

AUGUST 15, 2014

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



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## ISRAEL

**COVER:** Sisters preaching in Russian on a Tel Aviv promenade. In the background are the rocky hills of modern Jaffa, the ancient seaport of Joppa

POPULATION

8,050,000

PEAK PUBLISHERS IN 2013

1,459

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE IN 2013

2,671

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## STUDY ARTICLES

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Learn what the rebellion against God in Eden has meant for men and women. Consider the experiences of some godly women of the past. Also, find out what role Christian women play in God’s purpose today.

### ■ Use the Word of God—It Is Alive!

Every Kingdom publisher wants to be effective in the ministry. Consider some practical suggestions on how to use the Bible along with our tracts to engage people in conversations and to reach their hearts with Jehovah’s living Word.

### ■ How Jehovah Draws Close to Us

We need to have a personal relationship with our Creator. Learn how Jehovah’s provisions of the ransom and of his written Word prove that he has taken the initiative to draw us close to him.

### ■ Hear Jehovah’s Voice Wherever You Are

In order to walk in the way of the truth, we must listen to what Jehovah says. Learn how we can listen to Jehovah’s voice despite interference from Satan and from our own sinful inclinations. This article will help us to appreciate the importance of good communication with the true God.

 **THE WATCHTOWER®**  
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH’S KINGDOM

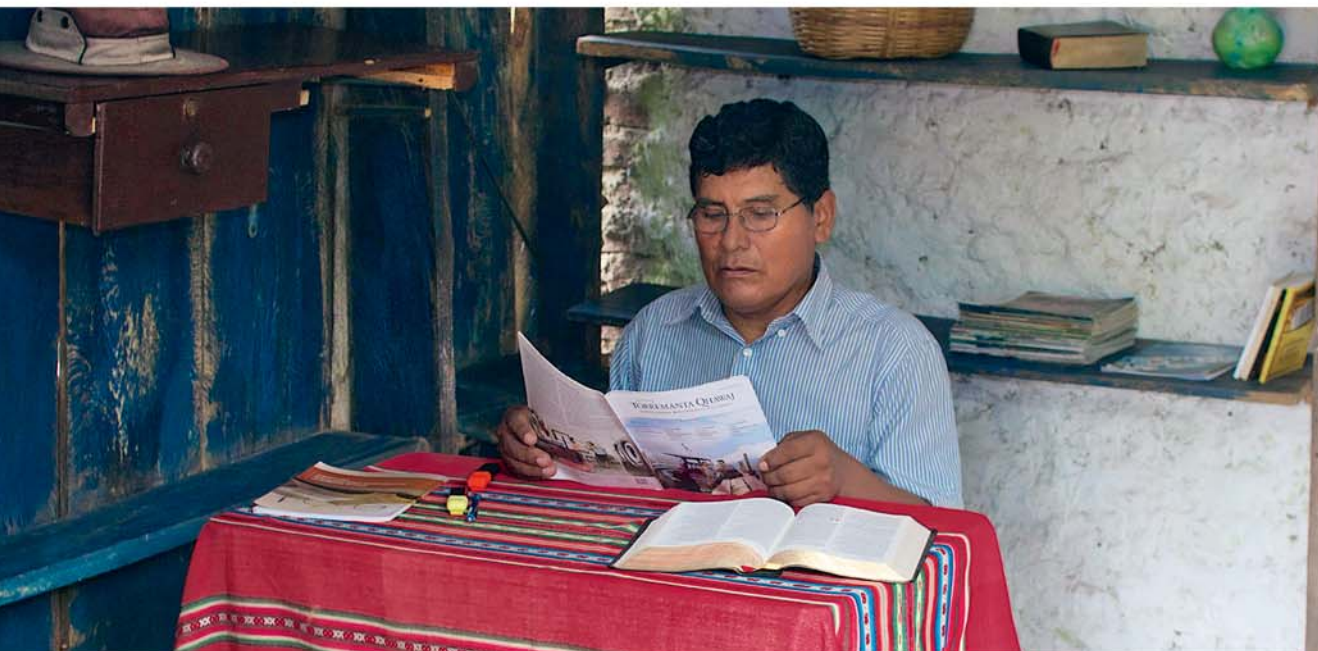
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## Are You Receiving “Food at the Proper Time”?

WE LIVE in the most challenging time of all human history. (2 Tim. 3:1-5) Our love for Jehovah and our determination to live by his righteous standards are tested each day. Jesus foresaw this troubled time, and he assured his followers that they would receive the encouragement they needed to endure to the end. (Matt. 24:3, 13; 28:20) In order to strengthen them, he appointed a faithful slave to provide spiritual “food at the proper time.”—Matt. 24:45, 46.

Since the appointment of the faithful slave in 1919, millions of “domestics” of all languages have been gathered into God’s organization and are being spiritually fed. (Matt. 24:14; Rev. 22:17) However, the same amount of material is not available in all languages, and not all individuals have access to the electronic forms of our publications. For example, many do not have the videos and the articles published only on [jw.org](http://jw.org). Does this mean that some miss out on receiving the food they need to remain spiritually healthy? To arrive at the correct conclusion, consider the answers to four key questions.



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## 1 What is the primary ingredient in the food that Jehovah provides?

When Satan tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread, Jesus replied: “Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every word that comes from Jehovah’s mouth.” (Matt. 4:3, 4) Jehovah’s words are recorded in the Bible. (2 Pet. 1:20, 21) Therefore, the Bible is the primary ingredient in our spiritual food.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

Jehovah’s organization has made the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* available in whole or in part in over 120 languages, and more languages are being added each year. In addition to that translation, billions of copies of other versions of the Bible are available in whole or in part in thousands of languages. That astounding achievement is in harmony with Jehovah’s will that “all sorts of people should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth.” (1 Tim. 2:3, 4) And because “there is not a creation that is hidden from [Jehovah’s] sight,” we can be sure that he will draw those who are “conscious of their spiritual need” to his organization and provide spiritual food for them.—Heb. 4:13; Matt. 5:3, 6; John 6:44; 10:14.

Jehovah knows what  
we need and has given  
us enough to keep us  
spiritually strong

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## 2 What role do our publications play in providing spiritual food?

For a person to develop strong faith, he needs to do more than read the Bible. He must understand what he reads and apply what he learns. (Jas. 1:22-25) An Ethiopian eunuch in the first century appreciated that fact. He was looking at God’s Word when the evangelizer Philip asked him: “Do you actually know what you are reading?” The eunuch replied: “Really, how could I ever do so unless someone guided me?” (Acts 8:26-31) Philip responded by helping the eunuch gain an accurate knowledge of God’s Word. The eunuch was so moved by what he learned that he got baptized. (Acts 8:32-38) Similarly, our Bible-based publications have helped us gain an accurate knowledge of the truth. They have touched our emotions and have motivated us to apply what we learn.—Col. 1:9, 10.

