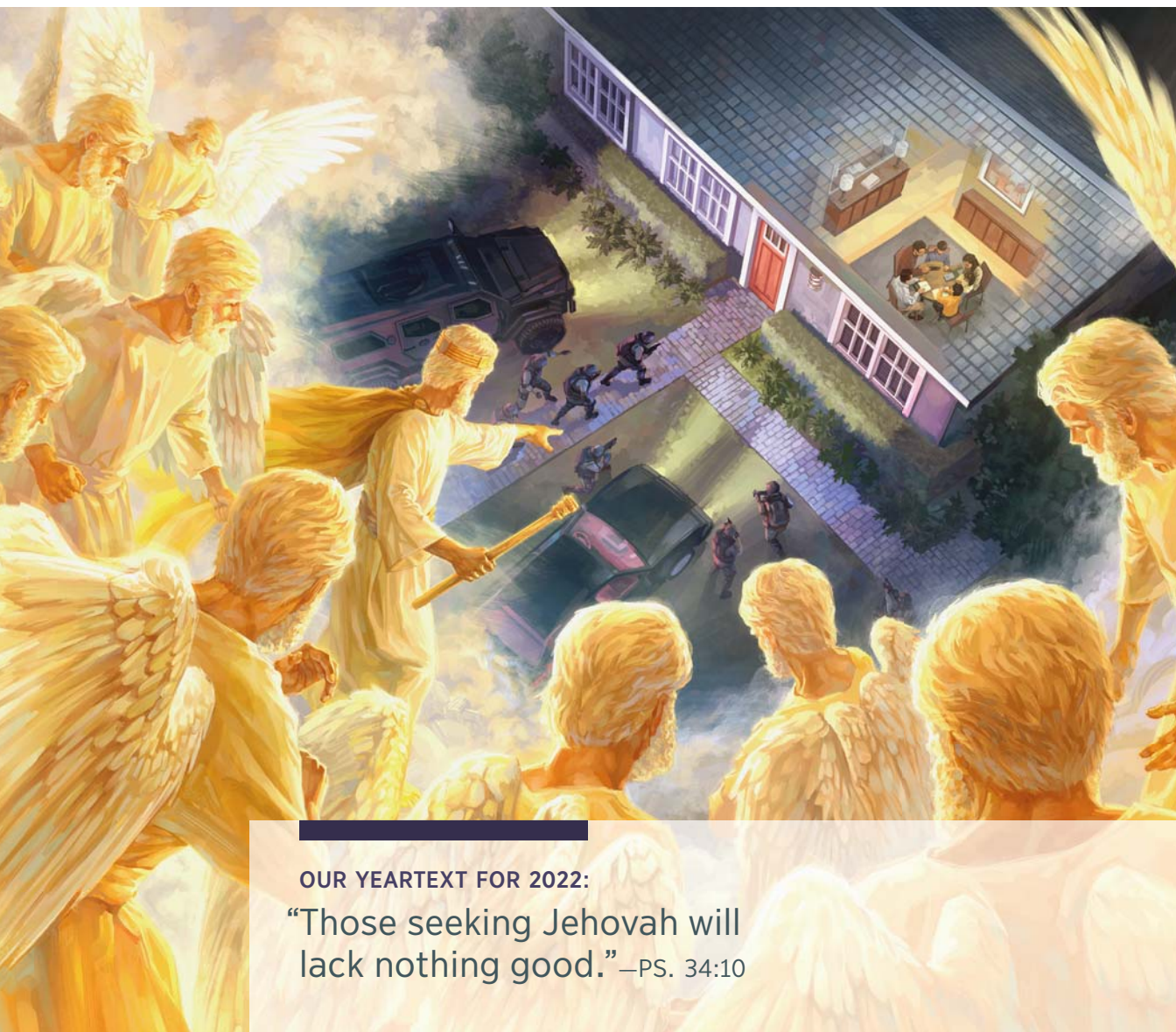


JANUARY 2022

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



OUR YEARETEXT FOR 2022:

“Those seeking Jehovah will  
lack nothing good.”—PS. 34:10



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
FEBRUARY 28–APRIL 3, 2022

## SONG 4

“Jehovah Is My Shepherd”

## PREVIEW

Our yeartext for 2022 is taken from Psalm 34:10: “Those seeking Jehovah will lack nothing good.” Many of Jehovah’s faithful servants have very little materially. How can it be said that they “lack nothing good”? And how can understanding the meaning of this verse help us to prepare for the difficult times to come?

## “Those Seeking Jehovah Will Lack Nothing Good”

## OUR YEARTEXT FOR 2022:

*“Those seeking Jehovah will lack nothing good.”*—PS. 34:10.

DAVID was running for his life. Saul, the powerful king of Israel, was determined to put him to death. When David needed provisions, he stopped at the city of Nob, where he made a modest request for five loaves of bread. (1 Sam. 21:1, 3) Later, he and his men found refuge in a cave. (1 Sam. 22:1) How did David come to be in this situation?

<sup>2</sup> Saul was insanely jealous of David’s popularity and military victories. Saul also knew that his own disobedience had led to Jehovah’s rejecting him as king of Israel and that Jehovah had selected David for the throne. **(Read 1 Samuel 23:16, 17.)** Still, as king of Israel, Saul had a large army and many supporters, so David had to flee for his life. Did Saul really think that he could fight against God’s expressed purpose for David? (Isa. 55:11) The Bible does not say, but we can be sure of one thing: Saul was putting himself in a dangerous position. Those who fight against God always lose!

<sup>3</sup> David was not an ambitious man. He did not choose to become the king of Israel. Jehovah assigned that role to him. (1 Sam. 16:1, 12, 13) Saul came to view David as a mortal enemy. But David did not blame Jehovah for

1. What difficult situation did David find himself in?
2. How did Saul put himself in a dangerous position? (1 Samuel 23: 16, 17)
3. How did David feel despite his circumstances?

the danger he was in; nor did he complain about having a limited food supply and a cave for shelter. On the contrary, it might have been while he was hiding in that very cave that he composed the beautiful song of praise that includes the words of our theme text: “Those seeking Jehovah will lack nothing good.”—Ps. 34:10.

<sup>4</sup> Today many of Jehovah’s servants have experienced a shortage of food and other necessities of life.\* This has been especially true during the recent pandemic. And with the “great tribulation” looming, we can expect to face even more difficult times. (Matt. 24:21) With those facts in mind, let us answer four questions: In what way did David “lack nothing good”? Why must we learn to be

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\* See “Questions From Readers” in the September 15, 2014, issue of *The Watchtower*.

4. What questions will we consider, and why are they important?

content? Why can we be confident that Jehovah will care for us? And how can we prepare now for the future?

#### “I WILL LACK NOTHING”

<sup>5</sup> What did David mean when he said that Jehovah’s servants would “lack nothing good”? We can get an idea by considering the similar wording found in the 23rd Psalm. (**Read Psalm 23: 1-6.**) David introduces that psalm with the words: “Jehovah is my Shepherd. *I will lack nothing.*” In the rest of the psalm, David mentions things that are truly of lasting value—the abundant spiritual blessings he enjoys by accepting Jehovah as his Shepherd. Jehovah leads him “in the paths of righteousness,” and He loyally supports David in good times and in bad times. David acknowledges that his life in Jehovah’s

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5-6. How does Psalm 23:1-6 help us understand what David meant when he said that God’s servants would “lack nothing good”?



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David felt that he ‘lacked nothing good’ even during difficult times  
(See paragraphs 1-3)

“grassy pastures” will not be trouble free. At times, he may get discouraged, as if walking “in the valley of deep shadow,” and he will have enemies. But with Jehovah as his Shepherd, David will “fear no harm.”

<sup>6</sup> So here we have the answer to our question: In what way did David “lack nothing good”? Spiritually speaking, he had everything he needed. His happiness was not dependent on material things. David was satisfied with what Jehovah provided. What mattered most to him was the blessing and the protection of his God.

