

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

AUGUST 15, 2008

STUDY EDITION

STUDY ARTICLES FOR THE WEEKS OF:

September 29—October 5

Jehovah Will Not Leave His Loyal Ones

PAGE 3 SONGS TO BE USED: 114, 223

October 6-12

Maintain Loyalty With a Unified Heart

PAGE 7 SONGS TO BE USED: 38, 8

October 13-19

Honor Jehovah by Displaying Dignity

PAGE 12 SONGS TO BE USED: 48, 136

October 20-26

Jehovah Tenderly Cares for His Elderly Servants

PAGE 17 SONGS TO BE USED: 58, 216

October 27—November 2

Are You Speaking the "Pure Language" Fluently?

PAGE 21 SONGS TO BE USED: 78, 169



THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE, *The Watchtower*, is to honor Jehovah God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe. Just as watchtowers in ancient times enabled a person to observe developments from afar, so this magazine shows us the significance of world events in the light of Bible prophecies. It comforts people with the good news that God's Kingdom, which is a real government in heaven, will soon bring an end to all wickedness and transform the earth into a paradise. It promotes faith in Jesus Christ, who died so that we might gain everlasting life and who is now ruling as King of God's Kingdom. This magazine has been published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879 and is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

Publication of *The Watchtower* is part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*.

PURPOSE OF STUDY ARTICLES

Study Articles 1, 2 PAGES 3-11

Examining the division of Israel into northern and southern kingdoms, these articles show how Jehovah does not forsake his loyal ones. Emphasis is placed on the need for us to cultivate heartfelt loyalty now so that we will not succumb to the temptations of materialism or presumptuousness.

Study Article 3 PAGES 12-16

This article shows the effects that appreciation for God's dignity should have on us. It examines what we can learn about dignity from the way Jesus treated others. Learn, too, how we can display dignity.

Study Article 4 PAGES 17-21

Learn to view elderly Christians as Jehovah does. Note how the Bible helps us to respect their knowledge and experience, take their feelings into account, and assist them to remain spiritually active.

Study Article 5 PAGES 21-25

Through his prophet Zephaniah, Jehovah said: "I shall give to peoples the change to a pure language." (Zeph. 3:9) Learn what the "pure language" is. See what steps you can take to master it. And find out how you can use this unique language to praise Jehovah.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Jehovah's Word Is Alive—Highlights From the Letters to the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, and the Colossians

PAGE 26

Do You Remember?

PAGE 29

Missionaries Are Compared to Locusts

PAGE 30

JEHOVAH WILL NOT LEAVE HIS LOYAL ONES

"[Jehovah] will not leave his loyal ones. To time indefinite they will certainly be guarded."—PS. 37:28.

IT IS the tenth century B.C.E. and a time of decision. Civil war has narrowly been avoided by granting Israel's restless northern tribes a measure of independence. Their newly appointed king, Jeroboam, quickly moves to consolidate his power by establishing a new State religion. He demands complete allegiance from his subjects. What will faithful servants of Jehovah do? Will they remain loyal to the God they worship? Thousands do, and Jehovah watches over them as they maintain their integrity.—1 Ki. 12:1-33; 2 Chron. 11:13, 14.

² The loyalty of God's servants is being tested in our day too. "Keep your senses, be watchful," warns the Bible. "Your adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone." Can we successfully "take [our] stand against him, solid in the faith"? (1 Pet. 5:8, 9) Let us examine certain events surrounding King Jeroboam's inauguration in 997 B.C.E. and see what we can learn from them. During those critical times, Jehovah's faithful servants were oppressed. They were also exposed to apostate influences while they carried out

- 1, 2. (a) What developments in the tenth century B.C.E. tested the loyalty of God's servants?
(b) In what three situations did Jehovah guard his loyal ones?

The blessings that Solomon and his subjects enjoyed were conditional

challenging assignments. In each of these situations, Jehovah did not leave his loyal ones then, and he will not do so today.—Ps. 37:28.

When Under Oppression

³ Let us first examine the circumstances under which Jeroboam came to be king. Proverbs 29:2 states: "When anyone wicked bears rule, the people sigh." Under the reign of King David of ancient Israel, people did not sigh. David was not perfect, but he was loyal to God and trusted in him. David's rulership was not oppressive. Jehovah made a covenant with David, saying: "Your house and your kingdom will certainly be steadfast to time indefinite before you; your very throne will become one firmly established to time indefinite."—2 Sam. 7:16.

⁴ The rulership of David's son Solomon was initially so peaceful and prosperous that it could rightly foreshadow the future Millennial Reign of Christ Jesus. (Ps. 72:1, 17) Not one of the 12 tribes of Israel back then had reason to revolt. However, the blessings that Solomon and his subjects enjoyed were conditional. Jehovah had told Solomon: "If you will walk in my statutes and perform my judicial decisions and actually keep all my commandments by walking in them, I also shall certainly carry out my word with you that I spoke to David your father; and I shall

3. Why was the reign of King David not oppressive?
4. Upon what did the blessings experienced during Solomon's rulership depend?

indeed reside in the middle of the sons of Israel, and I shall not leave my people Israel.”—1 Ki. 6:11-13.

⁵ In his old age, Solomon became unfaithful to Jehovah and began to engage in false worship. (1 Ki. 11:4-6) Gradually, Solomon ceased to obey Jehovah’s laws and became increasingly oppressive. This happened to such an extent that after his death, people complained about him to his son and successor, Rehoboam, and requested relief. (1 Ki. 12:4) How did Jehovah respond when Solomon became unfaithful?

⁶ The Bible tells us: “Jehovah came to be incensed at Solomon, because his heart had inclined away from . . . the God of Israel, the one appearing to him twice.” Jehovah told Solomon: “For the reason that . . . you have not kept my covenant and my statutes that I laid in command upon you, I shall without fail rip the kingdom away from off you, and I shall certainly give it to your servant.”—1 Ki. 11:9-11.

⁷ Jehovah then sent the prophet Ahijah to anoint a deliverer. That deliverer was Jeroboam, a capable man who worked in Solomon’s government. Although Jehovah remained loyal to the Kingdom covenant made with David, He approved a governmental division among the 12 tribes. Ten tribes would be given to Jeroboam; two would remain with the family line of David, now represented by King Rehoboam. (1 Ki. 11:29-37; 12:16, 17, 21) Jehovah told Jeroboam: “It must occur that, if you obey all that I shall command you, and you do walk in my ways and actually do what is right in my eyes by keeping my statutes and my commandments, just as David my servant did, I will also prove to be with you, and I will build you a lasting house,

5, 6. What resulted from Solomon’s disloyalty to God?

7. Although Solomon was rejected, how did Jehovah care for His loyal ones?

just as I have built for David, and I will give you Israel.” (1 Ki. 11:38) Jehovah acted in behalf of his people and provided a way of bringing them relief from oppression.

⁸ Oppression and injustices abound today. “Man has dominated man to his injury,” states Ecclesiastes 8:9. Greedy commerce and corrupt rulership may result in harsh economic conditions. Leaders in government, business, and religion often set a poor moral example. Like righteous Lot, therefore, God’s loyal ones today are “greatly distressed by the indulgence of the law-defying people in loose conduct.” (2 Pet. 2:7) Moreover, as we quietly strive to live by godly standards, we often become the target of persecution by arrogant rulers.—2 Tim. 3:1-5, 12.

⁹ We can be certain, though, of this fundamental truth: Jehovah will not leave his loyal ones! Just think of the steps he has already taken to replace the world’s corrupt rulers. God’s Messianic Kingdom in the hands of Christ Jesus has already been established. Jesus Christ has been ruling in heaven for close to a hundred years. Soon he will bring complete relief to those fearing God’s name. (*Read Revelation 11:15-18.*) Jesus has already proved himself loyal to God to the point of death. He will never disappoint his subjects, as Solomon did.—Heb. 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:6.

¹⁰ God’s Kingdom is a real government that will end all oppression. Our allegiance belongs to Jehovah God and his arrangement. With full confidence in the Kingdom, we repudiate the world’s ungodliness and zealously pursue fine works. (Titus 2:12-14) We strive to remain without spot from this world. (2 Pet. 3:14) Whatever trials we may

8. What trials oppress God’s people today?

9. (a) What has Jehovah already done to deliver his people? (b) Why can we be sure that Jesus will always be loyal to God?

10. (a) How can we show that we appreciate God’s Kingdom? (b) When undergoing trials, of what can we be confident?

face at present, we can be confident that Jehovah will protect us from spiritual harm. (*Read Psalm 97:10.*) Moreover, Psalm 116:15 assures us: "Precious in the eyes of Jehovah is the death of his loyal ones." Jehovah's servants are so precious to him that he will not allow them to perish as a group.

