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# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



## STUDY EDITION

STUDY ARTICLES FOR THE WEEKS OF:

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Receive God's Spirit, Not the World's

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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.

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## PURPOSE OF STUDY ARTICLES

### STUDY ARTICLE 1 PAGES 8-12

People around us reflect the spirit of the world, so is it possible for us to be different? This article will help us to see how the world's spirit might influence us. We will also consider what we can learn from Jesus' example about receiving God's spirit.

### STUDY ARTICLE 2 PAGES 12-16

What does it mean to trust in Jehovah? From this article, we will see that it means more than simply believing his promises about a new world. It includes our wholeheartedly accepting his ways and standards while rejecting those of the world.

### STUDY ARTICLES 3, 4 PAGES 24-32

These articles will show how Noah and his family, Moses, and Jeremiah kept themselves ready to carry out their assignments and will become eyewitnesses to the fulfillment of God's promises. See what lessons you can draw from these men and their attitude.

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17 **You Have Cause for Rejoicing** ▶

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# Do Not Deceive Yourself With False Reasoning

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**“W**HAT is this you have done?” God asked Eve after she had eaten from the forbidden tree. “The serpent—it deceived me and so I ate,” she replied. (Gen. 3:13) Satan, the crafty serpent who led her to disobey God, was later called “the original serpent, . . . who is misleading the entire inhabited earth.”—Rev. 12:9.

This Genesis account presents Satan as cunning, as one who spins lies with the intention of deceiving the unwary. Eve certainly succumbed to his deceit. Nevertheless, we should not think that Satan is the only one who can mislead us. The Bible also warns about the danger of ‘deceiving *ourselves* with false reasoning.’—Jas. 1:22.

The thought of deceiving ourselves may seem highly improbable or even impossible. The divine warning, however, is obviously there for a purpose. So we would do well to consider how we might deceive ourselves and what sort of false reasoning could mislead us. A Scriptural example can help us.

## Self-Deception in Action

About the year 537 B.C.E., Cyrus the Great of Persia issued a decree for the Jews exiled in Babylon to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the temple. (Ezra 1:1, 2) The following year, in accord with Jehovah’s purpose, the people laid the foundations for a new temple. The returnees rejoiced and praised Jehovah for blessing the initial stage of this important project. (Ezra 3:8, 10, 11) But soon, opposition to their rebuilding arose and the people became disheartened. (Ezra 4:4)

About 15 years after their return, the Persian authorities banned all construction work in Jerusalem. To enforce the ban, regional officials arrived in Jerusalem and “stopped [the Jews] by force of arms.”—Ezra 4:21-24.

Faced with this serious obstacle, the Jews deceived themselves with false reasoning. “The time has not come, the time of the house of Jehovah, for it to be built,” they told themselves. (Hag. 1:2) They concluded that God did not want the temple built immediately. Instead of seeking a way to do his will, they abandoned their sacred assignment and became absorbed in improving their own homes. God’s prophet Haggai pointedly asked them: “Is it the time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house [Jehovah’s temple] is waste?”—Hag. 1:4.

Do you see a lesson in this example? A wrong view of the timing of the divine purpose could lead us to lose sight of the importance of our spiritual activities and become sidetracked with personal interests. To illustrate, imagine you are expecting guests. Anticipation of their visit may lead to a flurry of activity as you attend to necessary household chores related to their stay. However, then you receive word that your visitors are delayed. Will you abandon the preparations?

Recall, though, that Haggai and Zechariah helped the Jews to understand that Jehovah still wanted the temple rebuilt without delay. “Be strong, all you people of the land, . . . and work,” Haggai urged. (Hag. 2:4) They needed to get on with the work at





*Haggai and Zechariah urged the Jews to build*

hand, confident that God's spirit would back them up. (Zech. 4:6, 7) Can this example help us avoid reaching wrong conclusions about Jehovah's day?—1 Cor. 10:11.

### **Replacing False Reasoning With Sound Thinking**

In his second letter, the apostle Peter considered Jehovah's timetable for establishing a "new heavens and a new earth." (2 Pet. 3:13) He noted that some ridiculers raised doubts as to whether God would ever intervene in human affairs. They wrongly argued that nothing would happen, that "all things [were] continuing exactly as from creation's beginning." (2 Pet. 3:4) Peter wanted to counteract such faulty reasoning. He wrote: "I am arousing your clear thinking faculties by way of a reminder." He reminded fellow Christians that the ridiculers were mistaken. God had previously intervened in mankind's affairs, bringing a catastrophic global deluge.—2 Pet. 3:1, 5-7.

Haggai gave a similar exhortation to the disheartened, inactive Jews in 520 B.C.E. He

admonished them: "Set your heart upon your ways." (Hag. 1:5) To arouse their thinking abilities, he reminded his fellow worshippers of God's purposes and promises with regard to His people. (Hag. 1:8; 2:4, 5) Soon after that encouragement, construction work restarted—despite the official prohibition. Once again, adversaries tried to scuttle the building project, but they were unsuccessful. The ban was rescinded, and in five years the temple was completed.—Ezra 6:14, 15; Hag. 1:14, 15.

### **Setting Our Hearts Upon Our Ways**

Do you think that like the Jews in Haggai's day, we could become disheartened when difficulties arise? If that happened, we might find it hard to maintain our zeal for preaching the good news. But what might cause us to be disheartened? Well, we might find ourselves suffering because of the injustice of this system of things. Think of Habakkuk, who asked: "How long must I call for help before you listen, before you save us from violence?" (Hab. 1:2, *Today's English Version*) In view of what some might consider a delay, a Christian could lose his sense of urgency and instead give priority to a comfortable lifestyle. Could you see that happening to you? If we followed this line of reasoning, we would be deceiving ourselves. How vital that we heed the Scriptural counsel to 'set our hearts upon our ways' and 'arouse our clear thinking faculties'! We could ask ourselves, 'Should it surprise me that this wicked system of things has lasted longer than I expected?'

### **A Period That the Bible Anticipated**

Stop to consider Jesus' words about the conclusion of this system of things. Mark's account of Jesus' prophecy of the last days reveals that Jesus repeatedly admonished us

to keep alert. (Mark 13:33-37) We find a similar warning in the middle of the prophetic description of Jehovah's great day at Armageddon. (Rev. 16:14-16) Why the repeated warnings? Such reminders are needed when as a result of waiting over what seems to be an extended period, people are at risk of losing their sense of urgency.

Jesus illustrated the need for us to be continually vigilant as we await the end of the system of things. He referred to a householder whose home had been burglarized. How could he have avoided being robbed? By staying awake through the whole night. Jesus concluded this illustration by counseling us: "Prove yourselves ready, because at an hour that *you do not think to be it*, the Son of man is coming."—Matt. 24:43, 44.

That illustration shows the need for being prepared to wait, even for a considerable length of time. No, we should not be overly concerned that this wicked system may have lasted longer than we expected. We should not deceive ourselves by falsely reasoning that 'Jehovah's time has not come.'

Such thinking would dull our desire to preach the good news of the Kingdom.—Rom. 12:11.

### Weeding Out False Reasoning

With regard to false reasoning, the principle at Galatians 6:7 applies: "Do not be misled . . . Whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap." If a plot of soil is left unsown, weeds easily take over. Likewise, if we do not arouse our clear thinking faculties, false reasonings can take root in our minds. For example, we might tell ourselves, 'Jehovah's day is undoubtedly coming—but not immediately.' Such a shift in expectations could lead to a relaxed approach toward our theocratic activities. In time, we could begin to neglect our spiritual routine. Jehovah's day could then catch us unawares.—2 Pet. 3:10.

However, false reasoning will not take root in our minds if we constantly prove to ourselves "the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (Rom. 12:2) Regular reading of God's Word is one of the best helps to this end. The Scriptures can strengthen our conviction that Jehovah always acts at the appointed time.—Hab. 2:3.

Our study, prayers, faithful meeting attendance, and preaching, along with loving acts of kindness, will enable us to 'keep close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah.' (2 Pet. 3:11, 12) Jehovah will notice our constancy. The apostle Paul reminds us: "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.

Now is certainly not the time to allow false reasoning to deceive us into thinking that Jehovah's day has been postponed. Rather, it is the time to make our hearts firm, for Jehovah's day has drawn close.

***What if the householder had known  
that the thief was coming?***



## Questions From Readers

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**When Jesus Christ sent out the 12 apostles to preach, were they told to carry staffs and wear sandals?**

Some contend that the three Gospel accounts that report on Jesus' sending out the apostles contradict one another. By comparing these accounts, however, we can reach an interesting conclusion. First, compare what Mark and Luke wrote. Mark's account says: "[Jesus] gave them orders to carry nothing for the trip except a staff alone, no bread, no food pouch, no copper money in their girdle purses, but to bind on sandals, and not to wear two undergarments." (Mark 6: 7-9) Luke recorded: "Carry nothing for the trip, neither staff nor food pouch, nor bread nor silver money; neither have two undergarments." (Luke 9:1-3) Here we note the seeming contradiction. According to Mark, the apostles were told to carry a staff and to bind on sandals, but Luke's record says that they were to carry nothing, not even a staff. Unlike Mark, Luke made no mention of sandals.

