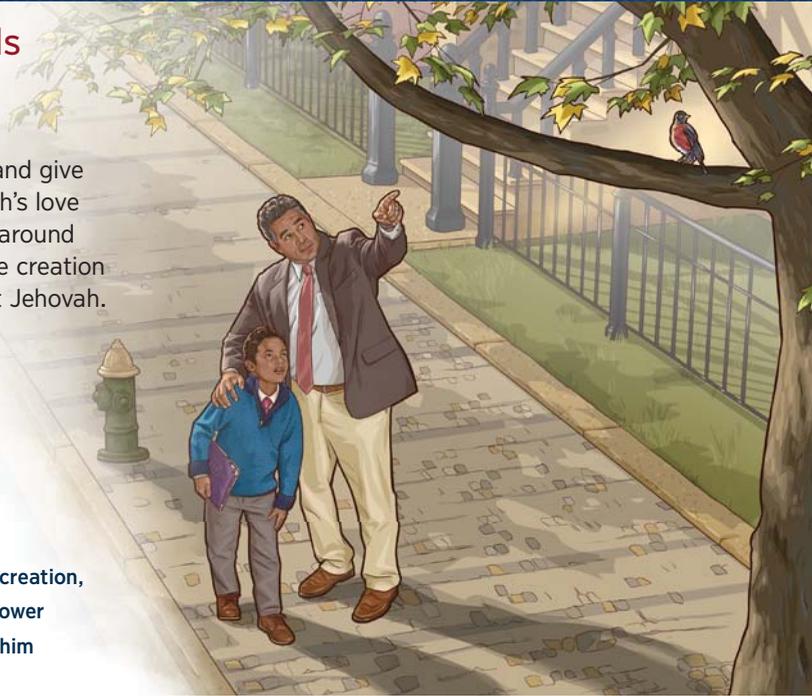




How Creation Reveals God's Love

We can easily go about our busy lives and give little thought to the evidence of Jehovah's love and generosity seen in the creation all around us. But Jesus encourages us to observe creation and reflect on what it teaches us about Jehovah. —Mt 6:25, 26.

Since Jehovah has shown so much love in creation, we can be confident that he is ready to shower blessings upon us for our efforts to serve him



WATCH THE VIDEO *CREATION REVEALS JEHOVAH'S LOVE*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

What did you learn about Jehovah's love for us from . . .

- earth's elements?

- earth's atmosphere?

- grass?

- the design of animals?

- our senses?

- our brain?

Creation Reveals Jehovah's Love

Raw transcript

Everything on earth is made from fewer than one hundred naturally occurring elements, such as oxygen, carbon, calcium, and iron. How are such elements formed? Many are created inside of stars, where tremendous heat and pressure cause atoms to fuse together. Stars like our sun fuse hydrogen, the lightest element, to form helium, a heavier element. Helium fuses to make carbon. As a star progressively forms heavier elements, it becomes larger. Its core becomes hotter and denser. Eventually, the core collapses on itself and the star explodes, becoming a supernova. A supernova forms even heavier elements and shoots them into space. The Bible does not describe exactly how Jehovah formed the earth. But Jehovah ensured that earth contains all of the elements needed for life. “When I see your heavens, the works of your fingers, “the moon and the stars that you have prepared, “what is mortal man that you keep him in mind, and a son of man that you take care of him?” The atmosphere—one of earth’s amazing life-support systems—its mix of gases sustains life. It insulates the earth and prevents temperature extremes that could destroy life. It protects against most life-threatening radiation and objects from space. Living things both depend on the atmosphere and contribute to it. When people and animals breathe, they absorb oxygen and put carbon dioxide back into the air. Plants absorb carbon dioxide and release oxygen. Nonliving systems also help to renew and to protect the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide trapped in rocks is recycled into the air when volcanos erupt. Earth’s gravity holds the atmosphere close to the surface. And its magnetic field may prevent solar winds from eroding the atmosphere into space. The earth, our well-supplied and well-protected home, is indeed a loving gift. “As for the heavens, they belong to Jehovah, but the earth he has given to the sons of men.” Of all plant life on earth, the most abundant is grass. Found on every continent, it covers more than one third of the planet. Grass serves as food. Nearly 70 percent of all agricultural land grows grass crops. Grass provides shelter. Bamboo, a type of grass, can grow taller than 40 meters, or 131 feet. This makes it a popular building material. Grass can be clothing. It’s in our lives almost every day. Grass is just one of many plants that Jehovah created to meet our needs. These are mentioned by name at Genesis 1:12. “And the earth began to produce grass, “seed-bearing plants “and trees yielding fruit along with seed, “according to their kinds. Then God saw that it was good.” Temperatures in the Arctic can drop to minus 50 degrees Celsius, or minus 58 degrees Fahrenheit. The polar bear, however, maintains its body temperature at around 37 degrees Celsius, or 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit. It is a marvel of thermal engineering. The transparent hairs of a polar bear scatter the sun’s visible light, making them appear white. Ultraviolet rays are trapped in the fur. The bear’s black skin helps it to absorb that captured heat. Oils in its fur also help to keep the bear warm and dry. From extreme temperatures to