While Exposed to Apostate Influences

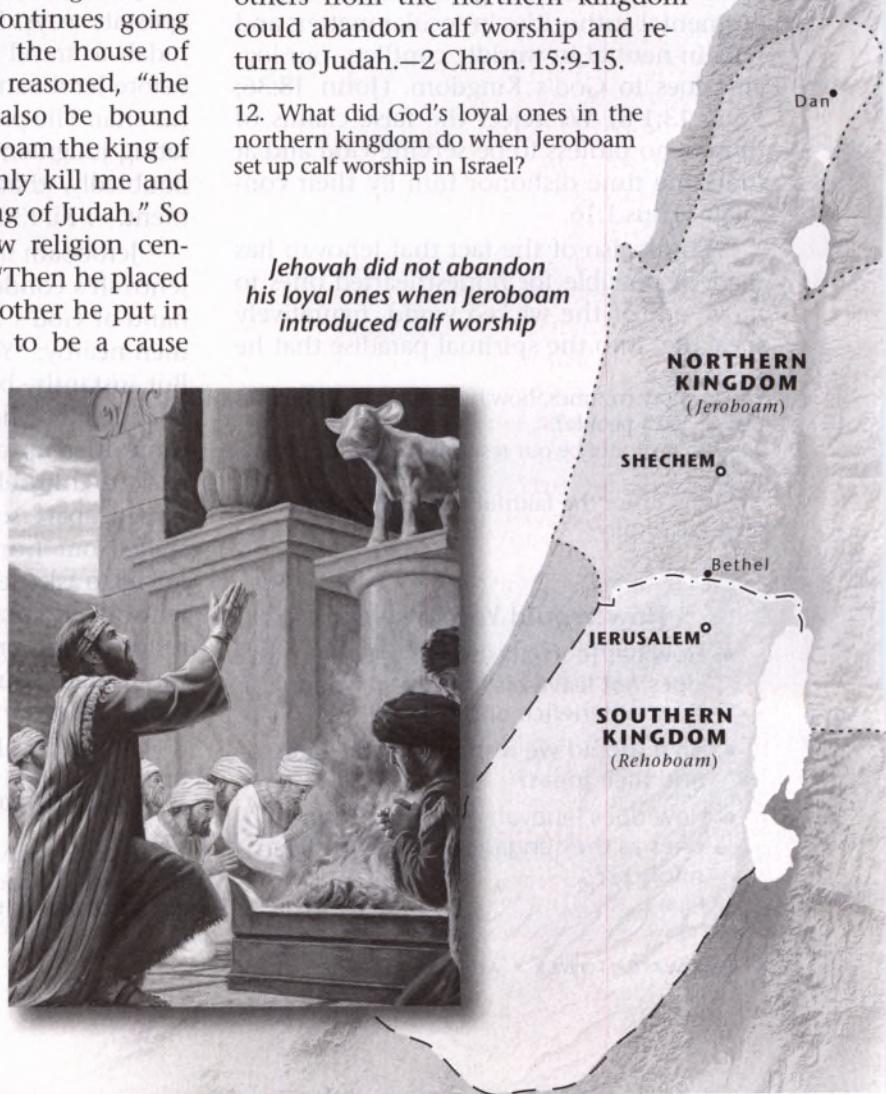
¹¹ King Jeroboam's rule could have brought some relief to God's people. Instead, his actions further tested their loyalty to God. Not content with the honor and privilege already given him, Jeroboam began to seek ways to strengthen his position. "If this people continues going up to render sacrifices in the house of Jehovah in Jerusalem," he reasoned, "the heart of this people will also be bound to return to their lord, Rehoboam the king of Judah; and they will certainly kill me and return to Rehoboam the king of Judah." So Jeroboam established a new religion centered on two golden calves. "Then he placed the one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan. And this thing came to be a cause for sin, and the people began to go before the one as far as Dan. And he began to make a house of high places and to make priests from the people in general, who did not happen to be of the sons of Levi." Jeroboam even invented his own day of "festival for the sons of Israel," and he proceeded "to make offerings upon the altar to make sacrificial smoke." —1 Ki. 12:26-33.

11. How did Jeroboam become disloyal?

¹² What would God's loyal ones in the northern kingdom do now? Like their faithful forefathers, the Levites living in cities given to them in the territory of the northern kingdom lost no time in reacting. (Ex. 32:26-28; Num. 35:6-8; Deut. 33:8, 9) Leaving their inheritances behind, they moved their families south to Judah, where they could continue to worship Jehovah without interference. (2 Chron. 11:13, 14) Other Israelites who had been living temporarily in Judah chose to remain there permanently instead of moving back home. (2 Chron. 10:17) Jehovah saw to it that the way back to true worship was kept open so that in later generations others from the northern kingdom could abandon calf worship and return to Judah.—2 Chron. 15:9-15.

12. What did God's loyal ones in the northern kingdom do when Jeroboam set up calf worship in Israel?

Jehovah did not abandon his loyal ones when Jeroboam introduced calf worship



¹³ Apostates and their influences threaten God's people today. Some rulers have tried to set up their own form of State religion, pressuring their subjects to comply. Christendom's clergy and other presumptuous ones have tried to claim the spiritual priesthood for themselves. However, only among true Christians do we find genuine anointed ones, making up "a royal priesthood."—1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 14:1-5.

¹⁴ Like the faithful Levites back in the tenth century B.C.E., God's loyal ones today are not deceived by apostate ideas. Anointed ones and their Christian associates are quick to avoid and reject apostate ideas. (*Read Romans 16:17*) While we gladly submit to governmental authorities in secular matters and remain neutral in worldly conflicts, our loyalty goes to God's Kingdom. (John 18:36; Rom. 13:1-8) We reject the false claims of those who profess to be serving God and at the same time dishonor him by their conduct.—Titus 1:16.

¹⁵ Think also of the fact that Jehovah has made it possible for honesthearted ones to move out of the wicked world, figuratively speaking, into the spiritual paradise that he

13. In modern times, how have apostate influences tested God's people?
14. What should be our response to apostate thinking?
15. Why does "the faithful and discreet slave" deserve our loyalty?

How Would You Answer?

- How has Jehovah shown that he does not leave his loyal ones when they experience oppression?
- How should we respond to apostates and their ideas?
- How does Jehovah guard his loyal ones as they engage in the Christian ministry?

has created. (2 Cor. 12:1-4) With hearts full of gratitude, we stay close to "the faithful and discreet slave whom his master appointed over his domestics, to give them their food at the proper time." Christ has appointed this slave "over all his belongings." (Matt. 24:45-47) Therefore, even if we as individuals do not fully understand a certain position taken by the slave class, that is no reason for us to reject it or return to Satan's world. Instead, loyalty will move us to act humbly and wait on Jehovah to clarify matters.

While Carrying Out God-Given Assignments

¹⁶ Jehovah condemned Jeroboam for his apostate ways. He assigned a prophet from Judah to travel north to Bethel and appear before Jeroboam while he was officiating at his altar. The prophet was to deliver a devastating judgment message to Jeroboam. Undoubtedly, that was a challenging assignment.—1 Ki. 13:1-3.

¹⁷ Jeroboam flew into a rage upon hearing Jehovah's condemnation. He thrust out his hand at God's representative, screaming to men nearby: "You men, grab hold of him!" But instantly, before anyone could act, the "hand that he had thrust out against him became dried up, and he was not able to draw it back to himself. And the altar itself was ripped apart so that the fatty ashes were spilled out from the altar." Jeroboam was forced to ask the prophet to soften the face of Jehovah and pray that the dried-up hand be restored. The prophet did so, and the hand was healed. Thus Jehovah protected his messenger from harm.—1 Ki. 13:4-6.

¹⁸ As we loyally engage in the Kingdom-

16. What assignment did a prophet from Judah receive?
17. How did Jehovah protect his messenger?
18. How does Jehovah guard us as we fearlessly render sacred service to him?

preaching and disciple-making work, we at times encounter an unfriendly, or even a hostile, response. (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20) But we must never allow the fear of rejection to dampen our zeal for the ministry. Like the unnamed prophet in Jeroboam's day, we have "the privilege of fearlessly rendering sacred service to [Jehovah] with loyalty."* (Luke 1:74, 75) Although we do not expect miraculous intervention today, Jehovah is still guarding and backing us as his Witnesses by means of his holy spirit and the angels. (*Read John 14:15-17; Revelation 14:6.*) God will never abandon those who fearlessly continue to speak his word.—Phil. 1:14, 28.

* Whether the prophet continues to obey Jehovah or not and what happens to him will be discussed in the following article.

Jehovah Will Guard His Loyal Ones

¹⁹ Jehovah is our loyal God. (Rev. 15:4; 16:5) He is "loyal in all his works." (Ps. 145:17) And the Bible assures us: "He will guard the very way of his loyal ones." (Prov. 2:8) When faced with trials or apostate ideas or when carrying out a challenging assignment, God's loyal ones can be confident of Jehovah's guidance and support.

²⁰ What we individually need to reflect on now is this: What will help me to maintain my loyalty to Jehovah regardless of the trials or temptations that may come my way? In other words, how can I strengthen my loyalty to God?

19, 20. (a) Why can we be sure that Jehovah will never leave us? (b) What questions will be discussed in the following article?

MAINTAIN LOYALTY WITH A UNIFIED HEART

"I shall walk in your truth. Unify my heart to fear your name."—PS. 86:11.

WHY do some Christians who remain faithful for years despite imprisonment or persecution later succumb to materialism? The answer has to do with our figurative heart—what we really are inside. The 86th Psalm connects loyalty to a unified heart; that is, a complete heart, one that is not divided. "O do guard my soul, for I am loyal," prayed the psalmist David. "Save your servant—you are my God—that is trusting in you." David also prayed: "Instruct me, O Je-

1, 2. (a) According to Psalm 86:2, 11, what will help us to remain faithful to Jehovah in the face of tests or temptations? (b) When should heartfelt loyalty be cultivated?

hovah, about your way. I shall walk in your truth. Unify my heart to fear your name."—Ps. 86:2, 11.

² Unless we trust in Jehovah with all our heart, other concerns and affections will undermine our loyalty to the true God. Selfish desires are like land mines hidden under the road we walk on. Even though we may have remained faithful to Jehovah under trying circumstances, we can fall victim to satanic traps or snares. How vital it is that we cultivate heartfelt loyalty to Jehovah now, before tests or temptations come upon us! "More than all else that is to be guarded," says the Bible, "safeguard your heart." (Prov. 4:23)

We can learn valuable lessons in this regard from the experience of a prophet from Judah who was sent by Jehovah to King Jeroboam of Israel.

"Let Me Give You a Gift"

³ Picture the scene. The man of God has just delivered a stinging message to King Jeroboam, who had set up calf worship in the northern ten-tribe kingdom of Israel. The king becomes furious. He orders his men to seize the messenger. But Jehovah is with his servant. Immediately, the hand that the king has thrust out in anger withers miraculously, and the altar used for false worship is ripped apart. Suddenly, Jeroboam's demeanor changes. He begs the man of God: "Soften, please, the face of Jehovah your God and pray in my behalf that my hand may be restored to me." The prophet prays, and the king's hand is healed.—1 Ki. 13:1-6.

⁴ Then Jeroboam says to the man of the true God: "Do come with me to the house and take sustenance, and let me give you a gift." (1 Ki. 13:7) What is the prophet to do now? Should he accept the king's hospitality after delivering a message of condemnation to him? (Ps. 119:113) Or should he reject the king's invitation, even though the king appears to be remorseful? Jeroboam certainly has the means to lavish expensive gifts on his friends. If God's prophet has harbored any secret desire for material things, the king's offer is likely to be a huge temptation. However, Jehovah has commanded the prophet: "You must not eat bread or drink water, and you must not return by the way that you went." So the prophet unequivocally replies: "If you gave me half of your house I would not come with you and eat bread or drink wa-

3. How did Jeroboam react to the judgment message delivered by God's prophet?
4. (a) Why was the king's offer really a test of the prophet's loyalty? (b) What was the prophet's reply?

ter in this place." And the prophet leaves Bethel by another way. (1 Ki. 13:8-10) What lesson does the prophet's decision teach us about heartfelt loyalty?—Rom. 15:4.

