

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

STUDY ARTICLES

JUNE 3-9

Receive Full Benefit From Reading the Bible

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Help Yourself and Others by Using God's Word

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"Make Sure of the More Important Things"

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"Do Not Tire Out"

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NEPAL

COVER: In most congregations, the brothers meet at 7:30 a.m., if not earlier, for preaching. They take every opportunity to witness to people on the street

POPULATION

26,620,809

PUBLISHERS
1,667

BIBLE STUDIES
3,265

Over the past five years, Nepal has averaged a 14 percent increase in publishers each year

■ PUBLISHERS
■ BIBLE STUDIES



STUDY ARTICLES

- **Receive Full Benefit From Reading the Bible**
- **Help Yourself and Others by Using God's Word**

Paul wrote that “the word of God is alive and exerts power.” (Heb. 4:12) But that power will benefit us only if we study God’s inspired Word and apply its teachings. These articles highlight an effective method of Bible study and show how we can allow godly wisdom to influence our ministry and our personal life.

- **“Make Sure of the More Important Things”**
- **“Do Not Tire Out”**

We are privileged to be part of God’s awesome universal organization. How, though, can we cooperate fully with what it is accomplishing today? What will help us to keep pace with Jehovah’s organization and not tire out? These articles will explain.

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- 17 Five Decades of Full-Time Service Near the Arctic Circle
- 32 Did You Know?

THE WATCHTOWER®
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THEY OFFERED
THEMSELVES
WILLINGLY



in Mexico



IT IS heartwarming to see that an increasing number of young Witnesses are simplifying their lifestyle to be able to expand their Christian ministry. (Matt. 6:22) What changes do they make? What obstacles do they face? To find out, let us get acquainted with some who are presently serving in Mexico.

"WE HAD TO MAKE A CHANGE"

Dustin and **Jassa** from the United States were married in January 2007. Shortly thereafter, they were able to realize a long-cherished dream—that of owning a sailboat and living on it year-round. Their boat was moored near Astoria, Oregon, U.S.A., a picturesque town surrounded by forested hills and snowcapped mountains, just a short distance from the Pacific Ocean. "Wherever you looked," says Dustin, "the views were breathtaking!" The couple felt that they were living a simple life, relying on Jehovah. 'After all,' they thought, 'we live on a 26-foot (7.9 m) boat, work part-time, attend a foreign-language congregation, and occasionally serve as auxiliary pioneers.' But after a while, they concluded that they were fooling themselves. "Instead of supporting the congregation, most of the time we were busy fixing up our boat," says Dustin. "We



Dustin and Jassa

knew that if we really wanted to put Jehovah first in our life, we had to make a change."

Jassa adds: "Before getting married, I lived in Mexico, where I was part of an English-speaking congregation. I enjoyed serving there, and I was eager to go back." During family worship, to strengthen their desire to serve abroad, Dustin and Jassa began reading life stories about brothers and sisters who moved to lands where the fields were ready to be harvested. (John 4:35) "We wanted to experience that same joy," says Dustin. When they heard from friends in Mexico that a newly formed group needed help, Dustin and Jassa made up their mind. They quit their jobs, gave up their sailboat, and moved to Mexico.

"THE BEST THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO US"

Dustin and Jassa settled in the town of Tecomán—still near the Pacific Ocean but some 2,700 miles (4,345 km) south of Astoria. "Instead of a cool breeze and mountain views, we have blistering heat and lemon trees as far as the eye can see," says Dustin. Initially, they could not find jobs. Lacking funds, they ate rice and beans twice a day, week after week. "But just when our

diet seemed to become unbearable," says Jassa, "our Bible students began to give us mangoes, bananas, papayas and, of course, bags full of lemons!" In time, the couple found work with an online language school based in Taiwan. Now the money they earn from that job amply cares for their daily needs.

How do Dustin and Jassa feel about their new lifestyle? "This move is the best thing that ever happened to us," they say. "Our relationship with Jehovah and with each other is stronger than we ever believed possible. Every day we do so many things together—go out in the field service, discuss how to help our Bible students, prepare for meetings. Also, we're free from the type of pressures we felt in the past." They add: "We now appreciate what we never fully understood before—the truth of the promise found at Psalm 34:8, 'Taste and see that Jehovah is good.'"

THOUSANDS OF WILLING WORKERS —WHAT MOTIVATES THEM?

More than 2,900 brothers and sisters—married and single, many in their 20's and 30's—have moved to serve in regions of Mexico where there is still a great need for Kingdom preachers. Why did all these Witnesses take up this challenging



1



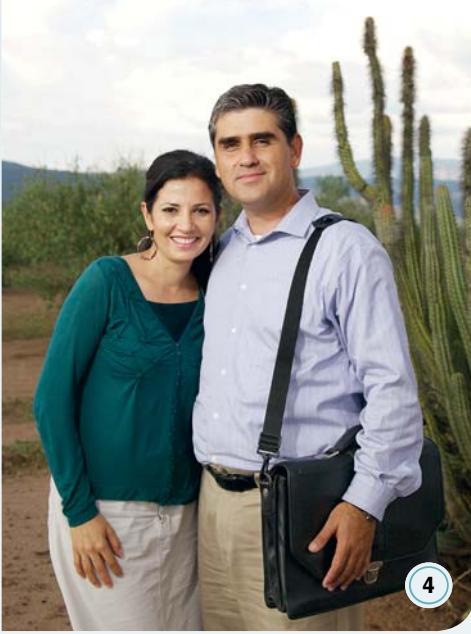
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3

(1) Amelia and Levi, (2) Racquel and Phillip, (3) Essly, (4) Leticia and Hermilo, (5) Verónica, (6) Adam and Jennifer





4



5



6

work? When a group of them were asked that question, they gave three main reasons. What are they?

To show love for Jehovah and fellow men. **Leticia** was baptized at age 18. She says: “When I dedicated myself to Jehovah, I understood that this meant serving him with my whole heart and soul. So to demonstrate my wholehearted love for Jehovah, I wanted to use more of my time and energy in his service.” (Mark 12:30) **Hermilo**, who is now married to Leticia, was in his early 20’s when he moved to serve where more Kingdom preachers were needed. He states: “I realized that helping people to fill their spiritual need would be the best way to show my love for neighbor.” (Mark 12:31) So he left the prosperous city of Monterrey, where he worked in a bank and enjoyed a comfortable lifestyle, and he moved to a small town.

To experience real and lasting joy. Shortly after her baptism, Leticia accompanied an experienced pioneer sister to an isolated town, where they preached for a month. Recalls Leticia: “I was amazed. Seeing how well the people responded to the Kingdom message we shared with them gave me so much joy. At the end of that month, I said to myself, ‘This is what I want to do with my

life!’” Similarly, for **Essly**, a single sister now in her early 20’s, it was the joy she observed that attracted her to this type of service. While still in high school, she met several zealous Witnesses who served where the need was greater. She says, “Seeing the joyful faces of those brothers and sisters made me want to have the kind of life they had.” Many sisters have responded like Essly. In fact, in Mexico more than 680 single sisters serve where the need is greater. What a fine example they set for young and old alike!

To live a purposeful and satisfying life. Upon completing high school, Essly was offered a university scholarship. Peers encouraged her to accept it and to pursue a “normal life”—get a degree, a career, a car, and take time to travel. Yet, she did not follow their advice. Says Essly: “Several of my Christian friends pursued these things, and I noticed that for them, spiritual goals were no longer high priorities. I also saw that they ended up frustrated with the problems they faced as they got more and more involved in this world’s affairs. I wanted to use my youth to serve Jehovah to the full.”

Essly took some additional school courses that enabled her to find work to support herself

financially while pioneering, and then she moved to an area where Kingdom publishers are urgently needed. She even took up the challenge of learning the indigenous languages spoken by the Otomi and Tlapaneco peoples. Now, looking back on three years of preaching in isolated regions, she says: “Serving where the need is greater has brought satisfaction and real meaning to my life. Most of all, it has deepened my relationship with Jehovah.” **Phillip** and **Racquel**, a couple in their early 30’s from the United States, agree. “The world is changing so quickly that many feel that their lives are unstable. But serving where we still find so many who listen to the Bible’s message gives us a strong sense of purpose. It’s very satisfying!”

CHALLENGES

—HOW TO HANDLE THEM

Of course, serving where the need for Kingdom publishers is greater has its challenges. One such challenge is how to support yourself financially. To do so, you need to be willing to adjust to local circumstances. Explains **Verónica**, an experienced pioneer: “In one place where I served, I prepared and sold low-cost fast food. In another location, I sold clothing and cut hair. At present, I clean a house and also conduct a class for new parents, teaching them to communicate with their children.”