To understand what Jesus wanted to convey on this occasion, note the expression common to all three Gospels. In the accounts just quoted as well as at Matthew 10: 5-10, the apostles were told not to wear or to have "two undergarments." Likely, each apostle was wearing one undergarment. So they were not to get another for the trip. Similarly, they were wearing sandals. Mark highlighted the need "to bind on sandals," the sandals they were already wearing. How about staffs? *The Jewish Encyclopedia* notes: "It seems to have been the universal custom among the ancient Hebrews also to carry a staff." (Gen. 32:10) Mark mentioned that the apostles were to "carry nothing

for the trip" except the staff that they had with them when Jesus gave the command. Hence, the Gospel writers were emphasizing Jesus' instruction not to go out of the way to get extra supplies for the trip.

This point is further emphasized by Matthew, who heard Jesus' command on this occasion and recorded it. Jesus said: "Do not *procure* gold or silver or copper for your girdle purses, or a food pouch for the trip, or two undergarments, or sandals or a staff; for the worker deserves his food." (Matt. 10:9, 10) What about the sandals that the apostles were wearing and the staffs that they had in their hands? Jesus did not say to throw away what they already had, but he was telling them not to procure such things. Why did he give such a command? Because "the worker deserves his food." That was the thrust of Jesus' command, which was in harmony with his exhortation in the Sermon on the Mount that they not be anxious about what they would eat, drink, or wear.—Matt. 6:25-32.

Though the Gospel accounts may at first seem to be contradictory, they were all covering the same point. The apostles were to go as they were and not be distracted by procuring anything extra. Why? Because Jehovah would provide for them.



**Who were the “lady, even ladies” to whom Solomon referred?—Eccl. 2:8.**

We cannot be sure, but one possibility is that they were notable women that Solomon encountered at his royal court.

In Ecclesiastes chapter 2, Solomon mentioned various things he had accomplished, including his extensive building projects. He added: “I accumulated also silver and gold for myself, and property peculiar to kings and the jurisdictional districts. I made male singers and female singers for myself and the exquisite delights of the sons of mankind, a lady, even ladies.”—Eccl. 2:8.

Many commentators assume that the “ladies” to whom Solomon was referring were the many foreign wives and concubines that he had in his later years, women who led him into false worship. (1 Ki. 11:1-4) However, there are problems with that explanation. When Solomon wrote these words, he already was acquainted with the “lady, even ladies.” And at that point, he still had Jehovah’s approval, for God was inspiring him to write books of the Bible. That hardly fits his situation in later years when he had hundreds of foreign wives and concubines and he took up false worship.

In the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon said that he had “sought to find the delightful words and the writing of correct words of truth.” (Eccl. 12:10) He obviously knew the words for “wife,” “queen,” and “concubine,” because he used those words in his inspired writings. (Prov. 5:18; 12:4; 18:22; Eccl. 9:9; Song of

Sol. 6:8, 9) But at Ecclesiastes 2:8, those familiar words are not used.

In the words “lady, even ladies,” we find the only instances (singular and plural) in the Bible of an unusual Hebrew word. Scholars admit that its meaning is uncertain. Many Bible translators take the phrase at Ecclesiastes 2:8 to refer to women, expressed in singular and then the plural or superlative degree. The rendering “lady, even ladies” conveys that sense.

Solomon was renowned, so much so that a queen from the wealthy kingdom of Sheba heard of him, visited, and was impressed. (1 Ki. 10:1, 2) That points to one possible meaning to Solomon’s mention of “a lady, even ladies.” He may have been referring to outstanding women whom he encountered at his court during the many years when he still had God’s favor.





# RECEIVE GOD'S SPIRIT, NOT THE WORLD'S

*"We received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God,  
that we might know the things that have been kindly given us by God."*

—1 COR. 2:12.

**T**RUE Christians are at war! Our enemy is powerful, cunning, and battle-hardened. He has at his disposal a weapon so effective that it has subdued the majority of mankind. But we need not feel powerless or doomed to defeat. (Isa. 41:10) We have a defense available to us that is impenetrable and unbeatable.

<sup>2</sup> Our war is not physical; it is spiritual. Our enemy is Satan the Devil, and a prime weapon that he uses is "the spirit of the world." (1 Cor. 2:12) Our key defense against his attacks is God's spirit. To survive this war and remain spiritually vibrant, we need to ask for God's spirit and then display its fruitage in our lives. (Gal. 5:22, 23) What, though, is the spirit of the world, and how did it become so influential? How can we determine whether the spirit of the world is influencing us? And what can we learn from Jesus about receiving God's spirit and resisting the spirit of the world?

## The Spirit of the World —Why So Pervasive?

<sup>3</sup> The spirit of this world originates with Satan, "the ruler of the world," and it is in opposition to God's holy spirit. (John 12:31; 14:30; 1 John 5:19) It is the world's dominant inclination, and it moves people to action. This animating force leads human

society into conflict with God's will and purpose.

<sup>4</sup> How did the spirit that Satan promotes become so pervasive? First, Satan deceived Eve in the garden of Eden. He convinced her that independence from God would improve her life. (Gen. 3:13) What a liar he proved to be! (John 8:44) Then, through the woman, he maneuvered Adam into becoming disloyal to Jehovah. Because of Adam's choice, mankind was sold into sin, thus inheriting a tendency to be influenced by Satan's spirit of disobedience.—**Read Ephesians 2:1-3.**

4, 5. How did the spirit that Satan promotes become so pervasive?

*How did some angels become demons?*



- 1, 2. (a) In what sense are true Christians at war?
- (b) What questions will we consider?
3. What is the spirit of the world?



<sup>5</sup> Satan also influenced a considerable number of angels, who became demons. (Rev. 12:3, 4) That betrayal of God occurred sometime before the Flood of Noah's day. Those angels believed that they would be better off forsaking their assigned positions in heaven and giving free rein to unnatural desires on earth. (Jude 6) With the help of those demons, now back in the spirit realm, Satan is "misleading the entire inhabited earth." (Rev. 12:9) Sadly, the majority of mankind remain blind to demonic influence.—2 Cor. 4:4.

### Is the World's Spirit Influencing You?

<sup>6</sup> Many are blind to Satan's influence, but there is no need for true Christians to be ignorant of his tactics. (2 Cor. 2:11) In fact, the spirit of the world cannot influence us unless we allow it to do so. Let us examine four questions that will help to reveal whether we are being influenced by God's spirit or by that of the world.

<sup>7</sup> *What does my choice of entertainment reveal about me? (Read James 3:14-18.)* Satan tries to alienate us from God by stirring up love of violence in our hearts. The Devil knows that Jehovah hates anyone who loves violence. (Ps. 11:5) Therefore, Satan tries to use literature, movies, music, and electronic games—some of which incite players to simulate gross immorality and brutality—to appeal to our fleshly desires. Satan does not mind if part of our heart is loving what is right as long as part of it loves what is bad, what he promotes.—Ps. 97:10.

<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, God's spirit moves those who receive it to be chaste, peaceable,

and full of mercy. We would do well to ask ourselves, 'Does the entertainment I choose encourage positive qualities in me?' The wisdom from above is "not hypocritical." Those who are influenced by God's spirit do not preach chastity and peace to their neighbors and then revel in watching sadistic violence and immorality in the privacy of their homes.

<sup>9</sup> Jehovah expects exclusive devotion. Satan, though, will settle for just one act of worship, as he sought from Jesus. (Luke 4:7, 8) We might ask ourselves: 'Does the entertainment I choose make it possible for me to give God exclusive devotion? Does my choice make it harder or easier for me to resist the spirit of the world? Should I make any adjustments as to future choices?'

<sup>10</sup> *What is my attitude toward material possessions? (Read Luke 18:24-30.)* The spirit of the world promotes "the desire of the eyes" by encouraging greed and materialism. (1 John 2:16) It has nurtured in many a determination to be rich. (1 Tim. 6:9, 10) That spirit would have us believe that a stockpile of material things will provide lasting security. (Prov. 18:11) However, if we allow a love for money to supplant our love for God, Satan will have gained a victory. We should ask ourselves, 'Has my life become focused on a quest for material comforts and pleasures?'

<sup>11</sup> By contrast, God's spirit-inspired Word encourages us to have a balanced view of money and to work hard to provide material necessities for ourselves and our family. (1 Tim. 5:8) God's spirit helps those who receive it to reflect Jehovah's

6. How only can the spirit of the world infect us?

7. What is one way that Satan tries to alienate us from Jehovah?

8, 9. What questions regarding entertainment should we ask ourselves?

10, 11. (a) Regarding material possessions, what attitude does the spirit of the world promote? (b) God's spirit-inspired Word encourages what attitude?

***Satan uses the spirit of the world to control people, but we can break free of its influence***

generous personality. Such ones are known as givers, not takers. They value people more highly than things and gladly share what they have when they can afford to do so. (Prov. 3:27, 28) And they never allow the pursuit of money to take precedence over serving God.

<sup>12</sup> Which spirit does my personality reflect? (**Read Colossians 3:8-10, 13.**)

The spirit of the world advances the works of the flesh. (Gal. 5:19-21) A real test as to which spirit influences us comes, not when things are going well, but when they are not, such as if a Christian brother or sister ignores us, offends us, or even sins against us. Additionally, in the privacy of our homes, it may become evident which spirit holds sway. Some self-examination may be in order. Ask yourself, ‘Over the past six months, has my personality become more Christlike or have I slipped back into some bad habits of speech and conduct?’

<sup>13</sup> God’s spirit can help us to “strip off the old personality with its practices” and to clothe ourselves with “the new personality.” That will help us to become more loving and kind. We will be inclined to forgive one another freely, even if there seems to be a legitimate cause for complaint. We will no longer react to perceived injustices with outbursts of “malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech.” Instead, we will put forth effort to

12, 13. In contrast with the world’s spirit, how can God’s spirit affect us for our good?



become “tenderly compassionate.”—Eph. 4: 31, 32.