extreme depths, the Mariana Trench in the Pacific is deeper than earth's tallest mountains. Creatures survive here despite perpetual darkness and the crushing weight of the waters. Fish living at extreme depths have a highly concentrated chemical in their cells that keeps proteins and membranes working properly. God has marvelously equipped these and other animals. What does this say about our own value in God's eyes? "Observe intently the birds of heaven; "they do not sow seed or reap or gather into storehouses, "yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than they are?" From the moment we are born, we experience the world through our senses. Touch lets us feel safe and loved. We use it to explore and learn. The sounds we hear convey meaning. With two ears, we can locate a sound's direction. Different wavelengths of light are perceived as a range of vivid colors. Images from each eye combine in 3-D so that we can better judge depth and distance. We can detect over ten thousand smells by using a small group of cells that detect microscopic materials in the air. We taste, see, smell, touch, and hear in one enjoyable experience, with all the senses converging in one place—our brain. Some two hundred billion nerve cells are connected by trillions of tiny contacts. The brain interprets chemical signals from each sense, connects new information to what we already know, and stores lasting memories. Life is a precious gift from our loving Creator. King David was inspired to write: "I praise you because in an awe-inspiring way "I am wonderfully made. "Your works are wonderful, I know this very well."

video source: https://www.jw.org/en/library/videos/#en/mediaitems/2019Convention/pub-jwbcov_201905_11_VIDEO

3. (a) What was pictured by the stick “for Judah”? (b) Why did “the stick of Ephraim” represent the ten-tribe kingdom?

4. What does Ezekiel’s next action with the two sticks illustrate? (See opening picture.)

5. What is the meaning of what Ezekiel acted out? (See the box “The Joining of the Two Sticks.”)

6. What complementary prophecies are found in Ezekiel chapter 37?

7. How does the account found at 1 Chronicles 9:2, 3 confirm that “with God all things are possible”?

“They Will Become One in My Hand”

³ Jehovah instructed Ezekiel to take two sticks and to write on one “for Judah” and on the other “for Joseph, the stick of Ephraim.” (Read Ezekiel 37:15, 16.) What did these two sticks picture? The stick that was “for Judah” represented the two-tribe kingdom of Judah and Benjamin. Kings in the line of Judah had ruled the two tribes; also, the priesthood had been associated with them, for the priests served at the temple in Jerusalem. (2 Chron. 11:13, 14; 34:30) Hence, the kingdom of Judah held the Davidic line of kings as well as the Levitical priesthood. “The stick of Ephraim” represented the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel. In what way was that stick associated with Ephraim? The first king of the ten-tribe kingdom was Jeroboam, from the tribe of Ephraim. In time, Ephraim became the dominant tribe in Israel. (Deut. 33:17; 1 Ki. 11:26) Note that the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel did *not* include Davidic kings or Levitical priests.

⁴ Ezekiel was further instructed to bring the two sticks together “so that they become just one stick.” As the exiles anxiously watched Ezekiel, they asked him: “Will you not tell us what these things mean?” He answered that the enactment illustrated what Jehovah himself would do. Regarding the two sticks, Jehovah stated: “I will make them one stick, and they will become one in my hand.”—Ezek. 37:17-19.

⁵ Next, Jehovah explained the meaning of the joining together of the two sticks. (Read Ezekiel 37:21, 22.) Exiles from the two-tribe kingdom of Judah and exiles from the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel (Ephraim) would be brought to the land of Israel, where they would become “one nation.”—Jer. 30:1-3; 31:2-9; 33:7.