Adapting to another culture and different customs can be especially challenging when you live among an indigenous population in an isolated region. That was the case with Phillip and Racquel when they served in the Nahuatl-language field. “The cultural differences were huge,” says Phillip. What helped them to adjust? “We focused on the positive things we observed among the Nahuatl people—the closeness in their families, the sincerity they showed in their dealings with one another, and their demonstrations of generosity.” Adds Racquel: “We learned much from living there and from serving alongside our brothers and sisters in that indigenous community.”

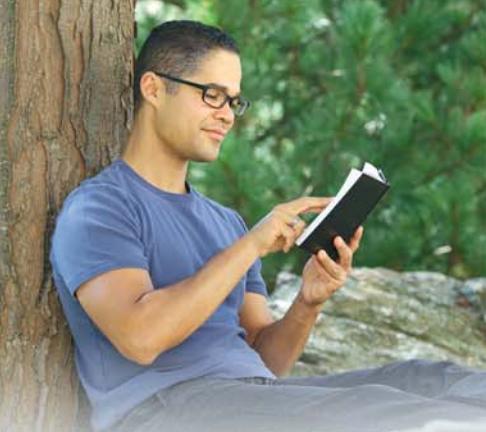
HOW TO PREPARE YOURSELF

If you would like to serve in isolated regions where help is needed, what can you do now to prepare yourself? Brothers and sisters who have experience in this type of service say: Before you move, begin to simplify your lifestyle and learn to be content. (Phil. 4:11, 12) What else could you do? Leticia relates: “I avoided types of secular work that required me to make a long-term commitment to stay in one place. I wanted to be able to move at any time—whenever and wherever needed.” Says Hermilo: “I learned to cook, wash, and iron.” Verónica relates: “While I lived at home with my parents and siblings, I helped with cleaning and learned to prepare low-cost but nourishing meals. I also learned to save.”

Levi and **Amelia** from the United States and married for eight years relate how specific prayers helped them to prepare for serving in Mexico. Says Levi: “We calculated how much money we would need to serve abroad for a year and then asked Jehovah in prayer to help us earn that exact amount.” Within months, they were able to save the sum they had mentioned in their prayer, and they moved without delay. Says Levi: “Jehovah had answered our specific request, so now it was our turn to follow through.” Adds Amelia: “We thought we could stay for one year only, but we have been here for seven years now, and we’re not thinking of leaving! Living here allows us to experience Jehovah’s help firsthand. Every day, we see proof of his goodness.”

For **Adam** and **Jennifer**, a couple from the United States who are serving in the English-speaking field in Mexico, prayer also played a vital role. They recommend: “Don’t wait for the perfect circumstances. Make your desire to serve abroad a matter of prayer, and then act on your prayers. Simplify your life, write the branch in the country where you would like to serve, and after counting the cost, make the move!”* If you do, an exciting and spiritually rich life will be waiting for you.

* For more information, see the article “Can You ‘Step Over Into Macedonia?’” in the August 2011 issue of *Our Kingdom Ministry*.



"I really delight in the law of God."—ROM. 7:22.

LOOK FOR THESE POINTS

How will reading “in an undertone” benefit you?

How can you build a reserve of Scriptural points that you can use to help others?

Careful reading of the Bible gives you what protection?

RECEIVE FULL BENEFIT FROM READING THE BIBLE

“I THANK Jehovah every morning for helping me to understand the Bible.” The elderly Christian sister who made that statement has read the entire Bible over 40 times, and she is not stopping. A younger sister wrote that Bible reading has helped her to see that Jehovah is real. As a result, she has drawn closer to her heavenly Father. She stated, “I have never been happier in my life!”

² The apostle Peter encouraged all to “form a longing for the unadulterated milk belonging to the word.” (1 Pet. 2:2) Those who satisfy that longing through Bible study and who apply Bible teachings have a clean conscience and a purpose in living. They develop enduring friendships with others who also love and serve the true God. All of these are valid reasons to “delight in the law of God.” (Rom. 7:22) But there are even more benefits. What are some of them?

³ The more you learn about Jehovah and his Son, the more your love for them and your fellow humans will grow. Having accurate Scriptural knowledge helps you to see how God will soon save obedient mankind from this dying system. You have a positive message of good news to share with people in your ministry. Jehovah will bless you as you teach others the things that you have learned from reading God’s Word.

READ AND REFLECT

⁴ Jehovah does not want his servants to rush through a reading of his Word. He told Joshua of ancient times: “This book of the law should not depart from your *mouth*, and you must in an *undertone*

1-3. What benefits are gained from reading the Bible and applying its teachings?

4. What does it mean to read the Bible “in an undertone”?

read in it day and night." (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2) Does this instruction require that you literally utter in a low voice all the words you read from Genesis to Revelation? No. It means that you should read at a pace that allows for meditation. When you read the Bible "in an undertone," it will help you to fix attention on portions that are especially useful and encouraging to you at that moment. On finding such phrases, verses, or accounts, read them slowly, perhaps forming the words with the tongue and lips. The full weight of a Scriptural point may strike you in a deeply personal way. Why is this important? Because getting the sense of God's counsel gives you strong motivation to put it into practice.

5 Reading in an undertone is helpful when you consider Bible books that are unfamiliar to you. To illustrate, imagine three scenarios. First, think of a young Christian brother whose personal reading program has taken him to the prophecy of Hosea. In chapter 4, he pauses after reading verses 11 to 13 in an undertone. (*Read Hosea 4:11-13.*) Why? Those verses catch his attention because he has been struggling to resist immoral pressures in school. He reflects on the verses and thinks: 'Jehovah sees the bad things people do even in private. I do not want to offend him.' The brother resolves to remain morally clean before God.

6 In a second scenario, a Christian sister is reading Joel's prophecy and comes to chapter 2, verse 13. (*Read Joel 2:13.*) As she reads that verse in an undertone, she reflects on how she should imitate

5-7. Illustrate how reading God's Word in an undertone might help you to (a) remain morally clean; (b) treat others with patience and kindness; (c) build trust in Jehovah even during difficult times.

Jehovah, who is "gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness." She decides to try to eliminate the sarcasm and angry words that she sometimes uses when she speaks to her husband and others.

7 Third, imagine a Christian father who has lost his job and worries about the well-being of his wife and children. At Nahum 1:7, he reads in an undertone that Jehovah "is cognizant of those seeking refuge in him" and protects them like "a stronghold in the day of distress." That thought consoles him. He senses Jehovah's loving care and stops worrying overmuch. Then he reads verse 15 in an undertone. (*Read Nahum 1:15.*) Our brother sees that by preaching the good news in difficult times, he demonstrates that he, indeed, views Jehovah as his stronghold. While the brother keeps on looking for secular work, he is now also moved to support midweek field service activity.

8 The beneficial points just mentioned are from Bible books that some may consider difficult to understand. As you examine the books of Hosea, Joel, and Nahum with a desire to learn, you will want to read other verses from them in an undertone. Imagine how much wisdom and comfort await you in the writings of those prophets! And what about the rest of the Bible? God's Word is like a productive diamond mine. Work that mine well! Yes, read the whole Bible with the goal of finding gems of divine guidance and reassurance.

STRIVE FOR UNDERSTANDING

9 While it is important that you dai-

8. Briefly share a spiritual gem that you discovered in your Bible reading.

9. How can we increase our understanding of God's will?

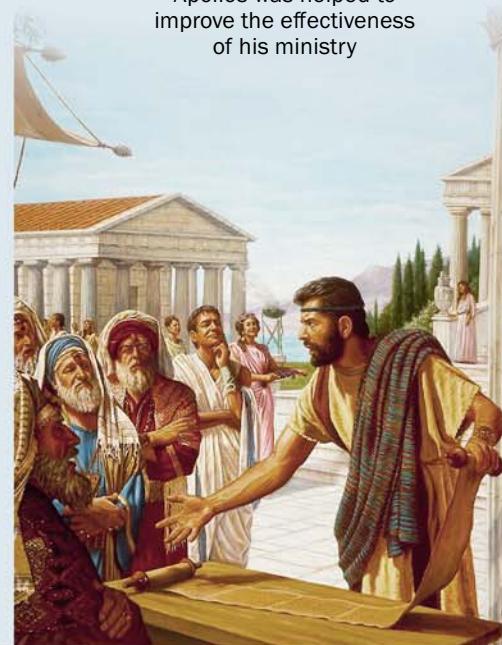
IS YOUR TEACHING UP-TO-DATE?

We want to stay up-to-date with the understanding of Bible truth so that we can share accurate knowledge with others. With that in mind, how would you answer the following questions?

- Whom did Jesus have in mind when he spoke of “this generation” mentioned at Matthew 24:34?
—*The Watchtower*, April 15, 2010, pages 10-11.
- When does the separating of “the sheep from the goats” described at Matthew 25:32 take place?
—*The Watchtower*, October 15, 1995, pages 21-23.
- As stated at Luke 21:26, when will “men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth”?—*The Watchtower*, February 15, 1994, pages 19-20.