<sup>14</sup> Do I respect and love the Bible’s moral standards? (**Read Proverbs 3:5, 6.**) The spirit of the world reflects rebellion against God’s Word. Those influenced by this spirit ignore what they view as inconvenient parts of the Bible, preferring instead human traditions and philosophies. (2 Tim. 4: 3, 4) Some disregard God’s Word altogether. Such ones question the Bible’s relevance and authenticity, becoming wise in their own eyes. They water down its pure standards regarding adultery, homosexuality, and divorce. They teach that “good is bad and bad is good.” (Isa. 5:20) Have we been affected by this spirit? Do we rely on human wisdom, including our own ideas, when facing problems? Or do we strive to follow the Bible’s advice?

<sup>15</sup> God’s spirit engenders in us a respect for the Bible. Like the psalmist, we view God’s word as both a lamp to our foot and a

14. How do many in the world view God’s Word?

15. Rather than lean on our own wisdom, what should we do?

light to our roadway. (Ps. 119:105) Rather than lean on our own wisdom, we confidently rely on God's written Word to help us discern right from wrong. We learn not only to *respect* the Bible but also to *love* God's law. —Ps. 119:97.

### Learn From Jesus' Example

<sup>16</sup> To receive God's spirit, we must develop in ourselves "the mind of Christ." (1 Cor. 2:16) Having "the same mental attitude that Christ Jesus had" requires our knowing the way he thought and acted and then imitating him. (Rom. 15:5; 1 Pet. 2:21) Consider some ways that we can do so.

<sup>17</sup> *Pray for God's spirit.* Before facing trials, Jesus prayed for God's spirit to help him. (Luke 22:40, 41) We too need to ask God for his holy spirit. Jehovah gives it freely and generously to all who ask for it in faith. (Luke 11:13) Jesus said: "Keep on asking, and it will be given you; keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and it will be opened to you. For everyone asking receives, and everyone seeking finds, and to everyone knocking it will be opened." —Matt. 7:7, 8.

<sup>18</sup> When seeking Jehovah's spirit and help, do not be too quick to stop asking for it. We may need to pray more often and to linger in prayer. At times, Jehovah allows his petitioners to demonstrate the depth of their concern and the genuineness of their faith before he answers their prayers.\*

<sup>19</sup> *Obey Jehovah completely.* Jesus always did the things pleasing to his Father. On at

\* For more information, see pages 170-173 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach*?

16. What is involved in having "the mind of Christ"?

17, 18. (a) What do we learn from Jesus about prayer? (b) Why should we "keep on asking"?

19. What did Jesus always do, and why should we imitate him?

least one occasion, Jesus' inclination on how to deal with a situation was different from what his Father wanted. Yet, with confidence he said to his Father: "Let, not my will, but yours take place." (Luke 22:42) Ask yourself, 'Do I obey God even when doing so is not easy?' Obedience to God is essential for life. We owe him implicit obedience as our Maker, the Source and Sustainer of our life. (Ps. 95:6, 7) There is no substitute for obedience. We cannot gain God's favor without it.

<sup>20</sup> *Know the Bible well.* When resisting Satan's direct attack on his faith, Jesus quoted the Scriptures. (Luke 4:1-13) When confronting his religious opposers, Jesus used God's Word as his authority. (Matt. 15:3-6) Jesus' whole life revolved around knowing and fulfilling God's law. (Matt. 5:17) We too want to keep feeding our mind with the faith-strengthening Word of God. (Phil. 4:8, 9) Finding time for personal and family study may prove to be a challenge for some of us. Rather than *find* time, though, we may have to *make* time.—Eph. 5:15-17.

<sup>21</sup> "The faithful and discreet slave" has helped us to have time for personal and family study by arranging for a Family Worship evening each week. (Matt. 24:45)

20. Jesus' life revolved around what, and how can we imitate him?

21. What arrangement can we use to help us know God's Word better and apply it?

### Do You Remember?

- Why is the spirit of the world so pervasive?
- What four questions should we ask ourselves?
- What are three things we learn from Jesus about receiving God's spirit?

Are you making wise use of this arrangement? To help you gain the mind of Christ, could you include in your study session a systematic consideration of what Jesus taught on subjects of your choice? You could use the *Watch Tower Publications Index* to locate informative discussions of the subject you are pursuing. For example, from 2008 to 2010, the public edition of this magazine carried a series of 12 articles that had the theme “What We Learn From Jesus.” You may want to use these articles as a basis for study. Beginning in 2006, *Awake!* carried the feature “How Would You Answer?” This quiz was designed to help broaden and deepen your knowledge of God’s Word. Why not include material from such features in your Family Worship program from time to time?

### We Can Conquer the World

<sup>22</sup> To be led by God’s spirit, we must resist the spirit of the world. Such resistance does not come easily. It can be a struggle, a hard fight. (Jude 3) But we can win! Jesus said to his disciples: “In the world you are having tribulation, but take courage! I have conquered the world.”—John 16:33.

<sup>23</sup> We too can conquer the world if we resist its spirit and do all we can to receive God’s spirit. Really, “if God is for us, who will be against us?” (Rom. 8:31) By receiving God’s spirit and by following its direction as outlined in the Bible, we will find contentment, peace, happiness, and the assurance of everlasting life in the new world near at hand.

22, 23. What must we do to conquer the world?

## TRUST IN JEHOVAH AS THE END DRAWS NEAR

*“Trust in Jehovah, you people, for all times.”—ISA. 26:4.*

**W**E LIVE in a world where millions no longer know whom or what to trust, perhaps because they have been hurt or disappointed too many times. What a contrast to Jehovah’s servants! Guided by godly wisdom, they know better than to place their trust in this world or its “nobles.” (Ps. 146:3) Rather, they place their lives and their future in Jehovah’s hands, knowing that he loves them and that he always fulfills his Word.—Rom. 3:4; 8:38, 39.

1. What contrast is there between God’s servants and people in the world?

<sup>2</sup> Joshua of old attested to God’s trustworthiness. Toward the end of his life, he said to his fellow Israelites: “You well know with all your hearts and with all your souls that not one word out of all the good words that Jehovah your God has spoken to you has failed. They have all come true for you.”—Josh. 23:14.

<sup>3</sup> Jehovah fulfills his promises, not just out of love for his servants but especially for the sake of his own name. (Ex. 3:

2. How did Joshua attest to God’s trustworthiness?  
3. God’s name reveals what about him?



14; 1 Sam. 12:22) Concerning the divine name, the introduction to *The Emphasized Bible*, by J. B. Rotherham, states: “[It] becomes a most gracious promise; the Divine capacity of adaptation to any circumstances, any difficulties, any necessities that may arise . . . [It is] a promise, . . . a revelation, a memorial, a pledge. To this Name, God will ever be faithful; of it He will never be ashamed.”

<sup>4</sup> Ask yourself: ‘Do I know Jehovah well enough to have absolute trust in him? Do I face the future with confidence, knowing that God is in full control?’ Says Isaiah 26:4: “Trust in Jehovah, you people, for all times, for in Jah Jehovah is the Rock of times indefinite.” Granted, God does not now miraculously intervene in people’s lives as he did on occasion in Bible times. Nevertheless, as “the Rock of times indefinite,” he can be trusted “for all times.” How does our trustworthy God assist his faithful worshippers today? Let us consider three ways: He strengthens us when we seek his help to resist temptation, he supports us when we have to deal with apathy or outright opposition, and he buoys us up when anxieties weigh us down. As we examine these areas, be sure to reflect on how you can strengthen your trust in Jehovah.

### Trust in God When Tempted to Do Wrong

<sup>5</sup> It is one thing to trust in Jehovah when it comes to his promise of Paradise or the resurrection—things for which we yearn. But it may be an entirely different thing to trust in

4. (a) What does Isaiah 26:4 exhort us to do?
- (b) What will we consider in this article?
5. As to our trust in God, where may a great test lie?



***Holding to God’s standards leads to happiness***

him in moral matters, to be thoroughly convinced at heart that submitting to his ways and standards is right and will lead to the greatest happiness. King Solomon wrote this admonition: “Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight.” (Prov. 3:5, 6) Note the reference to our “ways” and “paths.” Yes, our whole way of life—not just our Christian hope—should reflect our trust in God. How can we show that trust when temptations arise?

<sup>6</sup> Turning away from bad begins in the mind. (***Read Romans 8:5; Ephesians 2:3.***) How, then, can you strengthen your resolve to reject bad thoughts? Consider these five ways: 1. Seek God’s help through prayer. (Matt. 6:9, 13) 2. Meditate on Bible examples of those who failed to listen to Jehovah and those who listened. Then note how things turned out for them.\* (1 Cor. 10:8-11) 3. Reflect on the mental and emotional harm

\* See pages 102-106 of the book “Keep Yourselves in God’s Love.”

6. How can we strengthen our resolve to reject bad thoughts?

that sin can cause to you and to your loved ones. 4. Think how God must feel when one of his servants falls into gross sin. (**Read Psalm 78:40, 41.**) 5. Imagine the joy that fills Jehovah's heart when he sees a loyal worshipper reject bad and do what is right, whether in public or in private. (Ps. 15:1, 2; Prov. 27:11) You too can show you trust in Jehovah.