⁶ What amazing complementary prophecies of restoration are recorded in Ezekiel chapter 37! Jehovah will prove to be the God who restores not only life (verses 1-14) but also unity (verses 15-28). The heartening message conveyed by these two prophecies is: Death can be reversed, and so can division.

How Did Jehovah “Collect Them Together”?

⁷ Humanly speaking, the liberation and unification of the exiles seemed totally impossible.^[1] However, “with God all things are possible.” (Matt. 19:26) Jehovah fulfilled his prophecy. The Babylonian captivity ended in 537 B.C.E., and thereafter, individuals of both kingdoms arrived in Jerusalem to help restore true worship. The inspired record confirms

FOOTNOTE

[1] Some two centuries before Ezekiel received this prophecy, the inhabitants of the ten-tribe kingdom (“the stick of Ephraim”) were carried off as exiles by the Assyrians.—2 Ki. 17:23.

8. (a) What was prophesied by Isaiah? (b) What two significant aspects are found at Ezekiel 37:21?

9. How did Jehovah help the returned exiles to become united?

Jehovah provided spiritual shepherds to help his people to become united

SEE PARAGRAPH 9

this: “Some of the descendants of Judah, of Benjamin, of Ephraim, and of Manasseh settled in Jerusalem.” (1 Chron. 9:2, 3; Ezra 6:17) Indeed, just as Jehovah had foretold, members of the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel were joined, or united, with members of the two-tribe kingdom of Judah.

⁸ Some 200 years earlier, the prophet Isaiah had prophesied about what would happen to Israel and Judah after their captivity. He foretold that Jehovah would begin to gather “the dispersed ones of Israel” and “the scattered ones of Judah from the four corners of the earth,” including “out of Assyria.” (Isa. 11:12, 13, 16) And indeed, as Jehovah had foretold, he took “*the Israelites* from among the *nations*.” (Ezek. 37:21) Note two significant aspects: At this point, Jehovah no longer referred to the exiles as “Judah” and “Ephraim” but as “the Israelites”—one group. Further, the Israelites were described as coming, not from one nation, Babylon, but from several nations—in fact, “from every direction.”

⁹ After the exiles’ return to Israel, how did Jehovah help them to become united? He provided Israel with spiritual shepherds, such as Zerubbabel, High Priest Joshua, Ezra, and Nehemiah. God also raised up the prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. All these faithful men exerted themselves in encouraging the nation to follow God’s instructions. (Neh.



8:2, 3) In addition, Jehovah protected the nation of Israel by defeating conspiracies plotted by the enemies of God's people.—Esther 9:24, 25; Zech. 4:6.

¹⁰ Nevertheless, despite all the loving provisions of Jehovah, most Israelites failed to adhere to pure worship. Their actions are recorded in the Bible books that were written after the return of the exiles. (Ezra 9:1-3; Neh. 13:1, 2, 15) In fact, within a century after their return, the Israelites deviated so far from pure worship that Jehovah had to urge them: "Return to me." (Mal. 3:7) By the time Jesus came to earth, the Jewish religion was divided into several sects that were led by unfaithful shepherds. (Matt. 16:6; Mark 7:5-8) Satan had succeeded in preventing any achievement of full unity. Even so, Jehovah's prophecy of unification would without fail come true. How?

"My Servant David Will Be Their King"

¹¹ Read Ezekiel 37:24. Jehovah revealed that his unification prophecy would see its complete fulfillment among his people only after his "servant David," Jesus, would begin to rule as King, which happened in 1914.^[2] (2 Sam. 7:16; Luke 1:32) By that time, natural Israel had been replaced by spiritual Israel, the anointed. (Jer. 31:33; Gal. 3:29) Satan, especially after his ouster from heaven, again set out to destroy the unity of God's people. (Rev. 12:7-10) For instance, after Brother Russell's death in 1916, Satan saw an opportunity to cause division among the anointed by means of the actions of apostates. Before long, however, those apostates left the organization. Satan also succeeded in having the brothers who were taking the lead at the time thrown into prison, but even that did not bring an end to Jehovah's people. The anointed brothers who remained faithful to Jehovah maintained their unity.

¹² Hence, contrary to what had happened to natural Israel, spiritual Israel withstood Satan's divisive schemes. Why have Satan's efforts failed? Because the anointed have done their best to adhere to Jehovah's standards. As a result, they have had the protection of their King, Jesus Christ, who is continuing his conquest against Satan.—Rev. 6:2.