By augmenting daily Bible reading with careful personal study, we will be able to help others walk in the ever-increasing light that Jehovah sheds on his written Word.—Prov. 4:18.

Apollos was helped to improve the effectiveness of his ministry



ly read a portion of the Bible, you also want to gain understanding and insight. Therefore, make good use of the publications of Jehovah’s organization to research the background of people, places, and events you read about. Or if you wonder how a certain Bible teaching might affect your life, you could ask a congregation elder or another mature Christian for help. To illustrate the importance of increasing our understanding, let us consider the example of one first-century Christian who strove to do just that. His name was Apollos.

10 Apollos was a Jewish Christian who was “well versed in the Scriptures” and “aglow with the spirit.” The book of Acts relates about him: “He went speaking

10, 11. (a) How was Apollos helped to improve as a minister of the good news? (b) What can we learn from the account of Apollos? (See the box “Is Your Teaching Up-to-Date?”)

and teaching with correctness the things about Jesus, but being acquainted with only the baptism of John.” Without realizing it, Apollos had been teaching an out-of-date understanding of baptism. After hearing him teach in Ephesus, a Christian couple named Priscilla and Aquila explained “the way of God more correctly to him.” (Acts 18:24-26) How did this benefit Apollos?

11 After preaching in Ephesus, Apollos went to Achaia. “When he got there, he greatly helped those who had believed on account of God’s undeserved kindness; for with intensity he thoroughly proved the Jews to be wrong publicly, while he demonstrated by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ.” (Acts 18:27, 28) By that time, Apollos could correctly explain the meaning of Christian baptism. With his increased understanding, he “greatly helped” new

ones to make progress in true worship. What can we learn from this account? Like Apollos, we strive to understand what we read in the Bible. However, when an experienced fellow believer suggests how we can teach more effectively, we want to accept that help with humility and gratitude. If we do so, the quality of our sacred service will improve.

USE WHAT YOU LEARN TO HELP OTHERS

12 Like Priscilla, Aquila, and Apollos, we can be a blessing to others. When your encouragement helps an interested person overcome an obstacle to his spiritual progress, how do you feel? Or as an elder, how do you feel when a fellow worshipper thanks you for Scriptural counsel that helped him or her through a difficult time? No doubt, using God's Word to help others to improve their lives is a source of satisfaction and joy.* Notice how you might accomplish that goal.

13 Regarding true worship and false, many Israelites in Elijah's day were sitting on the fence. Elijah's counsel to those people could help an indecisive Bible student who is holding back from making spiritual progress. (*Read 1 Kings 18:21.*) Consider another situation: If an interested person fears the reaction of friends or family, you might strengthen his or her resolve to worship Jehovah by reasoning on **Isaiah 51:12, 13.—Read.**

* Of course, we do not use Bible counsel to pressure or condemn others. We should be as patient and kind with a Bible student as Jehovah is with us.—Ps. 103:8.

12, 13. Illustrate how a tactful use of the Scriptures may help Bible students to make progress.

14 Clearly, the Bible contains many words that can encourage, correct, or strengthen its readers. But you may ask, 'How can I have scriptures at the ready when I need them?' Read the Bible and meditate on God's thoughts *daily*. In that way, you will build a reserve of divine expressions that Jehovah's spirit can help you recall when you need them.—Mark 13:11; *read John 14:26.**

15 Like King Solomon, pray to Jehovah for wisdom in carrying out theocratic responsibilities. (2 Chron. 1:7-10) As did the prophets of old, make "a diligent inquiry and a careful search" of God's Word for accurate knowledge of Jehovah and his will. (1 Pet. 1:10-12) The apostle Paul encouraged Timothy to nourish himself "with the words of the faith and of the fine teaching." (1 Tim. 4:6) By your doing so, you will be in an excellent position to help others spiritually. At the same time, you will build up your own faith.

SURE PROTECTION BASED ON GOD'S WORD

16 Jews in the Macedonian city of Berea had the custom of "carefully examining the Scriptures daily." When Paul preached the good news to those Jews, they compared his words with their knowledge of the Scriptures. The result?

* What if you remember the key words of a passage but not the book, chapter, and verse? By looking up those words in the index at the back of the Bible, in the *Watchtower Library*, or in the concordance of the *New World Translation*, you will likely find the scripture.

14. What will help you to recall Bible passages when you need them to help others?

15. What will help you to understand God's Word more fully?

16. (a) How did "carefully examining the Scriptures daily" benefit the Bereans? (b) Why is daily Bible reading so important to us today?

'JEHOVAH GIVES ME JUST WHAT I NEED'

Many were convinced that he was teaching the truth, and they "became believers." (Acts 17:10-12) This shows that daily reading of the Bible promotes strong faith in Jehovah. Such faith, "the assured expectation of things hoped for," is vital if we are to survive into God's new world.—Heb. 11:1.

17 For good reason, Paul wrote: "As for us who belong to the day, let us keep our senses and have on the breastplate of faith and love and as a helmet the hope of salvation." (1 Thess. 5:8) A soldier's heart needs protection from the enemy. Similarly, a Christian's figurative heart requires shielding from the power of sin. What happens when a servant of Jehovah couples strong faith in God's promises with love for Him and for fellow humans? Such a servant puts on a spiritual breastplate of the highest quality. It is unlikely that he will do anything to lose God's favor.

18 Paul also mentioned a helmet, "the hope of salvation." Without protecting his head, a soldier in Bible times could easily lose his life in battle. But with a good helmet, he could survive blows to the head without suffering serious injury. We build hope in Jehovah's saving acts by studying his Word. Strong hope enables us to resist apostates and their gangrenous "empty speeches." (2 Tim. 2: 16-19) Our hope will also strengthen us to say no to those who would lead us into conduct condemned by Jehovah.

A KEY TO SURVIVAL

19 The deeper we get into the time of

17, 18. (a) How does strong faith and love protect a Christian's figurative heart? (b) How does hope protect us from danger?

19, 20. Why do we highly esteem God's Word, and how do we show our appreciation for it? (See the box "Jehovah Gives Me Just What I Need.")

A young Christian sister wrote: "Of all the loving reminders Jehovah gives us, those urging us to read the Bible daily have had the greatest influence on my life. I began reading the Bible in my last year of high school, and it took me about two years to read it completely. During that time, I found in Jehovah's Word everything I needed to decide what to do with my life. Now I am reading through the Bible for the second time. But it seems that I am reading things I never saw before. Reading the Bible is as exciting now as it was the first time—if not more so! I am amazed at Jehovah's ability to give me just what I need."

the end, the greater our need to rely on Jehovah's Word. The counsel we draw from it helps us to correct bad habits and to control our sinful tendencies. With its encouragement and comfort, we will pass the tests that Satan and his world bring on us. With the guidance Jehovah provides in his Word, we will stay on the road to life.

20 Recall that God's will is that "all sorts of men should be saved." Jehovah's servants are among "all sorts of men." So are those whom we might help through our preaching and teaching work. But all who wish to attain to salvation must gain "an accurate knowledge of truth." (1 Tim. 2:4) Thus, surviving the last days goes hand in glove with reading the Bible and applying its inspired instructions. Yes, our daily Bible reading shows how highly we esteem Jehovah's precious Word of truth.—John 17:17.



"I have considered all orders regarding all things to be right."

—PS. 119:128.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

How can you effectively use the Scriptures when teaching others?

What did Paul mean when he spoke of “setting things straight”?

What does it mean for elders and parents to ‘discipline in righteousness’?

HELP YOURSELF AND OTHERS BY USING GOD'S WORD

WHEN the elders consider whether a Bible student qualifies to participate in the field ministry, they ask themselves, ‘Do the person’s expressions show that he believes that the Bible is the inspired Word of God?’* For someone who desires to become a Kingdom publisher—in fact, for all of God’s servants—the answer must be a clear yes. Why? Our confidence in God’s Word and our ability to use it in the ministry will help us to assist others to get to know Jehovah and to attain to salvation.

² The apostle Paul emphasized the importance of God’s Word when he wrote to Timothy: “Continue in the things that you learned and were persuaded to believe.” “The things” that Paul mentioned are Bible truths that moved Timothy to put faith in the good news. These truths have had the same effect on us today, and they continue to help us to remain “wise for salvation.” (2 Tim. 3:14, 15) We often use Paul’s next words to show others that the Bible is of divine origin, but we may personally obtain an additional benefit from those words found at **2 Timothy 3:16. (Read.)** Let us consider that verse in more detail. Doing so will strengthen our confidence that all of Jehovah’s teachings are “right.”—Ps. 119:128.

“BENEFICIAL FOR TEACHING”

³ Jesus told the nation of Israel: “I am sending forth to you prophets and wise men and public

* See *Organized to Do Jehovah’s Will*, page 79.