### **Trust in God When Facing Apathy and Opposition**

<sup>7</sup> Many of our brothers serve in territories where endurance is a special challenge. The prophet Jeremiah served in such an environment—the kingdom of Judah during its tumultuous last days. Daily he was buffeted by tests of faith because he obediently announced God's judgment messages. At one point, even his loyal secretary, Baruch, complained of weariness. (Jer. 45:2, 3) Did Jeremiah give in to discouragement? Well, on occasion, he did feel depressed. "Cursed be the day on which I was born!" he exclaimed. "Why is it that I have come forth from the very womb in order to see hard work and grief and that my days should come to their end in mere shame?"—Jer. 20:14, 15, 18.

<sup>8</sup> Yet, Jeremiah did not give up. He continued to trust in Jehovah. As a result, this faithful prophet experienced the fulfillment of Jehovah's own words recorded at Jeremiah 17:7, 8: "Blessed is the able-bodied man who puts his trust in Jehovah, and whose confidence Jehovah has become. And he will certainly become like a tree planted by the waters, that sends out its roots right by the watercourse; and he will not see when heat comes, but his foliage will actually prove to be luxuriant. And in the year of drought he

will not become anxious, nor will he leave off from producing fruit."

<sup>9</sup> Like a luxuriant fruit tree "planted by the waters" or in an irrigated orchard, Jeremiah never 'left off from producing fruit.' He refused to be influenced by the wicked ridiculers around him. Rather, he stuck to the Source of life-sustaining "water" and took to heart everything Jehovah told him. (**Read Psalm 1:1-3;** Jer. 20:9) What a fine example Jeremiah is for us, especially those of us who serve God in difficult territories! If that is your situation, continue to rely heavily on Jehovah, who will grant you endurance as you "make public declaration to his name."—Heb. 13:15.

<sup>10</sup> To help us cope with life during these last days, Jehovah has given us a truly verdant spiritual estate. Among other things, he has provided the complete Word of God, which is being accurately translated into more and more languages. He has made available an abundance of timely spiritual food through the faithful and discreet slave class. And he has given us the supportive companionship of a vast throng of fellow believers at meetings and assemblies. Do you take full advantage of these provisions? All who do "will cry out joyfully because of the good condition of the heart." However, those who fail to listen to God "will make outcries because of the pain of heart and . . . will howl because of the sheer breakdown of spirit."—Isa. 65:13, 14.

### **Trust in God When Dealing With Anxieties**

<sup>11</sup> As foretold, a rising flood of woes is affecting mankind. (Matt. 24:6-8; Rev. 12:12)

10. What blessings do we have, and what should we ask ourselves?

11, 12. In view of the world's problems, what is the course of true wisdom?

7. What tests did Jeremiah face, and how did he at times feel?

8, 9. In line with Jeremiah 17:7, 8 and Psalm 1:1-3, what must we do to continue bearing good fruit?



*"Jehovah is the Rock of times indefinite"*

When literal flooding occurs, a common reaction is to run to higher ground or to climb onto the roof of a building—anywhere of higher elevation. Similarly, as the world's problems mount, millions seek refuge in seemingly lofty financial, political, or religious institutions, as well as in science and technology. But none of these give real security. (Jer. 17:5, 6) Jehovah's servants, on the other hand, do have a sure refuge—"the Rock of times indefinite." (Isa. 26:4) The psalmist stated: "[Jehovah] is my rock and my salvation, my secure height." (**Read Psalm 62:6-9.**) How do we make this Rock our refuge?

<sup>12</sup> We cling to Jehovah when we heed his Word, which often runs contrary to human wisdom. (Ps. 73:23, 24) For instance, people influenced by human wisdom may say: 'You have only one life; make the most of it.' 'Pursue a good career.' 'Make a lot of money.' 'Buy this, buy that.' 'Travel; enjoy the world.' Godly wisdom, on the other hand, is in line with the advice: "[Let] those making use of the world [be] as those *not* using it to the full; for the scene of this world is changing." (1 Cor. 7:31) Likewise, Jesus exhorts

us always to put Kingdom interests first and thereby store up "treasures in heaven," where they will be absolutely secure.—Matt. 6:19, 20.

<sup>13</sup> Does your attitude toward "the world" and "the things in the world" reflect your complete trust in God? (1 John 2:15-17) Are spiritual riches and privileges of Kingdom service more desirable and important to you than the things the world offers? (Phil. 3:8) Do you strive to maintain a 'simple eye'? (Matt. 6:22) Of course, God does not want you to be imprudent or irresponsible, especially if you have a family to care for. (1 Tim. 5:8) But he does expect his servants to trust fully in him—not in Satan's dying world.—Heb. 13:5.

<sup>14</sup> Consider the example of Richard and Ruth, parents of three young children. "My heart was telling me that I could do more for Jehovah," says Richard. "I had a comfortable life but felt that I was just giving God my surplus, as it were. After praying about the matter and counting the cost, Ruth and I agreed that I would ask my supervisor for a reduced work schedule of four days a week—even though the country was in the middle of an economic crisis. My request was approved, and I started working the new schedule within one month." How does Richard feel now?

<sup>15</sup> "I get 20 percent less pay than before," he says, "but now I have an extra 50 days a year to be with my family and train the children. I have been able to double my time in field service, triple my number of Bible studies, and take a greater lead in the congregation. And because I am more available to

13. With 1 John 2:15-17 in mind, what should we ask ourselves?

14-16. How have some benefited by maintaining a 'simple eye' and keeping Kingdom interests in first place?

help with the children, Ruth has been able to auxiliary pioneer from time to time. I am determined to maintain this schedule for as long as possible.”

<sup>16</sup> Roy and Petina, who still have a daughter at home, were able to cut back their secular work so as to share in the ministry full-time. “I work three days a week,” says Roy, “and Petina works two. Also, we moved from a house to an apartment, which is much easier to care for. We pioneered before we had our son and daughter, and we never lost the desire to pioneer. So when our children had grown up, we got back into the full-time ministry. No amount of money can compare with the blessings we have received.”

### **Let “the Peace of God” Guard Your Heart**

<sup>17</sup> None of us know what tomorrow may bring, for “time and unforeseen occurrence” befall us all. (Eccl. 9:11) However, uncertainty about tomorrow need not rob us of peace of mind today, as it often does those who lack the security of a warm relationship with God. (Matt. 6:34) The apostle Paul wrote: “Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers.” —Phil. 4:6, 7.

17. In view of life’s uncertainties, how have the Scriptures comforted you?

### **Can You Explain?**

How can we trust in God

- when tempted to do wrong?
- when facing apathy or opposition?
- when dealing with anxieties?

<sup>18</sup> Many brothers and sisters in trying situations have experienced inner calm and peace from Jehovah. Says one sister: “A surgeon repeatedly tried to intimidate me into accepting a blood transfusion. ‘What’s this nonsense about no blood?’ was one of his first ‘greetings.’ Then and at other times, I prayed silently to Jehovah, and his peace came over me. I felt like a rock. Despite weakness from my low blood count, I was able to give clear Scriptural reasons for my stand.”

<sup>19</sup> God may at times provide needed support by means of a comforting fellow believer or by spiritual food at the right time. You have likely heard a brother or a sister say: “This article is just what I needed. It was written just for me!” Yes, no matter what our circumstances or need may be, Jehovah will prove his love for us if we trust in him. After all, we are his “sheep,” and he has placed his name upon us.—Ps. 100:3; John 10:16; Acts 15:14, 17.

<sup>20</sup> During the rapidly approaching “day of Jehovah’s fury,” everything in which Satan’s world puts its trust will come crashing down. Gold, silver, and other valuable things will provide no security whatsoever. (Zeph. 1:18; Prov. 11:4) The only refuge will be our “Rock of times indefinite.” (Isa. 26:4) So let us demonstrate our full trust in Jehovah now by walking obediently in his righteous ways, by proclaiming his Kingdom message despite our having to face apathy or opposition, and by rolling all our anxieties on him. As we do these things, we truly will “reside in security and be undisturbed from dread of calamity.” —Prov. 1:33.

18, 19. In what ways does God comfort us? Illustrate.

20. Why will Jehovah’s servants reside in security when Satan’s world comes to its end?



# You Have Cause for Rejoicing

FROM the tiniest living cell to colossal galaxies grouped into clusters and superclusters, creation reflects organization. This is hardly surprising, for the Creator ‘is not a God of disorder.’ (1 Cor. 14:33) God’s arrangement for worship is also impressive. Consider what Jehovah has done. He has formed into one universal organization hundreds of millions of intelligent creatures—physical as well as spiritual—having free will, united in pure worship. How magnificent!

In ancient Israel, the earthly part of God’s organization was symbolized by Jerusalem, where Jehovah’s temple was located and his anointed king resided. One Israelite captive in Babylon expressed his feelings toward the holy city this way: “Let my tongue stick to my palate, if I were not to remember you, if I were not to make Jerusalem ascend above my chief cause for rejoicing.”—Ps. 137:6.

Is that how you feel about God’s organization today? Does it bring more joy to you than anything else? Do your children understand the history and function of the earthly part of God’s organization? Do they appreciate that they are part of a worldwide brotherhood of Jehovah’s Witnesses? (1 Pet. 2:17) Why not implement the following suggestions in your Family Worship evening in order to enhance your family’s appreciation for Jehovah’s organization?