Through the publications, Jehovah’s servants are given an abundant supply of spiritual things to eat and drink. (Isa. 65:13) For instance, *The Watchtower*, available in over 210 languages, explains Bible prophecy, increases our comprehension of deep spiritual truths, and motivates us to live by Bible principles. *Awake!* magazine, published in some 100 languages, broadens our knowledge of Jehovah’s creative works and shows us how to apply the Bible’s practical counsel. (Prov. 3:21-23; Rom. 1:20) The faithful slave provides Bible-based material in more than 680 languages! Do you set aside time each day to read the Bible? Do you read each new magazine and all the new publications made available in your language each year?

In addition to producing publications, Jehovah’s organization prepares Bible-based outlines for talks that are delivered at our meetings, assemblies, and conventions. Do you enjoy the discourses, dramas, demonstrations, and interviews that are presented at those gatherings? Jehovah certainly provides us with a spiritual banquet!—Isa. 25:6.

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**3** If you do not have access in your language to all the publications that are produced, will you become spiritually undernourished?

The answer is no. And it should not surprise us that some of Jehovah's servants might, at times, have access to more spiritual food than others do. Why not? Consider the apostles. They received more instruction than many other disciples in the first century did. (Mark 4:10; 9:35-37) Even so, the other disciples were not spiritually undernourished; they received what they needed.—Eph. 4:20-24; 1 Pet. 1:8.

It is also worth noting that much of what Jesus said and did while on earth is not recorded in the Gospel accounts. The apostle John wrote: "There are also, in fact, many other things that Jesus did, which if ever they were written in full detail, I suppose the world itself could not contain the scrolls written." (John 21:25) Even though Jesus' first-century followers had more information about the perfect man Jesus than we do, we are not deprived. Jehovah has made sure that we know enough about Jesus for us to be his footstep followers.—1 Pet. 2:21.

Think, too, of the letters sent by the apostles to the first-century congregations. At least one letter written by Paul was not preserved in the Bible. (Col. 4:16) Is our spiritual food inadequate because we do not have access to that letter? No. Jehovah knows what we need and has given us enough to keep us spiritually strong.—Matt. 6:8.

Today, some groups of Jehovah's servants have more spiritual food available to them than others have. Do you speak a language in which only a few publications are available? If so, know that Jehovah cares for you. Study the material you have, and if possible, attend the meetings in a language that you understand. And be assured that Jehovah will keep you spiritually strong.—Ps. 1:2; Heb. 10:24, 25.

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**4** If you do not have access to material that is published on jw.org, will you become spiritually weak?

On our Web site, we publish copies of our magazines and other Bible-study publications. The Web site also provides material that helps couples, teenagers, and those with young children. Families benefit by considering this material in their Family Worship sessions. In addition, our Web site reports on special programs, such as Gilead graduations and the annual meeting, and it keeps our global brotherhood informed about natural disasters and legal developments that affect Jehovah's people. (1 Pet. 5:8, 9) The Web site is also a powerful preaching tool, making the good news available even in lands where our work is restricted or banned.

However, you can remain spiritually strong whether you have access to our Web site or not. The slave has worked hard to provide enough printed material to keep each domestic spiritually well-fed. Therefore, you should not feel obligated to buy a device just to access jw.org. Some may make private arrangements to print a limited amount of material published on our Web site and give it personally to those who do not have Internet access, but congregations are not required to do this.

We are grateful to Jesus for keeping his promise to care for our spiritual needs. As these difficult last days rapidly draw to a close, we can be confident that Jehovah will continue to provide spiritual "food at the proper time."



# What Is the Role of Women in Jehovah's Purpose?

*"The women proclaiming the good news are a large army."—PS. 68:11.*

## HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

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What has the rebellion in Eden meant for men and women?

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How did women serve Jehovah in the past?

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What role do women now play in preaching the good news?

JEHOVAH created the earth for a purpose. He "formed it to be inhabited." (Isa. 45:18) His first human creation, Adam, was perfect, and God gave him a wonderful home—the garden of Eden. How Adam enjoyed its stately trees, its trickling streams, its frolicking animals! But he lacked something very important. Jehovah indicated what that was when he declared: "It is not good for the man to continue to be alone. I am going to make a helper for him, as a complement of him." God then caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep, took one of his ribs, and "built the rib . . . into a woman." When Adam woke up, how happy he was! "This is at last bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh," said Adam. "This one will be called Woman, because from man she was taken."—Gen. 2:18-23.

<sup>2</sup> God's gift of a woman was unique in that she was to be the man's perfect helper. She would also have the special privilege of bearing children. In fact, "Adam named his wife Eve, because she was to become the mother of everyone living." (Gen. 3:20; ftn.) What an amazing gift God gave that first human couple! They had the ability to produce other perfect humans. By this means, the earth would eventually be-

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**1, 2.** (a) What gifts did God give Adam? (b) Why did God provide a wife for Adam? (See opening image.)

come a paradise populated by perfect people who would have other living things in subjection.—Gen. 1:27, 28.

<sup>3</sup> To receive the blessings set before them, Adam and Eve would have to obey Jehovah and acknowledge his rulership. (Gen. 2:15-17) Only under those circumstances could they fulfill God's purpose for them. Sadly, though, they were influenced by "the original serpent," Satan, and sinned against God. (Rev. 12:9; Gen. 3:1-6) How has this rebellion affected women? What was accomplished by godly women of the past? Why can present-day Christian women be referred to as "a large army"?—Ps. 68:11.

#### WHAT REBELLION HAS MEANT

<sup>4</sup> When called to account for his rebellion, Adam offered this lame excuse: "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, so I ate." (Gen. 3:12) Adam not only failed to accept responsibility for his sin but also tried to place the blame on the woman God had given him—and on the loving Giver! Both Adam and Eve sinned, but Adam was held responsible for their wrongdoing. Hence, the apostle Paul wrote that "through *one* man [Adam] sin entered into the world and death through sin."—Rom. 5:12.