Jehovah Will Cause His Worshipers to "Become One"

¹³ What significance does the prophecy of the unification of the two sticks have in our time? Keep in mind that the

10. Satan eventually succeeded in doing what?

11. (a) What did Jehovah reveal about his unification prophecy? (b) What did Satan again try to do after his ouster from heaven?

12. Why have Satan's efforts to divide spiritual Israel failed?

13. What important truth does the prophecy about the unification of the two sticks teach us?

FOOTNOTE

[2] This prophecy is discussed in detail in Chapter 8 of this publication.

14. Since 1919, how has the prophecy of the joining of the sticks seen its greater fulfillment?

15. How are the prophetic statements found at Ezekiel 37:26, 27 being fulfilled today?

16. What prophecy did Zechariah give regarding the unification of spiritual Israel with those having an earthly hope?

point of the prophecy was to illustrate how two groups would become united. Above all, the prophecy highlights that this unity is brought about by Jehovah. So, what important truth about pure worship does this prophetic illustration of the joining of the two sticks highlight? Put simply, this: Jehovah himself will cause his worshippers to “become one.”—Ezek. 37:19.

¹⁴ Since 1919, after God’s people had been spiritually cleansed and had begun to enter a spiritual paradise, the prophecy of the joining of the sticks began to see its greater fulfillment. At that time, the majority of those brought together in unity had the hope of becoming kings and priests in heaven. (Rev. 20:6) Symbolically, these anointed ones were like the stick “for Judah”—a nation that included Davidic kings and Levitical priests. However, as time went on, these spiritual Jews were joined by more and more of those with an earthly hope. Such ones were like “the stick of Ephraim”—a nation that did not include Davidic kings and Levitical priests. Together, both groups serve unitedly as Jehovah’s people under their one King, Jesus Christ.—Ezek. 37:24.

“They Will Be My People”

¹⁵ Ezekiel’s prophecy itself suggests that many individuals would be moved to join the anointed in pure worship. Jehovah stated about his people: “I will . . . make them *many*” and, “my *tent* will be over them.” (Ezek. 37:26, 27; ftn.) These statements bring to mind what was prophesied to the apostle John some 700 years after Ezekiel’s time, namely, that “the One seated on the throne [would] spread his tent” over “a great crowd.” (Rev. 7:9, 15) Today, the anointed and the great crowd dwell as one nation, God’s people, under his protective tent.

¹⁶ The unification of spiritual Jews with those having an earthly hope was also prophesied by Zechariah, himself a returned exile. He stated that “ten men out of . . . the nations” would “take firm hold of the robe of a Jew” and say: “We want to *go with you*, for we have heard that God is with *you people*.” (Zech. 8:23) The description “a Jew” refers, not to an individual person, but to a group of people, “you people,” today represented by the anointed remnant, or spiritual Jews. (Rom. 2:28, 29) The “ten men” represent those with an earthly hope. They “take firm hold of” the anointed and “go with” them. (Isa. 2:2, 3; Matt. 25:40) The expressions “take firm

Praising Earth's New King

(Psalm 2:12)

Ab Abma7/C Fm

A mul - ti - tude is gath - er - ing from ev - 'ry tribe and
We praise the Christ, our reign - ing King, with sounds of ju - bi -

Ab Bbm F7/C Bbm/Db Bb7/D Eb Bb7/F Eb/G Eb

na - tion, Col - lect - ed by the Christ and his a -
la - tion. This Prince of Peace will be our Judge and

Fm Bb7 Eb7 Ab

noint - ed con - gre - ga - tion. God's King - dom has been
bring a - bout sal - va - tion. We see the joys that

Abma7/C Bbm F/C Bbm/Db Bb7/D Eb Bb7 Eb Eb/Db

brought to birth; We pray his will be done on earth. This
lie a - head: An earth re - leased from fear and dread; The

Praising Earth's New King

Ab/C Db Ab/C Eb7/Bb Ab Eb7/Bb Ab/C Ab Db Eb7

hope is a gift of price-less worth, Giv-ing joy and con-so-
time for our Lord to raise the dead. What a time for ex-ul-

Absus4 Ab Chorus Ab Fm

la-tion. Praise our God, Je-ho-vah; Praise his Son for-ev-er-
ta-tion!