## Recount “the Days of Long Ago”

Each year, Israelite families assembled to celebrate the Passover. When the festival

was instituted, Moses instructed the people: “In case your son should inquire of you later on, saying, ‘What does this mean?’ then you must say to him, ‘By strength of hand Jehovah brought us out of Egypt, from the house of slaves.’” (Ex. 13:14) Jehovah’s dealings with the Israelites were not to be forgotten history. Certainly, many Israelite fathers followed Moses’ command. Generations later, one Israelite prayed: “O God, with our ears we have heard, our forefathers themselves have recounted to us the activity that you performed in their days, in the days of long ago.”—Ps. 44:1.

To a young person today, the history of Jehovah’s Witnesses over the last 100 years or so may also seem like “the days of long ago.” How can you bring these events to life for your offspring? To do so, some parents use *Jehovah’s Witnesses—Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom*, the *Yearbook*, life stories published in our journals, and other reports of theocratic history, including our new DVD about God’s people in modern times. Videos relating the persecution of our brothers in the former Soviet Union and Nazi Germany teach families to rely on Jehovah during trials. Include such material for your Family Worship evening. That will bolster the faith of your children in case they face challenges to their integrity.

A lecture about history, however, may quickly bore young minds. So get your children involved. For example, you might ask your son to choose a country that interests him, research the theocratic history of that



## God's Organization A Worthy Topic for Study

We have abundant provisions to help all to learn more about the history and operation of Jehovah's organization. The following questions may help you to get started:



**How did the work of modern-day traveling overseers get started?**—*Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, pages 222-227.



**What was significant about "Children's Day" at the 1941 Theocratic Assembly?**—*Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, pages 86, 88.



**How does the Governing Body make decisions?**—*"Bearing Thorough Witness" About God's Kingdom*, pages 108-114.





land, and present some of what he learned to his family. In your congregation, there may be Christians with a long record of faithful service who might join you for family worship one evening. Perhaps your daughter could interview them and draw them out, having them tell their experiences. Or you can have your child draw pictures of theocratic milestones, such as the construction of a branch, an international convention, or the use of a phonograph in the house-to-house ministry.

### **Learn How “Each Part Does Its Work”**

The apostle Paul compared the Christian congregation to “the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, [which] grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” (Eph. 4:16, *New International Version*) Learning about how the human body functions increases our appreciation and respect for our Creator. Similarly, when we examine how the worldwide congregation operates, we marvel at “the greatly diversified wisdom of God.”—Eph. 3:10.

Jehovah describes how his organization, including its heavenly part, operates. For example, he tells us that he first gave a revelation to Jesus Christ, who then “sent forth his angel and presented it in signs through him to his slave John, who bore witness.” (Rev. 1: 1, 2) If God reveals how the invisible part of his organization functions, would he not want us to understand how “each part does its work” on earth?

For instance, if the circuit overseer will soon visit your congregation, why not consider with your family the duties and privileges of traveling overseers? How do they help each one of us? Other questions that might be considered include: Why is it important to report field service? How is God’s organization financed? How is the Govern-

ing Body organized, and how does it provide spiritual food?

When we understand how Jehovah’s people are organized, we benefit in at least three ways: Our appreciation is enhanced for those who work hard in our behalf. (1 Thess. 5:12, 13) We are motivated to support theocratic arrangements. (Acts 16:4, 5) Finally, our trust in those taking the lead is strengthened as we see the Scriptural basis for decisions and arrangements made.—Heb. 13:7.

### **“Inspect Its Dwelling Towers”**

“March around Zion, you people, and go about it, count its towers. Set your hearts upon its rampart. Inspect its dwelling towers, in order that you may recount it to the future generation.” (Ps. 48:12, 13) The psalmist there urged the Israelites to see Jerusalem up close. Can you imagine the precious memories shared by Israelite families who had traveled to the holy city for annual festivals and had seen its magnificent temple? They must have been moved to “recount it to the future generation.”

Think of the queen of Sheba, who was at first skeptical of reports of Solomon’s splendid rule and great wisdom. What convinced her that the things she had heard were true? “I did not put faith in their words,” she said, “until I had come that my own eyes might see.” (2 Chron. 9:6) Yes, what we see with our “own eyes” can affect us deeply.

How can you help your children to see the wonders of Jehovah’s organization with their “own eyes”? If there is a branch office of Jehovah’s Witnesses near your home, make an effort to visit it. Mandy and Bethany, for example, grew up some 900 miles (1,500 km) from the Bethel home in their country. Yet, their parents planned frequent trips to tour its facilities, especially while their daughters were growing up. “Before we

toured Bethel, we thought it was rather stiff and only for old people,” they explain. “But we met young people who were working hard for Jehovah and enjoying it! We saw that Jehovah’s organization was more than just the little area where we lived, and each visit to Bethel gave us a dose of spiritual energy.” Seeing God’s organization up close motivated Mandy and Bethany to start pioneering, and they were even invited to serve at Bethel as temporary volunteers.

We have another way to “see” Jehovah’s organization, a way that was unavailable to ancient Israel. In recent years, God’s people have received videos and DVDs that take up various features of God’s organization, such as: *Jehovah’s Witnesses—Organized to Share*

*the Good News, Our Whole Association of Brothers, To the Ends of the Earth, and United by Divine Teaching.* When you and your family see the hard work of Bethelites, relief workers, missionaries, and brothers who prepare and organize conventions, appreciation for the worldwide brotherhood will surely grow in your heart.

Every congregation of God’s people plays an important role in preaching the good news and supporting Christians in its locality. However, take time with your family to remember “the *entire* association of your brothers in the world.” This will help you and your children to remain “solid in the faith,” recognizing that you have cause for rejoicing.—1 Pet. 5:9.

## Never Forsake Your Fellow Believers

“FOR ten years, we were mesmerized by the glittering lights of the business world, enjoying considerable wealth. Although we were raised in the truth, we had strayed too far and had no spiritual strength to return,” relate Jarosław and his wife, Beata.\*

Another brother, Marek, recalls: “Because of social and political changes in Poland, I lost job after job. I was frustrated. I had been afraid to start my own company because I did not have a flair for business. Finally, I was tempted to start one, thinking this would

help me to take better care of my family’s material needs without any negative impact on my spirituality. In time, I found out how wrong I was.”

In a world where the cost of living is rising relentlessly and unemployment is increasing steadily, some individuals become desperate and, as a result, make unwise decisions. A number of brothers have decided to accept overtime work, to take on additional employment, or to start their own business even though lacking experience. They presume that the extra income will help the

\* Some names have been changed.



family and cause no spiritual harm. Yet, unforeseen circumstances and the unstable economy can disrupt even well-motivated plans. As a result, some have fallen into the trap of greed and have sacrificed spiritual interests in favor of material ones.—Eccl. 9: 11, 12.

Some brothers and sisters have become so engrossed in worldly pursuits that they no longer have time for personal study, meetings, or the ministry. Clearly, such neglect causes harm to their spirituality and to their relationship with Jehovah. They may

help.’ (Job 29:12) Some may lack basic material sustenance. The apostle John reminded us of the opportunity that this presents. “Whoever has this world’s means for supporting life and beholds his brother having need and yet shuts the door of his tender compassions upon him, in what way does the love of God remain in him?”—1 John 3:17.

You may have responded to such needs and extended generous help to others. Yet, our interest in the brotherhood is not limited to material assistance. Some may cry

for help because they are lonely or discouraged. They may feel unworthy, suffer from a serious illness, or have experienced the death of a loved one. One way that we can encourage them is by listening to and talking with them, thus being sensitive to their emotional and spiritual needs. (1 Thess. 5: 14) This often further cements the bond of love with our brothers.

Spiritual shepherds may especially be in a position to listen with

empathy, show understanding, and provide loving Scriptural counsel. (Acts 20:28) In that way overseers imitate the apostle Paul, who had “tender affection” for his spiritual brothers and sisters.—1 Thess. 2:7, 8.

However, if a Christian strays from the flock, what happens to his obligation to his fellow believers? Not even overseers are immune to the temptation of materialistic pursuits. What if a Christian should succumb to such a temptation?



*Does your secular work interfere with your meeting attendance?*

also abandon another important relationship—their bond with those ‘related to them in the faith.’ (Gal. 6:10) Some gradually withdraw from the Christian brotherhood. Consider seriously this aspect of the matter.

### **Our Obligation Toward Fellow Believers**

As brothers and sisters, we have many occasions to show tender feelings toward one another. (Rom. 13:8) In your congregation, you have likely seen ‘afflicted ones crying for

### **Weighed Down by Life's Anxieties**

As noted, toiling to fill our family's basic physical needs often brings anxieties and can weaken our view of spiritual values. (Matt. 13:22) Marek, mentioned earlier, explains: "When my business failed, I decided to find a well-paying job abroad. I left just for three months, then for another three months, and so on, with short intervals back home. My unbelieving wife suffered emotionally from that."

Family life was not the only thing that suffered. "In addition to long hours of work in oppressive heat," continues Marek, "I was exposed to vulgar people who were striving to exploit others. They acted like common gangsters. I felt depressed and dominated. Not even having time to take care of myself, I began to doubt my ability to serve others."

The sad consequences of Marek's decision should move us to stop and think. Even if it seems that moving abroad would solve financial difficulties, would it not create other problems? For instance, what would happen to the spiritual and emotional well-being of our family? Would such a move lead to the severing of our ties with the congregation? Would it not deprive us of the privilege of ministering to fellow believers? —1 Tim. 3:2-5.