<sup>7</sup> From David’s words we can see how important it is for us to have a proper view of material things. We can certainly enjoy whatever material possessions we have, but we should not make them the focus of our life. That was a vital truth that first-century Christians living in Judea came to understand. **(Read Luke 21:20-24.)** Jesus had warned them that the time would come when the city of Jerusalem would be “surrounded by encamped armies.” When that occurred, they needed to “begin fleeing to the mountains.” Their flight would lead to their salvation, but it would come at a high cost. Some years ago, *The Watchtower* put it this way: “They left fields and homes, not even gathering their possessions from their houses. Confident of the protection and support of Jehovah, they put his worship ahead of everything else that might seem important.”

7. According to Luke 21:20-24, what challenging situation did the first-century Judean Christians face?

<sup>8</sup> What sobering lesson can we learn from what happened to the first-century Christians living in Judea? *The Watchtower* just mentioned said: “There may be tests ahead as to how we view material things; are they the most important thing, or is the salvation that will come for all on God’s side more important? Yes, our fleeing may involve some hardships and deprivations. We will have to be ready to do whatever it takes, as did our first-century counterparts who fled from Judea.”\*

<sup>9</sup> Can you imagine how difficult it was for those Christians to leave almost everything they had and start over? It took faith on their part to rely on Jehovah for their basic needs. But they were not without help. Five years before the Romans surrounded Jerusalem, the apostle Paul gave the Hebrews some valuable advice: “Let your way of life be free of the love of money, **while you are content** with the present things. For he has said: ‘I will never leave you, and I will never abandon you.’ So that we may be of good courage and say: ‘Jehovah is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?’” (Heb. 13:5, 6) No doubt those who took to heart Paul’s advice before the Roman invasion found it easier to adapt to what might have been a modest lifestyle in their new home. They were certain that Jehovah would care

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\* See the May 1, 1999, issue of *The Watchtower*, p. 19.

8. What sobering lesson can we learn from what happened to the first-century Christians living in Judea?

9. What encouragement do you derive from the apostle Paul’s counsel to the Hebrews?





The Israelites “lacked nothing” during their 40 years in the wilderness.  
Can we be content with what we have now?

(See paragraph 11)

for their basic needs. Paul’s words assure us that we can have the same confidence.

#### “WE WILL BE CONTENT WITH THESE THINGS”

<sup>10</sup> Paul gave similar counsel to Timothy and, by extension, to us. He wrote: “So, having food and clothing, we will be content with these things.” (1 Tim. 6:8) Does this mean that we cannot enjoy a fine meal, have a decent place to live, or purchase new clothing from time to time? That is not the point Paul is making. Paul is saying that *we should be content* with whatever we have materially. (Phil. 4:12) That was Paul’s “secret.”

10. What “secret” does Paul share with us?

Our most precious possession is our relationship with our God, not any material thing that we own.—Hab. 3:17, 18.

<sup>11</sup> There may be a difference between our view and Jehovah’s view of what we need. Consider what Moses told the Israelites after they had spent 40 years in the wilderness: “Jehovah your *God has blessed you* in all that you have done. He is fully aware of your walking through this great wilderness. These 40 years Jehovah your *God has been with you*, and *you have lacked nothing*.” (Deut. 2:7) During those 40 years, Jehovah provided the Israelites with manna to eat.

11. What lesson about contentment do we learn from Moses’ words to the Israelites?

Their clothes—the very clothes with which they had left Egypt—never wore out. (Deut. 8:3, 4) Although some might have viewed these as modest provisions, Moses reminded the Israelites that they had everything they needed. Jehovah will be pleased if we can learn to be content—to appreciate even the simple provisions he makes available, viewing them as a blessing and giving thanks for them.

#### **BE CONFIDENT THAT JEHOVAH WILL CARE FOR YOU**

<sup>12</sup> David knew that Jehovah is loyal and cares deeply for those who love Him. Even though his life was in danger when he composed the 34th Psalm, with eyes of faith, David saw “the angel of Jehovah” camping “all around” him. (Ps. 34:7) Perhaps David was comparing Jehovah’s angel to a soldier camping in the field, always on the alert for the enemy. Although he himself was a mighty man of war and Jehovah had promised him the kingship, David did not rely on his ability to sling a stone or to wield a sword to defeat the enemy. (1 Sam. 16: 13; 24:12) David put his trust in God, confident that Jehovah’s angel ‘rescues those fearing Him.’ Of course, we do not expect to receive miraculous protection today. But we know that no one who puts his trust in Jehovah will suffer everlasting harm.

<sup>13</sup> In the near future, our trust in Jehovah’s ability to protect us will be put to

the test. When Gog of Magog, a coalition of nations, attacks God’s people, our lives will appear to be in danger. We will need to be convinced that Jehovah can and will deliver us. To the nations, we will seem like defenseless sheep with no one to protect us. (Ezek. 38:10-12) We will be unarmed, untrained in warfare. The nations will see us as easy targets. They will not see what we see with our eyes of faith—a host of angels camped all around God’s people, ready to defend us. How could the nations see them? They have no spiritual vision. What a surprise is in store for them when the heavenly armies come to our aid!—Rev. 19:11, 14, 15.

#### **PREPARE NOW FOR THE FUTURE**

<sup>14</sup> What can we do now to prepare for the future? First of all, we need to have a proper view of material things, realizing that one day we will have to part with what we have. We also need to be content and to find our greatest joy in our relationship with Jehovah. The better we get to know our God, the more convinced we will be of his ability to protect us when Gog of Magog attacks.

<sup>15</sup> Consider what else helped David and can help us to prepare for trials. David said: “Taste and see that Jehovah is good; happy is the man who takes refuge in him.” (Ps. 34:8) Those words explain why David knew that he could count on Jehovah’s support. David often relied on Jehovah, and his God never

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12. What shows that David’s confidence was in Jehovah, not in himself?

13. When Gog of Magog attacks, why will we appear to be vulnerable, but what reason for confidence will we have? (See cover picture.)

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14. What steps can we take now to prepare for the future?

15. What early experiences taught David that Jehovah would never disappoint him?

disappointed him. When young, David faced the Philistine giant Goliath and told that formidable warrior: “This very day Jehovah will surrender you into my hand.” (1 Sam. 17:46) Later, David was in the service of a king, Saul, who tried a number of times to murder him. But “Jehovah was with” David. (1 Sam. 18:12) Because David had experienced Jehovah’s help in the past, David knew he could count on Him during his present trials.

<sup>16</sup> The more we look to Jehovah for guidance now, the more confident we will be in his ability to deliver us in the future. It takes faith and a willingness to rely on Jehovah to ask our employer for time off so that we can attend an assembly or a convention or to ask for an adjusted work schedule so that we can attend all our meetings and spend more time in the ministry. Suppose our employer refuses our request and we lose our job. Do we have faith that Jeho-

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16. In what practical ways can we “taste” Jehovah’s goodness?

vah will never leave us or abandon us and that he will always supply our basic needs? (Heb. 13:5) Many who are in full-time service can relate experiences that show how Jehovah came to their aid when they needed him most. Jehovah is faithful.

<sup>17</sup> With Jehovah on our side, we have no reason to fear the days ahead. Our God will never forsake us as long as we put his interests first in our lives. To remind us of the need to prepare now for the difficult days ahead and to trust that Jehovah will never forsake us, the Governing Body has chosen Psalm 34:10 as our yeartext for 2022: ***“Those seeking Jehovah will lack nothing good.”***

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17. What is the yeartext for 2022, and why is it appropriate?

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**PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS** **Page 3:** Even while hiding in a cave to escape from King Saul, David was appreciative of Jehovah’s provisions. **Page 5:** After the Israelites left Egypt, Jehovah provided them with manna to eat and kept their clothes from wearing out.

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## HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| ■ In what sense can it be said that we “lack nothing good”? | ■ What “secret” does Paul share with us? | ■ What steps can we take now to prepare for the future? |
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**SONG 88**

Make Me Know Your Ways

**PREVIEW**

James grew up in the same household as Jesus did. James knew the perfect Son of God better than most people at that time. In this article, we will examine what we can learn from the life and teachings of Jesus' younger brother who became a pillar in the first-century Christian congregation.