<sup>5</sup> The first human pair were led to think that they did not need Jehovah as their Ruler. That raised this vital question of sovereignty: Who has the right to rule? To provide an answer for all eterni-

ty, God allowed rule independent of him to continue for a time. He knew that experience would prove that rule independent of him would fail. Over the centuries, such rulership has plunged human society into one calamity after another. In the past century alone, about 100,000,000 people died in wars—and that includes millions of innocent men, women, and children. So there already is mounting evidence that "it does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." (Jer. 10:23) Realizing that fact, we acknowledge Jehovah as our Ruler.—**Read Proverbs 3:5, 6.**

<sup>6</sup> Both men and women have experienced mistreatment in this world that lies in the power of Satan. (Eccl. 8:9; 1 John 5:19) Some of the worst atrocities have involved the abuse of women. Worldwide, about 30 percent of women report having been assaulted by a male partner. Males are favored in some societies because it is thought that they will grow up to continue the family line and care for their aging parents and grandparents. In certain lands, females are considered undesirable children, and far more baby girls than baby boys are aborted.

<sup>7</sup> The mistreatment of women certainly does not please God. He treats women justly and respects them. Jehovah's regard for women is evident from the fact that Eve was created perfect and with characteristics that made her, not a slave, but a wonderful complement of Adam. That is one reason why, at the end of the sixth creative day, God "saw everything he had made, and look! it was very good." (Gen. 1:31) Yes,

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3. (a) To be blessed by God, what did Adam and Eve need to do, but what happened? (b) What questions will we consider?

4. Who was held responsible for the sin of the first human couple?

5. What has been proved by God's allowing rule independent of him to continue for a time?

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6. In many lands, how are females treated?

7. What kind of start did God give both men and women?

“everything” Jehovah made was “very good.” He gave both men and women a very good start!

### WOMEN WHO HAD JEHOVAH'S BACKING

<sup>8</sup> The behavior of men and women in general deteriorated after the rebellion in Eden, and during the past century, it has become worse than ever before. The Bible foretold that wicked conduct would prevail in “the last days.” Human wrongdoing has become so widespread that these truly are “critical times.” (2 Tim. 3:1-5) Throughout mankind’s history, however, the “Sovereign Lord Jehovah” has shown favor to men and women who have trusted in him, have obeyed his laws, and have submitted to him as their Ruler.—**Read Psalm 71:5.**

<sup>9</sup> When God destroyed the violent ancient world by means of the Flood in the days of Noah, very few humans survived. If Noah’s brothers and sisters were still alive at that time, they too died in the floodwaters. (Gen. 5:30) But as many women as men survived the Deluge. The survivors were Noah, his wife, his three sons, and their wives. They were preserved because they feared God and did his will. The billions of humans now living descended from those eight individuals who had Jehovah’s backing.—Gen. 7:7; 1 Pet. 3:20.

<sup>10</sup> Years later, the God-fearing wives of faithful patriarchs also had God’s backing. That would not have been the case had they been complainers

about their lot in life. (Jude 16) It is hard to imagine that serious cries of complaint would have come from the lips of Abraham’s respectful wife, Sarah, when they left the comforts of Ur and became temporary residents living in tents in another land. Instead, “Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord.” (1 Pet. 3:6) Consider also Rebekah, who was a blessed gift from Jehovah and became an excellent wife. It is no surprise that her husband, Isaac, “fell in love with her, and . . . found comfort after the loss of his mother.” (Gen. 24:67) And how glad we are today that we have in our midst godly women who are like Sarah and Rebekah!

<sup>11</sup> During their years of slavery in Egypt, the Israelites increased greatly in number, and Pharaoh decreed that all Hebrew male babies were to be destroyed at birth. However, consider the Hebrew midwives Shiphrah and Puah, who likely headed the midwife profession. Because they had reverential fear of Jehovah, they courageously refused to practice infanticide. He therefore rewarded them with their own families.—Ex. 1:15-21.

<sup>12</sup> In the days of Israel’s judges, one woman who had God’s backing was the prophetess Deborah. She encouraged Judge Barak and played a part in helping the Israelites to rid themselves of oppression, but she foretold that glory for victory over the Canaanites would not go to Barak. Instead, it would be “into the hand of a woman” that God would give the Canaanite army chief Sisera. That is what happened when the non-

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8. (a) Describe the behavior of people in general. (b) Throughout history, to whom has God shown favor?

9. How many people survived the Flood, and why?

10. Why did God-fearing wives of faithful patriarchs have Jehovah’s backing?

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11. How did two Hebrew midwives display courage?

12. What was remarkable about Deborah and Jael?



Israelite woman Jael killed him.—Judg. 4:4-9, 17-22.

<sup>13</sup> Abigail was a noteworthy woman who lived in the 11th century B.C.E. She had discernment, whereas her husband, Nabal, was harsh, worthless, and senseless. (1 Sam. 25:2, 3, 25) David and his men protected Nabal's possessions for a time, but when they asked for provisions, he "screamed insults at them" and gave them nothing. This angered David so much that he planned to do away with Nabal and his men. Hearing about this, Abigail took food and drink to David and his men, thereby preventing bloodshed. (1 Sam. 25:8-18) David later said to her: "Praise Jehovah the God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me!" (1 Sam. 25:32) After the death of Nabal, David married Abigail. —1 Sam. 25:37-42.

<sup>14</sup> Many men, women, and children died when the Babylonian forces destroyed Jerusalem and its temple in 607 B.C.E. The city's walls were rebuilt in 455 B.C.E. under Nehemiah's supervision. Among those who helped to repair the walls were the daughters of Shallum, a prince of half the district of Jerusalem. (Neh. 3:12) They willingly did menial work. How we appreciate the many Christian women who joyfully support theocratic building projects in various ways today!

### GODLY WOMEN OF THE FIRST CENTURY

<sup>15</sup> Somewhat before and during the first century C.E., Jehovah blessed a number of women with fine privileges.

**13.** What does the Bible tell us about Abigail?

**14.** The daughters of Shallum took part in what work, and how are Christian women doing something similar today?

**15.** God gave what privilege to one woman named Mary?

Among them was a virgin named Mary. While engaged to Joseph, she miraculously conceived a child by holy spirit. Why did God choose her to become the mother of Jesus? No doubt because she had the spiritual qualities needed to help nurture her perfect son through childhood to maturity. What a privilege it was to be the mother of the greatest man ever to live on earth!—Matt. 1:18-25.

<sup>16</sup> Jesus was very kind to women. For example, consider a woman who had a flow of blood for 12 years. From behind, she approached Jesus in a crowd and touched his garment. Instead of rebuking her, Jesus kindly said: "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be healed from your grievous sickness."—Mark 5:25-34.

<sup>17</sup> Some women who were Jesus' disciples ministered to him and his apostles. (Luke 8:1-3) And at Pentecost 33 C.E., about 120 men as well as women received God's spirit in a special way. (**Read Acts 2:1-4.**) That outpouring of holy spirit was foretold in the words: "I [Jehovah] will pour out my spirit on every sort of flesh, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy . . . And even on my male slaves and female slaves I will pour out my spirit." (Joel 2:28, 29) By means of that miraculous event on the day of Pentecost, God showed that he had transferred his backing from apostate Israel to "the Israel of God," made up of both men and women. (Gal. 3:28; 6:15, 16) Among the Christian women who shared in the ministry in the first century were the four daughters of Philip the evangelizer.—Acts 21:8, 9.