As you probably realize, though, a person does not have to work outside of his home country to become engrossed in secular work. Consider Jarosław and Beata. "It all started innocently enough," he says. "As newlyweds, we opened a small hot-dog stand in a good location. Swelling profits encouraged us to expand our business. But we had little time, so we missed Christian meetings. Before long, I gave up pioneering and serving as a ministerial servant. Excited over the profits we were making, we opened

a large shop and entered into a partnership with an unbeliever. Soon I was traveling abroad to sign contracts worth millions of dollars. I was rarely at home, and the family bond with my wife and my daughter deteriorated. Finally, the booming business lulled us to sleep spiritually. Cut off from the congregation, we did not spare a thought for our brothers."

What lesson can we learn from this? The desire to create a private "paradise" can ensnare a Christian, resulting in complacency—even the loss of "his outer garments," his Christian identity. (Rev. 16:15) That could cut us off from the brothers whom we previously were in a position to help.

### **Make an Honest Evaluation**

'That wouldn't happen to me,' we might be inclined to think. Yet, we all do well to consider seriously how much is really needed in life. "We have brought nothing into the world, and neither can we carry anything out," wrote Paul. "So, having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things." (1 Tim. 6:7, 8) Granted, the standard of living varies from country to country. What may be considered the bare minimum in a developed country may be considered a luxury in many other lands.

Whatever the standard where we live, consider Paul's next words: "Those who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many senseless and hurtful desires, which plunge men into destruction and ruin." (1 Tim. 6:9) A snare is hidden from the prey. It is designed to catch the victim by surprise. How can we avoid being ensnared by "hurtful desires"?

Establishing priorities can move us to find more time for Kingdom interests, including personal study. Such prayerful study can

help a Christian to become “fully competent, completely equipped” to assist others. —2 Tim. 2:15; 3:17.

Over the course of a few years, loving elders worked to build up and encourage Jarosław. He was moved to make radical changes. He says: “In one crucial conversation, the elders quoted the Scriptural example of a rich young man who wanted to live forever but who was not willing to give up his material possessions. Then they tactfully raised the issue of whether this information might apply to me. That was a real eye-opener!”—Prov. 11:28; Mark 10:17-22.

Jarosław evaluated his situation honestly and decided to end his involvement in big business. Within two years, he and his family regained their spiritual health. He is now serving his brothers as an elder. Jarosław says: “When brothers become engrossed in business to the point of neglecting their spirituality, I use my own example to illustrate how unwise it is to become unevenly yoked with unbelievers. It is not easy to resist tempting offers and to keep away from dishonest practices.”—2 Cor. 6:14.

Marek too learned a lesson the hard way. Though a well-paying job abroad helped his family financially, his relationship with God and his brothers suffered. In time, he redefined his priorities. “Over the years, my situation resembled the one of Baruch of old who ‘kept seeking great things for himself.’ Finally, I poured out my heart, telling Jehovah of my anxieties, and now I feel that I have regained spiritual balance.” (Jer. 45:1-5) Marek is now reaching out for the “fine



*Do you value your opportunities to help your spiritual brothers and sisters?*



work” of an overseer in the congregation. —1 Tim. 3:1.

Marek gives this warning for those who might consider traveling abroad in search of a better-paying job: “When abroad, it is very easy to fall into the traps of this wicked world. Poor knowledge of the local language hinders communication with others. You may return home with money, but you also have spiritual wounds that can take a long time to heal.”

Maintaining the balance between secular employment and our obligation to our brothers will help us to please Jehovah. And we can provide a living example that may motivate others to make a wise decision. Those who are weighed down need support, compassion, and the good example of their brothers and sisters. Congregation elders and other mature ones can help fellow believers to maintain their balance and avoid being consumed by life’s anxieties.—Heb. 13:7.

Yes, may we never forsake our fellow believers by becoming engrossed in our secular job. (Phil. 1:10) Instead, let us be “rich toward God” as we put Kingdom interests first in our life.—Luke 12:21.

# PROVE YOURSELF READY!

*“Prove yourselves ready, because at an hour that you do not think to be it, the Son of man is coming.”—MATT. 24:44.*

FOR years, a noted performer entertained audiences by interacting peacefully with his trained Bengal tigers. He said: “When an animal gives you its trust, you feel like you have been given the most beautiful gift in the world.” But on October 3, 2003, that trust ended. For no apparent reason, one of his animals, a 380-pound (172 kg) white tiger, attacked him. That attack was totally unexpected, and the trainer was not prepared.

<sup>2</sup> It is of interest to note that the Bible foretells an attack of a “wild beast,” and we need to be ready. (***Read Revelation 17:15-18.***) Whom does this beast attack? In a stunning plot twist, the Devil’s world becomes divided against itself. The scarlet-colored wild beast represents the United Nations, and “the ten horns” represent all the political powers. These will turn on the harlotlike Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, and violently destroy her. When will this event occur? We do not know the day and the hour. (Matt. 24:36) We do know that it will be at an hour when we do not expect it and that the time left before this attack is reduced. (Matt. 24:44; 1 Cor. 7:29) It is vital, then, that we keep ourselves spiritually ready so that when that attack occurs and Christ comes as Executioner, he will also prove to be our Deliverer! (Luke 21:28) To achieve this state of readiness, we can learn from faithful servants of God who

1, 2. (a) What events foretold in Bible prophecy can be compared to an attack by a tiger? (b) How does the coming attack affect you?

proved themselves ready and thus became eyewitnesses of the fulfillment of God’s promises. Will we take these real-life experiences to heart?

## Prove Yourself Ready—Like Noah

<sup>3</sup> Despite the sickening conditions that prevailed on earth during his lifetime, Noah proved himself ready to see the fulfillment of God’s promise. Imagine the challenges Noah had to face as rebel angels materialized in human form and cohabited with attractive women! These unnatural unions produced superhuman offspring, “mighty ones” who used their superior power to bully others. (Gen. 6:4) Think of the violence that was fomented as these giants caused havoc wherever they went. Consequently, wickedness prevailed and man’s thinking and behavior became thoroughly depraved. The Sovereign Lord Jehovah then issued a divine decree that marked the beginning of the end for that ungodly world.—***Read Genesis 6:3, 5, 11, 12.***\*

<sup>4</sup> Jesus prophesied that the conditions in our day would be similar to those in the days of Noah. (Matt. 24:37) For example, we also witness interference by wicked spirits. (Rev. 12:7-9, 12) These demon angels materialized in the days of Noah. Although

\* As to the “hundred and twenty years” mentioned at Genesis 6:3, see *The Watchtower*, December 15, 2010, page 30.

3. What conditions made it challenging for Noah to serve God faithfully?

4, 5. In what ways are conditions in our day similar to those of Noah’s day?



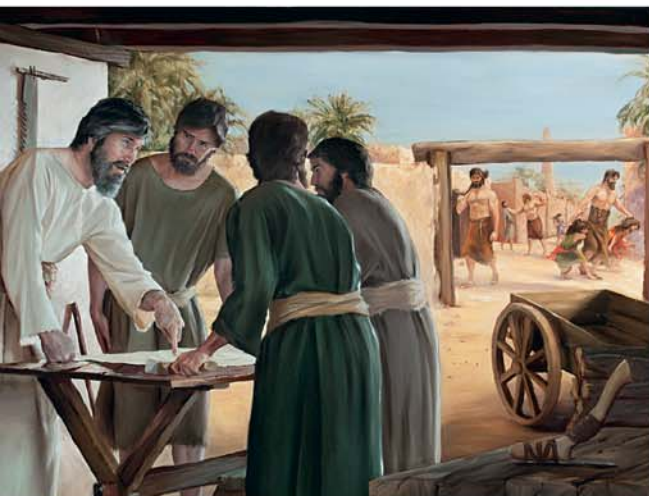
they are now barred from materializing as humans, they endeavor to control young and old alike. Behind the scenes, these sex perverts derive pleasure from the evil and debased actions of those whom they can corrupt on the earth.—Eph. 6:11, 12.

<sup>5</sup> God's Word describes the Devil as "a manslayer" and says that he has "the means to cause death." (John 8:44; Heb. 2:14) His power is limited when it comes to causing death directly. Nonetheless, this vicious spirit fosters deceit and seduction. He plants murderous attitudes in the hearts and minds of people. For example, 1 out of every 142 children born in the United States will become a murder victim. With senseless violence so prevalent, do you think that Jehovah will take less notice today than he did in Noah's day? Will he fail to act?

<sup>6</sup> In due time, Noah was informed of God's decision to bring a deluge of waters upon the earth, bringing all flesh to ruin. (Gen. 6:13, 17) Jehovah instructed Noah to

6, 7. How did Noah and his family demonstrate faith and godly fear?

*Noah and his family  
kept focused on Jehovah's work*



build an ark shaped like a huge chest. Noah and his family went to work. What helped them to obey and prove themselves ready when God's judgment arrived?

<sup>7</sup> Deep faith and godly fear moved Noah and his family to do as God commanded. (Gen. 6:22; Heb. 11:7) As family head, Noah stayed alert spiritually and avoided the corruption of that ancient world. (Gen. 6:9) He knew that his family needed to guard against adopting the violent ways and defiant attitude of the people around them. It was important that they not become engrossed in the everyday affairs of life. God had a work for them to do, and it was vital that the entire family center their lives on it.—***Read Genesis 6:14, 18.***

#### **Noah and His Family Proved Ready**

<sup>8</sup> The Bible account focuses attention on the family head Noah, but Noah's wife and his sons and their wives were also worshippers of Jehovah. The prophet Ezekiel confirmed this. He said that if Noah were living in Ezekiel's time, his children would not be delivered on the basis of their father's righteousness. They were old enough to obey or disobey. Therefore, they had personally given evidence of their love for God and his ways. (Ezek. 14:19, 20) Noah's family accepted his instruction, shared his faith, and did not allow the influence of others to hinder their God-given work.