## Learn From Jesus' Younger Brother

*“James, a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

—JAS. 1:1.

JAMES, the brother of Jesus, was raised in a spiritually strong family.\* His parents, Joseph and Mary, loved Jehovah very much and did their best to serve Him. James had an added blessing—his older brother would grow up to be the promised Messiah. What a fine privilege James had to be part of that family!

<sup>2</sup> James had many reasons to look up to his older brother. (Matt. 13:55) For example, Jesus knew the Scriptures so well that by the age of 12, he amazed the well-educated elders in Jerusalem. (Luke 2:46, 47) James may have worked in the carpentry trade with Jesus. In that case, he would have come to know his brother very well. Nathan H. Knorr often said, “You learn a lot about a person when you work with him.”<sup>#</sup> James could also not help but notice how “Jesus went on progressing in wisdom and in physical growth and in favor with God and men.” (Luke 2:52) So we might assume that James would have been among the first to become a disciple of Jesus. But that is not what happened.

<sup>3</sup> During Jesus' ministry on earth, James did not be-

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\* For the sake of simplicity, we will refer to James as Jesus' brother. He was actually Jesus' half brother and evidently the one who wrote the letter bearing his name.

<sup>#</sup> Nathan H. Knorr was a member of the Governing Body. He finished his earthly course in 1977.

1. How would you describe James' family?
2. What reasons did James have to look up to his older brother?
3. How did James respond when Jesus began his ministry?





During the time that he spent growing up with Jesus, James got to know his older brother very well  
(See paragraph 2)

come one of his disciples. (John 7:3-5) In fact, James may have been one of the relatives who thought that Jesus had “gone out of his mind.” (Mark 3:21) And there is no indication that James was with their mother, Mary, when Jesus was put to death on the torture stake.—John 19:25-27.

<sup>4</sup> Later, James put faith in Jesus and became a respected member of the Christian congregation. In this article, we will consider two lessons that we can learn from James: (1) why we must remain humble and (2) how we can be effective teachers.

#### REMAIN HUMBLE LIKE JAMES

<sup>5</sup> When did James become a loyal follower of Jesus? After Jesus was raised from the dead, “he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.” (1 Cor. 15:7) That meeting with Jesus marked a turning point in James’ life. He was present when the apostles awaited the promised

holy spirit in an upper room in Jerusalem. (Acts 1:13, 14) Later, James had the joy of serving as a member of the first-century governing body. (Acts 15: 6, 13-22; Gal. 2:9) And sometime before 62 C.E., he was inspired to write a letter to anointed Christians. That letter is of benefit to us today, whether our hope is heavenly or earthly. (Jas. 1:1) According to the first-century historian Josephus, James was executed at the order of the Jewish High Priest Ananias the Younger. James remained faithful to Jehovah until he finished his earthly course.

<sup>6</sup> ***James was humble.*** Why can we say that? Consider the contrast between the way James eventually responded to Jesus and the way that many of the religious leaders reacted. When James was confronted by irrefutable evidence that Jesus is the Son of God, he humbly accepted it. That was not the case with the chief priests in Jerusalem. For example, they could not deny that Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead. Instead of

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4. What lessons will we consider?

5. How did James respond when the resurrected Jesus appeared to him?

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6. In what way was James different from the religious leaders of his day?

acknowledging that Jesus was Jehovah's representative, they endeavored to kill both Jesus and Lazarus. (John 11:53; 12:9-11) Later when Jesus himself was resurrected from the dead, they conspired to hide that fact from the people. (Matt. 28:11-15) The pride of those religious leaders caused them to reject the Messiah.

***7 The lesson: Avoid pride, and remain teachable.*** Just as disease can harden the arteries of a literal heart and restrict its ability to beat, pride can harden our figurative heart and prevent us from responding to Jehovah's direction. The Pharisees allowed their heart to become so hard that they refused to recognize the clear evidence being presented to them by God's spirit. (John 12:37-40) That was a dangerous course because it affected their everlasting future. (Matt. 23:13, 33) How important it is that we continue to allow God's Word and spirit to mold our personality

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7. Why must we avoid pride?

and influence our thinking and our decisions! (Jas. 3:17) Because James was humble, he allowed himself to be taught by Jehovah. And, as we will see, it was because of his humility that he became a skillful teacher.

### TEACH EFFECTIVELY LIKE JAMES

***8*** James did not have an impressive secular education. The religious leaders of his day no doubt viewed him in the same way they viewed the apostles Peter and John—as “uneducated and ordinary.” (Acts 4:13) But James learned to be an effective teacher, as is evident when we read the book that bears his name. Like James, we may have limited secular education. Even so, with the help of Jehovah's spirit and practical training from his organization, we too can become good teachers. Let us consider the example James set as a teacher and see what lessons we can learn.

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8. What will help us to become good teachers?

James humbled himself when Jesus appeared to him, and from then on he faithfully served as Christ's disciple  
(See paragraphs 5-7)



<sup>9</sup> ***James did not use big words or complicated reasoning.*** As a result, his audience knew what they needed to do and how to do it. Consider, for example, the simple way James taught that Christians must be willing to suffer injustice without becoming resentful. He wrote: “We consider happy those who have endured. You have heard of the endurance of Job and have seen the outcome Jehovah gave, that Jehovah is very tender in affection and merciful.” (Jas. 5:11) Note that James relied on the Scriptures as his authority. He used God’s Word to help his audience to see that Jehovah always rewards those who, like Job, are loyal to Him. James got his point across by using simple words and logic. In that way, he drew attention, not to himself, but to Jehovah.

<sup>10</sup> ***The lesson: Keep your message simple, and teach from God’s Word.*** Our goal should be, not to impress others with how much we know, but to impress them with how much Jehovah knows and how much he cares about them. (Rom. 11:33) We can reach that goal by always basing what we say on the Scriptures. For example, rather than tell our Bible students what we would do in their place, we should help **them** to reason on Bible examples and to perceive Jehovah’s thinking and feelings. Then they will be motivated by a desire to please Jehovah, not us.

<sup>11</sup> ***James was realistic.*** From his letter,

9. How would you describe James’ way of teaching?

10. What is one way that we can imitate James when teaching?

11. What challenges were some Christians dealing with in James’ day, and what counsel did he give them? (James 5:13-15)

it is obvious that James was aware of the challenges his fellow believers were struggling with, and he gave them clear direction on how to overcome these. For example, some Christians were slow to apply counsel. (Jas. 1:22) Others showed partiality toward the rich. (Jas. 2:1-3) Still others had a hard time controlling their tongue. (Jas. 3:8-10) Those Christians had serious problems, but James did not give up on them. He presented his counsel in a kind but straightforward way and encouraged those who were struggling spiritually to seek additional help from the elders.—**Read James 5:13-15.**

<sup>12</sup> ***The lesson: Be realistic, but keep a positive view of others.*** Many with whom we study the Bible may struggle to apply its counsel. (Jas. 4:1-4) It may take them some time to root out bad traits and replace them with Christlike qualities. In imitation of James, we must have the courage to tell our students where they need to improve. We also need to remain positive, trusting that Jehovah will draw humble people to him and will give them the strength to make changes in their life.—Jas. 4:10.

<sup>13</sup> ***James kept the right view of himself.*** James did not feel that his family background or his privileged assignments made him special or placed him above his brothers and sisters. He referred to his fellow worshippers as “my beloved brothers.” (Jas. 1:16, 19; 2:5) He did not give the impression that he was

12. How can we remain positive when helping our Bible students?

13. As indicated at James 3:2 and footnote, what did James recognize?



James' illustrations were simple, clear, and effective  
(See paragraphs 15-16)

perfect. Rather, he included himself in the statement: “We all make mistakes many times.”—**Read James 3:2 and footnote.**

<sup>14</sup> **The lesson: Remember that we are all sinners.** We must not think that we are somehow superior to those whom we teach. Why not? If we give our student the impression that we are flawless, he may conclude that he could never measure up to God’s requirements. But when we honestly admit that it has not always been easy for us to follow Scriptural principles and we explain how Jehovah has helped us to overcome our challenges, we will help our student to see that he too can serve Jehovah.