1. Why must we have complete confidence in God’s Word?
2. Why should we ‘continue in the things we have learned’?
- 3-5. (a) How did a crowd react to Peter’s talk at Pentecost, and why? (b) Why did many in Thessalonica accept the truth? (c) What about our ministry may impress people today?

instructors.” (Matt. 23:34) Jesus was speaking about his disciples, whom he taught to use the Scriptures in their ministry. At Pentecost 33 C.E., one of these “public instructors,” the apostle Peter, gave a talk to a large crowd in Jerusalem in which he quoted several passages from the Hebrew Scriptures. On hearing Peter’s application of these words, many listeners “were stabbed to the heart.” They repented over their past sins. About three thousand of them sought God’s forgiveness and became Christians.—Acts 2:37-41.

4 Another public instructor, the apostle Paul, preached the good news far beyond Jerusalem. For instance, in the Macedonian city of Thessalonica, he spoke to those worshipping in a synagogue. For three Sabbaths, Paul “reasoned with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving by references that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead.” The result? “Some of them [Jews] became believers,” as did “a great multitude of the Greeks.”—Acts 17:1-4.

5 The way God’s servants today use the Bible impresses many. After a householder in Switzerland listened to one of our sisters as she read a scripture, he asked her: “Whom do you represent?” She answered: “My companion and I are Jehovah’s Witnesses.” He said: “I should have known. Other than Jehovah’s Witnesses, who would come to my house to read the Bible?”

6 How could we use the Bible to a fuller extent in our teaching? If you have the privilege of teaching the congrega-

6, 7. (a) How can those teaching the congregation make good use of the Bible? (b) Why is effective use of the Scriptures on home Bible studies so important?

tion from the platform, use specific Bible references. Rather than paraphrasing key scriptures or reading them from a computer printout or an electronic device, *open the Bible and read from it*, and encourage the audience to do the same. Also, take time to *apply* the verses in a way that helps the audience draw closer to Jehovah. Instead of using complicated illustrations and experiences that merely entertain, use the time to expound on God’s Word.

7 What do we need to keep in mind while conducting home Bible studies? As we use our Christian publications, we must be careful not to skip the Bible references. We should encourage the student to read cited texts and help him to grasp their meaning. How? Not by giving long explanations that turn the study into a series of lectures, but by encouraging the student to express himself. Instead of telling him what to believe or how to act, we can ask well-thought-out questions that will help him arrive at proper conclusions.*

“BENEFICIAL . . . FOR REPROVING”

8 We often view the matter of “reproving” as a task to be carried out by Christian elders. And, indeed, overseers have the responsibility to ‘reprove those who practice sin.’ (1 Tim. 5:20; Titus 1:13) But reproofing *ourselves* is also important. Paul was an exemplary Christian who had a clean conscience. (2 Tim. 1:3) Even so, he wrote: “I behold in my members another law warring against the law of my mind and leading me captive to sin’s law.” By studying the context of those

* In his teaching, Jesus often asked others: “What do you think?” Then he waited for a response.—Matt. 18:12; 21:28; 22:42.

8. Paul dealt with what inner struggle?

words, we will better understand what fight Paul had to wage to control his sinful nature.—*Read Romans 7:21-25.*

9 What weaknesses did Paul strive to overcome? Though he did not specify them, he did write to Timothy that he had been “an insolent man.” (1 Tim. 1:13) Before his conversion, Paul’s fury against Christians had been intense. Regarding his feelings about Christ’s followers, he confessed: “I was extremely mad against them.” (Acts 26:11) Paul learned to control his temper, yet he at times must have struggled to control his feelings and his words. (Acts 15:36-39) What helped him to succeed?

10 When writing to the Christians in Corinth, Paul described the strategy that he used to reprove himself. (*Read 1 Corinthians 9:26, 27.*) He struck at his imperfect human nature with well-directed spiritual blows. Very likely, he looked for points of counsel in the Scriptures, supplicated Jehovah for help to apply them, and worked hard to improve.* We can benefit from his example because we wage similar fights against our imperfect inclinations.

11 We must never become complacent in our worship. Instead, we need to “keep testing” ourselves to make sure that we are truly walking in the way of the truth. (2 Cor. 13:5) When reading such scriptures as Colossians 3:5-10, we could ask ourselves: ‘Am I working hard

* Paul’s letters contain much encouragement on overcoming sinful tendencies. (Rom. 6:12; Gal. 5:16-18) It is reasonable to conclude that he himself applied the counsel he gave to others.—Rom. 2:21.

9, 10. (a) What possible weaknesses did Paul contend with? (b) How did Paul likely carry on his fight against sin?

11. How can we “keep testing” ourselves to see whether we are walking in the way of the truth?

on deadening my sinful inclinations or am I weakening morally? In using the Internet, when an immoral site comes up, do I get out of it, or do I search out improper Web sites? Applying the counsel of God’s Word in such a personal way will help us to “stay awake and keep our senses.”—1 Thess. 5:6-8.

“BENEFICIAL . . . FOR SETTING THINGS STRAIGHT”

12 The Greek term translated “setting things straight” means “to make good, to correct, to restore to a proper, upright condition.” At times, we must take the step of setting things straight with others who misunderstand us or our actions. For example, the Jewish religious leaders complained that Jesus was kind to “tax collectors and sinners.” Jesus responded: “Persons in health do not need a physician, but the ailing do. Go, then, and learn what this means, ‘I want mercy, and not sacrifice.’” (Matt. 9:11-13) He patiently and kindly explained God’s words to all. Hence, humble ones came to know Jehovah as “a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness and truth.” (Ex. 34:6) In response to the efforts of God’s Son to ‘set things straight,’ many came to have faith in the good news.

13 Jesus’ example teaches us how we should help others. Someone who is upset might say in an abrupt tone, ‘I want to set something straight with you.’ But such an approach is not the intent of what is stated at 2 Timothy 3:16. “All Scripture” does not authorize us to tell others off. Like “the stabs of

12, 13. (a) What should be our goal in “setting things straight,” and how can we follow Jesus’ example in doing so? (b) What kind of speech has no place in “setting things straight” with others?



By kindly using the Bible to 'set things straight' with their young ones, parents help them to avoid much heartache
(See paragraph 15)

a sword," sharp criticism often causes much pain and seldom brings any benefits.—Prov. 12:18.

14 How, then, can we use patience and kindness in "setting things straight"? Suppose a married couple asked a Christian elder for help to end their frequent arguments. What would the elder do? Without taking sides, he can reason with the couple on Bible principles, perhaps using those found in chapter 3 of the book *The Secret of Family Happiness*. As the elder guides the discussion, the husband and wife may discern what counsel each should apply more fully. At a later time, the elder would want to inquire about how things are going in the family and offer more help if that is needed.

14-16. (a) How can elders 'set things straight' in a way that helps others solve their problems? (b) Why is "setting things straight" in a Scriptural way so important in raising children?

15 How can parents 'set things straight' in a way that strengthens their children spiritually? Imagine that you want to help your teenage daughter avoid a questionable friendship. First, you should find out the facts. Then, if there is reason for concern, you can talk to her, perhaps using points from *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*, Volume 2. In the days following, you can spend extra time with her. You can also observe her frame of mind as she engages in the field service or shares in family recreation. If you show patience and kindness, your daughter will sense your loving interest. She will likely be moved to apply your counsel and avoid a disastrous turn in her life.

16 In a similar patient and kind way, we can encourage those who are worried about their health, are downhearted after the loss of their employment,

or are confused about certain Scriptural teachings. Using God's Word to 'set things straight' brings great benefits to Jehovah's people.

“BENEFICIAL . . . FOR DISCIPLINING IN RIGHTEOUSNESS”

17 “No discipline seems for the present to be joyous, but grievous.” And yet, “afterward to those who have been trained by it it yields peaceable fruit, namely, righteousness.” (Heb. 12:11) Most Christian adults agree that the discipline they received from their believing parents helped them. And accepting discipline from Jehovah, as given by Christian elders, keeps us on the way to life.—Prov. 4:13.

18 Giving effective discipline is a skill. Jehovah told Christians to administer it “in righteousness.” (2 Tim. 3:16) Hence, we should use Bible principles as our guide. One such principle is found at Proverbs 18:13: “When anyone is replying to a matter before he hears it, that is foolishness on his part and a humiliation.” Thus, when elders need to speak with an individual accused of serious sin, they must thoroughly investigate the matter to obtain all the facts. (Deut. 13:14) Only then can they discipline “in righteousness.”