Bb Bb7 Eb Ab/Eb Eb Bb7 Bb13 Eb Eb7 Ab Eb/Bb Ab/C Db Ab/C

King of all kings and the Lord of lords. Now u-nit-ed-ly we

Db Ab/C Eb7/Bb Ab Db Bbm Eb7 Ab

bow to his rule, And praise him with one ac-cord.

JUNE 2021

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



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AUGUST 2-29, 2021

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We Guard Our Hearts

(Proverbs 4:23)

Eb
Ebma7
Eb
F#°
B7/F#
Eb/G

We guard our hearts, it means our life;
 Pre - pared hearts in heart, we search for God
 Our hearts we shield from harm - ful thoughts,

F#°
Bb7/F

We shun the path of sin.
 By means of on ear - nest prayer.
 We dwell on what is true.

Fm
Ab/Bb
Bb7
Bb7/D
Fm7
Bb7

God reads the heart, and there he finds
 Each day we give him to praise and our thanks,
 We love God's Word to touch our hearts,

Eb/G
B7/F#
Fm7
Bb7
Eb

The per - son deep with - in.
 Re - veal - ing ev - 'ry care.
 To strength - en and re - new.

We Guard Our Hearts

Eb
Ebma7
Eb
F#°
B7/F#
Eb/G

Some - times the heart de - ceives the mind,
 The things Je - ho - vah teach - es us,
 Je - ho - vah loves his loy - al ones;

Eb
Eb/G
Bb7/F
Eb7
Ab
C7/G
Fm

And we be - gin to stray.
 We glad - ly will o - bey.
 On this we can de - pend.

Fm/Ab
A°
Eb6/Bb
Eb/G
Bbm/G
Bbm6/Db
C7

So may our mind di - rect our heart
 We cul - ti - vate a loy - al heart,
 We'll wor - ship him whole - heart - ed - ly

Fm
Fm7
Gm/Bb
Bb7
Eb

And keep Je - ho - vah's way.
 To please him ev - 'ry day.
 For - ev - er as his friend.

SONG 36

We Guard Our Hearts

PREVIEW

Satan is like a skilled hunter. He tries to trap us, no matter how long we have been serving Jehovah. In this article, we will learn how Satan tries to use pride and greed to destroy our relationship with God. We will also learn from the examples of some who have been trapped by pride and greed, and we will see how we can avoid those snares.

You Can Escape From Satan's Snares!

“Escape from the snare of the Devil.”—2 TIM. 2:26.

A HUNTER has but one goal—that of capturing or killing his prey. He may use a variety of snares or traps, even as noted by one of Job’s false comforters. (Job 18:8-10) How might a hunter lure an animal into his snare? He studies the animal. Where does it go? What is it interested in? What will catch it by surprise? Satan is like that hunter. He studies us. He notices where we go and what we are interested in. Then he sets a snare that he hopes will catch us unawares. Still, the Bible assures us that if we are caught, we may be able to escape. It also teaches us how to avoid those snares altogether.

² Two of Satan’s most effective snares are **pride** and **greed**.^{*} For thousands of years, Satan has successfully used these undesirable traits. He is like a birdcatcher who lures his prey into a trap or who ensnares it in a net. (Ps. 91:3) But we do not have to be caught by Satan. Why not? Because Jehovah has revealed to us the tactics that Satan uses.—2 Cor. 2:11.

³ One of the ways in which Jehovah warns us about pride and greed is by encouraging us to learn from real-life experiences. Note in the examples we will consider

^{*} **EXPRESSIONS EXPLAINED:** This article focuses on improper **pride**, the feeling that one person is better than another, and on **greed**, the excessive desire to have more money, power, sex, or other such things.

1. Why can we compare Satan to a hunter?
2. What are two of Satan’s most effective snares?
3. Why has Jehovah included certain examples in the Bible?

that Satan was able to ensnare even mature servants of Jehovah. Does this mean that we are doomed to fail? Not at all. Jehovah included these examples in the Bible as “a warning to us.” (1 Cor. 10: 11) He knows that we can learn from warning examples and thus avoid or escape from the Devil’s snares.