"Be Content"

⁵ Materialism may not seem to be an issue of loyalty, but it is. Do we trust in Jehovah's promise to provide what we really need? (Matt. 6:33; Heb. 13:5) Rather than striving to obtain at any cost some of the "better" things in life that are presently beyond our reach, can we do without them? (*Read Philippians 4:11-13.*) Are we tempted to forgo theocratic privileges in order to get what we want now? Does loyal service to Jehovah have first place in our life? Our answers will largely depend on whether we are wholehearted in our service to God or not. "It is a means of great gain," wrote the apostle Paul, "this godly devotion along with self-sufficiency. For we have brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out. So, having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things."—1 Tim. 6:6-8.

⁶ For example, our employer may offer us a promotion with better pay and other benefits. Or perhaps we realize that we can obtain greater financial rewards if we move to another country or region to find employment. At first, such opportunities might seem to be a blessing from Jehovah. But before we act on them, should we not examine our motives? Our primary concern should be, "How will my decision affect my relationship with Jehovah?"

⁷ Satan's system relentlessly promotes materialism. (*Read 1 John 2:15, 16.*) The Devil's objective is to corrupt our hearts. Therefore,

5. How is materialism an issue of loyalty?
6. What "gifts" might be offered to us, and what will help us to decide whether to accept them?
7. Why is it important to root out materialistic desires?



we need to be vigilant to identify and root out materialistic desires in our heart. (Rev. 3: 15-17) Jesus had no difficulty rejecting Satan's offer of all the kingdoms of the world. (Matt. 4:8-10) He warned: "Keep your eyes open and guard against every sort of covetousness, because even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses." (Luke 12:15) Loyalty will help us to rely on Jehovah instead of ourselves.

An Old Prophet "Deceived Him"

⁸ Things would have gone well with God's prophet if he had continued on his journey back home. Almost immediately, however, he faced another test. "A certain old prophet was dwelling in Bethel," states the Bible, "and his sons now came in and related to him" all that had taken place earlier that day. Upon hearing the report, the old man asks them to saddle an ass for him so that he might catch up with God's prophet. Not long thereafter, he finds the prophet resting under a big tree and says: "Go with me to the house and eat bread." When the man of the true God declines the invitation, the old man replies: "I too am a prophet like you, and an an-

8. How was the loyalty of God's prophet tested?

gel himself spoke to me by the word of Jehovah, saying, 'Have him come back with you to your house that he may eat bread and drink water.'" But the Scriptures say: "He deceived him."—1 Ki. 13:11-18.

⁹ Whatever might have been the old prophet's motive, he lied. Perhaps the old man had at one time been a faithful prophet of Jehovah. At this point, however, he was acting deceptively. The Scriptures strongly denounce such conduct. (*Read Proverbs 3: 32.*) Deceitful ones not only hurt themselves spiritually but often harm others.

"He Went Back With" the Old Man

¹⁰ The prophet from Judah should have been able to see through the ruse of the old prophet. He could have asked himself, 'Why would Jehovah send an angel to someone else with new instructions for me?' The prophet could have asked Jehovah to clarify the direction, but the Scriptures do not indicate that he did so. Instead, "he went back with [the old man] that he might eat bread in his house and drink water." Jehovah was not

9. What do the Scriptures say about deceptive people, and whom do they hurt?
10. How did God's prophet respond to the old man's invitation, and what was the outcome?

pleased. When the deceived prophet finally got on his way back to Judah, a lion found him and killed him. What a tragic end to his prophetic career!—1 Ki. 13:19-25.*

¹¹ On the other hand, the prophet Ahijah, who was sent to anoint Jeroboam as king, remained faithful well into his old age. When Ahijah was old and blind, Jeroboam sent his wife to inquire of Ahijah about the welfare of their sick son. Ahijah boldly foretold that Jeroboam's son would die. (1 Ki. 14:1-18) Among the many blessings that Ahijah received was the privilege of contributing to God's inspired Word. How? His writings were later used by Ezra the priest as source material.—2 Chron. 9:29.

¹² The Bible does not say why the younger

* The Bible does not say whether Jehovah brought about the death of the old prophet.

11. What good example did Ahijah set?

12-14. (a) What lesson can we learn from the incident involving the younger prophet? (b) Illustrate the need to give careful and prayerful consideration to Bible-based counsel given by the elders.



prophet did not consult Jehovah before turning aside and eating and drinking with the older man. Could it be that the older man told him what he wanted to hear? What lesson is there for us? We need to be absolutely convinced of the rightfulness of Jehovah's requirements. And we have to be determined to follow them, come what may.

¹³ Some hear what they want to hear when it comes to counsel. For example, a publisher may be offered a job that could cut into the time he can spend with his family and on theocratic activities. He may ask an elder for advice. The elder may preface his remarks by acknowledging that he is not in a position to tell the brother how to support his family. Then the elder may review with the brother the spiritual dangers involved in accepting the employment he has been offered. Will the brother remember only the elder's initial comments, or will he give serious consideration to the follow-up? The brother obviously needs to determine what is best for him in a spiritual way.

¹⁴ Consider another possible situation. A sister may ask an elder if she should separate from her unbelieving husband. The elder will undoubtedly explain that the decision

Will you give prayerful consideration to Bible-based counsel?



whether to separate or not is hers to make. He may then review the Bible's counsel on the subject. (1 Cor. 7:10-16) Will the sister give due consideration to what the elder says? Or has she already made up her mind to leave her husband? In making her decision, it will be wise for her to give prayerful consideration to Bible-based counsel.

Be Modest

¹⁵ What else can we learn from the error of the prophet from Judah? Proverbs 3:5 states: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding." Rather than continue to rely on Jehovah as he had in the past, on this occasion the prophet from Judah trusted his own judgment. His mistake cost him his life and his good name with God. How forcefully his experience underscores the value of modestly and loyally serving Jehovah!

¹⁶ The selfish inclination of our heart is prone to misguide us. "The heart is more treacherous than anything else and is desperate." (Jer. 17:9) To remain loyal to Jehovah, we must continue to work hard to strip off the old personality with its tendency toward presumptuousness and self-reliance. And we must put on the new personality, "which was created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty."—*Read Ephesians 4:22-24.*

¹⁷ "Wisdom is with the modest ones," states Proverbs 11:2. Modestly relying on Jehovah helps us to avoid making costly mistakes. For example, discouragement can easily distort our judgment. (Prov. 24:10) We might grow weary of some aspect of sacred service and begin to feel that we have done enough over the years, thinking that perhaps it is time for others to carry the load. Or we

15. What do we learn from the error of God's prophet?

16, 17. What will help us remain loyal to Jehovah?

might wish to have a more "normal" life. However, 'exerting ourselves vigorously' and "always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord" will safeguard our heart.—Luke 13:24; 1 Cor. 15:58.

¹⁸ At times, we may need to make difficult decisions, and the right course to take may not be readily evident. Would we then be tempted to take matters into our own hands? Whenever we find ourselves in such situations, we would be wise to ask Jehovah to help us. "If any one of you is lacking in wisdom," says James 1:5, "let him keep on asking God, for he gives generously to all." Our heavenly Father will give us the holy spirit we need so that we can make good decisions. —*Read Luke 11:9, 13.*

Be Determined to Remain Loyal

¹⁹ The turbulent years following Solomon's deviation from true worship severely tested the loyalty of God's servants. It is true that many compromised in one way or another. Nevertheless, some did remain loyal to Jehovah.

²⁰ Each day, we are confronted with choices and decisions that test our loyalty. We too can prove ourselves faithful. Let us always remain loyal to Jehovah as we unify our heart, fully confident that he will continue to bless his loyal ones.—2 Sam. 22:26.

18. What can we do if we do not know what decision to make?

19, 20. What should we be determined to do?

How Would You Answer?

- Why should we work to root out materialistic desires in our heart?
- What will help us to remain loyal to Jehovah?
- How can modesty help us to stay loyal to God?

HONOR JEHOVAH BY DISPLAYING DIGNITY

[Jehovah's] activity is dignity and splendor themselves."—PS. 111:3.

WHEN asked to define the word "dignified," ten-year-old Madison immediately replied, "Well-dressed." What that young girl may not have known is that the Bible speaks of God as being 'clothed with dignity.' (Ps. 104:1) For humans, displaying dignity may sometimes involve being well-dressed. For instance, the apostle Paul desired that Christian women "adorn themselves in well-arranged dress, with modesty and soundness of mind, not with styles of hair braiding and gold or pearls or very expensive garb." (1 Tim. 2:9) But dignified conduct that honors Jehovah's "dignity and splendor" goes further than that.—Ps. 111:3.

² In the Bible, the Hebrew word for "dignity" can also be translated "splendor," "majesty," "glory," and "honor." According to one

- 1, 2. (a) How would you define "dignity"? (b) What questions will be considered in this article?

*How did
Jehovah dignify
Abel?*

dictionary definition, "dignity" is "the quality or state of being worthy, honored, or esteemed." And no one is worthy of greater honor and esteem than Jehovah. As his dedicated servants, therefore, we should be dignified in speech and action. Why, though, can humans act with dignity? How are Jehovah's dignity and splendor made evident? How should we be affected by God's dignity? What can Jesus Christ teach us about displaying this quality? And how can we display godly dignity?

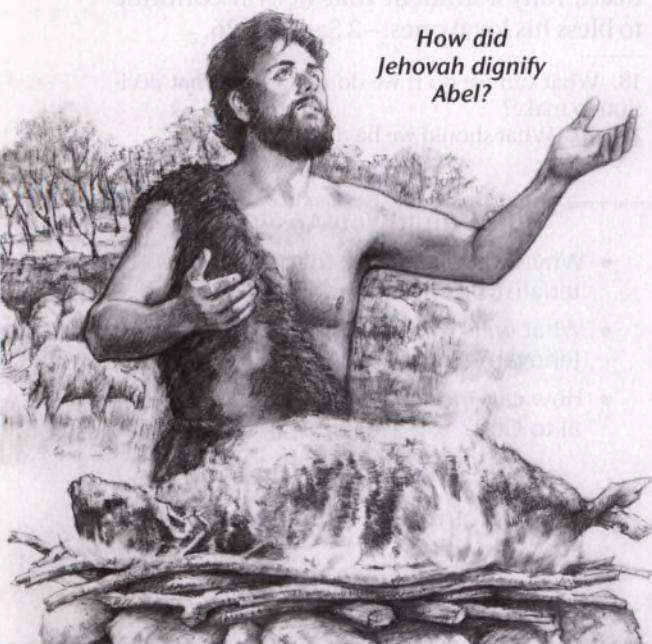
Why We Can Act With Dignity

³ Because they are made in God's image, all humans have the capacity to act with dignity. Jehovah dignified the first man by appointing him as caretaker of the earth. (Gen. 1:26, 27) Even after man's fall from perfection, Jehovah restated man's responsibility in connection with the earth. Thus, God still 'crowns' humans with dignity. (*Read Psalm 8:5-9.*)^{*} The dignity bestowed upon us requires a dignified response—that of praising Jehovah's majestic name with reverence and dignity.