19 Moreover, God's Word instructs Christian elders to correct others “with mildness.” (*Read 2 Timothy 2:24-26.*) True, a person may bring reproach on Jehovah as well as injury to innocent people. Still, an elder who gets angry when

17. Why should we accept discipline with gratitude?

18, 19. (a) Why is the counsel found at Proverbs 18:13 so important in “disciplining in righteousness”? (b) When elders show mildness and love in dealing with wrongdoers, what is often the result?

counseling such an individual will not help him. However, when elders imitate “the kindly quality of God,” they may move to repentance the one who has erred.—Rom. 2:4.

20 In raising their children “in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah,” parents must apply Bible principles. (Eph. 6:4) A father should avoid punishing his son based on a one-sided report of the boy's behavior. And violent anger has no place in a Christian family. “Jehovah is very tender in affection and merciful,” and those who have the responsibility for disciplining young ones should strive to show the same loving qualities.—Jas. 5:11.

JEHOVAH'S PRICELESS GIFT TO US

21 A godly man once revealed why he loved Jehovah's law. (*Read Psalm 119:97-104.*) By studying it, he gained wisdom, insight, and understanding. Keeping its counsel helped him avoid false paths that brought heartache to others. For him, studying the Scriptures was pleasant and satisfying. He was determined to obey the God whose instructions had given him so many advantages in living.

22 Do you value “all Scripture”? With it, you build up your faith that God will fulfill his purpose. Its inspired counsel protects you from the deadly effects of practicing sin. And by explaining it skillfully, you can help others get on the road to life and stay on it. May we make full use of “all Scripture” as we serve our all-wise and loving God, Jehovah.

20. What principles should parents apply when disciplining their children?

21, 22. What expression found at Psalm 119:97-104 best describes your feeling toward Jehovah's Word?

Five Decades of Full-Time Service Near the Arctic Circle

AS TOLD BY AILI AND ANNIKKI MATTILA

"It is easy for you to pioneer. Both of your parents are in the truth, and they can support you," we said to our friend who was serving in the full-time ministry. "Now listen! We all have the same Father," she replied. Her answer contained an important lesson: Our heavenly Father takes care of his servants and strengthens them. Indeed, our life experience has confirmed the truthfulness of this fact.

Annikki and Aili in their current assignment





From left: Matti (father), Tauno, Saimi, Maria Emilia (mother), Väinö (baby), Aili, and Annikki in 1935



From left: Eeva Kallio, Saimi Mattila-Syrjälä, Aili, Annikki, and Saara Noponen in 1949

WE WERE born into a farm family of ten children in Northern Ostrobothnia, Finland. Our childhood was affected by World War II. Although we lived hundreds of miles from the front lines, the horrors of the war left a deep impression on us. When the nearby cities of Oulu and Kalajoki were bombed, we saw a red glow in the night sky. Our parents urged us children to hide as soon as we saw warplanes flying overhead. So when our eldest brother, Tauno, told us about a paradise earth without injustice, our hearts were touched.

Tauno learned Bible truths at the age of 14 from the literature of the Bible Students. When World War II broke out, he refused military service because of his Bible-trained conscience and was sent to prison. There, he was brutally treated. That only strengthened his resolve to serve Jehovah, and after his release he was even more zealous in the ministry. Our brother's fine example encouraged us to go to the meetings that the Witnesses were holding in a neighboring village. We also attended conventions, though we had to put forth great effort to save enough money for the trip. We sewed clothes for our neighbors, grew onions, and picked berries. As we had many duties on our farm, we usually could not attend conventions together, so we took turns.

The truths we learned about Jehovah and his purposes deepened our love for him, and we de-

cided to dedicate our lives to him. In 1947, both of us symbolized our dedication by water baptism—Annikki at age 15 and Aili at age 17. Our sister Saimi was baptized that same year. We also studied the Bible with our sister Linnea, who was already married. She and her family became Jehovah's Witnesses too. After baptism, we set for ourselves the goal of pioneering, serving as vacation (or, auxiliary) pioneers from time to time.

ENTERING THE FULL-TIME MINISTRY

In 1955, we moved to Kemi, a city farther north. Although both of us worked full-time, we still wanted to become pioneers but were afraid that we could not support ourselves. We thought that we first should set aside some savings. It was then that we had the discussion with the pioneer sister mentioned above. That helped us to see that serving Jehovah full-time is not dependent solely on our own resources or the support of our family. The most important thing is that we lean on our heavenly Father.

At that time, we had enough savings to support ourselves for two months. So in May 1957, we timidly applied for two months' pioneering in Pello, a municipality in Lapland, above the Arctic Circle. After two months, we still had all our savings, so we applied to pioneer for another two months. Two months later, we still had all the



Convention trip to Kuopio in 1952.
From left: Annikki, Aili, Eeva Kallio



Kaisu Reikko and Aili in the field ministry

After 50 years of pioneer service, we still have our savings left!

money. Now we were sure that Jehovah would take care of us. After 50 years of pioneer service, we still have our savings left! Looking back, we feel as if Jehovah were grasping our hands and saying to us: "Do not be afraid. I myself will help you."—Isa. 41:13.

In 1958, our circuit overseer recommended that we move to serve as special pioneers in Sodankylä, Lapland. At that time, there was only one Witness, a sister, in that area. She learned the truth in an interesting way. Her son was on a class trip to Helsinki, the capital of Finland. As the group was walking through the city, an elderly sister handed an issue of *The Watchtower* to the boy, who was last in line, and asked him to give it to his mother. The boy did so, and the mother immediately recognized the ring of truth.

We rented a room located above a sawmill. We held meetings there. At first, the only ones who attended were the two of us and the local sister and her daughter. We read the study material to-

gether. Later, a man who had studied the Bible with the Witnesses came to work at the sawmill. He and his family started to associate with our group. In time, both he and his wife were baptized. This brother took the lead in our meetings. In addition, some other men who were working at the mill began to attend the meetings and embraced Bible truth. A couple of years later, our group had grown to such an extent that a congregation was formed.

CHALLENGING CONDITIONS

Long distances presented a challenge to our preaching work. In the summer, we walked, cycled, and even rowed to reach people in our territory. Our bicycles were especially of great help. We also used them when going to conventions and visiting our parents, who lived hundreds of miles away. During wintertime, we took a bus early in the morning to a village in the region and then walked from house to house. After we had covered one village, we walked to the next one. The snow was deep, and the roads were not always cleared. We often walked along the tracks that horse-drawn sleighs had left in the snow. Sometimes snow covered the tracks of previous travelers, and in the early spring, the snow was so soft and soggy that we had to trudge through it.



Together in the ministry on a cold winter day



Some we have studied with

The freezing temperatures and snowy conditions taught us to dress warmly. We wore woolen stockings and two or three pairs of socks as well as high-top boots. Still, our boots were often full of snow. As we got to the stairs of a house, we took off our boots and shook the snow out of them. Also, the hems of our long winter coats got wet when we waded through the snow. Then, when it got colder, the hems froze solid and felt like sheet metal. One housewife said, "You must have real faith, since you have voluntarily ventured out in this kind of weather." We had walked over seven miles (11 km) to that house.

Because of the long distances, we often stayed overnight in the homes of the local people. When it was getting late, we started asking for a place to stay. The homes were humble, but the people were friendly and hospitable, and they offered us not only a place to sleep but also something to eat. Often a skin of a reindeer, a moose, or even a bear served as our bed. On occasion, we enjoyed a little luxury. For example, one lady in a big house took us upstairs to a guest room where a beautiful bed with fresh white lace sheets was waiting for us. Many times we discussed the Bible with the household till late in the evening. At one place, the couple who lived in the house slept on one side of the room, and we on the other. Our Scriptural discussion with them went on

in the dark of night until the early hours of the morning. The man and his wife took turns asking still more questions—one after another.

A REWARDING MINISTRY

Lapland is a barren but beautiful country, and its beauty varies according to the season. To us, however, the people who appreciated Jehovah were even more beautiful. Among the sincere people to whom we witnessed were lumberjacks who had come to logging camps in Lapland. Sometimes, there were dozens of men in one cottage as we two small sisters entered. These burly men welcomed the Bible's message and gladly obtained literature.

We had many exciting experiences. One day, the clock in the bus station was five minutes ahead, so we missed our bus. We decided to take another bus to a different village. We had never worked in that area before. At the first house, we met a young woman who said, "Here you girls are, just as I expected." We had been conducting a Bible study with her sister. The young woman had asked her sister to arrange for us to visit on that very day. However, we never got this message. A Bible study was started with her and her relatives who lived in a neighboring house. Not long thereafter, we combined these studies into one study with an attendance of some one dozen

people. Since then, many in this family have become Jehovah's Witnesses.

In 1965, we were reassigned to our current congregation in Kuusamo, just below the Arctic Circle. At that time, the congregation consisted of only a few publishers. Initially, our new territory seemed a bit difficult. People were very religious and prejudiced against us. Even so, many respected the Bible, which provided a common ground for conversation. So little by little, we tried to get to know the people, and after about two years, it was easier to start Bible studies.