<sup>15</sup> **James used illustrations that reached the heart.** No doubt he was helped by holy spirit, but he likely also learned a great deal about how to teach by studying the illustrations that his older brother, Jesus, had used. The illustrations

James used in his letter are simple, and the application is clear.—**Read James 3:2-6, 10-12.**

<sup>16</sup> **The lesson: Use effective illustrations.** When you use appropriate illustrations, you turn ears into eyes. You paint pictures in the minds of people. These pictures help your audience to remember key Bible truths. Jesus was a master at using effective illustrations, and his brother James followed his example. Let us examine one of James’ illustrations and consider why it is so effective.

<sup>17</sup> **Read James 1:22-25.** James’ illustration of the mirror is effective for a number of reasons. He had a specific point in mind, namely, that to benefit from God’s Word, we must do more than read it; we must act on what we read. James chose an illustration that his audience could quickly relate to—a man looking in a mirror. His point? It would be foolish if a man were to look in a mir-

14. Why must we be willing to admit our mistakes?

15. How would you describe the illustrations James used? (James 3:2-6, 10-12)

16. Why should we use effective illustrations?

17. Why is the illustration recorded at James 1:22-25 so effective?



ror, see a flaw he can correct, and do nothing about it. Similarly, it would be foolish if we were to read God's Word, see something that we need to change about our personality, and do nothing about it.

<sup>18</sup> When using an illustration, you can imitate James' example by doing three things: (1) Make sure that the illustration is appropriate to the point you are discussing. (2) Use an illustration that your audience can easily relate to. (3) Make the application of the illustration clear. If you find it difficult to think of appropriate illustrations, consult the *Watch Tower Publications Index*. Under the heading "Illustrations," you will find dozens of examples that you can use. Remember, though, that illustrations are like a microphone—they will amplify the point you are making. So be sure to illustrate only the key points that you want to teach. Of course, our ultimate reason for wanting to improve

18. What three things must we do when using an illustration?

our teaching skills is, not to draw attention to ourselves, but to help as many as possible to be part of Jehovah's happy family.

<sup>19</sup> We have not had the privilege of growing up with a perfect older brother, but we have had the honor of serving Jehovah along with a large family of Christian brothers and sisters. We show our love for them by associating with them, by learning from them, and by loyally serving side by side with them in the preaching and teaching work. When we strive to imitate James' example in our attitude, conduct, and method of teaching, we bring honor to Jehovah and we help honesthearted people to draw close to our loving heavenly Father.

19. How do we show that we appreciate our spiritual family?

**PICTURE DESCRIPTION Page 12:** James used the example of a small fire—something people could easily understand—to illustrate the danger of misusing the tongue.

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## HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- |                              |   |  |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| ■ Why must we remain humble? | ■ Why should we keep our teaching simple? | ■ Why should we use effective illustrations? |
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## SONG 17

"I Want To"

## PREVIEW

At times, Jesus experienced strong emotions that moved him to tears. In this article, we will discuss three occasions on which Jesus shed tears and the lessons we can learn.

## Lessons We Can Learn From Jesus' Tears

*"Jesus gave way to tears."*—JOHN 11:35.

WHEN was the last time you wept? Occasionally, we shed tears of joy. But all too often, we cry because of the anguish in our heart. For example, we may cry when we lose a loved one in death. Lorilei, a sister in the United States, wrote: "There have been moments when the pain of losing my daughter was so intense that nothing seemed to bring me comfort. In those moments, I wondered how my broken and crushed heart could keep beating."<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>2</sup> We may shed tears for other reasons. Hiromi, a pioneer in Japan, confided: "Now and then I get discouraged by the apathy of the people I meet in the ministry. Sometimes with tears in my eyes, I ask Jehovah to help me find someone who is searching for the truth."

<sup>3</sup> Can you relate to the feelings expressed above? Many of us can. (1 Pet. 5:9) We want to "serve Jehovah with rejoicing," but we may be serving him with tears because of grief, discouragement, or a distressing situation that tests our loyalty to God. (Ps. 6:6; 100:2) How can we cope when we are overwhelmed by such feelings?

<sup>4</sup> We can learn from the example of Jesus. At times, he too experienced strong emotions that moved him to 'give way to tears.' (John 11:35; Luke 19:41; 22:44; Heb. 5:7) Let us review those events. As we do, we will see what lessons we can learn. We will also review practical ways we can deal with challenges that bring us to tears.

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<sup>\*</sup> Some names have been changed.

1-3. What challenges may cause Jehovah's people to shed tears?

4. What will we consider in this article?

## TEARS FOR HIS FRIENDS

<sup>5</sup> In the winter of 32 C.E., Jesus' good friend Lazarus got sick and died. (John 11:3, 14) The man had two sisters, Mary and Martha, and Jesus loved this family very much. The women were devastated by the loss of their beloved brother. After Lazarus died, Jesus traveled to the village of Bethany, where Mary and Martha lived. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she rushed out to meet him. Imagine the surge of emotions as she said: "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." (John 11:21) Shortly afterward when Jesus saw Mary and others weeping, he "gave way to tears."—**Read John 11:32-36.**

<sup>6</sup> Why did Jesus weep on that occasion? *Insight on the Scriptures* answers: "The death of his friend Lazarus and the

resulting grief to Lazarus' sisters caused Jesus to 'groan and give way to tears.'"<sup>\*</sup> Jesus may have been thinking about the pain his dear friend Lazarus experienced during his illness and imagining how the man felt as he realized that his life was slipping away. Jesus was surely also moved to tears on seeing how Mary and Martha were affected by the death of their brother. If you have lost a close friend or a family member in death, no doubt you have experienced similar emotions. Consider three lessons you can learn from this event.

<sup>7</sup> ***Jehovah understands how you feel.*** Jesus is "the exact representation" of his Father. (Heb. 1:3) When Jesus wept, he reflected his Father's emotions. (John 14:9) If you are enduring the loss of a loved one, you can be sure that

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<sup>\*</sup> See *Insight on the Scriptures*, Volume 2, p. 69.

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5. What do we learn about Jesus from the account recorded at John 11:32-36?

6. Why did Jesus weep on that occasion?

7. What do we learn about Jehovah from the tears Jesus shed for his friends?



Support those who grieve,  
as Jesus did  
(See paragraphs 5-9)



Jehovah not only notices your grief but also feels deeply for you. He wants to heal your broken heart.—Ps. 34:18; 147:3.

<sup>8</sup> ***Jesus wants to resurrect your loved ones.*** Shortly before he wept, Jesus assured Martha: “Your brother will rise.” Martha believed Jesus. (John 11:23-27) As a faithful worshipper of Jehovah, Martha no doubt was aware of the resurrections that had been performed centuries earlier by the prophets Elijah and Elisha. (1 Ki. 17:17-24; 2 Ki. 4:32-37) And she had likely also heard of the resurrections that Jesus had performed. (Luke 7:11-15; 8:41, 42, 49-56) You too can be convinced that you will see your dead loved ones again. Jesus’ tears as he gave comfort to his grief-stricken friends are proof that the resurrection is close to his heart!

<sup>9</sup> ***You can support those who grieve.*** Jesus not only wept with Martha and Mary but also listened and spoke reassuringly to them. We can do the same for those who grieve. Dan, an elder who lives in Australia, says: “After losing my wife, I needed support. Several couples made themselves available day and night just to listen to me. They let me grieve, and they were not embarrassed by my tears. They also offered practical help, such as washing my car, shopping for groceries, and cooking meals when I felt unable to care for these tasks myself. And they prayed

with me often. They proved to be true friends and brothers who are ‘born for times of distress.’”—Prov. 17:17.