<sup>9</sup> How encouraging today to see within our worldwide brotherhood family heads who are doing their utmost to imitate Noah! They realize that it is not enough to provide food, clothing, shelter, and education for their families. They must also

8. What indicates that the members of Noah's family practiced godly devotion?

9. We can point to what modern-day examples of Noahlike faith?

*God's sure promises helped  
Moses to remain watchful*

care for their spiritual needs. In doing so, they are proving themselves ready for what Jehovah will soon do.

<sup>10</sup> Noah, his wife, his sons, and their wives may have worked on building the ark for some 50 years. As they built the ark, they must have gone in and out of it hundreds of times. They water-proofed it, stocked it with food, and brought in the animals. Picture the scene. The big day finally arrives. It is the 17th day of the second month of the year 2370 B.C.E., and they go into the ark. Jehovah shuts the door, and it begins to rain. This is no mere local flood. The water canopy, or heavenly ocean, bursts open, and a torrential downpour pounds the ark. (Gen. 7:11, 16) People outside the ark are dying while those inside are being saved. What might Noah's family have felt? Profound gratitude to God, yes. But undoubtedly they thought, 'How glad we are that we walked with the true God and proved ourselves ready!' (Gen. 6:9) Can you picture yourself on the other side of Armageddon, your heart swelling with similar appreciation?

<sup>11</sup> Nothing can stop the Almighty from fulfilling his promise to bring an end to this satanic system of things. Ask yourself, 'Do I have absolute confidence that none of God's promises will fail even in the slightest detail and that all of them will be fulfilled at his appointed time?' If so, prove yourself

10, 11. (a) While inside the ark, how did Noah and his family undoubtedly feel? (b) What question do we do well to ask ourselves?



ready by keeping close in mind that fast-approaching "day of Jehovah."—2 Pet. 3:12.

### Moses Remained Alert

<sup>12</sup> Let us consider another example. From a fleshly viewpoint, Moses seemed to be in an exceedingly advantageous position in the Egyptian world. As the adopted son of Pharaoh's daughter, likely he was highly esteemed and enjoyed the finest of foods, the best of clothing, and the most luxurious of surroundings. He received an extensive education. (**Read Acts 7:20-22.**) He may have been in line to inherit a magnificent estate.

<sup>13</sup> Apparently, early training by his parents allowed Moses to discern the folly of idol worship practiced by the Egyptians. (Ex. 32:8) The educational system of Egypt and the material splendor of the royal house did not cause Moses to abandon true worship. He must have pondered deeply over God's promises to his forefathers and had a keen desire to prove himself ready to do the di-

12. What could have blurred Moses' spiritual vision?

13. How did Moses remain focused on God's promises?

vine will. After all, Moses told the sons of Israel: “Jehovah . . . the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob, has sent me to you.”—**Read Exodus 3:15-17.**

<sup>14</sup> Unlike all the idols representing the lifeless gods of Egypt, Jehovah, the true God, was real to Moses. He lived his life as if he could see “the One who is invisible.” Moses had faith that God’s people would be liberated, but he did not know when that would be. (Heb. 11:24, 25, 27) His strong desire to see the Hebrews set free was manifested by his defending an Israelite slave who was being abused. (Ex. 2:11, 12) However, it was not Jehovah’s time, so Moses had to live as a fugitive in a faraway land. No doubt it was difficult for him to go from enjoying the comfortable surroundings of the Egyptian court to living in the wilderness. Still, Moses proved himself ready by keeping awake to every instruction Jehovah gave him. Thus, God could use him to bring relief to his brothers after he spent 40 years in Midian. At God’s direction, Moses obediently returned to Egypt. The time had come for Moses to carry out a divine commission and to do God’s work in God’s way. (Ex. 3:2, 7, 8, 10) Back in Egypt, Moses, ‘the meekest of all men,’ needed faith and courage to appear before Pharaoh. (Num. 12:3) He did so, not just once, but time and again as the plagues proceeded, not knowing from one plague to the next how many more times he would need to go before Pharaoh.

<sup>15</sup> Over the next 40 years, from 1513 B.C.E. to 1473 B.C.E., Moses faced disappointments. Yet, he watched for opportunities to honor Jehovah and wholeheartedly encour-

14. How were Moses’ faith and courage put to the test?

15. Despite setbacks, what moved Moses to remain watchful for opportunities to honor his heavenly Father?

aged his fellow Israelites to do so. (Deut. 31:1-8) Why? Because he loved Jehovah’s name and sovereignty more than his own name. (Ex. 32:10-13; Num. 14:11-16) Despite disappointments or setbacks, we too must continue to support God’s rulership, confident that his way of doing things is wiser, more righteous, and better than any other. (Isa. 55:8-11; Jer. 10:23) Is that how you feel?

### Keep Awake!

<sup>16</sup> “Keep looking, keep awake, for you do not know when the appointed time is.” (Mark 13:33) Jesus gave that warning when discussing the sign that would mark the conclusion of this wicked system of things. Consider the concluding words to Jesus’ great prophecy as recorded by Mark: “Keep on the watch, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, whether late in the day or at midnight or at cock-crowing or early in the morning; in order that when he arrives suddenly, he does not find you sleeping. But what I say to you I say to all, Keep on the watch.”—Mark 13:35-37.

<sup>17</sup> Jesus’ exhortation is thought-provoking. He referred to four different watches of the night. The final watch would

16, 17. Why does Mark 13:35-37 have profound meaning for you?

### Do You Recall?

- Why did Noah need to give priority to his family’s spiritual needs?
- How are our times remarkably similar to Noah’s day?
- Despite disappointments, why did Moses keep his eyes focused on Jehovah’s promises?
- What Bible prophecies move you to stay awake spiritually?

prove to be a challenging time to stay awake, for it lasted from about three in the morning until sunrise. War strategists consider this to be the most effective time to attack the enemy, affording the best opportunity to catch them “sleeping.” Likewise now, when in a spiritual sense the world is sound asleep, we might have our greatest struggle to stay awake. Do we have any doubt that we need to “keep awake” and “keep looking” for the foretold end and our deliverance?

<sup>18</sup> The animal trainer mentioned at the outset survived the attack by the Bengal tiger. But Bible prophecy unmistakably indi-

18. As Jehovah’s Witnesses, what inestimable privilege do we have?

cates that neither false religion nor the rest of this wicked system will escape the approaching end. (Rev. 18:4-8) May all of God’s servants, young and old, see the seriousness of doing all they can to prove ourselves ready for Jehovah’s day as did Noah and his family. We live in a God-dishonoring world in which teachers of false religion, as well as agnostics and atheists, mock the Creator with their speech. But we cannot risk being affected. Let us take to heart the examples that we have considered and stay watchful for opportunities to defend and honor Jehovah as “the God of gods,” yes, “the God great, mighty and fear-inspiring.”—Deut. 10:17.

## KEEP AWAKE, AS JEREMIAH DID

*“I [Jehovah] am keeping awake concerning my word  
in order to carry it out.”—JER. 1:12.*

ON THE hills of Lebanon and Israel, one of the first trees to blossom is the almond tree. Its lovely pink or white flowers can be seen as early as the end of January or the beginning of February. Its Hebrew name literally means “awakening one.”

<sup>2</sup> When Jehovah appointed Jeremiah as his prophet, this characteristic of the almond tree was aptly used to illustrate an important reality. At the start of his ministry, the prophet was shown in vision an offshoot of that tree. What did it mean? Jehovah ex-

1, 2. Why is Jehovah’s “keeping awake” associated with the almond tree?

plained: “I am keeping awake concerning my word in order to carry it out.” (Jer. 1:11, 12) Just as the almond tree ‘awakened’ early, so Jehovah was figuratively “getting up early” to send his prophets to warn his people about the consequences of disobedience. (Jer. 7:25) And he would not rest—he would ‘keep awake’—until his prophetic word was accomplished. In 607 B.C.E., right at the appointed time, Jehovah’s judgment came upon the apostate nation of Judah.

<sup>3</sup> Likewise today, Jehovah is awake, attentive to carrying out his will. It is impossible

3. Of what can we be sure regarding Jehovah?



for him to neglect the fulfillment of his word. How does Jehovah's attentiveness affect you? Do you believe that in this year of 2011, Jehovah is "awake" to the fulfillment of his promises? If we have any doubts about Jehovah's sure promises, now is the time for us to awaken from any spiritual drowsiness. (Rom. 13:11) As Jehovah's prophet, Jeremiah kept himself awake. Examining how and why Jeremiah kept awake to his God-given assignment will help us to see how we can persevere in the work that Jehovah has given us.

### An Urgent Message

<sup>4</sup> Jeremiah may have been close to 25 years old when he received from Jehovah his commission as a watchman. (Jer. 1:1, 2) But he felt like a mere boy, utterly unqualified to speak to the elders of the nation, men advanced in age and having positions of authority. (Jer. 1:6) He had scathing denunciations and fearful judgments to proclaim, especially to the priests, false prophets, and rulers, as well as to those who took "the popular course" and developed "an enduring unfaithfulness." (Jer. 6:13; 8:5, 6) King Solomon's glorious temple, which had been the center of true worship for almost four centuries, would be demolished. Jerusalem and Judah would lie desolate, and their inhabitants would be taken captive. Clearly, the message that Jeremiah was commissioned to deliver was urgent!