THE SNARE OF PRIDE

⁴ Satan wants us to develop an unbalanced sense of pride. He knows that if we allow improper pride to dominate us, we will become like him and lose out on gaining everlasting life. (Prov. 16:18) Accordingly, the apostle Paul warned that a person might “get puffed up with pride and fall into the judgment passed on the Devil.” (1 Tim. 3:6, 7) That could happen to any one of us, whether we are new in the truth or we have been serving Jehovah for many years.

4. To what will pride lead?

⁵ Pride is a form of selfishness. Satan tries to get us to be selfish, to focus more on ourselves than on Jehovah, especially when we face a challenge. For example, have you been falsely accused? Or have you been treated unjustly? Satan would love to see you blame Jehovah or your brothers. And the Devil wants you to think that the only remedy is to do things your own way rather than to follow the guidance Jehovah gives you in his Word.—**Read Ecclesiastes 7:16, 20.**

⁶ Consider the experience of a sister in the Netherlands who became irritated by the imperfections of others. She decided that she could not tolerate the situation anymore. “I felt very lonely and unable to change my feelings,” she says. “I told my husband that we had

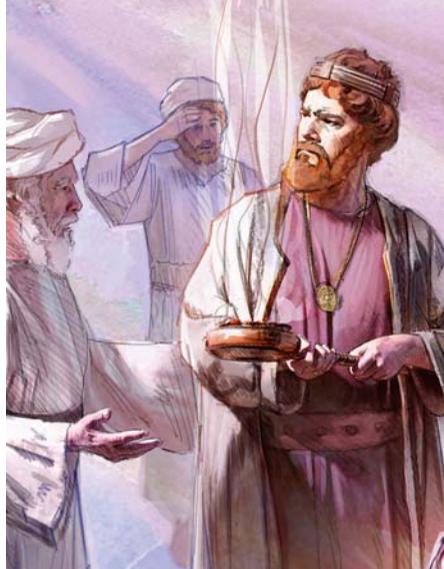
5. As indicated at Ecclesiastes 7:16, 20, how might a person show pride?

6. What can you learn from the experience of a sister in the Netherlands?



Pride and greed have proved to be two of Satan’s most effective snares
(See paragraph 2)





We can learn from warning examples and thus avoid or escape from the Devil's snares (See paragraph 3)

to move to a different congregation.” Then she watched the March 2016 JW Broadcasting® program. That program gave some suggestions on how to deal with the imperfections of others. The sister relates: “I saw that I had to look honestly and humbly at my own mistakes rather than try to change the brothers and sisters in the congregation. The program helped me to focus on Jehovah and his sovereignty.” Do you see the point? When you face a trial, stay focused on Jehovah. Beg him to help you look at others from his perspective. Your heavenly Father sees their mistakes; yet, he is willing to forgive them. He wants you to do the same.—1 John 4:20.

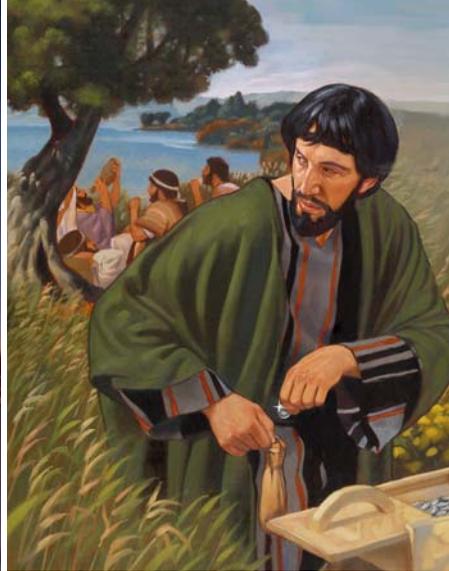
⁷ Pride led King Uzziah of Judah to resist counsel and to act presumptuously. Uzziah was a very capable man. He was successful in military campaigns, in construction projects, and in agricultural developments. “The true God made him prosper.” (2 Chron. 26:3-7, 10) “However, as soon as he was strong, his heart

became haughty to his own ruin,” the Bible says. Jehovah had earlier commanded that only the priests were allowed to offer incense at the temple. But King Uzziah presumptuously went into the temple to offer incense. Jehovah was not pleased and struck that proud man with leprosy. Uzziah remained a leper for the rest of his life.—2 Chron. 26:16-21.