STILL ACTIVE IN THE MINISTRY

Today, we do not have the energy to spend long days in the field service, but we still share in the ministry almost every day. Spreading the good news to the people in our large territory became easier when Aili, encouraged by our nephew, took driving lessons and got a driver's license in 1987 at the age of 56. We got further help when a new Kingdom Hall was built and we moved into an apartment attached to it.

The growth we have witnessed brings us great joy. When we began the full-time service in northern Finland, there were only a few publishers scattered throughout that vast area. Now several congregations make up a circuit. It has often happened at the assemblies and conventions that someone introduces himself and asks if we remember him. In some cases, we had been conducting a Bible study in his home when he was a child. The seed that had been sown years or even decades earlier had produced fruit!—1 Cor. 3:6.

In 2008, we completed 50 years of special pioneer service. We thank Jehovah that we have been able to encourage each other to endure in his precious work. Our life has been simple, but we have never lacked anything. (Ps. 23:1) How unnecessary our initial hesitation proved to be! Happily, through all these years, Jehovah has strengthened us in line with his promise at Isaiah 41:10: "I will fortify you. I will really help you. I will really keep fast hold of you with my right hand of righteousness."

We enjoy field service even
on rainy days





"Make sure of the more important things."

—PHIL. 1:10.

POINTS FOR MEDITATION

What confidence do the visions of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel give us?

What lesson do we learn by considering the clear focus of the earthly part of Jehovah's organization?

What determination has this article given you?

"MAKE SURE OF THE MORE IMPORTANT THINGS"

PETER, James, John, and Andrew were finally alone with their Master. Jesus' earlier comments regarding the destruction of the temple weighed heavily on their minds. (Mark 13:1-4) Thus, they asked: "Tell us, When will these things be, and what will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things?" (Matt. 24:1-3) Jesus began to tell them about events, or conditions, that would not only result in great changes to life but also identify the last days of Satan's wicked system of things. One particular event must have intrigued Jesus' disciples. After telling of such distressing matters as wars, food shortages, and an increase of lawlessness, Jesus foretold that something positive would also mark the last days. He said: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come."—Matt. 24:7-14.

² Jesus' disciples had enjoyed preaching the good news of the Kingdom along with Christ. (Luke 8:1; 9:1, 2) They may have recalled that he said: "The harvest, indeed, is great, but the workers are few. Therefore beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2) But how would they preach "in all the inhabited earth" and give "a witness to all the nations"? Where would the workers come from? If only they could have looked into the future while sitting with Jesus that day! They would no doubt have been amazed to see the fulfillment of those few words that we now read at Matthew 24:14.

1, 2. What prophecy regarding the last days must have intrigued Jesus' disciples, and why?

³ We are living in the time of the fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy. Millions have joined together to fill the earth with the preaching of the good news of the Kingdom. (Isa. 60:22) Jesus indicated, though, that some would find it challenging to maintain their focus in these last days. They would be distracted and become "weighed down." (*Read Luke 21:34.*) We are seeing the fulfillment of those words as well. Some among God's people are getting sidetracked. This may be seen in the decisions they make with regard to secular work, higher education, and acquisition of material possessions, as well as the amount of time spent in sports and entertainment. Others are tiring out because of the pressures and anxieties of everyday life. Ask yourself: 'How am I doing? What do my decisions say about my focus in life?'

⁴ Christians living in the first century had to put forth effort to maintain their spiritual priorities. The apostle Paul saw the need for praying that those in Philippi would "make sure of the more important things." (*Read Philippians 1:9-11.*) Like the apostle Paul, most back then were "showing all the more courage to speak the word of God fearlessly." (Phil. 1:12-14) In a similar manner, by far most of us today courageously preach God's Word. Still, can a consideration of what is now being accomplished in Jehovah's organization help us to focus even more on the all-important preaching work? Indeed it can! In this article, let us reflect on the arrangement that Jehovah has in place

3. How is Luke 21:34 being fulfilled today, and what self-examination should we make?

4. (a) What did Paul pray about for the Christians in Philippi, and why? (b) What will we consider in this and the following article, and with what objective?

to facilitate the fulfillment of Matthew 24:14. What is the focus of his organization, and how can knowing this motivate us and our families? In the article that follows, we will consider what can help us to endure and to remain in step with Jehovah's organization.

THE HEAVENLY PART OF JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION IS ON THE MOVE

⁵ There are many things that Jehovah chose not to include in his written Word. For example, he did not provide details about how the brain works or how the universe functions, even though such information would have been very fascinating! Rather, Jehovah provided information that we need in order to understand his purposes and to live our lives in harmony with them. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) How interesting, then, that the Bible does provide glimpses of the invisible part of Jehovah's organization! We thrill at reading the descriptions of Jehovah's heavenly arrangement written by Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel and in John's Revelation account. (Isa. 6:1-4; Ezek. 1:4-14, 22-24; Dan. 7:9-14; Rev. 4:1-11) It is as if Jehovah pulled back a curtain and allowed us to peer into the heavens. Why did he provide this information?

⁶ Jehovah wanted us never to forget that we are part of a universal organization. There is much more going on in support of Jehovah's purposes than what we can see. For example, Ezekiel saw the invisible part of Jehovah's organization depicted by a colossal celestial chariot. This chariot could move swiftly and change direction in an instant.

5, 6. (a) Why did Jehovah provide visions of the heavenly part of his organization? (b) What did Ezekiel see in vision?



(Ezek. 1:15-21) With each revolution of its wheels, the chariot could cover great distances. In vision, Ezekiel was also able to get a glimpse of the Rider of the chariot. He said: "I got to see something like the glow of electrum, like the appearance of fire all around . . . It was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of Jehovah." (Ezek. 1:25-28) How awe-inspiring it must have been for Ezekiel to see this vision! He saw Jehovah in full control of his organization, directing its movement through his holy spirit. What an amazing representation of the heavenly part of Jehovah's organization on the move!

7 Daniel too saw much to give us confidence. He was allowed to see Jehovah

7. How does the vision given to Daniel fill us with confidence?

depicted as "the Ancient of Days" sitting on a throne with flames of fire. The throne was on wheels. (Dan. 7:9) Jehovah wanted Daniel to see that His organization is in motion, accomplishing His purpose. Daniel also saw "someone like a son of man," Jesus, being given oversight of the earthly part of Jehovah's organization. Christ's perfect rule does not exist for just a few short years. Rather, it is "an indefinitely lasting rulership that will not pass away, and his kingdom one that will not be brought to ruin." (Dan. 7:13, 14) We are moved to trust in Jehovah and to recognize what he is accomplishing. He gave "rulership and dignity and kingdom" to his tried and proven Son, Jesus. Jehovah puts trust in his Son. Thus, we can have confidence in Jesus' leadership as well.

8 How should this view of the invisible part of Jehovah's organization impact us? Like Ezekiel, we are surely awed and humbled by what Jehovah is accomplishing. (Ezek. 1:28) Meditating on Jehovah's organization can move us to action, just as it did Isaiah. When the opportunity arose for him to tell others about what Jehovah is doing, he seized it without hesitation. (*Read Isaiah 6:5, 8.*) Isaiah was confident that with Jehovah's backing, he could successfully face any challenge. Similarly, this glimpse of the invisible part of Jehovah's organization should fill us with awe and spur us to action. How motivating to contemplate that organization, ever on the move and completely focused on accomplishing Jehovah's purposes!

THE EARTHLY PART OF JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION

9 Through his Son, Jehovah established an arrangement here on earth that works in harmony with the invisible part of the organization. Why is a visible arrangement needed to accomplish the work described at Matthew 24: 14? Consider three reasons.

10 First, Jesus stated that this preaching work would take his disciples "to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) Second, arrangements would be needed to provide spiritual food and to care for those engaged in this work. (John 21:15-17) Third, provisions would have to be made so that those preaching the good news could gather together to worship Jehovah and be taught how to carry out the work. (Heb. 10:24, 25)

8. What impact did visions from Jehovah have on Ezekiel and Isaiah, and how should we be affected?

9, 10. Why is there a need for a visible part of Jehovah's organization?

Accomplishing these goals could not be done by accident. For Christ's followers to be successful, the work would need to be well-organized.

11 How do we demonstrate our support for the arrangements made by Jehovah's organization? One important way is by always putting our confidence in the ones whom Jehovah and Jesus are trusting to lead us in our preaching work. There are many activities or causes in the world today that could vie for the attention of those taking the lead among us. Yet, what has consistently been the focus of the visible part of Jehovah's organization?

FOCUSED ON "THE MORE IMPORTANT THINGS"

12 Experienced Christian elders around the world have been appointed to oversee and give impetus to the Kingdom-preaching work in the lands where they serve. As these brothers make decisions, they seek direction from God's Word, making it 'a lamp to their foot and a light to their roadway,' and they earnestly pray for Jehovah's guidance.—Ps. 119:105; Matt. 7:7, 8.