<sup>5</sup> In modern times, Jehovah has lovingly provided mankind with a group of anointed Christians who act as figurative watchmen to warn about his judgment of this world. For decades, this Jeremiah class has been urging people to pay attention to the times

in which we live. (Jer. 6:17) The Bible emphasizes that Jehovah, the Great Timekeeper, is not slow. His day will come exactly on time, at an hour that humans do not expect. —Zeph. 3:8; Mark 13:33; 2 Pet. 3:9, 10.

<sup>6</sup> Keep in mind that Jehovah is awake and will usher in his righteous new world right on time. Knowing that should urge on those of the Jeremiah class and help their dedicated companions to keep awake to the increasing urgency of their message. How does that affect you? Jesus indicated that all need to take a stand for God's Kingdom. Let us examine three qualities that helped Jeremiah to stay awake to his commission and that will help us to do the same.

### Love for People

<sup>7</sup> What motivated Jeremiah to preach despite challenging circumstances? He had love for people. Jeremiah knew that false shepherds were causing much of the trouble the people faced. (Jer. 23:1, 2) This knowledge helped him do his work with love and compassion. He wanted his countrymen to hear God's words and live. He was so concerned that he wept over the calamity to come upon them. (***Read Jeremiah 8:21; 9:1.***) The book of Lamentations vividly reflects Jeremiah's deep love and concern for Jehovah's name and people. (Lam. 4:6, 9) When you see people being "skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd" today, do you not feel a desire to bring them the comforting news of God's Kingdom?—Matt. 9:36.

<sup>8</sup> Jeremiah suffered at the hands of the very people he wished to help, yet he did not retaliate or become bitter. He was long-suffering and kind, even toward corrupt

4. What challenges did Jeremiah face in delivering his message, and what made it urgent?

5, 6. (a) How is Jehovah using the Jeremiah class today? (b) On what will our study focus?

7. Explain how love motivated Jeremiah to preach despite difficult circumstances.

8. What shows that suffering did not make Jeremiah bitter?

King Zedekiah! After Zedekiah turned him over to be put to death, Jeremiah still pleaded with him to obey the voice of Jehovah. (Jer. 38:4, 5, 19, 20) Is our love for people as strong as Jeremiah's?

### God-Given Courage

<sup>9</sup> When Jehovah first spoke to him, Jeremiah tried to beg off. From this, we see that the boldness and firmness he went on to show were not inherent in him. No, the extraordinary strength Jeremiah showed during his prophetic career actually came from his full reliance on God. Truly, Jehovah was with the prophet "like a terrible mighty one" in that he supported Jeremiah and gave him the strength to handle his assignment. (Jer. 20:11) Jeremiah's reputation for boldness and courage was such that during Jesus' earthly ministry, some took Jesus to be Jeremiah returned to life!—Matt. 16:13, 14.

<sup>10</sup> As "King of the nations," Jehovah commissioned Jeremiah to deliver a judgment message to nations and kingdoms. (Jer. 10: 6, 7) But in what sense are the anointed remnant "over the nations and over the kingdoms"? (Jer. 1:10) Like the prophet of old, the Jeremiah class has been given an assignment from the Sovereign of the universe. God's anointed servants are thus duly authorized to make pronouncements worldwide against nations and kingdoms. Invested with authority from the Most High God and using the clear language of his inspired Word, the Jeremiah class declares that the nations and kingdoms of today will be uprooted and destroyed at God's due time and by his chosen means. (Jer. 18:7-10; Rev. 11: 18) The Jeremiah class is determined not to relent in its God-given commission to pro-

9. How do we know that Jeremiah's courage was from God?

10. Why can it be said that the anointed remnant are 'over nations and kingdoms'?

claim Jehovah's judgment messages earth wide.

<sup>11</sup> It is not unusual to get discouraged at times in the face of opposition, indifference, or difficult circumstances. (2 Cor. 1:8) But like Jeremiah, let us keep going. Do not lose heart. May each of us continue to supplicate God, lean on him, and 'muster up boldness' as we look to him for help. (1 Thess. 2:2) Being true worshippers, we must continue to keep awake to our God-given responsibilities. We need to be determined to keep preaching without letup about the destruction of Christendom, which was foreshadowed by that of unfaithful Jerusalem. The Jeremiah class will declare not just "the year of goodwill on the part of Jehovah" but also "the day of vengeance on the part of our God."—Isa. 61:1, 2; 2 Cor. 6:2.

### Heartfelt Joy

<sup>12</sup> Jeremiah found joy in his work. He said to Jehovah: "Your words were found, and I proceeded to eat them; and your word becomes to me the exultation and the rejoicing of my heart; for your name has been called upon me, O Jehovah." (Jer. 15:16) For Jeremiah, it was a privilege to represent the true God and preach his word. It is of interest that when Jeremiah focused on the ridicule from the people, he lost his joy. When he turned his attention to the beauty and importance of his message, his joy was rekindled.—Jer. 20:8, 9.

<sup>13</sup> To maintain joy in the preaching work in our day, we need to feed ourselves on "solid food," deep truths of God's Word. (Heb.

11. What will help us to keep preaching without letup when we face difficult circumstances?

12. Why may we conclude that Jeremiah maintained his joy, and what was a key element in his doing so?

13. Why is feeding on deeper spiritual truths important in our maintaining joy?



*Will you keep on preaching despite opposition?*

5:14) Deeper study builds faith. (Col. 2:6, 7) It impresses on us how our actions really touch Jehovah's heart. If we are struggling to find time to read and study the Bible, we should reexamine our schedule. Even a few minutes of study and meditation each day will draw us closer to Jehovah and will contribute to 'the exultation and rejoicing of the heart,' as was true in Jeremiah's case.

<sup>14</sup> Jeremiah did declare Jehovah's warn-

14, 15. (a) What fruitage resulted from Jeremiah's faithfully sticking to his commission? (b) God's people today appreciate what about the preaching work?

ings and judgment message without letup, yet he had at heart his commission "to build and to plant." (Jer. 1:10) His work of building and planting bore fruitage. Some Jews as well as non-Israelites survived Jerusalem's destruction in 607 B.C.E. We know of the Rechabites, Ebed-melech, and Baruch. (Jer. 35: 19; 39:15-18; 43:5-7) These loyal and God-fearing friends of Jeremiah well illustrate those having an earthly hope today who befriend the Jeremiah class. Great is the pleasure of the Jeremiah class in spiritually building up this "great crowd." (Rev. 7:9) Likewise, these loyal companions of the

anointed find immense satisfaction in assisting honesthearted ones to come to a knowledge of the truth.

<sup>15</sup> God's people appreciate that the preaching of the good news is not only a public service to those who hear it but also an act of worship to our God. Whether we find a receptive ear or not, rendering sacred service to Jehovah by means of our preaching brings us great joy.—Ps. 71:23; **read Romans 1:9.**

### **'Keep Awake' to Your Assignment!**

<sup>16</sup> The urgency of the times we live in is underscored when we consider the inspired prophecy at Revelation 17:10. The seventh king, the Anglo-American World Power, has come into existence. Concerning it we read: "When he [the seventh world power] does arrive he must remain a short while." By now that "short while" must be near its completion. The prophet Habakkuk gives us this assurance concerning the end of this wicked system: "The vision is yet for the appointed time . . . Keep in expectation of it; for it will without fail come true. It will not be late."—Hab. 2:3.

<sup>17</sup> Ask yourself: 'Does my life truly reflect the urgency of our times? Does my way of life show that I expect the end to come soon? Or do my decisions and priorities in-

16, 17. How do Revelation 17:10 and Habakkuk 2:3 show the urgency of our times?

### **Do You Recall?**

- How did love help Jeremiah 'keep awake' to his commission?
- Why do we need God-given courage?
- What helped Jeremiah maintain his joy?
- Why do you want to 'keep awake'?

dicating that I do not expect the end anytime soon or even that I am not sure if it will ever come?"

<sup>18</sup> The work of the watchman class is not yet over. (**Read Jeremiah 1:17-19.**) What a source of joy it is that the anointed remnant are standing immovable, like "an iron pillar" and "a fortified city"! They have their "loins girded about with truth" in that they allow God's Word to strengthen them until their commissioned work is completed. (Eph. 6:14) With similar determination, those of the great crowd actively support the Jeremiah class in carrying out its divine assignment.

<sup>19</sup> Now is not the time to slow down in Kingdom activity but to consider the import of Jeremiah 12:5. (**Read.**) All of us face trials that we must endure. These tests of faith may be compared to "footmen" with whom we must run. Nonetheless, as the "great tribulation" approaches, we can expect hardships to increase. (Matt. 24:21) Grappling with the more challenging difficulties ahead may be likened to running "a race with horses." It would require great powers of endurance for a man to keep up with galloping horses. So it is beneficial to endure the trials we now face, which may prepare us to endure those that lie ahead.

<sup>20</sup> We can all imitate Jeremiah and successfully fulfill our assignment to preach! Such qualities as love, courage, and joy moved Jeremiah to carry out his 67-year-long ministry faithfully. The beautiful almond blossom reminds us that Jehovah will 'keep awake' concerning his word in order to carry it out. We have good reason, then, to do likewise. Jeremiah 'kept awake,' and so can we.

18, 19. Why is now not the time to slow down?

20. What are you determined to do?