⁸ Could pride lead us into a snare like the one that caught Uzziah? Consider the example of José. He was a very successful businessman who served as a respected congregation elder. He gave talks at assemblies and conventions, and circuit overseers consulted him for advice. “But I trusted in my own ability and in my experience,” he admits. “I had pushed Jehovah away. I thought that I was strong, so I didn’t listen to Jehovah’s warnings and counsel.” José committed a serious sin and was disfellowshipped. Several years ago, he was

8. In line with 1 Corinthians 4:6, 7, how can we avoid becoming proud?

7. What happened to King Uzziah?



reinstated. He now says: “Jehovah has taught me that the important thing is, not having a title, but doing what he asks of us.” Let us remember that any talents we have and any privileges we receive in the congregation are from Jehovah. **(Read 1 Corinthians 4:6, 7.)** If we are proud, Jehovah will not use us.

THE SNARE OF GREED

⁹ When we think of greed, Satan the Devil likely comes to mind. As one of Jehovah’s angels, Satan must have had many fine privileges. But he wanted more. He wanted the worship that only Jehovah rightly deserves. Satan wants us to become like him, so he tries to make us feel discontented with what we have. That sort of effort started when he approached Eve. Jehovah had lovingly provided Eve and her husband with an abundance of satisfying food to eat —“from every tree of the garden” except one. (Gen. 2:16) Still, Satan deceived Eve into thinking that she needed to eat

from the one tree that was forbidden. Eve failed to appreciate what she had; she wanted more. We know what that led to. Eve gave in to sin and eventually died.—Gen. 3:6, 19.

¹⁰ Greed led King David to forget what Jehovah had given him, including wealth, prominence, and victory over many of his enemies. David gratefully acknowledged that God’s gifts were “too numerous to recount!” (Ps. 40:5) But at one point, David forgot what Jehovah had given him. He was no longer content; he wanted more. Although David had several wives, he let an improper desire for another man’s wife develop in his heart. The woman was Bath-sheba, and her husband was Uriah the Hittite. David selfishly had sexual relations with Bath-sheba, and she became pregnant. As if the adultery were not bad enough, David arranged for Uriah to be killed! (2 Sam. 11:2-15) What was David thinking? Did he imagine that Jehovah could not see? That once faithful servant of Jehovah

9. What did greed cause both Satan and Eve to do?

10. How did greed become a snare for King David?

gave in to selfish greed and paid dearly for it. Happily, though, in time David admitted his error and repented. How thankful he was to have Jehovah's favor again!—2 Sam. 12:7-13.

¹¹ What do we learn from the example of David? We learn that we can fight greed if we remain thankful for all that Jehovah has given us. **(Read Ephesians 5:3, 4.)** We must be content with what we have. New Bible students are encouraged to think of one specific blessing and to thank Jehovah for it. If a person does that every day for a week, it will mean that he has prayed about seven different topics. (1 Thess. 5:18) Do you do something similar? If you meditate on all that Jehovah has done for you, it will help you to be thankful. And when you are thankful, you become content. When you are content, greed loses its grip on you.

¹² Greed led Judas Iscariot to become a despicable traitor. He did not start out that way though. (Luke 6:13, 16) Jesus chose him as an apostle. Judas was evidently capable and dependable, for he was in charge of the money box. Jesus and the apostles used those funds to care for their expenses in the preaching activity. In a sense, they were like donations to the worldwide work today. But at some point, Judas began to steal, despite having heard Jesus' repeated warnings about greed. (Mark 7:22, 23; Luke 11:39; 12:15) Judas ignored those warnings.

11. According to Ephesians 5:3, 4, what can help us to fight greed?

12. What did greed lead Judas Iscariot to do?

¹³ Judas' greed became evident during an incident that happened not long before Jesus was put to death. Jesus and his disciples, including Mary and her sister, Martha, were guests of Simon the leper. During the meal, Mary got up and poured on Jesus' head perfumed oil that cost a lot of money. Judas and the other disciples got very upset. The other disciples may have felt that the money could be better used in the ministry. But Judas' motive was different. He "was a thief," and he wanted to steal money from the box. Later, greed moved Judas to betray Jesus for the price of a slave. —John 12:2-6; Matt. 26:6-16; Luke 22:3-6.