⁴ Jehovah has especially conferred a measure of dignity upon those who render sacred service to him. God dignified Abel by accepting his sacrifice, rejecting the one offered by

* David's expressions in the 8th Psalm also prophetically point to the perfect man Jesus Christ.—Heb. 2:5-9.

- 3, 4. (a) How should we respond to the dignity bestowed upon us? (b) To whom does Psalm 8:5-9 point prophetically? (See footnote.) (c) Upon whom did Jehovah bestow dignity in the past?



his brother Cain. (Gen. 4:4, 5) Moses was instructed to ‘put some of his dignity’ upon Joshua, the man who was to succeed him as leader of the Israelites. (Num. 27:20) Concerning David’s son Solomon, the Bible says: “Jehovah continued to make Solomon surpassingly great before the eyes of all Israel and to put upon him such royal dignity as had not come to be upon any king before him over Israel.” (1 Chron. 29:25) God will confer exceptional dignity upon resurrected anointed Christians, who have faithfully declared “the glory of the splendor of his kingship.” (Ps. 145:11-13) In thus extolling Jehovah, increasing throngs of Jesus’ “other sheep” also have a blessed and dignified role.—John 10:16.

Jehovah’s Dignity and Splendor Made Evident

⁵ In a song that contrasts God’s greatness with man’s littleness, the psalmist David sang: “O Jehovah our Lord, how majestic your name is in all the earth, you whose dignity is recounted above the heavens!” (Ps. 8:1) From before the creation of “the heavens and the earth” to beyond the grand fulfillment of God’s purpose to make the earth a paradise and raise the human family to perfection—from eternity to eternity—Jehovah God is the most majestic and dignified Personage in the universe.—Gen. 1:1; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 21:1-5.

⁶ How the God-fearing psalmist must have been touched when he beheld the quiet grandeur of the starry night sky, studded with glistening “jewels”! Filled with wonder at how God ‘has stretched out the heavens like a tent cloth,’ the psalmist represented Jehovah as clothed in dignity because of His magnificent creative skill. (*Read Psalm 104:*

5. How great is Jehovah’s dignity?

6. Why did the psalmist say that Jehovah is clothed in dignity?

1, 2.) The dignity and splendor of the invisible, almighty Creator are evident in his visible works.

⁷ For instance, consider the Milky Way galaxy. In this vast ocean of stars, planets, and solar systems, planet Earth appears as insignificant in size as one grain of sand on an endless beach. Why, this one galaxy alone contains over 100 billion stars! If you could count one star each second nonstop for 24 hours a day, it would take you over 3,000 years to reach 100 billion.

⁸ If the Milky Way galaxy alone contains 100 billion stars, what about the rest of the universe? Astronomers estimate that the Milky Way may be one of anywhere from 50 billion to as many as 125 billion galaxies. How many stars are there in the entire universe? The answer surely is mind-boggling. Yet, Jehovah “is counting the number of the stars; all of them he calls by their names.” (Ps. 147:4) Upon seeing Jehovah clothed in such dignity and splendor, are you not moved to extol his great name?

⁹ Let us now lower our eyes from the majestic heavens to something as common as bread. Not only is Jehovah “the Maker of heaven and earth” but he is also “the One giving bread to the hungry ones.” (Ps. 146:6, 7) God’s “dignity and splendor” are reflected in his great works, including his provision of plants from which bread is made. (*Read Psalm 111:1-5.*) Jesus taught his followers to pray: “Give us today our bread for this day.” (Matt. 6:11) Bread was a staple in the diet of many ancient peoples, including the Israelites. Though bread is considered a simple food, the chemical process that transforms a few basic ingredients into delicious bread is anything but simple.

7, 8. What evidence of Jehovah’s dignity and splendor do we see in the heavens?

9, 10. How does the provision of bread magnify our Creator’s wisdom?

*Jehovah's great works
are evident even in the
provision of bread*

¹⁰ When the Bible was being written, the Israelites used wheat or barley flour and water to make bread. Leaven, or yeast, was sometimes used in the bread-making process. These simple substances combine to form an astonishing number of chemical compounds that have active links to one another. The exact relationship between these compounds is not fully understood. Moreover, the way bread is digested in the body is another amazingly intricate process. No wonder the psalmist sang: "How many your works are, O Jehovah! All of them in wisdom you have made"! (Ps. 104:24) Are you similarly moved to laud Jehovah?

How Are You Affected by God's Dignity and Splendor?

¹¹ We do not have to be astronomers to marvel at the night sky nor chemists to enjoy bread. To appreciate the splendor of our Creator, however, we need to take time to reflect on the works of his hands. What can such meditation do for us? The effect is the same as that of meditating on Jehovah's works of another sort.

¹² Concerning the great acts that Jehovah performed in behalf of His people, David sang: "The glorious splendor of your dignity and the matters of your wonderful works I will make my concern." (Ps. 145:5) We show concern for these works by studying the Bi-



ble and taking time to meditate on what we read in it. What is the effect of this reflection? Our appreciation for God's dignity and splendor is increased. Surely, then, we are moved to join David in honoring Jehovah and saying: "As for your greatness, I will declare it." (Ps. 145:6) Meditating on God's wonderful works should strengthen our relationship with Jehovah and motivate us to tell others about him with enthusiasm and determination. Are you zealously declaring the good news and helping people to appreciate the dignity, splendor, and majesty of Jehovah God?

Jesus Perfectly Reflects God's Dignity

¹³ God's Son, Jesus Christ, zealously proclaimed the good news and honored his dignified and majestic heavenly Father. Jehovah endowed his only-begotten Son with special dignity by giving him 'rulership and kingdom.' (*Read Daniel 7:13, 14.*) Yet, Jesus is not haughty or aloof. Just the opposite—he is a compassionate Ruler who understands the

11, 12. Reflecting on God's creative works can have what effect on us?

13. (a) According to Daniel 7:13, 14, with what has Jehovah endowed his Son? (b) As King, how does Jesus treat his subjects?

limitations of his subjects and affords them a measure of dignity. Consider one example of how Jesus as King-Designate treated the people he met, especially the unwanted and the seemingly unlovable.

¹⁴ People afflicted with leprosy in ancient times often experienced a heartbreakingly slow death. Little by little, the victim's body parts became diseased. Curing a leper was considered to be as difficult as raising a person from the dead. (Num. 12:12; 2 Ki. 5:7, 14) Lepers were declared unclean and were abhorred and banished from society. When approaching people, they were to call out the warning: "Unclean, unclean!" (Lev. 13:43-46) A leper was like someone dead. According to rabbinical records, a leper was allowed to come within only about six feet of anyone. It was reported that when a leper was seen,

14. How were lepers viewed in ancient Israel? right

What did you learn about dignity from the way Jesus dealt with a certain leper?



even at a distance, a certain religious leader threw stones to keep him far away.

¹⁵ Noteworthy, however, is Jesus' reaction to a leper who came to him and pleaded to be cured. (*Read Mark 1:40-42.*) Instead of sending the leper away, Jesus dealt with the shunned man in a compassionate and dignified manner. What Jesus saw was a pitiful human with a need for relief. With heart stirred, Jesus turned his feelings of compassion into prompt action. He reached out, touched the leper, and healed him.

¹⁶ As Jesus' followers, how can we imitate the manner in which Jesus reflected the dignity of his Father? One way is by appreciating that all humans—regardless of status, health, or age—deserve due honor and respect. (1 Pet. 2:17) Especially do those in positions of oversight, such as husbands, parents, and Christian elders, need to dignify those in their care and help them to preserve their self-respect. Stressing that this is a requirement for all Christians, the Bible states: "In brotherly love have tender affection for one another. In showing honor to one another take the lead."—Rom. 12:10.

Displaying Dignity in Worship

¹⁷ Special attention should be given to displaying dignity when we approach Jehovah in worship. "Guard your feet whenever you go to the house of the true God," says Ecclesiastes 5:1. Both Moses and Joshua were commanded to remove their sandals when in a holy place. (Ex. 3:5; Josh. 5:15) They were to do this as a gesture of respect or reverence. Israelite priests were obliged to wear linen drawers "to cover the naked flesh." (Ex. 28:42, 43) This prevented indecent exposure

15. How did Jesus deal with a certain leper?
16. What lesson have you learned from Jesus' manner of dealing with others?
17. What can we learn from the Scriptures about displaying dignity when approaching Jehovah in worship?



Dignified worship involves honoring Jehovah

when they served at the altar. Every member of a priest's family was to uphold the godly standard of dignity.

¹⁸ Dignity in worship, then, involves honor and respect. To be worthy of honor and respect, we must act respectfully. The dignity we display must be more than a pretense or a mere robe of identification. It should go beyond what human eyes see to what God sees —our heart. (1 Sam. 16:7; Prov. 21:2) Dignity should become part of us and affect our behavior, our attitude, our relationship with others, even the way we view and feel about ourselves. Indeed, dignity should be evident at all times and in everything we say and do. When it comes to our conduct, demeanor, and dress and grooming, we take to heart the words of the apostle Paul: "In no way are we giving any cause for stumbling, that our ministry might not be found fault with; but in every way we recommend ourselves as God's ministers." (2 Cor. 6:3, 4) We "adorn the

18. How is dignity displayed in our worship of Jehovah?

teaching of our Savior, God, in all things."—Titus 2:10.

Keep On Displaying Godly Dignity

¹⁹ Dignity is displayed by anointed Christians, who are "ambassadors substituting for Christ." (2 Cor. 5:20) The "other sheep," who loyally support them, are dignified envoys for the Messianic Kingdom. An ambassador or an envoy speaks boldly and with dignity on behalf of his government. Therefore, we should speak with dignity and boldness in support of God's government, the Kingdom. (Eph. 6:19, 20) And when we bring to others "good news of something better," are we not according them dignity?—Isa. 52:7.

²⁰ We should be resolved to glorify God by conducting ourselves in accord with his dignity. (1 Pet. 2:12) Let us always show deep respect for him, for his worship, and for our fellow worshippers. And may Jehovah, who has clothed himself with dignity and splendor, be pleased with our dignified manner of rendering worship to him.

19, 20. (a) What is a fine way to dignify others? (b) With regard to dignity, what should be our resolve?

How Would You Answer?