### TEARS FOR HIS NEIGHBORS

<sup>10</sup> Jesus arrived in Jerusalem on Nisan 9, 33 C.E. As he approached the city, a crowd gathered and people spread their garments on the road before him to acknowledge him as their King. That was certainly a happy occasion. (**Read Luke 19:36-40.**) So his disciples might not have expected what happened next. “When [Jesus] got nearby, he viewed the city and wept over it.” With tears in his eyes, Jesus foretold the grim fate that awaited the inhabitants of Jerusalem.—Luke 19:41-44.

<sup>11</sup> Jesus felt pain of heart because he knew that despite the warm reception he was receiving, his countrymen in general had already shown that they would refuse to respond favorably to the Kingdom message. As a result, Jerusalem would be destroyed and any Jews who survived the destruction of the city would be led into captivity. (Luke 21:20-24) Sadly, just as Jesus anticipated, most of the people rejected him. How do people in general respond to the Kingdom message where you live? If few respond positively to your efforts to teach them the truth, what can you learn from Jesus’ tears? Consider three more lessons.

<sup>12</sup> ***Jehovah cares about people.*** Jesus’

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8. Why can we be confident that Jesus will resurrect our loved ones?

9. Like Jesus, how can you support those who grieve? Give an example.

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10. Describe the event recorded at Luke 19:36-40.

11. Why did Jesus weep for the inhabitants of Jerusalem?

12. What can we learn about Jehovah from the tears Jesus shed for his fellow man?





Adjust your witnessing  
schedule, as Jesus did  
(See paragraphs 13-14)

tears remind us of how much Jehovah cares about people. “He does not desire anyone to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance.” (2 Pet. 3:9) Today we show that we love our neighbors by persevering in our self-sacrificing efforts to touch their heart with the good news.—Matt. 22:39.\*

<sup>13</sup> **Jesus worked hard in the ministry.** He showed his love for people by continuing to teach them at every opportunity. (Luke 19:47, 48) What moved him to do so? Jesus felt compassion for them. At times, so many wanted to hear Jesus’ words that he and his disciples “were not able even to eat a meal.” (Mark 3:20) He also made himself available at night—a time that was more convenient for one of his listeners. (John 3:1, 2) The majority of those who initially listened to Je-

\* The Greek word rendered “neighbor” at Matthew 22:39 can include more than just those who live nearby. It can refer to anyone with whom a person interacts.

13-14. How did Jesus show compassion for people, and how can we cultivate that quality?

sus did not become his disciples. But all who heard him received a thorough witness. Today we want to give everyone the opportunity to hear the good news. (Acts 10:42) To accomplish this, we may need to adjust our approach to the ministry.

<sup>14</sup> **Be willing to make necessary adjustments.** If we do not vary the times when we share in the ministry, we may not be reaching those who would respond favorably to the good news. A pioneer named Matilda says: “My husband and I try to call on people at different times. In the early morning, we do business territory. At midday when many are out and about, we use literature carts. Later in the day, we find it effective to reach people at their homes.” Rather than stick to a schedule that is convenient for us, we should be willing to adjust our schedule to preach when we are more likely to meet people. If we do, we can be sure that Jehovah will be pleased.



Supplicate Jehovah when  
in distress, as Jesus did  
(See paragraphs 15-17)

### TEARS FOR HIS FATHER'S VINDICATION

<sup>15</sup> Late in the evening on Nisan 14, 33 C.E., Jesus went to the garden of Gethsemane. There he poured out his heart to Jehovah. (**Read Luke 22:39-44.**) It was during those difficult hours that Jesus “offered up supplications . . . with strong outcries and tears.” (Heb. 5:7) What did Jesus pray for during that final night before his death? He prayed for strength to remain loyal to Jehovah and to do His will. Jehovah heard the anguish in his Son’s prayer and sent an angel to strengthen him.

<sup>16</sup> Jesus no doubt wept while praying in the garden of Gethsemane because he was distressed over the very thought of being viewed as a blasphemer. He was also aware of the tremendous responsibility he bore—that of vindicating his

Father’s name. If you are facing a distressing situation that tests your loyalty to Jehovah, what can you learn from Jesus’ tears? Consider three additional lessons.

<sup>17</sup> ***Jehovah listens to your supplications.*** Jehovah listened to Jesus’ earnest requests. Why? Because Jesus’ main concern was to stay loyal to his Father and to vindicate His name. If our main concern is to stay loyal to Jehovah and to vindicate his name, he will answer our prayers for help.—Ps. 145:18, 19.

<sup>18</sup> ***Jesus sympathizes with your feelings.*** When we are distraught, how happy we are to be comforted by a sympathetic friend, especially one who has faced trials similar to ours. Jesus is that friend. He knows what it is like to feel weak and in need of help. He understands our makeup, and he will see to it

15. What occurred on the final night of Jesus’ life, as recorded at Luke 22:39-44?

16. Why was Jesus distressed while he was praying in the garden of Gethsemane?

17. What can we learn about Jehovah from his answer to Jesus’ earnest prayers?

18. In what ways is Jesus like a sympathetic friend?

that we receive the support we need “at the right time.” (Heb. 4:15, 16) Just as Jesus accepted help from an angel in the garden of Gethsemane, we should be willing to accept the help Jehovah provides, whether it is in the form of a publication, a video, a talk, or an encouraging visit from an elder or a mature friend.

<sup>19</sup> *Jehovah will give you “the peace of God.”* How will Jehovah strengthen us? When we pray, we will receive “the peace of God that surpasses all understanding.” (Phil. 4:6, 7) The peace that Jehovah gives calms our heart and stabilizes our thoughts. Consider how this proved true for a sister named Luz. She says: “I struggle with feelings of loneliness. At times, those feelings cause me to think that Jehovah does not love me. But when that happens, I immediately tell Jehovah how I feel. Prayer allows me to gain control of my feelings.” As her experience shows, we can find peace through prayer.

19. How can you gain strength when you are facing a distressing test of loyalty to God? Give an example.

<sup>20</sup> What comforting and practical lessons we can learn from Jesus’ tears! We are reminded to support our grieving friends and to trust that Jehovah and Jesus will support us when we lose a loved one in death. We are motivated to preach and teach with compassion because Jehovah God and Jesus Christ show this tender quality. And we find comfort in knowing that Jehovah and his dear Son understand how we feel, sympathize with our weaknesses, and want to help us endure. May we continue to apply what we have learned until the day when Jehovah fulfills his heart-warming promise to “wipe out every tear from [our] eyes”—Rev. 21:4.

20. What lessons have we learned from the tears Jesus shed?

**PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS** **Page 15:** Jesus was moved to comfort Mary and Martha. We can do the same for those who lose loved ones in death.

**Page 17:** Jesus willingly taught Nicodemus at night. We should study the Bible with people when it is convenient for them. **Page 18:** Jesus prayed for strength to remain loyal to Jehovah. We must do the same when under trial.

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## EXPLAIN WHAT LESSONS YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM JESUS IN THE ACCOUNTS RECORDED AT . . .

■ John 11:35

■ Luke 19:41

■ Luke 22:44;  
Hebrews 5:7

## SONG 20

You Gave Your  
Precious Son

## PREVIEW

Whether our hope is to live in heaven or on a paradise earth, we look forward to attending the Memorial each year. This article will discuss the sound Scriptural reasons why we attend and how we benefit from doing so.

## Why We Attend the Memorial

*“Keep doing this in remembrance of me.”*—LUKE 22:19.

NO MATTER how long it has been since our loved ones have died, we still remember them. The anniversary of their death usually brings especially vivid memories to mind.

<sup>2</sup> Each year, we are among the millions worldwide who gather on the anniversary of the death of someone we dearly love—Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. 1:8) We come together to remember the one who gave his life as a ransom to save us from sin and death. (Matt. 20:28) In fact, Jesus wanted his followers to remember his death. The night before he died, he instituted a special evening meal and commanded: “Keep doing this in remembrance of me.”\* —Luke 22:19.