**16.** Give an example showing Jesus' attitude toward women.

**17.** What miraculous event occurred at Pentecost 33 C.E.?



The women declaring the good news truly are “a large army”  
(See paragraphs 18, 19)

## GRAND BLESSINGS AHEAD FOR GODLY WOMEN

<sup>20</sup> Space does not permit us to discuss the many faithful women of Bible record. But all of us can read about them in God’s Word and in articles published in our literature. For instance, we can meditate on the loyalty of Ruth. (Ruth 1:16, 17) Reading the Bible book named after Queen Esther and articles about her may well strengthen our faith. We can benefit from study projects of this kind that can be planned for Family Worship evenings. If we live alone, we can consider such subjects when we do our personal study.

<sup>21</sup> Jehovah undeniably blesses the preaching work of Christian women and supports them in times of trial. With his help, for example, godly women maintained their integrity under Nazi and Communist rule when many of them suffered and some even lost their lives because of their obedience to God. (Acts 5:29) Today as in the past, our sisters and all their fellow worshippers uphold God’s sovereignty. In effect, as in the case of the ancient Israelites, Jehovah grasps their right hand and says: “Do not be afraid. I will help you.”—Isa. 41:10-13.

<sup>22</sup> In the near future, godly men and women will transform the earth into a paradise and help millions of resurrected ones to learn about Jehovah’s purposes. Until then, whether male or female, let us cherish our privilege of serving him “shoulder to shoulder.”—Zeph. 3:9.

**20.** What study projects merit our consideration?

**21.** How have godly women shown their devotion to Jehovah in difficult times?

**22.** We can look forward to what future privileges?

### “A LARGE ARMY” OF WOMEN

<sup>18</sup> In the late 1800’s, a few men and women showed keen interest in true worship. They were forerunners of those who now share in the fulfillment of Jesus’ prophetic words: “This good news of the Kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”—Matt. 24:14.

<sup>19</sup> The small group of Bible Students has grown to some 8,000,000 Witnesses of Jehovah today. More than 11,000,000 other individuals show interest in the Bible and our work by attending the annual Memorial of Jesus’ death. In most lands, the majority of those present are women. Also, women make up the greater number of over 1,000,000 full-time Kingdom proclaimers worldwide. God has indeed granted faithful women the privilege of participating in the fulfillment of the psalmist’s words: “Jehovah gives the command; the women proclaiming the good news are a large army.”—Ps. 68:11.

**18, 19.** (a) With regard to true worship, what privilege has God given to both men and women? (b) How does the psalmist refer to women who declare the good news?



## Use the Word of God It Is Alive!

*“The word of God is alive and exerts power.”—HEB. 4:12.*

CAN you imagine how you would feel if you had to stand before the most powerful ruler on earth and speak up in behalf of Jehovah’s people? You would likely feel anxious, inadequate, and intimidated. How would you prepare your presentation? What could you do to add power to your words as a representative of the almighty God?

<sup>2</sup> Moses was in that exact situation. Jehovah had told him, “the meekest of all the men on the face of the earth,” that he was being sent to Pharaoh to rescue God’s people from their oppression and slavery in Egypt. (Num. 12:3) As events would prove, Pharaoh was a disrespectful and arrogant man. (Ex. 5:1, 2) Yet, Jehovah wanted Moses to order Pharaoh to let several million of his slaves leave the country! Understandably, Moses asked Jehovah: “Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and bring the Israelites out of Egypt?” Moses must have felt inadequate and incapable. But God assured him that he would not be alone. “I will prove to be with you,” said Jehovah.—Ex. 3:9-12.

<sup>3</sup> What fears did Moses have? Evidently, he was afraid

1, 2. What assignment did Jehovah give Moses, and what assurance did He provide?

3, 4. (a) Moses had what fears? (b) In what respect may you be able to relate to the challenge that Moses faced?

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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What will add power to the presentations we use in the ministry?

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How do our tracts prompt us to use the Bible on initial calls and on return visits?

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How can we imitate Paul’s attitude when preparing for the ministry?

that Pharaoh would not receive or pay attention to a representative of Jehovah God. Moses also feared that his own people would not believe that Jehovah had appointed him to lead them out of Egypt. Thus, Moses said to Jehovah: “Suppose they do not believe me and do not listen to my voice, for they will say, ‘Jehovah did not appear to you.’”—Ex. 3: 15-18; 4:1.

<sup>4</sup> Jehovah’s response to Moses and the events that followed can teach each one of us a powerful lesson. True, you may never have to appear before a high government official. But have you ever found it challenging to talk about God and his Kingdom even to common, everyday people whom you meet? If so, consider what can be learned from Moses’ experience.

#### “WHAT IS THAT IN YOUR HAND?”

<sup>5</sup> When Moses expressed his fear that his words would not be taken seriously, God prepared him to deal with what lay ahead. The account recorded in Exodus states: “Jehovah said to [Moses]: ‘What is that in your hand?’ He answered: ‘A rod.’ He said: ‘Throw it on the ground.’ So he threw it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from it. Jehovah now said to Moses: ‘Reach out your hand and seize it by the tail.’ So he reached out and seized it, and it became a rod in his hand. God then said: ‘This is so that they may believe that Jehovah . . . has appeared to you.’” (Ex. 4:2-5) Yes, God put in Moses’ hand the means by which he could prove that his message was from Jehovah. What seemed to others like nothing more than a rod came to life by God’s power! What force

such a miracle would add to Moses’ words, proving conclusively that he had Jehovah’s backing! Hence, Jehovah told him: “You will take this rod in your hand and perform the signs with it.” (Ex. 4:17) With that proof of God’s authority in his hand, Moses could go forth and confidently represent the true God before his own people and before Pharaoh.—Ex. 4: 29-31; 7:8-13.

<sup>6</sup> The same question may be asked of us when we go forth to share the Bible’s message with others: “What is that in your hand?” In many cases, the Bible will be in our hand, ready for use. Although some may view the Bible as nothing more than a book, Jehovah speaks to us through his inspired written Word. (2 Pet. 1:21) It contains God’s promises concerning the things that will occur under the rule of his Kingdom. That is why the apostle Paul could write: “The word of God is alive and exerts power.” (**Read Hebrews 4:12.**) All of Jehovah’s promises are dynamic, not static, because he is constantly working toward their fulfillment. (Isa. 46:10; 55: 11) Once a person realizes this about Jehovah’s Word, what he reads in the Bible can exert a powerful force in his life.