¹⁴ Jesus reminded his followers of this basic truth: "You cannot be slaves to God and to Riches." **(Read Luke 16:13.)** That is still true. Consider how one couple in Romania allowed Jesus' words to influence them. They were offered a temporary job in a more prosperous country. "We had a large bank loan to repay, so at first we thought that this job was a blessing from Jehovah," they admit. However, there was a catch. The job would interfere with their service to Jehovah. After reading the article "Maintain Loyalty With a Unified Heart" in *The Watchtower* of August 15, 2008, they made their decision. They relate: "If earning more money was our motive for working in another country, we would be putting our relationship with Jehovah in second place. We were convinced

13. When did Judas' greed become evident?

14. How did one couple apply the lesson found at Luke 16:13?

that our spirituality would suffer.” So they declined the offer. What happened? The husband found a job in his home country that met their needs. The wife says: “Jehovah’s hand is never short.” This couple are happy they made Jehovah their Master rather than money.

AVOID SATAN’S SNARES

¹⁵ What if we discover that we have given in to pride or greed? We can escape! Paul said that those who “have been caught alive by” the Devil can still escape from the snare. (2 Tim. 2:26) After all, David listened to Nathan’s reproof, repented of his greed, and repaired his friendship with Jehovah. Never forget, Jehovah is stronger than Satan. So if we accept Jehovah’s help, we can escape from any snare or trap that the Devil has set.

¹⁶ Of course, rather than have to escape from Satan’s snares or traps, we should avoid them altogether. We can do

15. Why can we be sure that it is possible to escape from Satan’s snares?

16. What will help us to avoid Satan’s snares?

so only with God’s help. But we must not be complacent! Even longtime servants of Jehovah have become proud or greedy. So beg Jehovah daily to help you recognize if those ugly qualities have begun to influence your thinking and actions. (Ps. 139:23, 24) Never allow them to get a grip on you!

¹⁷ For thousands of years, Satan has been the hunter. But soon he will be bound and eventually destroyed. (Rev. 20:1-3, 10) We long for that day. Until then, stay alert to Satan’s snares. Work hard to prevent pride or greed from dominating you. Be determined to “oppose the Devil, and he will flee from you.”—Jas. 4:7.

17. What will soon happen to our adversary, the Devil?

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Page 15: A brother pridefully rejects wise direction. A sister who has many things is drawn to acquiring even more.

Page 16: Pride affected a spirit son of God and King Uzziah. **Page 17:** Greed was behind Eve’s eating from the forbidden tree, David’s committing adultery with Bath-sheba, and Judas’ stealing money.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- What lessons about pride can we learn from King Uzziah’s example?
- What lessons about greed can we learn from the examples of King David and Judas Iscariot?
- Why can we be certain that we can escape from Satan’s snares?

The Sort of Person I Should Be

(2 Peter 3:11)

Db Bbm7 Gb Ebm7

How can I re-pay you, what gift can I give To

Gb/Ab Ab/Gb Db/F F7b9b13/A Bbm7 Eb13sus4 Eb7

thank you, Je-ho - vah, for the life that I live? I

Ebm Ab7/Eb Db/F Gb Ab Bbm9/11 Bbm

look in my heart with your Word as my mir - ror; The

Bridge

Gb Db/F Ebm11 Gb/Ab Ab7 Dbsus4 Db

per - son I see, may you help me see clear - er. My

The Sort of Person I Should Be

G \flat ma7
A \flat /G \flat
G \flat ma7
A \flat /G \flat
Fm7
C \flat /D \flat

life I have prom - ised in ser - vice to you, But

G \flat ma7
A \flat /G \flat
G \flat ma7
B \flat m/G
C7sus4
C7
Fm

not from mere du - ty will I do what I do. Whole -

D $^{\circ}$
E \flat m11
E \flat m
G \flat m/A

souled and whole - heart - ed I serve you by

D \flat /A \flat
B \flat m/G
G \flat /A \flat
Fm/A \flat

choice; May I be one more who makes you re - jice.

The Sort of Person I Should Be

Ebm7/Ab Ab7 Db Bbm7 Gb Ebm7

Help me to ex-am-ine, and help me to see Just

Gb/Ab Ab/Gb Db/F F7b9b13/A Bbm7 Eb13sus4 Eb7

what sort of per-son you de-sire me to be. Those

Ebm Ab7/Eb Db/F Gb Ab Bbm9/11 Bbm

loy-al to you, you will loy-al-ly trea-sure; May

Gb Db/F Ebm11 Gb/Ab Ab7 Dbsus4 Db

I be a-mong those who bring your heart plea-sure.