- Appreciating the splendor of Jehovah's dignity should have what effect on us?
- What can we learn about dignity from the way Jesus responded to a certain leper?
- How can we honor Jehovah in dignified ways?

JEHOVAH TENDERLY CARES FOR HIS ELDERLY SERVANTS

"God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name."—HEB. 6:10.

WHEN you see elderly ones in the congregation who have white hair, are you reminded of an account in the Bible book of Daniel? In a vision that He gave to Daniel, Jehovah God portrayed himself as having white hair. Daniel wrote: "I kept on beholding until there were thrones placed and the Ancient of Days sat down. His clothing was white just like snow, and the hair of his head was like clean wool."—Dan. 7:9.

² In its natural state, wool often has a warm white color. Thus, white hair and the title "Ancient of Days" call attention to God's great age and wisdom, both of which merit our deepest respect. How, then, does the Ancient of Days, Jehovah, view faithful older men and women? God's Word says that "gray-headedness is a crown of beauty when it is found in the way of righteousness." (Prov. 16:31) Yes, if a faithful Christian has come to have gray or white hair, such a mature appearance is beautiful in God's sight. Do you share Jehovah's view of your older brothers and sisters?

Why So Precious?

³ Among such beloved older servants of God are members of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses, current and former traveling overseers, zealous pioneers, and mature Kingdom publishers—brothers and

1, 2. (a) Seeing a white-haired person might remind you of what? (b) How does Jehovah view older Christians?

3. Why are older fellow believers so precious to us?

sisters who serve faithfully in our congregations. You may know some who have zealously preached the good news for decades and whose good examples have helped to motivate younger ones and mold their lives. Some older fellow believers have carried heavy loads of responsibility and have endured persecution for the sake of the good news. Jehovah and "the faithful and discreet slave" deeply appreciate all their past and present contributions to the Kingdom work.—Matt. 24:45.

⁴ Such faithful seniors merit the gratitude and respect of other servants of Jehovah God. In fact, God's Law given through Moses links consideration and respect for the elderly with the fear of Jehovah. (Lev. 19:32) We should regularly pray for these faithful ones and thank God for their labors of love. The apostle Paul prayed for his dear coworkers, young and old.—*Read 1 Thessalonians 1:2, 3.*

⁵ Furthermore, all in the congregation can benefit from associating with older Christians. Through study, observation, and experience, faithful older worshippers of Jehovah have accumulated priceless knowledge. They have learned to exercise patience and show empathy, and passing on what they have learned to the next generation brings them great joy and satisfaction. (Ps. 71:18) Younger ones, be wise and draw on this source of

4. Why should we respect elderly Christians and pray for them?

5. How can we benefit from associating with older worshippers of Jehovah?

knowledge as you would draw up water from a deep well.—Prov. 20:5.

6 Do you let older ones know that you cherish them as Jehovah cherishes them? One way you can do so is by telling them how much you love them for their faithfulness and how you value their opinions. Moreover, by acting on what you learn from them, you demonstrate that your respect for them is sincere. Many elderly Christians can recall the wise advice they received from faithful older ones and how acting on it has benefited them throughout their lives.*

* See the article “Elderly Ones—A Blessing to the Young,” in the June 1, 2007, issue of *The Watchtower*.

6. How can you show older ones that you truly value them?

Members of the congregation have high regard for elderly ones



Show Tender Regard in Practical Ways

7 God gives the families of older ones the primary responsibility to provide for them. (Read 1 Timothy 5:4, 8.) Jehovah is pleased when families fulfill their obligation toward elderly relatives and thus show that they care about older ones as he himself does. God supports these families and blesses them for their efforts and for all their sacrifices.*

8 Similarly, Jehovah is pleased when local congregations assist faithful older ones who are in need but have no believing or willing family members to care for them. (1 Tim. 5:3, 5, 9, 10) Congregations thereby show that they have ‘fellow feeling, brotherly affection, and tender compassion’ for the elderly. (1 Pet. 3:8) Their concern for older congregation members is well-illustrated by Paul when he points out that if one member of the human body suffers, “all the other members suffer with it.” (1 Cor. 12:26) Taking practical, compassionate action in behalf of older ones demonstrates the principle behind Paul’s counsel: “Go on carrying the burdens of one another, and thus fulfill the law of the Christ.”—Gal. 6:2.

* See pages 3-10 of the February 8, 1994, issue of *Awake!*

7. To whom does Jehovah give the primary responsibility to care for older ones?

8. Why should congregations show their concern for aging Christians?



⁹ What burdens do older ones bear? Many tire easily. They may feel that doing even basic things—going to the doctor, doing paperwork, cleaning the house, preparing food—is beyond their capacity. Since appetite and thirst often diminish with age, they may think that they do not need to eat or drink as much as they really should. It can be similar with spiritual nourishment. Aging eyes and ears may make reading and listening to spiritual programs difficult, and just getting ready to go to Christian meetings may be exhausting. What, then, can others do for such older ones?

How You Can Help

¹⁰ In many congregations, the elderly are being cared for in an exemplary manner. Loving brothers and sisters help them with shopping, cooking, and cleaning. They help the elderly to study, to get ready for meetings, and to remain regular in the ministry. Younger Witnesses accompany them and provide transportation. If older ones are unable to leave home, they are tied in to meetings by telephone or recordings are made for them. Whenever possible, elders make sure that practical arrangements are implemented in order to meet the needs of older ones in the congregation.*

¹¹ Individual Christians too can extend hospitality and display generosity. After the wife of one older brother died, he could no longer afford to pay the rent without her pension. He and his wife had studied the Bible with a family—father, mother, and two

* In some lands, this may include helping older ones to avail themselves of government assistance. See the article "God Cares for the Elderly," in the June 1, 2006, issue of *The Watchtower*.

9. What burdens can advanced age impose on a person?

10. What can elders do to make sure that older ones receive practical help?

11. Relate how one family helped an older brother.

teenage daughters—who had a large house. They gave him two rooms to live in. For 15 years, they shared meals, laughter, and brotherly affection. The younger ones gained much from his faith and wealth of experience, and he benefited from joyful association. This elderly brother lived with them until he died at age 89. The family still thank God for the many blessings they received through their association with him. They have not 'lost their reward' for having helped a fellow disciple of Jesus Christ.—Matt. 10: 42.*

¹² You may not be in a position to assist an elderly brother or sister in the way this family did, but you may be able to help older ones to get to meetings and out in the field ministry. You can also invite them to your home and include them when you go on outings. You can visit them, especially when they are sick or confined. Moreover, you can and should always treat them as mature adults. As long as they are mentally able, older Christians should be included in all decision-making that affects them. Even those who have lost much of their mental ability can sense whether their dignity is being respected.

Jehovah Will Not Forget Your Work

¹³ Showing consideration for the feelings of older ones is essential. It is not unusual for the elderly to be deeply grieved by their inability to accomplish all that they were able to when they were younger and healthier. For instance, a sister who served Jehovah actively for some 50 years and who had been a regular pioneer developed a debilitating

* See the article "Jehovah Always Cares for Us," in the September 1, 2003, issue of *The Watchtower*.

12. What can you do to show your tender regard for brothers and sisters of advanced age?

13. Why is showing consideration for the feelings of elderly Christians important?

illness and could attend meetings only with great difficulty. When she compared her former ministry with her present limitations, she began to cry. Lowering her head, she said through her tears, "I'm not doing anything anymore."

¹⁴ If you are an older person, have you had such painful feelings? Or are there times when you feel that Jehovah may have abandoned you? The psalmist may have had similar feelings in his later years, for he petitioned Jehovah: "Do not throw me away in the time of old age; just when my power is failing, do not leave me.... Even until old age and gray-headedness, O God, do not leave me." (Ps. 71:9, 18) Of course, Jehovah was not about to abandon the composer of that psalm, and He will not abandon you. In another psalm, David expressed his confidence in God's support. (*Read Psalm 68:19.*) Rest assured that if you are a faithful elderly Christian, Jehovah is with you and will continue to sustain you day by day.

¹⁵ All that you aging Witnesses of Jehovah have done and are now doing for God's glory is never far from his mind. "God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name," says the Bible. (Heb. 6:10) Therefore, resist adopting a negative viewpoint, wrongly thinking that

14. What encouragement can older servants of Jehovah draw from the psalms?
15. What can help older ones to maintain a positive outlook?

How Would You Answer?

- Why do you consider faithful elderly Christians to be precious?
- How can we show tender regard for aging fellow worshippers?
- What can help older servants of Jehovah to have a positive outlook?

because of advanced age, you are no longer useful to Jehovah. Endeavor to replace depressing, pessimistic thoughts with positive ones. Rejoice over your blessings and your hope for the future! We have "a future and a hope"—the best possible—and these are guaranteed by our Creator. (Jer. 29:11, 12; Acts 17:31; 1 Tim. 6:19) Reflect on your hope, work to stay young in heart and mind, and never underestimate the value of your presence in the congregation!*

¹⁶ Consider Johan, who at 80 years of age cares full-time for his faithful, now invalid, wife, Sannie.[#] Sisters take turns staying with Sannie so that Johan can go to meetings and in the ministry. Recently, however, Johan felt that he was near the breaking point emotionally and began thinking that he should no longer serve as a congregation elder. "What's the point of my being an elder?" he asked as tears welled up in his eyes. "I no longer perform any useful function in the congregation." His fellow elders assured him that his experience and judgment were invaluable. They urged him to continue serving as an elder, even if his participation was limited. Greatly encouraged, Johan continues to serve as an elder, to the blessing of the congregation.

Jehovah Really Cares

¹⁷ The Scriptures make it clear that older ones can continue to prosper spiritually despite the problems accompanying old age. The psalmist declared: "Those who are planted in the house of Jehovah . . . will still keep

* See the article "The Splendor of Gray-Headedness," in *The Watchtower* of March 15, 1993.

[#] Names have been changed.

16. Why did one older brother think that he should stop serving as an elder, but how did the body of elders encourage him?
17. What assurances does the Bible give elderly Christians?

on thriving during gray-headedness, fat and fresh they will continue to be." (Ps. 92:13, 14) The apostle Paul, who may have been dealing with a physical affliction, 'did not give up, even if the man he was on the outside was wasting away.'—Read 2 Corinthians 4:16-18.

¹⁸ Many modern-day examples prove that older ones can "keep on thriving." But the challenges of illness and old age can be daunting, even for those who have caring and committed family members to help them. Caregivers too may become worn-out. The congregation has the privilege and re-

18. Why do older fellow believers and their caregivers need the help of others?

sponsibility to put their love into action in behalf of older ones and those who care for them. (Gal. 6:10) Such help shows that we are not, in effect, telling such ones to go and "keep warm and well fed" without assisting them in practical ways.—Jas. 2:15-17.