<sup>7</sup> Yes, Jehovah has put in our hand his living written Word with which we can prove that our message is credible and is from him. No wonder that after writing to the Hebrews, Paul urged his spiritual protégé Timothy to ‘do his utmost to handle the word of the truth aright.’ (2 Tim. 2:15) How can we apply Paul’s counsel? By reading aloud well-chosen

5. What did Jehovah put in Moses’ hand, and how did that allay his fears? (See opening image.)

6. (a) What should be in our hand when we preach, and why? (b) Explain how “the word of God is alive” and how it “exerts power.”

7. How can we ‘handle the word of the truth aright’?





Are you using the Bible and tracts effectively in your ministry?  
(See paragraphs 8-13)

scriptures that can touch the hearts of those who will listen to us. The tracts that were released in 2013 were designed to help us do just that.

#### READ A WELL-CHOSEN SCRIPTURE!

<sup>8</sup> All the new tracts follow the same format. So when we have learned to use one of them, we have learned to use all of them. Are they easy to use? One service overseer in Hawaii, U.S.A., wrote: “Little did we realize how effective these new tools would be both in the house-to-house work and in public witnessing.” He has found that the way the tracts are written prompts people to respond much more readily, and this often leads to stimulating conversations. He feels that this is because of the question and multiple-choice answers that appear on the front of the tracts. The householder does not have to worry about giving a wrong answer.

<sup>9</sup> Each tract prompts us to read a well-

chosen scripture. For example, look at the tract *Will Suffering Ever End?* Regardless of whether the householder picks “yes,” “no,” or “maybe” in response to that question, turn to the inside page and without adding anything more, say, “Here is what the Bible says.” Then read Revelation 21:3, 4.

<sup>10</sup> Likewise, when using the tract *How Do You View the Bible?* it does not matter which of the three choices on the front of the tract the householder selects. Just turn to the inside page and say, “The Bible says that ‘all Scripture is inspired of God.’” You could add, “Actually, that passage says much more.” Then open your Bible, and read all of 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

<sup>11</sup> The householder’s reaction will determine how much more of the tract you might read and discuss. In any case, besides putting the tracts in people’s hands, you have the satisfaction of having read some of God’s Word to them—even if you could read only one or two

8. What did one service overseer say about the tracts?

9, 10. (a) How do our tracts prompt us to use the Bible? (b) Which tracts have you had the most success using, and why?

11, 12. (a) What satisfaction do you get from the ministry? (b) How can tracts help you prepare for return visits?

verses on the initial call. Later, you can continue the discussion.

<sup>12</sup> The back of each tract provides a question under the heading “To Think About” and scriptures that can be discussed on a return visit. In the tract *How Do You View the Future?* the question for the next call is “How will God change our world for the better?” Matthew 6:9, 10 and Daniel 2:44 are cited. For the tract *Can the Dead Really Live Again?* the question is “Why do we grow old and die?” Genesis 3:17-19 and Romans 5:12 are cited.

<sup>13</sup> Use the tracts as stepping-stones for starting Bible studies. When a person scans the QR Code\* on the back of a tract, he will be directed to something on our Web site that may encourage him to study the Bible. The tracts also highlight the brochure *Good News From God!* and point to a specific lesson in it. For example, the tract *Who Really Controls the World?* leads into lesson 5 of that brochure. The tract *What Is the Key to Happy Family Life?* leads into lesson 9. By using the tracts in the way intended, you will be following the good routine of using the Bible on initial calls and on return visits. In turn, that may result in starting more studies. What else can you do to use God’s Word effectively in your ministry?

#### DISCUSS A TOPIC THAT WEIGHS ON PEOPLE’S MINDS

<sup>14</sup> Paul had an earnest desire to relate to “as many people as possible” in his

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\* QR Code is a registered trademark of Denso Wave Incorporated.

**13.** Explain how to use the tracts to start Bible studies.

**14, 15.** How can you imitate Paul’s attitude toward the ministry?

ministry. (**Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23.**) Notice that it was Paul’s hope “to gain Jews . . . , to gain those under law . . . , to gain those without law . . . , to gain the weak.” Yes, he wanted to reach “people of all sorts, so that [he] might by all possible means save some.” (Acts 20:21) How can we imitate Paul’s attitude as we prepare to share the truth with “all sorts of people” in our territory?—1 Tim. 2:3, 4.

<sup>15</sup> Suggested presentations appear in *Our Kingdom Ministry* each month. Try them. But if other topics are weighing on the minds of people in your territory, formulate interest-arousing presentations to meet those needs. Think about the environment in which you live, about the other people who live there, and about what concerns them the most. Then, think of a scripture that addresses their needs. A circuit overseer says this about the way he and his wife focus on the Bible: “Most householders will allow us to read one verse if we are brief and to the point. After a customary greeting with our open Bibles in hand, we read the scripture.” Consider a few field-tested examples of topics, questions, and scriptures that you might try in your territory.

<sup>16</sup> If you live in a region where peace is often disrupted, you might ask a person: “Could you ever imagine this as being the lead news story of the day: ‘The whole earth now rests, free of disturbance. People cry out for joy’? That is what the Bible says at Isaiah 14:7. In fact, the Bible contains God’s many promises of peaceful times that are coming in our future.” Then offer to read one of those promises from the Bible.

**16.** Explain how Isaiah 14:7 could be used in the ministry.

<sup>17</sup> Is it hard for many men in your area to make a living? If so, you might start a conversation by asking: "How much money does a man have to make in order for his family to be happy?" Follow the person's response with: "Many men earn much more than that, but their families are still not content. So, what is really needed?" Then read Matthew 5:3 and offer a Bible study.

<sup>18</sup> Are people in your locality suffering from the effects of a recent tragedy? You could begin your presentation by saying: "I came to your door to offer some comfort. (Read **Jeremiah 29:11.**) Did you notice the three things God wants for us? 'Peace,' 'a future,' and 'a hope.' Isn't it nice to know that he wants us to have a good life? But how is that possible?" Then direct attention to an appropriate lesson in the *Good News* brochure.

<sup>19</sup> Do you live in a neighborhood where people are interested in religion? If so, you might start a conversation by asking: "If an angel spoke to you, would you listen to what he had to say? (Read **Revelation 14:6, 7.**) Since this angel says 'fear God,' would it not be important to identify which God he has in mind? The angel gives us a clue when he says that it is 'the One who made the heaven and the earth.' Who was that?" Then read Psalm 124:8, which says: "Our help is in the name of Jehovah, the Maker of heaven and earth." Follow that up with an offer to explain more about Jehovah God.

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**17.** How can you introduce Matthew 5:3 in a conversation?