13 Like those who took the lead in the first century, Christian elders who oversee the preaching work today are devoted "to the ministry of the word." (Acts 6:4) They rejoice greatly at the progress that is being made in the preaching of the good news locally and throughout the world. (Acts 21:19, 20) They do not set out endless rules and procedures. Instead, they follow the Scriptures and

11. How do we demonstrate our support for the arrangements made by Jehovah's organization?

12, 13. How do Christian elders carry out their assignment, and why is that encouraging to you?

the leadings of God's holy spirit as they make arrangements that are needed to help the preaching work go forward. (*Read Acts 15:28.*) By doing so, these responsible brothers set a fine example for all in the local congregations.—Eph. 4:11, 12.

14 Unseen to many are the constant labors of preparing the spiritual food for our publications, meetings, and conventions. Thousands of volunteers work tirelessly to translate this spiritual food into some 600 languages so that as many as possible can learn about “the magnificent things of God” in their own language. (Acts 2:7-11) Young brothers and sisters work at producing our literature on high-speed printing presses and bindery equipment. This literature is then distributed to congregations even in the remotest regions of the earth.

15 Numerous arrangements are in place so that we can focus on preaching the good news with our local congregation. For example, thousands volunteer to assist with Kingdom Hall and Assembly Hall construction, to help those affected by natural disasters or who are facing medical emergencies, to organize our assemblies and conventions, and to teach theocratic schools, just to name a few activities that go on behind the scenes. What is the purpose of all this work? To facilitate the preaching of the good news, to enhance the spiritual welfare of those carrying out this work, and to advance true worship. Has the earthly part of Jehovah's organization remained focused on the more important things? Indeed it has!

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- 14, 15.** (a) What arrangements are in place for supporting the preaching work earth wide?
(b) How do you feel about the share you have in supporting the Kingdom-preaching work?

FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION

16 Do we periodically take the time to reflect on the workings of Jehovah's organization? Some have chosen to include time in their family worship or personal study to do research on these matters and to meditate on them. The visions given to Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and John make an exciting study. The book *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom* and other publications or DVDs available in your language provide intriguing insight into the organization.

17 Meditating on what Jehovah is accomplishing through his organization is good for us. Along with this wonderful organization, may we be resolved to keep focused on the more important things. Doing so will fortify us to have the same determination as Paul, who wrote: “Since we have this ministry according to the mercy that was shown us, we do not give up.” (2 Cor. 4:1) He also encouraged his fellow workers: “Let us not give up in doing what is fine, for in due season we shall reap if we do not tire out.”—Gal. 6:9.

18 Are there adjustments that we need to make as individuals or as families so as to make sure of the more important things in our daily routine? Can we simplify our lives or reduce distractions so that we can give more attention to the all-important preaching work? In the next article, we will consider five things that will assist us to keep in step with Jehovah's organization.

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- 16.** What would be a good Bible study project for you or your family?
17, 18. (a) How has this discussion benefited you? (b) What questions should we consider?



"Let us not give up in doing what is fine."

—GAL. 6:9.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

What provisions help us maintain our zeal for the truth?

How does focusing on the worship of Jehovah affect our meeting attendance?

How can our decisions indicate whether we will endure or tire out in our service?

"DO NOT TIRE OUT"

IT IS awe-inspiring to contemplate that we are part of a vast universal organization. The visions recorded in Ezekiel chapter 1 and Daniel chapter 7 vividly portray Jehovah maneuvering matters to a grand climax. Jesus is taking the lead in directing the earthly part of Jehovah's organization to focus on preaching the good news, to care spiritually for those carrying out this work, and to promote the true worship of Jehovah. What confidence this gives us in Jehovah's organization!—Matt. 24:45.

² Are we personally in step with this wonderful organization? Is our enthusiasm for the truth ever-increasing, or is it decreasing? When considering such questions, we may note that we have begun to tire out or perhaps have lost some of our zeal. That can happen. In the first century, the apostle Paul had to exhort fellow Christians to consider the zealous example of Jesus. Paul said that this would help them not to "get tired and give out in [their] souls." (Heb. 12:3) In a similar manner, careful examination of the preceding article, which shows what is being accomplished by Jehovah's organization, ought to have done much toward helping us maintain our enthusiasm and endurance.

³ Paul, however, indicated that more is needed if we are not going to tire out. He stated that we would need to work at "doing what is fine." (Gal. 6:9) Thus, action is needed on our part. Let us consider five areas of activity that can help us to remain steadfast and to keep pace with Jehovah's organization. Then we can personally decide whether there are aspects to which we or our families need to give greater attention.

1, 2. How is our confidence heightened by contemplating Jehovah's universal organization?

3. What is needed in order for us not to tire out, and what will we consider in this article?

MEET FOR ENCOURAGEMENT AND WORSHIP

4 Gathering together has always been a key activity for Jehovah's servants. In the invisible realm, spirit creatures are invited into Jehovah's immediate presence at appropriate times. (1 Ki. 22:19; Job 1:6; 2:1; Dan. 7:10) In ancient Israel, the nation was to gather "in order that they may listen and in order that they may learn." (Deut. 31:10-12) Jews in the first century had the custom of going to the synagogues to read from the Scriptures. (Luke 4:16; Acts 15:21) This emphasis on meeting together continued with the formation of the Christian congregation, and it is still a major part of our worship. True Christians "consider one another to incite to love and fine works." We need to keep on "encouraging one another, and all the more so as [we] behold [Jehovah's] day drawing near."—Heb. 10:24, 25.

5 One important way in which we encourage one another is by having a share in our meetings. We can make a public expression of our faith by answering a printed question, by giving an application of a scripture, by relating a brief experience that illustrates the wisdom of following Bible principles, or in other ways. (Ps. 22:22; 40:9) Surely you will agree that no matter how many years we have been attending meetings, it remains a source of encouragement to listen to the heartfelt comments made by our brothers and sisters—old and young.

6 For what other reasons does our God place such importance on our regu-

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4. Why can we say that gathering together is an integral part of true worship?
 5. How can we encourage one another at our meetings?
 6. How do our meetings help us to stay spiritually active?

larly gathering together? Our meetings, assemblies, and conventions help us to have courage to speak with boldness and to deal with opposition or apathy in our territories. (Acts 4:23, 31) We are strengthened and made firm in the faith by the Scriptural discussions. (Acts 15:32; Rom. 1:11, 12) The teaching and interchange of encouragement that we receive at our gatherings for worship help us to experience real happiness and give us "quietness from days of calamity." (Ps. 94:12, 13) The Teaching Committee of the Governing Body oversees the preparation of all spiritual programs for the instruction of Jehovah's people earth wide. How thankful we can be for the provisions that are made for us to enjoy wholesome teaching at our meetings every week of the year!

7 There is something even more important, however, than the personal benefits we receive from our meetings. The primary purpose of our gathering together is to worship Jehovah. (*Read Psalm 95:6.*) What a privilege we have to praise our wonderful God! (Col. 3:16) Jehovah deserves our regular worship through our attendance and participation at theocratic gatherings. (Rev. 4:11) It is no wonder, then, that we are exhorted 'not to forsake the gathering of ourselves together, as some have the custom'!—Heb. 10:25.

8 Do we see our Christian meetings as a provision to help us endure until Jehovah acts against this wicked system of things? If so, the meetings will be among "the more important things" that we make room for in our busy lives. (Phil. 1:10) It would have to be something extremely significant to cause us to miss an

7, 8. (a) What is the primary purpose of our congregation meetings? (b) How do the meetings help you spiritually?



THE EARTHLY PART OF JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION INCLUDES:

1. The Governing Body
2. Branch Committees
3. Traveling overseers
4. Bodies of elders
5. Congregations
6. Individual publishers

opportunity to be united with our brothers in worship of Jehovah.

SEARCH FOR THE HONESTHEARTED

⁹ Having a full share in the preaching work also helps us to keep in step with Jehovah's organization. Jesus set this work in motion when he was here on earth. (Matt. 28:19, 20) Since then, the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work has been a main focus of Jehovah's entire organization. Many modern-day experiences give evidence that the angels are supporting our work and guiding us to those "rightly disposed for everlasting life." (Acts 13:48; Rev. 14:

9. How do we know that the preaching work is important?

6, 7) The earthly part of Jehovah's organization is in place today and organized to support this all-important work. Is the ministry also the focus of our life?

¹⁰ Being zealous in the ministry helps us to maintain our enthusiasm for the truth. Consider the comments of Mitchell, a longtime elder and regular pioneer. He states: "I love telling people about the truth. I think about a new article in *The Watchtower* or *Awake!* and just marvel at the wisdom, insight, and perfect balance in each issue. I want to get out in the ministry to see how people will react, how I can spark their interest.