¹⁹ Advancing age may change a Christian's activities somewhat, but time does not diminish Jehovah's love for his loyal older servants. On the contrary, all of these faithful Christians are precious in his eyes, and he will never leave them. (Ps. 37:28; Isa. 46:4) Jehovah will sustain and guide them throughout old age.—Ps. 48:14.

19. Why can faithful elderly Christians view the future with confidence?

ARE YOU SPEAKING THE "PURE LANGUAGE" FLUENTLY?

"I shall give to peoples the change to a pure language, in order for them all to call upon the name of Jehovah."—ZEPH. 3:9.

THE gift of language did not originate with mankind but, rather, with man's Creator, Jehovah God. (Ex. 4:11, 12) He gave the first human, Adam, the ability not only to speak but also to coin new words and thus expand his vocabulary. (Gen. 2:19, 20, 23) What a wonderful gift this has proved to be! It has even enabled mankind to communicate with their heavenly Father and to praise his glorious name.

² During the first 17 centuries of human existence, everyone spoke just one language, having "one set of words." (Gen. 11:1) Then

1. What wonderful gift has Jehovah given us?
2. Why do humans no longer speak one common language?

came the rebellion of Nimrod's day. Contrary to Jehovah's instructions, disobedient humans gathered at what later came to be called Babel, determined to remain in one location. They started to build a massive tower, not to give Jehovah glory, but to "make a celebrated name" for themselves. So Jehovah confused the original language of those rebels and caused them to speak various tongues. Thus, they were scattered over all the surface of the earth.—Read Genesis 11:4-8.

³ Today, literally thousands of languages—some say over 6,800—are spoken in the

3. What happened when Jehovah confused the speech of the rebels at Babel?

world. Each of these languages requires different thought patterns. It appears, then, that when Jehovah God confused the speech of those rebels, he blotted out all memory of their previous common language. He not only introduced into their minds new vocabularies but also changed their thought patterns and produced new grammars. No wonder the location of that tower came to be called "Confusion," or Babel! (Gen. 11:9, ftn.) Interestingly, only the Bible gives a satisfying explanation of the origin of the diversity of languages that we see today.

A New, Pure Language

⁴ As fascinating as the Bible account about God's intervention at Babel may be, something even more interesting and important has occurred in our time. Through his prophet Zephaniah, Jehovah foretold: "Then I shall give to peoples the change to a pure language, in order for them all to call upon the name of Jehovah, in order to serve him shoulder to shoulder." (Zeph. 3:9) What is that "pure language," and how can we learn to speak it fluently?

⁵ The pure language is the truth about Jehovah God and his purposes as found in his Word, the Bible. That "language" includes a correct understanding of the truth about God's Kingdom and how it will sanctify Jehovah's name, vindicate his sovereignty, and bring eternal blessings to faithful mankind. What results from this change of language? We are told that people will "call upon the name of Jehovah" and will "serve him shoulder to shoulder." Unlike the events of Babel, this change to the pure language has resulted in praise to Jehovah's name and unity for his people.

4. What did Jehovah foretell would happen in our time?
5. What is the pure language, and what has resulted from this change of language?

Learning the Pure Language

⁶ When someone sets out to master another language, he has to do more than memorize new words. Learning a new language involves learning a new way of thinking, new thought patterns. Logic and humor may be different in another language. Pronunciation of new sounds will require a different use of the speech organs, such as the tongue. The same is true when we start to learn the pure language of Bible truth. More is required than just learning a few basic Bible teachings. Mastering this new language involves modifying our thinking and transforming our minds.—*Read Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:23.*

⁷ What will help us not only to understand the pure language but also to speak it fluently? As with learning any language, there are some basic techniques that can help us to attain proficiency in speaking the language of Bible truth. Let us consider some of the basic steps used by people to learn another language and see how those steps can help us to learn this new figurative language.

Speaking the Pure Language Fluently

⁸ *Listen carefully.* At first, a new language may sound completely foreign to the untrained ear. (Isa. 33:19) But as a person learns to concentrate on what he is hearing, he will start to recognize individual words and recurring patterns of speech. In a similar way, we are admonished: "It is necessary for us to pay more than the usual attention to the things heard by us, that we may never drift away." (Heb. 2:1) Repeatedly, Jesus admonished his followers: "Let him that has ears listen." (Matt. 11:15; 13:43; Mark 4:23; Luke 14:35) Yes, we need to "listen and get the sense" of

- 6, 7. (a) What is involved with learning a new language, and how does this apply to learning the pure language? (b) What will we now consider?
- 8, 9. What must we do if we want to learn the pure language, and why is this so important?

what we hear in order to progress in our understanding of the pure language.—Matt. 15:10; Mark 7:14.

⁹ Listening requires concentration, but the effort is truly worthwhile. (Luke 8:18) When at Christian meetings, do we find ourselves concentrating on what is being explained, or are we distracted? It is vital that we do our utmost to concentrate on what is being presented. Otherwise, we could actually become dull in our hearing.—Heb. 5:11.

¹⁰ *Imitate fluent speakers.* Students of a new language are encouraged not only to listen carefully but also to try to imitate, or mimic, the pronunciation and speech patterns of fluent speakers. This helps the students to avoid developing a heavy accent that may later hinder their efforts to communicate. In a comparable way, we should learn from those who have mastered the “art of teaching” the new language. (2 Tim. 4:2) Ask for help. Be willing to accept correction when you make mistakes.—*Read Hebrews 12:5, 6, 11.*

¹¹ Speaking the pure language involves not only believing the truth and teaching it to others but also harmonizing our conduct with God’s laws and principles. To assist us in doing this, we need to imitate others. This includes imitating their faith and zeal. It also includes imitating the whole life course of Jesus. (1 Cor. 11:1; Heb. 12:2; 13:7) If we persist in doing this, it will result in unity among God’s people, allowing them to speak, as it were, with the same accent.—1 Cor. 4:16, 17.

¹² *Memorize.* Students of language need to commit many new things to memory. This includes new vocabularies and expressions. For Christians, memorization can be a powerful help in mastering the pure language.

10, 11. (a) In addition to listening carefully, what must we do? (b) What else is involved in speaking the pure language?

12. How is memorization involved with learning a new language?

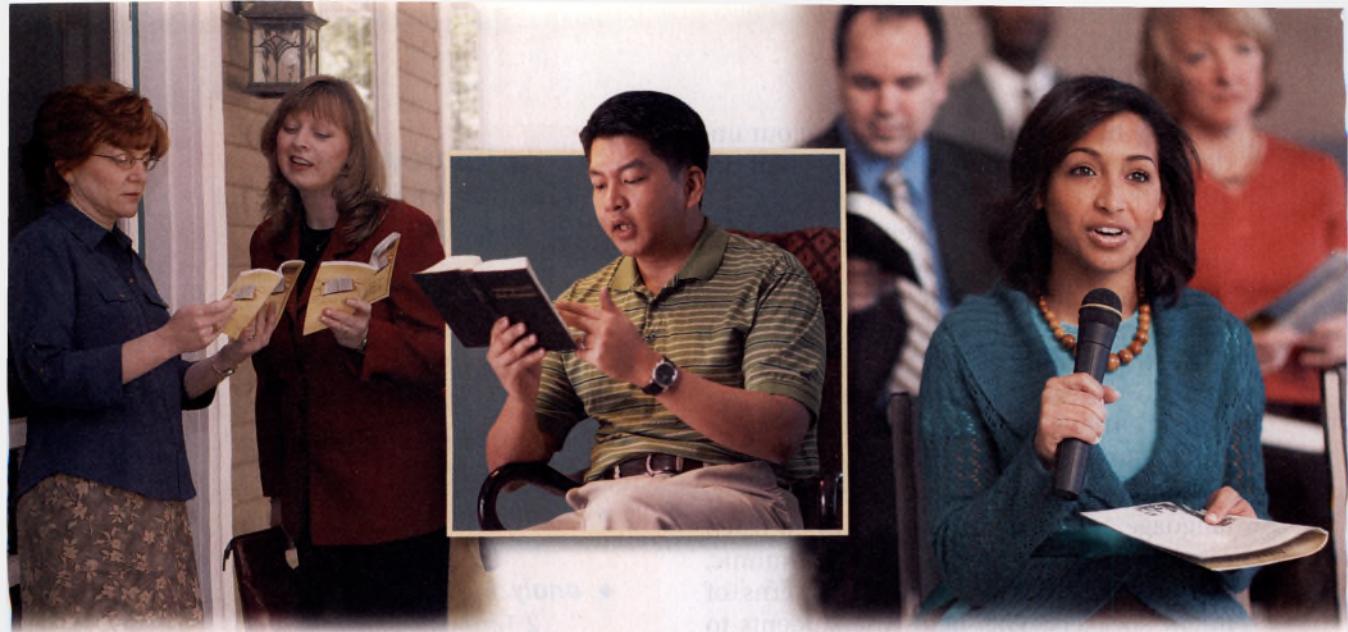
Improve Your Fluency in Speaking the Pure Language by

- ◆ *listening carefully.*
Luke 8:18; Heb. 2:1
- ◆ *imitating fluent speakers.*
1 Cor. 11:1; Heb. 13:7
- ◆ *memorizing and repeating.*
Jas. 1:22-25; 2 Pet. 1:12
- ◆ *reading aloud.*
Ps. 1:1, 2; Rev. 1:3
- ◆ *analyzing the “grammar.”*
2 Tim. 1:13
- ◆ *continuing to make progress.*
Heb. 5:11-14; 6:1, 2
- ◆ *assigning definite study times.*
Dan. 6:16, 20; Eph. 6:18
- ◆ *speaking it.*
Rom. 10:10; Heb. 10:23-25

Certainly we would do well to memorize the names of the books of the Bible in their order. Some have made it a goal to memorize the wording of a certain number of Bible texts or citations. Others have found it beneficial to memorize Kingdom songs, the names of the tribes of Israel and of the 12 apostles, and the qualities that make up the fruitage of the spirit. In ancient times, many Israelites learned the psalms by heart. In modern times, one young boy memorized over 80 Bible verses word for word by the time he was just six years old. Could we make better use of this valuable skill?