**18.** To comfort others, how can you use Jeremiah 29:11?

**19.** Explain how Revelation 14:6, 7 can be used in talking with religious people.

<sup>20</sup> You might start a conversation with a young person by saying: "I would like to read a scripture that asks a very important question. (Read **Proverbs 30:4.**) There is no human who fits this description, so it must be describing our Creator.\* How can we find out what his name is? I would be happy to show it to you in the Bible."

### LET GOD'S WORD EMPOWER YOUR MINISTRY

<sup>21</sup> You never know how people will react to a well-chosen scripture. For instance, two Witnesses in Australia knocked on a young woman's door. One of them asked her, "Do you know God's name?" and then read one scripture—Psalm 83:18. "I was floored!" the woman says. "After they left, I drove 35 miles (56 km) to a bookstore to check other Bible translations and then looked up the name in a dictionary. Having convinced myself that God's name is Jehovah, I wondered what else I didn't know." Soon thereafter, she and her future husband began studying the Bible, and later they got baptized.

<sup>22</sup> God's Word changes the lives of those who read it and develop faith in Jehovah's living promises. (Read **1 Thessalonians 2:13.**) The Bible's message is more powerful than anything we might say to try to reach the heart of another person. That is why, at every possible opportunity, we should use the Word of God. It is alive!

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\* See "Questions From Readers" in *The Watchtower* of July 15, 1987, page 31.

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**20.** (a) In what way can Proverbs 30:4 be used to teach someone God's name? (b) Is there a particular scripture that you use with good results?

**21, 22.** (a) How can a well-chosen scripture change a person's life? (b) What are you determined to do as you carry out your ministry?



## How Jehovah Draws Close to Us

*“Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you.”*

—JAS. 4:8.

### HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT . . .

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Jehovah’s invitation to draw  
close to him?

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God’s provision of the ransom  
sacrifice?

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having God’s written Word  
conveyed in a way that we  
can understand?

HUMANS have an immense need to feel close to other people. Individuals are said to be “close to each other when they like each other very much and know each other very well.” We naturally thrive on the relationships that we have with family and friends who love us, appreciate us, and understand us. However, the Person with whom we need to develop the closest relationship of all is our Grand Creator.—Eccl. 12:1.

<sup>2</sup> Jehovah urges us in his Word to “draw close” to him, and he promises us that if we do, “he will draw close” to us. (Jas. 4:8) What an uplifting thought that is! Yet, many people think that it is unrealistic to believe that God wants to be close to them; they feel that they are unworthy to approach him or that he is too remote to be approached. Is closeness with Jehovah really possible?

<sup>3</sup> The fact is that Jehovah “is not far off from each one” who wants to find him; it is possible to get to know him. **(Read**

1. What need do humans have, and who can satisfy that need?
2. What does Jehovah promise us, but why do many people not believe that promise?
3. What fact must we realize about Jehovah?



**Acts 17:26, 27; Psalm 145:18.)** Our God purposed that even imperfect humans should be close to him, and he is ready and willing to receive them into his favor as close friends. (Isa. 41:8; 55:6) From personal experience, the psalmist could write about Jehovah: “O Hearer of prayer, to you people of all sorts *will come*. Happy is the one whom you choose and *bring near*.” (Ps. 65:2, 4) The Bible account regarding King Asa of Judah provides an example of someone who drew close to God, and it shows how Jehovah responded.\*

### LEARN FROM AN ANCIENT EXAMPLE

<sup>4</sup> King Asa demonstrated a wonderful zeal for pure worship, having removed the temple prostitution and idolatry that had gained a strong presence in the land. (1 Ki. 15:9-13) With freedom of speech, he urged the people to “search for Jehovah the God of their forefathers and to observe the Law and the commandment.” Jehovah blessed the first ten years of Asa’s reign with complete peace. And to what did Asa attribute that tranquillity? He told the people: “The land is still at our disposal, because we have searched for Jehovah our God. We have searched, and he has given us rest all around.” (2 Chron. 14:1-7) Consider what happened next.

<sup>5</sup> Put yourself in Asa’s situation. Zerah the Ethiopian has come against Judah with 1,000,000 men and 300 chariots. (2 Chron. 14:8-10) How would you react to the sight of such a huge army

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\* See the article about Asa entitled “There Exists a Reward for Your Activity,” in the August 15, 2012, issue of *The Watchtower*.

4. What example did King Asa set for the people of Judah?
5. What situation tested Asa’s reliance on God, and what was the outcome?

marching into your kingdom? Your military force totals only 580,000! Outnumbered about 2 to 1, would you wonder why God is allowing such an invasion to occur? In response to this emergency, would you try to handle the matter according to your own wisdom? Asa’s reaction demonstrated his close and trusting relationship with Jehovah. He fervently called out: “Help us, O Jehovah our God, for we are relying on you, and in your name we have come against this crowd. O Jehovah, you are our God. Do not let mortal man prevail against you.” How did God respond to Asa’s heartfelt plea? “Jehovah defeated the Ethiopians.” Not one of the enemy survived the battle that ensued! —2 Chron. 14:11-13.

<sup>6</sup> What enabled Asa to trust fully in God’s guidance and protection? The Bible says that “Asa did what was right in the eyes of Jehovah” and that his “heart was complete with Jehovah.” (1 Ki. 15:11, 14) We too need to serve God with a complete heart. It is absolutely vital that we do so if we are to enjoy a close relationship with him now and in the future. How thankful we can be that Jehovah has taken the initiative to draw us to him and to help us to form and maintain a close bond with him! Consider two ways in which God has done so.

### JEHOVAH HAS DRAWN US CLOSE THROUGH THE RANSOM

<sup>7</sup> Jehovah showed his love for the human family by creating our beautiful earthly home. He still expresses his love for us by sustaining our life by means of his marvelous physical provisions. (Acts

6. What about Asa should we imitate?
7. (a) What has Jehovah done that draws us to him? (b) What is the foremost way in which God draws us to himself?

17:28; Rev. 4:11) More important, Jehovah looks after our spiritual needs. (Luke 12:42) He also assures us that he personally listens as we pray to him. (1 John 5:14) However, the foremost way in which God draws us to himself and we are drawn to him is through the love he expresses by means of the ransom. **(Read 1 John 4:9, 10, 19.)** Jehovah sent his “only-begotten Son” to the earth so that we might be delivered from sin and death.—John 3:16.

<sup>8</sup> Jehovah has made it possible even for people who lived before the time of Christ to benefit from the ransom. From the moment Jehovah prophesied about a future Savior for mankind, the ransom was as good as paid from his viewpoint, for he knew that his purpose would not fail. (Gen. 3:15) Centuries later, the apostle Paul expressed gratitude to God for “the release by the ransom paid by Christ Jesus.” Paul added: “God in his forbearance was forgiving the sins that occurred in the past.” (Rom. 3:21-26) What a vital role Jesus has in our being close to God!