<sup>3</sup> A small number of those attending the Memorial of Christ’s death cherish a heavenly hope. But many millions who have an earthly hope are also present. In this article, we will consider reasons why both groups are eager to attend the Memorial each year. We will also examine how we benefit from attending. Let us start by considering some reasons why the anointed attend.

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\* These words have been rendered “Do this in memory of me” (*Today’s English Version*) and “Do this as a memorial of me” (*The Jerusalem Bible*).

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- 1-2. (a) When especially do we remember a loved one who has died?  
(b) What did Jesus institute the night before he died?  
3. What will we discuss in this article?



## WHY ANOINTED ONES ATTEND

<sup>4</sup> Each year, anointed ones look forward to attending the Memorial **as partakers**. Why do they appropriately partake of the bread and the wine? To answer that, consider what happened on the final night of Jesus' earthly life. After the Passover meal, Jesus instituted what has come to be known as the Lord's Evening Meal. He passed the bread and the wine to his 11 faithful apostles and told them to eat and drink. Jesus spoke to them about two covenants, or agreements—the new covenant and the Kingdom covenant.\* (Luke 22:19, 20, 28-30) These covenants opened up the way for those apostles and a limited number of others to become kings and priests in heaven. (Rev. 5:10; 14:1) Only the anointed remnant,<sup>#</sup> who are in these two covenants, may partake of the bread and the wine at the Memorial.

<sup>5</sup> Here is another reason why the anointed are eager to attend the Memorial: This observance gives them an opportunity to **contemplate their hope**. Jehovah has given them a remarkable hope—to enjoy immortal and incorruptible life in heaven, to serve alongside the glorified Jesus Christ and the rest of the 144,000 and, above all, to be in the very

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\* For more information about the new covenant and the Kingdom covenant, see the article "You Will Become 'a Kingdom of Priests'" in the October 15, 2014, issue of *The Watchtower*, pp. 15-17.

<sup>#</sup> **EXPRESSION EXPLAINED:** The expression **anointed remnant** refers to the remaining anointed Christians still alive on earth.

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4. Why do anointed ones partake of the bread and the wine at the Memorial?

5. What do the anointed recognize about the hope they have been given?

presence of Jehovah God! (1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 John 3:2) The anointed recognize that they have been invited to enjoy such privileges in heaven. But to be admitted to heaven, they must remain faithful until their death. (2 Tim. 4:7, 8) It brings the anointed great joy to reflect on their heavenly hope. (Titus 2:13) What about the "other sheep"? (John 10:16) What are some reasons why they attend the Memorial?

## WHY THE OTHER SHEEP ATTEND

<sup>6</sup> The other sheep attend the Memorial, not as partakers, but **as observers**. In 1938, those with the earthly hope were for the first time specifically invited to attend the Memorial. *The Watchtower* of March 1, 1938, stated: "It will be entirely right and proper for the [other sheep] to be present at such meeting and observe what is done. . . . It should be and is a time of rejoicing for them also." Like invited guests who are happy to observe a wedding ceremony, the other sheep are happy to be present as observers at the Memorial.

<sup>7</sup> The other sheep too **contemplate their hope**. They look forward to the Memorial discourse, for much of it focuses on what Christ and his 144,000 corulers will do for faithful humans during the Thousand Year Reign. Under the leadership of their King Jesus Christ, those heavenly rulers will help transform the earth into a paradise and lift obedient humankind to perfection. How thrilling

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6. Why do the other sheep attend the Memorial each year?

7. Why do the other sheep look forward to the Memorial discourse?

it is for the millions of observers at the Memorial to imagine the future fulfillment of Bible prophecies, such as those found at Isaiah 35:5, 6; 65:21-23; and Revelation 21:3, 4. By picturing themselves and their loved ones in that new world, they strengthen their hope for the future and their determination never to stop serving Jehovah.—Matt. 24:13; Gal. 6:9.

<sup>8</sup> Consider another reason why the other sheep attend the Memorial. They want to *show their love and support for the anointed*. God's Word foretold that a close bond would exist between the anointed and those with the earthly hope. How so? Let us discuss a few examples.

<sup>9</sup> **Read Zechariah 8:23.** This prophecy paints a touching picture of the way the other sheep feel about their anointed brothers and sisters. The expressions “a Jew” and “you people” refer to the same group—the anointed remnant. (Rom. 2:28, 29) The “ten men out of all the languages of the nations” represent the other sheep. They “take firm hold of”—loyally attach themselves to—the anointed, joining them in pure worship. Naturally, then, on the night of the Memorial, the other sheep show their close attachment to the anointed by being present with them.

<sup>10</sup> **Read Ezekiel 37:15-19, 24, 25.** In

8. What is another reason why the other sheep attend the Memorial?

9. What does the prophecy recorded at Zechariah 8:23 indicate about the way the other sheep feel about the anointed?

10. What has Jehovah done in fulfillment of the prophecy found at Ezekiel 37:15-19, 24, 25?

fulfillment of this prophecy, Jehovah has brought the anointed and the other sheep together in an unbreakable bond of unity. The prophecy mentions two sticks. Those with the heavenly hope are like the stick “for Judah” (the tribe from which the kings of Israel were chosen), and those with the earthly hope are like the stick “of Ephraim.”\* Jehovah would unite the two groups so that they would become “one stick.” This means that they serve unitedly under their one King, Christ Jesus. Each year, the anointed and the other sheep attend the Memorial, not as two separate groups, but as “one flock” under “one shepherd.”—John 10:16.

<sup>11</sup> **Read Matthew 25:31-36, 40.** “The sheep” in this parable represent righteous ones in the time of the end who have the earthly hope—that is, the other sheep. They loyally support the remaining ones of Christ's spirit-anointed brothers primarily by helping them to fulfill an enormous responsibility—the worldwide preaching and disciple-making work.—Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20.

<sup>12</sup> Every year in the weeks leading up to the Memorial, the other sheep show their support for Christ's brothers by sharing fully in a global campaign to invite interested ones to the Memorial.

\* For more information about the prophecy of the two sticks found in Ezekiel chapter 37, see *Pure Worship of Jehovah—Restored At Last!*, pp. 130-135, pars. 3-17.

11. How do “the sheep” mentioned at Matthew 25:31-36, 40 primarily show their support of Christ's brothers?

12-13. What are some further ways in which the other sheep show their support for Christ's brothers?

(See the box “Are You Planning Ahead for the Memorial Season?”) They also help make all the necessary arrangements so that the Memorial can be held in every congregation worldwide, even though most congregations do not have any partakers in attendance. The other sheep are thrilled to support Christ’s brothers in such ways. These sheep know that Jesus views what they do for his anointed brothers as if they were doing it for him personally.—Matt. 25:37-40.

<sup>13</sup> What are some additional reasons why all of us, regardless of our hope, attend the Memorial?

#### WHY WE ALL ATTEND

<sup>14</sup> *We are thankful for the love that Jehovah and Jesus have shown us.* Jehovah has demonstrated his love for us in many ways, but one way stands out above all others. Our God made his greatest expression of unselfish love by sending his precious Son to suffer and die for us. (John 3:16) We recognize that Jesus too showed great love by willingly giving his life for us. (John 15:13) We can never repay Jehovah and Jesus for the love they have shown us. But we can show our thankfulness by how we live our life each day. (Col. 3:15) And we attend the Memorial so that we may remember their love for us as well as show our love for them.

<sup>15</sup> *We highly value the gift of the ransom.* (Matt. 20:28) The anointed trea-

sure the ransom, which makes their wonderful hope possible. Because of their faith in Christ’s sacrifice, Jehovah has declared them righteous and has adopted them as his children. (Rom. 5:1; 8:15-17, 23) The other sheep too are thankful for the ransom. On the basis of their faith in Christ’s shed blood, they have a clean standing before God, can render him sacred service, and have the hope of coming “out of the great tribulation.” (Rev. 7:13-15) One way that both the anointed and the other sheep show their gratitude for the ransom is by being present at the Memorial each year.