¹³ *Repetition* helps the memory, and repeated reminders are an integral part of our Christian education. The apostle Peter said:

13. Why is repetition so important?



Jehovah's people unitedly speak the pure language

"I shall be disposed always to remind you of these things, although you know them and are firmly set in the truth that is present in you." (2 Pet. 1:12) Why do we need reminders? Because they deepen our understanding, expand our viewpoint, and strengthen our determination to stay on course spiritually. (Ps. 119:129) Constantly reviewing God's standards and principles helps us scrutinize ourselves and counteracts the tendency to be "a forgetful hearer." (Jas. 1:22-25) If we do not keep reminding ourselves of the truth, other things will influence our hearts and we may no longer speak the pure language with fluency.

¹⁴ *Read aloud.* (Rev. 1:3) Some students try to study a new language silently by themselves. This does not produce the best results. When studying the pure language, we may at times need to read "in an undertone" to help our concentration. (*Read Psalm 1:1, 2.*) Doing this impresses indelibly on our minds the material we are reading. In Hebrew, the ex-

pression "to read in an undertone" is closely related to meditation. Just as digestion is needed if we are to benefit fully from the food we eat, meditation is needed if we are to absorb what we read. Do we allow enough time to meditate on what we study? After reading the Bible, we must think deeply about what we have read.

¹⁵ *Analyze the grammar.* At some point, it is beneficial to study the grammar, or word patterns and rules, of a new language that we are learning. This allows us to understand the structure of the language, enabling us to speak it properly. Just as a language has a pattern of words, the pure language of Scriptural truth has "the pattern of healthful words." (2 Tim. 1:13) We need to copy that "pattern."

¹⁶ *Continue to make progress.* A person may learn enough of a language to get by in normal conversation but then stop making progress. A similar problem may arise with

14. What will help us when we are studying the pure language?

15. How can we study the "grammar" of the pure language?

16. What tendency do we need to overcome, and how can we do this?

those speaking the pure language. (*Read Hebrews 5:11-14.*) What can help us to overcome this tendency? Be willing to expand your vocabulary, as it were. "Now that we have left the primary doctrine about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying a foundation again, namely, repentance from dead works, and faith toward God, the teaching on baptisms and the laying on of the hands, the resurrection of the dead and everlasting judgment."—Heb. 6:1, 2.

¹⁷ Assign definite study times. Shorter study periods on a regular basis are better than longer periods held spasmodically. Study at times when you are alert and not easily distracted. Learning a new language is like cutting a path through the jungle. The more often the path is traversed, the easier the journey becomes. If the path is unused for any length of time, the jungle will soon encroach upon it. So persistence and constancy are vital! (Dan. 6:16, 20) Prayerfully "keep awake with all constancy" when it comes to speaking the pure language of Bible truth.—Eph. 6:18.

¹⁸ Speak! Speak! Speak! Some who are learning a new language may hesitate to speak it because they are shy or afraid to make mistakes. That will hold them back from making progress. When it comes to learning a language, the old adage is true, Practice makes perfect. The more the student speaks the new language, the more comfortable he becomes with using it. We likewise need to speak the pure language at every opportunity. "With the heart one exercises faith for righteousness, but with the mouth one makes public declaration for salvation." (Rom. 10:10) Not only do we make a "public declaration" at the time of our bap-

17. Why are regular study habits important? Illustrate.

18. Why should we speak the pure language at every opportunity?

tism but we also make it when we speak about Jehovah at every opportunity, including when we engage in the ministry. (Matt. 28:19, 20; Heb. 13:15) Our Christian meetings allow us to make clear, concise expressions in the pure language.—*Read Hebrews 10:23-25.*

Unitedly Use the Pure Language to Praise Jehovah

¹⁹ How exciting it would have been to be in Jerusalem on Sunday morning, Sivan 6, in the year 33 C.E.! Early that morning, just before nine o'clock, those gathered in an upper room miraculously "started to speak with different tongues." (Acts 2:4) Today, the gift of tongues is no longer available to God's servants. (1 Cor. 13:8) Nevertheless, Jehovah's Witnesses declare the good news of the Kingdom in over 430 different tongues.

²⁰ How grateful we are that no matter what language we normally speak, we are all united in speaking the pure language of Bible truth! In a way, this is a reversal of what happened at Babel. As with one tongue, Jehovah's people bring praise to his name. (1 Cor. 1:10) May it be our resolve to continue serving "shoulder to shoulder" with our brothers and sisters earth wide as we learn to speak that one language ever more fluently, to the glory of our heavenly Father, Jehovah.—*Read Psalm 150:1-6.*

19, 20. (a) What amazing thing is being accomplished by Jehovah's Witnesses in our day? (b) What is your resolve?

How Would You Answer?

- What is the pure language?
- Our speaking the pure language involves what?
- What will help us to speak the pure language fluently?

Jehovah's Word Is Alive

Highlights From the Letters to the Galatians, the Ephesians, the Philippians, and the Colossians

UPON hearing that some Christians were being deflected from pure worship by Judaizers, the apostle Paul writes a powerful letter “to the congregations of Galatia.” (Gal. 1:2) Written sometime during 50-52 C.E., the letter contains direct counsel and strong exhortation.

Some ten years later while in Rome as a “prisoner of Christ Jesus,” Paul writes to the congregations in Ephesus, in Philippi, and in Colossae, giving them sound advice and loving encouragement. (Eph. 3:1) We today can benefit by paying attention to the message of the Bible books of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians.—Heb. 4:12.

“DECLARED RIGHTEOUS”—HOW? (Gal. 1:1–6:18)

Since Judaizers craftily seek to discredit Paul, he defends his apostleship by providing certain autobiographical details. (Gal. 1:11–2:14) Counteracting their false teachings, Paul makes the point: “A man is declared righteous, not due to works of law, but only through faith toward Christ Jesus.”—Gal. 2:16.

Christ ‘released by purchase those under law’ and set them free to enjoy Christian freedom, says Paul. He strongly admonishes the Galatians: “Stand fast, and do not let yourselves be confined again in a yoke of slavery.”—Gal. 4:4, 5; 5:1.

Scriptural Questions Answered:

3:16-18, 28, 29—Is the Abrahamic covenant still valid? Yes, it is. The Law covenant

was an addition to and not a replacement of God’s covenant with Abraham. Therefore, the Abrahamic covenant remained in effect after the Law was “abolished.” (Eph. 2:15) Its promises are passed on to Abraham’s true “seed”—Christ Jesus, who is the primary one, and those who “belong to Christ.”

6:2—What is “the law of the Christ”? This law consists of all that Jesus taught and commanded. It especially includes the commandment to “love one another.”—John 13:34.

6:8—How do we ‘sow with a view to the spirit’? We do this by living in a way that allows God’s spirit to operate freely on us. Sowing with a view to the spirit involves wholeheartedly participating in activities that promote the flow of the spirit.

Lessons for Us:

1:6-9. Christian elders need to act without delay when problems arise in the congregation. Using sound reasoning along with the Scriptures, they can quickly refute false reasoning.

2:20. The ransom is a personal gift from God to us. We should learn to view it that way.—John 3:16.

5:7-9. Bad associations can ‘hinder us from keeping on obeying the truth.’ We are wise to shun them.

6:1, 2, 5. Those with “spiritual qualifications” may help us to carry a burden, such as something troublesome or heavy resulting

from our unknowingly taking a false step. When it comes to carrying the load of our spiritual responsibilities, though, we must do it ourselves.

**'GATHERING OF
ALL THINGS IN THE CHRIST'
(Eph. 1:1–6:24)**

Highlighting the theme of Christian unity in his letter to the Ephesians, Paul speaks of "an administration at the full limit of the appointed times . . . to gather all things together again in the Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth." Christ has given "gifts in men" to help all to "attain to the oneness in the faith."—Eph. 1:10; 4:8, 13.

To honor God and promote unity, Christians should "put on the new personality" and "be in subjection to one another in fear of Christ." They also need "to stand firm against the machinations of the Devil" by putting on the complete suit of spiritual armor.—Eph. 4:24; 5:21; 6:11.

Scriptural Questions Answered:

1:4–7—How were anointed Christians foreordained long before they were born? They were foreordained as a group, or a class, not as individuals. This took place before the sinful world of mankind came into existence. The prophecy recorded at Genesis 3:15, declared before any sinful human was conceived, includes God's purpose to have certain followers of Christ rule with him in heaven.—Gal. 3:16, 29.

2:2—How is the spirit of the world like the air, and where does its authority lie? "The spirit of the world"—the spirit of independence and disobedience—is as pervasive as the air we breathe. (1 Cor. 2:12) Its authority, or power, lies in its persuasiveness, persistence, and relentlessness.

2:6—How can anointed Christians be "in the heavenly places" while still on earth?

The expression "heavenly places" here does not refer to their promised heavenly inheritance. Rather, it denotes their exalted spiritual position resulting from their being "sealed with the promised holy spirit."—Eph. 1:13, 14.

Lessons for Us:

4:8, 11–15. Jesus Christ "carried away captives," that is, took men away from Satan's control to use them as gifts for the building up of the Christian congregation. We can "by love grow up in all things into . . . Christ" by being obedient and submissive to those taking the lead among us and by cooperating with congregation arrangements.—Heb. 13:7, 17.

5:22–24, 33. Besides being in subjection to her husband, a wife is to respect him. She does this by manifesting a "quiet and mild spirit" and by endeavoring to bring him honor as she speaks well of him and works to make his decisions succeed.—1 Pet. 3:3, 4; Titus 2:3–5.

5:25, 28, 29. Just as he "feeds" himself, a husband ought to be a good provider for his wife—physically, emotionally, and spiritually. He should also cherish her by spending adequate time with her and by treating her tenderly in speech and action.

6:10–13. To resist demonic forces, we need to be wholehearted in putting on the suit of spiritual armor from God.

**"GO ON WALKING ORDERLY"
(Phil. 1:1–4:23)**

Paul's letter to the Philippians breathes love. "This is what I continue praying," he says, "that your love may abound yet more and more with accurate knowledge and full discernment." Helping them to avoid the snare of overconfidence, he exhorts: "Keep working out your own salvation with fear and trembling."—Phil. 1:9; 2:12.

Paul encourages those who are mature to pursue "down toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God." He states: "To what extent we have made progress, let us go on walking orderly in this same routine."—Phil. 3:14-16.

Scriptural Questions Answered:

1:23 and footnote—From what "two things" was Paul under pressure, and what "releasing" did he desire? Because of the circumstances he was in, Paul was under pressure from the two possibilities open to him: life or death. (Phil. 1:21) While not stating what he would choose, he makes known what he desired—"the releasing and the being with Christ." (Phil. 3:20, 21; 1 Thess. 4:16) This "releasing" during Christ's presence would result in Paul's receiving the reward that Jehovah had prepared for him.—Matt. 24:3.