<sup>9</sup> Only through Jesus can humble people come to know Jehovah and enjoy closeness and intimacy with him. How do the Scriptures highlight this truth? Paul wrote: “God recommends his own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom. 5:6-8) Jesus’ ransom sacrifice was provided, not because we are worthy, but because we are loved. “No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, *draws* him,” said Jesus. On another occasion, he stated: “No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 6:44; 14:6) It is by means of holy spirit that Jehovah

draws individuals to himself through Jesus and helps them to remain in His love with everlasting life in view. **(Read Jude 20, 21.)** Consider yet another way in which Jehovah draws us to himself.

### JEHOVAH DRAWS US CLOSE THROUGH HIS WRITTEN WORD

<sup>10</sup> Thus far in this article, we have quoted or cited scriptures from 14 different Bible books. Without the Bible, how would we have known that we can draw close to our Creator? Without it, how could we have learned about the ransom and about our being drawn to Jehovah through Jesus? By means of his spirit, Jehovah inspired the writing of the Bible, which reveals to us his appealing personality as well as his grand purposes. For example, at Exodus 34:6, 7, Jehovah described himself to Moses as “a God merciful and compassionate, slow to anger and abundant in loyal love and truth, showing loyal love to thousands, pardoning error and transgression and sin.” Who would not be drawn to someone like that? Jehovah knows that the more we learn about him through the pages of the Bible, the more real he will become to us and the closer we will feel to him.

<sup>11</sup> Explaining how we can reach out for a close relationship with God, the prologue to the book *Draw Close to Jehovah* states: “In any friendship we forge, the bond is based on knowing the person, admiring and valuing his distinctive traits. So God’s qualities and ways, as revealed in the Bible, are a vital field of study.” How thankful we can be, therefore, that Jehovah had his Word written in a way we humans can understand!

**10.** What does the Bible teach us that helps us draw closer to God?

**11.** Why should we endeavor to learn about God’s qualities and ways? (See opening image.)

**8, 9.** What role does Jesus play in Jehovah’s purpose?

<sup>12</sup> Jehovah could have had the angels do the writing of the Scriptures. After all, they have a keen interest in us and our activities. (1 Pet. 1:12) No doubt, the angels could have written down God's message to mankind. But would they have seen things from a human perspective? Would they have been able to relate to our needs, our weaknesses, and our aspirations? No, Jehovah knew their limitations in this regard. By having humans write the Bible, Jehovah made it more personal for us. We can understand the thinking and emotions of Bible writers and others mentioned in the Scriptures. We can empathize with their disappointments, doubts, fears, and imperfections as well as rejoice in their joys and successes. Like the prophet Elijah, all the Bible writers had "feelings like ours."—Jas. 5:17.

<sup>13</sup> Consider, for example, whether an angel could fully have conveyed the emotions of Jonah when that prophet ran away from his God-given assignment. How much better it was that Jehovah had Jonah write his own account, including his earnest prayer to God from the depths of the sea! Jonah said: "When my life was ebbing away, Jehovah was the One whom I remembered."—Jonah 1:3, 10; 2:1-9.

<sup>14</sup> Consider also what Jehovah had Isaiah write about himself. After seeing a vision of God's glory, the prophet was moved to say about his own sinfulness: "Woe to me! I am as good as dead, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live

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**12.** Why did Jehovah use humans to write the Bible?

**13.** How does Jonah's prayer speak to your heart?

**14.** Why can you relate to what Isaiah wrote about himself?



How do Jehovah's dealings with Jonah and Peter draw you closer to Him?  
(See paragraphs 13, 15)

among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of armies himself!" (Isa. 6:5) What angel would have been prompted to utter such words? But Isaiah could, and we can relate to how he felt.

<sup>15</sup> Would angels have been able to say that they were "unworthy," as Jacob said he was, or were "sinful," as Peter felt he was? (Gen. 32:10; Luke 5:8) Would they have been "fearful," as Jesus' disciples were, or would righteous angels have needed to 'muster up boldness' in the face of opposition to tell the good news, as Paul and others had to do? (John 6:19; 1 Thess. 2:2) No, the angels are perfect in every way and are superhuman. When imperfect humans express such emotions, however, we immediately understand their feelings because we too are mere humans. When reading God's Word, we can truly "rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep."—Rom. 12:15.

<sup>16</sup> If we ponder over what the Bible says about Jehovah's interactions with his faithful servants of the past, we will learn countless wonderful things about our God, who patiently and lovingly drew close to those imperfect humans. Thus we will come to know Jehovah very well and come to love him deeply. As a result, we will be able to draw closer to him.—**Read Psalm 25:14.**

### FORGE AN UNBREAKABLE BOND WITH GOD

<sup>17</sup> After King Asa won a resounding victory over the Ethiopian army, God's

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**15, 16.** (a) Why can we relate to what fellow humans feel? Give examples. (b) What will help us to draw closer to Jehovah?

**17.** (a) What good counsel did Azariah give Asa? (b) How did Asa ignore Azariah's counsel, and with what result?

prophet Azariah had some words of wisdom for him and his people. Azariah said: "Jehovah is with you as long as you remain with him; and if you search for him, he will let himself be found by you, but if you abandon him, he will abandon you." (2 Chron. 15:1, 2) Later in life, though, Asa failed to heed that good counsel. When threatened by the rival northern kingdom of Israel, Asa turned to the Syrians for assistance. Rather than calling out again to Jehovah for help, he sought an alliance with pagans. Appropriately, Asa was told: "You have acted foolishly in this matter; from now on there will be wars against you." The remaining years of Asa's rule were marred by continual warfare. (2 Chron. 16:1-9) What is the lesson for us?

<sup>18</sup> We should never draw away from Jehovah. If we have allowed some distance to develop between him and us, we should act in accord with Hosea 12:6, which states: "Return to your God, maintain loyal love and justice, and always hope in your God." Let us, then, draw closer and closer to Jehovah by reflecting appreciatively on the ransom and by diligently studying his Word, the Bible.—**Read Deuteronomy 13:4.**

<sup>19</sup> "Drawing near to God is good for me," wrote the psalmist. (Ps. 73:28) May all of us continue to learn new things about Jehovah and come to appreciate even more the many reasons to love him. And may Jehovah draw ever closer to us now and throughout all eternity!

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**18, 19.** (a) What should we do if we have allowed some distance to develop between God and us? (b) How may we draw closer to Jehovah?