<sup>16</sup> Another reason why we attend the Memorial is that *we want to obey Jesus*. Regardless of our hope for the future, we take personally the command that Jesus gave on the night he instituted the Memorial: “Keep doing this in remembrance of me.”—1 Cor. 11:23, 24.

#### HOW WE ALL BENEFIT FROM ATTENDING

<sup>17</sup> *We draw closer to Jehovah.* (Jas. 4:8) As we have learned, the Memorial gives us an opportunity to think about the hope Jehovah has given us and to meditate on the great love he has shown us. (Jer. 29:11; 1 John 4:8-10) When we reflect on our sure hope for the future and on God’s unfailing love for us, we deepen our own love for Jehovah and strengthen our bond with him.—Rom. 8:38, 39.

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14. How have Jehovah and Jesus shown great love for us?

15. Why do both the anointed and the other sheep highly value the gift of the ransom?

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16. What is another reason why we attend the Memorial?

17. How does the Memorial help us draw closer to Jehovah?



## Are You Planning Ahead for the Memorial Season?

### PRIOR TO THE MEMORIAL

- Share as fully as possible in the campaign to invite others to attend this important event. Make a list of those whom you want to invite.
- Consider prayerfully whether you can enroll as an auxiliary pioneer during the Memorial season.
- Review articles or other published information that deepens your appreciation for the Memorial, the ransom, and the love that Jehovah and Jesus have shown us. For example, you can review chapters 14 and 23 of the book *Draw Close to Jehovah* and chapter 17 of the book *“Come Be My Follower.”*
- Keep up with the Memorial Bible reading schedule found in *Examining the Scriptures Daily*. Take time to meditate on Bible accounts about Jesus’ last days on earth, his death, and his resurrection.

### ON THE EVENING OF THE MEMORIAL

- Arrive early so that you can warmly welcome visitors and inactive ones who come to the event.
- Pay close attention to the discourse, and follow along in your Bible when the speaker reads and explains the scriptures.
- After the program concludes, try to start a conversation with a visitor and answer any questions he may have. If he shows interest, make sure that you or someone else can follow up on it.



### AFTER THE MEMORIAL

Visit any who showed interest, and offer a Bible study in the *Enjoy Life Forever!* brochure.



<sup>18</sup> ***We are moved to imitate Jesus' example.*** (1 Pet. 2:21) In the days leading up to the Memorial, we focus on Bible accounts about Jesus' final week on earth, his death, and his resurrection. Then on the evening of the Memorial, the discourse reminds us of Jesus' love for us. (Eph. 5:2; 1 John 3:16) As we read about Jesus' self-sacrificing example and meditate on it, we feel compelled to "go on walking just as that one walked."—1 John 2:6.

<sup>19</sup> ***We are even more determined to remain in God's love.*** (Jude 20, 21) We remain in God's love by doing all we can to obey him, sanctify his name, and bring joy to his heart. (Prov. 27:11; Matt. 6:9; 1 John 5:3) The Memorial obser-

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18. What does meditating on Jesus' example move us to do?

19. How can we remain in God's love?

vance moves us to be more determined to live each day in a way that says to Jehovah, 'I want to remain in your love forever!'

<sup>20</sup> Whether our hope is to live forever in heaven or on earth, we have sound reasons to attend the Memorial. Each year when we gather together on that date, we remember the death of someone we love, Jesus Christ. Above all, we remember the greatest act of love—the love that Jehovah showed us by giving his Son as a ransom. This year, the Memorial will be held on the evening of **Friday, April 15, 2022**. We love Jehovah and his Son, so on the anniversary of Jesus' death, nothing could be more important to us than being present at the Memorial.

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20. What sound reasons do we have for attending the Memorial?

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## REGARDING THE MEMORIAL, . . .

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| ■ what are some reasons why the anointed attend? | ■ what are some reasons why the other sheep attend? | ■ how do we all benefit from attending? |
|--|---|---|

**SONG 8**

Jehovah Is Our Refuge

**PREVIEW**

Jehovah is our best Friend. We treasure our friendship with him, and we want to get to know him better. It takes time to get to know someone. This is also true when we want to continue developing a relationship with Jehovah. In view of the hectic lives we lead, how can we make the time to draw close to our heavenly Father, and how will we benefit by doing so?

## Make “the Best Use of Your Time”

*“Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, making the best use of your time.”*

—EPH. 5:15, 16.

WE LOVE spending time with people we care about. A happily married couple like nothing better than to spend a quiet evening together. Young people enjoy the company of their close friends. And all of us cherish the time we spend with fellow believers. Above all, however, we love spending time with our God. We can do this by praying to him, by reading his Word, and by meditating on his purpose and his beautiful qualities. The time we spend with Jehovah is very precious indeed!—Ps. 139:17.

<sup>2</sup> Although we enjoy spending time with Jehovah, we face a challenge. We lead busy lives, which can make it difficult for us to schedule time for spiritual activities. Secular work, family responsibilities, and other necessary activities can demand so much of our time that we may feel that we are just too busy to pray, study, or meditate.

<sup>3</sup> There is another more subtle threat to our time. If we are not careful, we could allow activities that are not wrong in themselves to rob us of time that we could use to draw closer to Jehovah. For example, consider the matter of recreation. We all benefit from an occasional change of pace. But even wholesome recreation can cut

1. How can we spend time with Jehovah?
2. What challenge do we face?
3. What is another threat to our time?

into our time to the point that there is little time left for spiritual activities. We need to keep recreation in its place. —Prov. 25:27; 1 Tim. 4:8.

<sup>4</sup> In this article, we will consider why we need to set proper priorities. We will also discuss how we can make the best use of our time with Jehovah and how we can benefit from this wise use of our time.

#### MAKE WISE CHOICES; SET PROPER PRIORITIES

<sup>5</sup> *Choose the best course in life.* Young people are often concerned about the best way to spend their life. On the one hand, school guidance counselors and unbelieving family members may urge them to pursue higher education in preparation for a prestigious career in the world. That path would likely consume a great deal of their time. On the other hand, parents and friends in the congregation may encourage young people to spend their life in Jehovah's service. What can help a young person who loves Jehovah to make the best decision? He would benefit by reading **Ephesians 5:15-17** and meditating on it. **(Read.)** After reading these verses, a young person might ask himself: 'What is "the will of Jehovah"? What decision will please him? Which path will result in my making the best use of my time?' Remember, "the days are wicked," and this system ruled by Satan will soon come to an end. It would be wise

on our part to use our life in a way that will endear us to Jehovah.

<sup>6</sup> *Set proper priorities.* Sometimes, making the best use of our time involves choosing between two activities that are not wrong in themselves. The well-known account about Jesus' visit to the home of Mary and Martha illustrates the point. No doubt thrilled to receive Jesus as her guest, hospitable Martha set about preparing an elaborate meal. Meanwhile, her sister, Mary, took advantage of the visit to sit close to her Lord and listen to his teaching. While Martha was certainly motivated by the best of intentions, Mary "chose the best portion." (Luke 10:38-42, ftn.) In time, Mary may have forgotten what food was served on that occasion, but we can be sure that she never forgot what she learned from Jesus. Just as Mary cherished that limited time with Jesus, we cherish our time with Jehovah. How can we make the best use of that time?

#### MAKE THE BEST USE OF YOUR TIME WITH JEHOVAH

<sup>7</sup> *Recognize that prayer, study, and meditation are part of our worship.* When we pray, we are communicating with our heavenly Father, who loves us dearly. (Ps. 5:7) When we study the Bible, we are taking in "the knowledge of God," who is the Source of all wisdom. (Prov. 2:1-5) When we meditate, we are considering Jehovah's appealing

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4. What will we now consider?

5. How can considering the counsel found at Ephesians 5:15-17 help a young person to choose the best course in life?

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6. What choice did Mary make, and why was it a wise choice?