2:12, 13—In what way does God cause us "to will and to act"? Jehovah's holy spirit can work in our heart and mind to increase our desire to do our very best in his service. Hence, we are not without help as we 'keep working out our own salvation.'

Lessons for Us:

1:3-5. Though they were materially poor, the Philippians set a fine example for us in displaying generosity.—2 Cor. 8:1-6.

2:5-11. As Jesus' example shows, humility is not a sign of weakness but of moral strength. Moreover, Jehovah exalts humble ones.—Prov. 22:4.

3:13. "The things behind" may be such things as a lucrative career, the security of belonging to a wealthy family, or even serious past sins of which we have repented and "been washed clean." (1 Cor. 6:11) We should forget these things, that is, cease to be concerned about them, and 'stretch forward to the things ahead.'

"BEING STABILIZED IN THE FAITH"

(Col. 1:1-4:18)

In his letter to the Colossians, Paul counteracts the wrong views of false teachers. Salvation depends, he reasons, not on the requirements of the Law, but on 'continuing in the faith.' Paul encourages the Colossians to "go on walking in union with [Christ], rooted and being built up in him and being stabilized in the faith." How should such stabilization affect them?—Col. 1:23; 2:6, 7.

"Besides all these things," writes Paul, "clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union. Also, let the peace of the Christ control in your hearts." The apostle tells them: "Whatever you are doing, work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah, and not to men." Regarding those outside the congregation, he says: "Go on walking in wisdom toward" them.—Col. 3:14, 15, 23; 4:5.

Scriptural Questions Answered:

2:8—What are "the elementary things of the world" against which Paul warned? These are the elements of Satan's world—basic things or principles that make up, guide, or motivate it. (1 John 2:16) Included among these are the philosophy, materialism, and false religions of this world.

4:16—Why is the letter to the Laodiceans not part of the Bible? This could be because the letter did not contain information necessary for today. Or it may be that it repeated points from other canonical letters.

Lessons for Us:

1:2, 20. The ransom, a provision of God's undeserved kindness, can clear our conscience of guilt and give us inner peace.

2:18, 23. "Mock humility"—a pretense of humility to impress others perhaps by renouncing material things or by treating the body with severity—is an indication of one's being 'puffed up by one's fleshly frame of mind.'

Do You Remember?

Have you appreciated reading the recent issues of *The Watchtower*? See if you can answer the following questions:

- Some Christians have faced what serious challenge after getting married, and what should they strive to do?

Some Christians may realize that they have little in common with their mate. Knowing that an unscriptural divorce is not an acceptable solution, they need to work hard to preserve the marriage.—4/15, page 17.

- A Christian in a nursing home may face what challenges?

He may be unfamiliar with the congregation in whose territory the home is located. Most in the home may have different beliefs and may try to involve him in religious activities. Christian relatives and members of the local congregation should be aware of these problems and offer support and care.—4/15, pages 25-27.

- What are four steps that can help marriage mates solve problems?

Set a time to discuss the issues. (Eccl. 3:1, 7) Express your opinion honestly and respectfully. (Eph. 4:25) Listen to and acknowledge your mate's feelings. (Matt. 7:12) Agree on a solution, and work together at it. (Eccl. 4:9, 10)—5/1, pages 10-12.

- When Jesus urged us to pray for forgiveness for our debts, what debts were meant?

Comparing Matthew 6:12 with Luke 11:4 makes it clear that Jesus did not mean financial debts. He had in mind sins. We need to imitate God by being willing to forgive.—5/15, page 9.

- The members of the Governing Body serve on what committees?

Coordinators' Committee; Personnel Committee; Publishing Committee; Service Committee; Teaching Committee; Writing Committee.—5/15, page 29.

- How can we be sure that the Noachian Flood was global?

Jesus believed that the Flood took place and was global. Biblical warnings are based on the reality of a global Flood.—6/1, page 8.

- Did the conduct described at Romans 1:24-32 relate to the Jews or to the Gentiles?

The description could fit either, but the apostle Paul was specifically referring to the Israelites of old who for centuries failed to follow the Law. They knew God's righteous decrees, yet they did not live in accord with them.—6/15, page 29.

- Where is Tel Arad, and why is it significant?

This mound in Israel marking the ancient city of Arad is west of the Dead Sea. At this mound, excavators have found a collection of pottery used as writing tablets. Some bear names found in the Bible, and they show that God's personal name was used in secular documents.—7/1, pages 23-24.

- Why can cultivating reasonable expectations increase our joy?

If we strive to attain unreasonable goals regardless of the cost, we subject ourselves to undue tension. Still, we should not be too lenient, using our perceived limitations as an excuse for slowing down in the ministry.—7/15, page 29.

- What may hinder parents' communicating with adolescents?

Roadblocks may be a youth's timidity, his quest for independence, and his sense of privacy. Parents may try to encourage communication in informal settings and strive to discern the message behind the words of the youth.—8/1, pages 10-11.

MISSIONARIES ARE COMPARED TO LOCUSTS

EVERY six months, the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead holds a graduation program to which the entire United States Bethel family is invited. On March 8, 2008, guests from more than 30 countries joined the Bethel family for the graduation of the 124th class of Gilead School. All 6,411 in attendance rejoiced with the students on their special day.

The chairman of the program, Stephen Lett of the Governing Body, opened with a talk entitled "Go Forth With Jehovah's Figurative Locusts." Revelation 9:1-4 compares the small band of anointed Christians who recovered from spiritual inactivity in 1919 to a swarm of locusts that burst into action. The students were reminded that as members of the "other sheep," they have joined themselves to this figurative swarm of locusts. —John 10:16.

Lon Schilling, a member of the United States Branch Committee, followed with the talk "Be Complementary." It was based on the Bible example of Aquila and Priscilla (or, Prisca), a first-century Christian married couple. (Rom. 16:3, 4) The Gilead class was composed of 28 married couples. They were reminded that in order to be successful as missionaries, they would need to keep their marriage bond strong. The Bible never re-

fers to Aquila without mentioning his wife, Priscilla. Hence, the apostle Paul and the congregation viewed them as a unit. Likewise, missionary couples today should work together, worship together, and meet the unique challenges of a foreign assignment together, thus complementing one another. —Gen. 2:18.

The following talk, entitled "Respond to Jehovah's Goodness," was delivered by Guy Pierce of the Governing Body. Brother Pierce explained that being good means more than refraining from doing bad. A good person does good things to benefit others. Jehovah God is good to the superlative degree. (Zech. 9:16, 17) God's goodness and love can become in us a driving force to do good things for others. Commending the students, Brother Pierce concluded by saying: "You've been doing good. We are confident that you will continue to respond to God's goodness by doing good in whatever future assignments Jehovah God gives you."

Next, Michael Burnett, a former missionary recently assigned as a Gilead instructor, presented the talk entitled "Wear It as a Frontlet Band Between Your Eyes." As though they were wearing "a frontlet band" between their eyes, the Israelites were to remember the miraculous deliverance from Egypt that

CLASS STATISTICS

Number of countries represented: 7 • Number of countries assigned to: 16

Total number of students: 56 • Average age: 33.8 • Average years in truth: 18.2

Average years in full-time ministry: 13.8



124th Graduating Class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead

In the list below, rows are numbered from front to back, and names are listed from left to right in each row.

- (1) Nicholson, T.; Main, H.; Senge, Y.; Snape, L.; Vanegas, C.; Pou, L. (2) Santana, S.; Oh, K.; Lemaitre, C.; Williams, N.; Alexander, L. (3) Woods, B.; Stainton, L.; Huntley, E.; Alvarez, G.; Cruz, J.; Bennett, J. (4) Williamson, A.; González, N.; Zuroski, J.; Degandt, I.; May, J.; Diemmi, C.; Tavener, L. (5) Lemaitre, W.; Harris, A.; Wells, C.; Rodgers, S.; Durrant, M.; Senge, J. (6) Huntley, T.; Vanegas, A.; Pou, A.; Santana, M.; Bennett, V.; Tavener, D.; Oh, M. (7) Zuroski, M.; Rodgers, G.; Diemmi, D.; Nicholson, L.; Alvarez, C.; Snape, J. (8) Harris, M.; González, P.; Main, S.; Woods, S.; Stainton, B.; Williamson, D.; Durrant, J. (9) Cruz, P.; Degandt, B.; Williams, D.; Wells, S.; Alexander, D.; May, M.

Jehovah performed in their behalf. (Ex. 13:16) The students were admonished to remember the abundant instruction received at Gilead School as if they were wearing it as a frontlet band between their eyes. Brother Burnett emphasized the need to be humble and modest and to apply Bible principles when settling any misunderstanding with fellow missionaries and others.—Matt. 5:23, 24.

Mark Noumair, a longtime Gilead instructor, gave the talk “What Song Will Be Sung About You?” In ancient times, it was the custom to celebrate war victories with song. One of such songs exposes the tribes of Reuben, Dan, and Asher as self-sparing, whereas the tribe of Zebulun is praised for its self-sacrificing spirit. (Judg. 5:16-18) Like the lyrics of a song, the actions of every Christian eventually become known to others. A

person's zeal for God's work and enduring loyalty to theocratic order will build up a fine record with Jehovah and serve as a good example to his brothers. As others in the congregation listen to the figurative song written by our actions, they are moved to imitate that good example.

As part of their Gilead training, the 124th class spent a combined total of some 3,000 hours in the preaching work. Under the theme "Following the Lead of Holy Spirit," the students related to Sam Roberson of the Theocratic Schools Department several field service experiences, reenacting some of them. These encouraging experiences were followed by interviews, chaired by Patrick La-Franca of the United States Branch Committee, with Gilead graduates now serving in various lands. The students appreciated the practical advice they received from these brothers.

Anthony Morris of the Governing Body gave the final talk, "Remember, the Things Seen Are Temporary." The Scriptures admonish us to focus on future blessings from Jehovah rather than on any temporary tribulation that we might currently experience. (2 Cor. 4:16-18) Extreme poverty, injustice, oppression, sickness, and death are realities that we all see today. Missionaries may come face-to-face with some of these tragic circumstances. But remembering that these things are temporary will help us to stay spiritually balanced and hopeful.

The program concluded with all the graduates onstage listening to Brother Lett's final remarks. He encouraged them not to give up and said: "There is no breaking point to our integrity if we have Jehovah on our side." He urged the new missionaries to be like locusts, pressing on in Jehovah's service and remaining zealous, loyal and obedient forever.

Gilead School is located at the Watchtower Educational Center