10. (a) Illustrate how we might maintain our enthusiasm for the truth. (b) How has the ministry helped you not to tire out?

My ministry keeps me stable. I force everything else to take place either before or after the time slot set aside for the ministry." Likewise, our staying busy in our sacred service can help us to continue steadfast in these last days.—*Read 1 Corinthians 15:58.*

PARTAKE OF SPIRITUAL PROVISIONS

11 Jehovah has provided a bounteous supply of written spiritual food to give us strength. No doubt, you can think of a time when after reading a publication, you thought: 'That is exactly what I needed! It is as if Jehovah had that written just for me!' That is not a coincidence. Through these provisions, Jehovah does instruct and guide us. He has said: "I shall make you have insight and instruct you in the way you should go." (Ps. 32:8) Do we strive to take in all the spiritual food we receive and meditate on it? Doing so will help us to continue to bear fruit and not wither spiritually in these difficult last days.—*Read Psalm 1:1-3; 35:28; 119:97.*

12 It is good for us to consider the work that is involved in making sure that we receive this regular flow of healthy spiritual provisions. The Writing Committee of the Governing Body oversees the process of researching, writing, proofreading, illustrating, and translating our printed publications as well as material posted on our Web site. Printing branches ship literature to congregations near and far. Why is all this work done? So that Jehovah's people are well-fed spiritually. (Isa. 65:13) May we be diligent in partaking of all the spiritual food

11. Why should we make full use of the spiritual food we receive from Jehovah?

12. What can help us not to take our spiritual provisions for granted?

we receive through Jehovah's organization.—Ps. 119:27.

SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

13 In the vision given to the apostle John, Jesus is seen riding on a white horse to conquer those rebelling against Jehovah. (Rev. 19:11-15) How faith-strengthening it is to know that right behind Jesus are the faithful angels and with him are the anointed conquerors from the earth, who have already received their heavenly reward! (Rev. 2:26, 27) What a superlative example that is of supporting Jehovah's arrangements!

14 In like manner, the great crowd fully supports the work of Christ's anointed brothers who are still on earth and who are taking the lead in the organization today. (*Read Zechariah 8:23.*) How can we show our individual support for Jehovah's arrangements? One way is by being in subjection to those taking the lead. (Heb. 13:7, 17) This starts right in our own congregation. Do our comments about the elders build respect for them and their office of oversight? Do we encourage our children to respect these faithful men and to look to them for Scriptural advice? Additionally, do we discuss as a family how we can use our finances to support the worldwide work through our donations? (Prov. 3:9; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:12) Do we view as important the privilege of sharing in the upkeep of the Kingdom Hall? Jehovah's spirit flows freely where there is such respect and unity. Through that spirit, we receive continuous help not to tire out in these last days.—Isa. 40:29-31.

13, 14. Who are supporting Jehovah's arrangements in the heavens, and how can we show similar support on earth?

LIVE IN HARMONY WITH OUR MESSAGE

15 Finally, to endure and to stay in step with Jehovah's organization, we must keep our personal lives consistent with the message that we bear by "making sure of what is acceptable to the Lord." (Eph. 5:10, 11) Because of our imperfect flesh and the efforts of Satan and this wicked world, we are constantly battling negative influences in our lives. Some of you dear brothers and sisters have a hard fight every day to maintain your relationship with Jehovah. That endears you greatly to him. Do not give up! Living our lives in harmony with Jehovah's purpose will give us great satisfaction and ensure that our worship is not futile.—1 Cor. 9:24-27.

16 What should we do, however, if we commit a serious sin? Get help as soon as possible. Keeping the matter hidden will only make matters worse. Remember, David said that when he kept silent about his sins, 'his bones wore out through his groaning all day long.' (Ps. 32:3) Yes, hiding secret sins will just cause us to tire out emotionally and spiritually, but "he that is confessing and leaving them will be shown mercy."—Prov. 28:13.

17 Consider the example of Anne.* When Anne was in her late teens, she served as a regular pioneer. However, she began to live a double life. This affected her greatly. She states: "What was left of my conscience felt guilty. I was unhappy and depressed all the time." What did she do? She states that one day at the meeting, James 5:14, 15 was



Diligently help others to appreciate that they too can be part of Jehovah's vast organization

discussed. Anne realized that she needed help and went to the elders for assistance. Looking back, she says: "Those scriptures are a prescription written by Jehovah for spiritual healing. The medicine is not easy to swallow, but it does heal. I heeded the advice found in those scriptures, and it worked." Some years have passed, and with renewed strength Anne is again zealously serving Jehovah with a good conscience.

18 What a privilege it is to live in these last days and to be part of Jehovah's incredible organization! Let us be determined never to take what we have for granted. Instead, let us work together as a family to be regular in meeting for worship with our local congregation, to search diligently for honesthearted ones in our territory, and to cherish the regular provisions of spiritual food we receive. Let us also support those taking the lead and live our lives in harmony with the message we bear. If we do so, not only will we find ourselves in step with Jehovah's organization but we will never tire out in doing what is fine!

* Name has been changed.

15. Why must we constantly battle to live in harmony with Jehovah's lofty purpose?

16, 17. (a) What should we do if we commit a serious sin? (b) How can we benefit from the example of Anne?

18. What should be our determination?

Was Jerusalem's temple ever rebuilt after 70 C.E.?

JESUS stated that not a stone of Jehovah's temple would be left standing upon a stone—a prophecy that was fulfilled when the Roman army under Titus destroyed Jerusalem in 70 C.E. (Matt. 24:2) Later, Emperor Julian planned to rebuild the temple.

Julian has been called the last pagan emperor of Rome. This nephew of Constantine the Great received a so-called Christian education. Yet, after being proclaimed emperor in 361 C.E., he openly rejected that education and the corrupt form of Christianity of his day in favor of paganism. History books refer to him as "the Apostate."

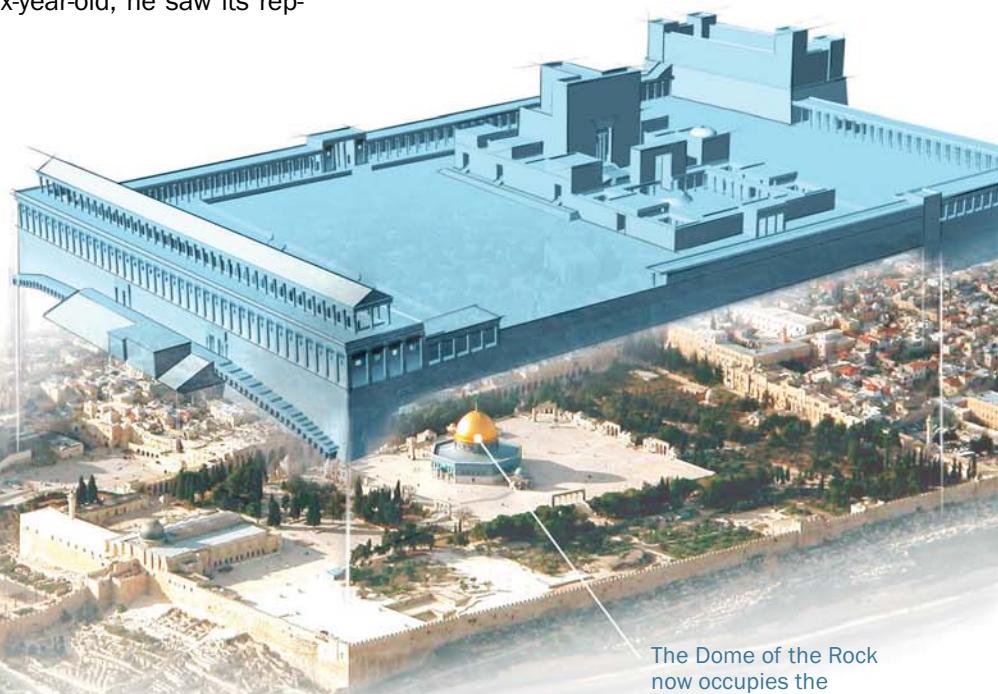
Julian loathed Christianity. One reason may well have been that as a six-year-old, he saw its rep-

resentatives murder his father and kinsmen. Julian, according to church historians, encouraged the Jews to rebuild their temple, in the belief that this would prove that Jesus was a false prophet.*

That Julian planned to rebuild the temple is beyond doubt. Historians debate whether he actually began the rebuilding work and if he did, what caused the work to be abandoned. One thing, however, is certain. Julian was killed less than two years after coming to power, and his project died with him.

* Jesus did not say that the temple would never be rebuilt but that it would be destroyed, which it was in 70 C.E.

The temple as it may have appeared in Jesus' day, overlaid on today's site



The Dome of the Rock now occupies the temple mount

Photo: Todd Bolen/BiblePlaces.com

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