7. Why do prayer, study, and meditation deserve our time and attention?

Can you find a quiet setting to do your personal study?  
(See paragraphs 8-9)



personality as well as his awe-inspiring purpose for all creation and how we fit into that purpose. Can you think of a better way to use your time? But how can we get the most from the limited time at our disposal?

<sup>8</sup> *If possible, choose a quiet setting.* Consider the example of Jesus. Before he undertook his earthly ministry, Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness. (Luke 4: 1, 2) In that quiet setting, Jesus could pray to Jehovah and meditate on his Father’s will for him. Doing so no doubt prepared Jesus for the tests that would soon come his way. How can you benefit from Jesus’ example? If you are a member of a large family, it may not always be possible for you to find a quiet place at home. In that case, you might look for an appropriate setting outdoors. That is what Julie does when she wants to spend time with Jehovah in prayer. She and her husband live in a small apartment in France, and it is difficult to be alone and uninterrupted. “So I go for a walk in the park every day,” Julie explains. “There I can be alone, concentrate, and really talk to Jehovah.”

8. What lesson can we learn from how Jesus used his time in the wilderness?

<sup>9</sup> Jesus lived a very busy life. During his earthly ministry, he was followed from place to place by crowds of people, all of whom were making demands on his time. On one occasion, “the whole city was gathered right at the door” to see him. Even so, Jesus arranged time to care for his own relationship with Jehovah. Before sunrise, he found “an isolated place” where he could spend time alone with his Father.—Mark 1:32-35.

<sup>10</sup> On the final night of his life on earth, as his ministry came to an end, Jesus again sought out a quiet setting where he could meditate and pray. He found that setting in the garden of Gethsemane. (Matt. 26:36) On that occasion, Jesus gave his disciples some timely counsel about prayer.

<sup>11</sup> Consider what happened. When they arrived at the garden of Gethsemane, it was very late, perhaps past midnight. Jesus asked the apostles to “keep on the watch,” and he went off to pray. (Matt. 26:37-39) But while he was pray-

9. In spite of his busy schedule, how did Jesus show that he valued his relationship with Jehovah?  
10-11. According to Matthew 26:40, 41, what timely counsel did Jesus give his disciples in the garden of Gethsemane, but what happened?

ing, they fell asleep. When he found them sleeping, Jesus again urged them to “keep on the watch and pray continually.” (**Read Matthew 26:40, 41.**) He realized that they had been under much stress and that they were tired. Jesus compassionately acknowledged that “the flesh is weak.” Still, two more times Jesus went off to pray, and when he returned he found his disciples sleeping rather than praying.—Matt. 26:42-45.

<sup>12</sup> **Choose the right time.** We may at times feel too stressed or too tired to pray. If that has happened to you, you are not alone. What can you do? Some who were accustomed to approaching Jehovah in prayer at the end of the day have found it helpful to spend time in prayer a little earlier in the evening when they are less tired. Others have found that the position they assume when praying can have a beneficial effect. What, though, if you feel too anxious or too discouraged to pray?

12. What can we do if at times we feel too stressed or too tired to pray?

Tell Jehovah how you feel. You can be sure that our merciful Father will understand.—Ps. 139:4.

<sup>13</sup> **Resist distractions when you study.** Prayer is not the only avenue we can use to strengthen our bond with Jehovah. A study of God’s Word and attendance at congregation meetings can also help us to draw closer to God. Is there anything you can do to make the best use of study periods and the time you spend at congregation meetings? Ask yourself, ‘What tends to interfere with my concentration during the meetings or when I am trying to study?’ Could it be receiving calls, emails, or text messages on your smartphone or on some other electronic device? Today billions of people own these useful tools. Some researchers suggest that when we are trying to concentrate, just having a smartphone nearby can distract us. “Your focus is not on the task at hand,” says a professor of psychology. “Your

13. How might electronic devices interfere with our time with Jehovah?



Can you set aside time to pray when you are most alert?  
(See paragraph 12)





Can you avoid responding to text messages and emails during meetings?

(See paragraphs 13-14)

mind is elsewhere.” Before assemblies and conventions, we are often told to adjust our electronic devices to a setting that will not disturb *others*. Could we do the same when we are alone so that our devices do not disturb *us* and interrupt our time with Jehovah?

<sup>14</sup> **Ask Jehovah to help you focus.** When you notice that your mind is wandering during a study period or a congregation meeting, ask Jehovah to help you. If you are worried or anxious, it may not be easy to set your concerns aside and focus on spiritual things, but it is essential that you do so. Pray for the peace that will guard not only your heart but also your “mental powers.”—**Read Philippians 4:6, 7.**

14. According to Philippians 4:6, 7, how will Jehovah help us focus?

## TIME SPENT WITH JEHOVAH IS REWARDING

<sup>15</sup> If you take time to talk to, listen to, and think about Jehovah, you will benefit greatly. How so? First, *you will make better decisions*. The Bible assures us that “the one walking with the wise will become wise.” (Prov. 13:20) So as you spend time with the Source of wisdom, Jehovah, you will become wiser. You will better understand how to please him and how to avoid making choices that hurt him.

<sup>16</sup> Second, *you will become a better teacher*. When we are studying the Bible with someone, one of our most important goals is to help our student draw close to Jehovah. The more we communicate with our heavenly Father, the more our own love for him will grow and the better equipped we will be to teach our student to love him. This was true of Jesus. He described his Father in such warm, loving terms that his faithful followers could not help but love Jehovah as well.—John 17:25, 26.

<sup>17</sup> Third, *your faith will grow stronger*. Consider what happens when you ask God for guidance, comfort, or support. Each time Jehovah answers those prayers, your faith in him grows. (1 John 5:15) What else can help strengthen your faith? Personal study. After all, “faith follows the thing heard.” (Rom. 10:17) However, to build strong faith, more is

15. What is one benefit of spending time with Jehovah?

16. How does spending time with Jehovah improve our teaching?

17. Why do prayer and study help us to strengthen our faith?

required than merely taking in knowledge. What else do we need to do?

<sup>18</sup> We need to meditate on what we are learning. Consider the experience of the writer of Psalm 77. He was distressed because he felt that he and his fellow Israelites had lost Jehovah's approval. Those anxious thoughts kept him up at night. (Verses 2-8) What did he do? He told Jehovah: "I will meditate on all your activity and ponder over your dealings." (Verse 12) Of course, the psalmist was well-aware of the things Jehovah had done for His people in the past, but the anxious man wondered: "Has God forgotten to show his favor, or has his anger caused his mercy to cease?" (Verse 9) The psalmist meditated on Jehovah's activity and on the fact that God had shown mercy and compassion in the past. (Verse 11) The result? The psalmist became convinced that Jehovah would not abandon His people. (Verse 15) In the same way, your faith will grow stronger as you meditate on

18. Illustrate why we need to meditate.

what Jehovah has already done for his people and on what he has done for you personally.

<sup>19</sup> Fourth, and most important, ***your love for Jehovah will deepen***. Love, more than any other quality, will motivate you to obey Jehovah, to make sacrifices in order to please him, and to endure any trial. (Matt. 22:37-39; 1 Cor. 13: 4, 7; 1 John 5:3) Nothing could be more precious than a close, loving friendship with Jehovah!—Ps. 63:1-8.

<sup>20</sup> Remember that prayer, study, and meditation are acts of worship. Like Jesus, seek out quiet settings in which to spend time with Jehovah. Eliminate unnecessary distractions. Ask Jehovah to help you focus when you are engaged in spiritual activities. If you make the best use of your time now, Jehovah will reward you with life forever in God's new world.—Mark 4:24.

19. How else will we benefit from spending time with Jehovah?

20. How do you plan to safeguard your time with Jehovah?

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## HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

■ What did Jesus do to ensure that he would maintain a strong relationship with Jehovah?

■ How can we make the best use of our time?

■ How do we benefit from spending time with Jehovah?

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During the great tribulation, Gog of Magog’s forces may try to assault us in our homes. But we can take comfort in knowing that Jesus and his angels are aware of what is happening and will defend us (See study article 1, paragraph 13)

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