# Hear Jehovah's Voice Wherever You Are

*"Your own ears will hear a word behind you saying,  
'This is the way.'"*—ISA. 30:21.

THROUGHOUT Bible history, individuals received guidance from Jehovah by various means. To some, God spoke through angels or by means of visions or dreams, thus revealing to them what would happen in the future. Jehovah also gave them specific work assignments. (Num. 7:89; Ezek. 1:1; Dan. 2:19) Others received direction through Jehovah's human representatives serving in the earthly part of his organization. No matter how Jehovah's people received his word, those who followed his instructions were blessed.

<sup>2</sup> Today, Jehovah guides his people by means of the Bible, his holy spirit, and the congregation. (Acts 9:31; 15:28; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17) The guidance that we receive from him is so clear that it is as if 'our own ears hear a word behind us saying: "This is the way. Walk in it."' (Isa. 30:21) In effect, Jesus also conveys Jehovah's voice to us as he directs the congregation through "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matt. 24:45) We need to take this guidance and direction seriously, for our everlasting life depends on our obedience.—Heb. 5:9.

<sup>3</sup> Satan the Devil is intent on neutralizing the lifesaving guidance we receive from Jehovah. Moreover, our own

- 1, 2. How does Jehovah communicate with his servants?
3. What could interfere with the way we respond to Jehovah's guidance? (See opening image.)

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## HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

How does Satan try to drown  
out the voice of Jehovah?

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What inclinations of the  
heart can interfere with our  
listening to Jehovah?

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What must we do to receive  
God's guidance?

How can a good spiritual routine protect you from Satan's schemes?  
(See paragraphs 4-9)

'treacherous heart' could interfere with how well we respond to Jehovah's directives. (Jer. 17:9) Therefore, let us consider how we can overcome obstacles that make it challenging to listen to God's voice. Let us also discuss how close communication with Jehovah will safeguard our relationship with him regardless of our circumstances.

### OVERCOMING SATAN'S SCHEMES

<sup>4</sup> Satan tries to influence the thinking of people by providing false information and deceptive propaganda. **(Read 1 John 5:19.)** In addition to printed material, the globe—including remote parts of the earth—is blanketed with broadcasts via radio, TV, and the Internet. Although such sources may feature items of interest, they often advocate conduct and standards that are contrary to Jehovah's standards. (Jer. 2:13) For example, the news and entertainment industries speak of same-sex marriage as if it were acceptable, and many people feel that what the Bible says about homosexuality is extreme.—1 Cor. 6:9, 10.

<sup>5</sup> How can those who love God's righteousness avoid being swept along by today's flood of satanic propaganda? How can they separate the good from the bad? "By keeping on guard according to [God's] word"! (Ps. 119:9) God's written Word contains essential guidance that enables us to distinguish truthful information from deceptive propaganda. (Prov. 23:23) Quoting the Scriptures, Je-

4. How does Satan try to influence the thinking of people?

5. How can we avoid being swept along by satanic propaganda?



sus said that "man must live . . . on every word that comes from Jehovah's mouth." (Matt. 4:4) We need to learn how to apply Bible principles in our life. For example, long before Moses recorded Jehovah's law against adultery, the young man Joseph understood that such conduct was a sin against God. He never even considered disobeying Jehovah when Potiphar's wife tried to entice him to do what was wrong. **(Read Genesis 39:7-9.)** Despite being pressured by her over a period of time, Joseph did not allow her voice to deafen him to the voice of God. Essential to distinguishing right from wrong is listening to Jehovah's voice and shutting out the incessant din of satanic propaganda.

<sup>6</sup> The world is so saturated with conflicting religious teachings and doctrines that many people feel that searching for the true religion is futile. However, Jehovah has made his guidance abundantly clear for those who are willing to take advantage of it. We have to decide whom we will listen to. Since it is practically impossible to listen to two voices simultaneously, we need to 'know the voice' of Jesus and listen to him. He is the

6, 7. What must we do in order to avoid Satan's wicked advice?



one whom Jehovah appointed over His sheep.—**Read John 10:3-5.**

<sup>7</sup> “Pay attention to what you are hearing,” said Jesus. (Mark 4:24) Jehovah’s counsel is clear and right, but we must pay attention and listen to it by preparing our heart to receive it. If we are not careful, we could give ear to Satan’s wicked advice instead of God’s loving counsel. Never allow worldly music, videos, TV shows, books, associates, educators, or so-called experts to control your life.—Col. 2:8.

<sup>8</sup> Satan knows that we have sinful tendencies, and he tries to induce us to cater to them. When Satan targets us in this way, it becomes a formidable challenge to maintain our integrity. (John 8:44-47) How can we possibly meet this challenge successfully? Consider the case of a person who becomes so absorbed in the pleasure of the moment that he ends up doing something wrong that he thought he would never do. (Rom. 7:15) What led up to this sad situation? Likely, the individual had gradually been losing sensitivity to Jehovah’s voice. Either he failed to notice the warning signs regarding

what was happening to his heart or he chose to ignore them. For example, he might have stopped praying, slowed down in the ministry, or started missing meetings. Eventually, he succumbed to his desire and did what he knew was wrong. We can avoid such a disastrous mistake if we remain alert to any warning signs and act immediately to correct matters. And if we are listening to Jehovah’s voice, we will not entertain any apostate ideas.—Prov. 11:9.

<sup>9</sup> Early detection of disease may save a person’s life. Similarly, we can avert disaster if we quickly identify tendencies that could lead us into temptation. As soon as we discover such leanings, it would be wise for us to take immediate action—before we are “caught alive by [Satan] to do his will.” (2 Tim. 2:26) What should we do if we notice that we have allowed our thinking and desires to drift away from what Jehovah requires of us? Without delay, we must humbly return to him, open our ears to his counsel, and listen to him with all our heart. (Isa. 44:22) We must realize that making a poor decision could scar us so badly that we may have to suffer serious consequences

**8.** (a) How can our heart make us vulnerable to Satan’s schemes? (b) What can happen to us if we ignore warning signs?

**9.** Why is early detection of sinful tendencies very important?



in this system of things. How much better it is to avoid going astray by acting promptly to prevent such a serious mistake!

### OVERCOMING PRIDE AND GREED

<sup>10</sup> We must recognize that our heart can lead us astray. What power our sinful tendencies exert on us! Take, for example, pride and greed. Consider how each of these traits can interfere with our listening to the voice of Jehovah and can lead us to take a disastrous course. A proud person has an exaggerated opinion of himself. He may feel that he has the right to do whatever he wants and that no one can tell him what to do. So he may feel that he is above the direction and counsel of fellow Christians, the elders, or even God's organization. For such a person, the sound of Jehovah's voice becomes very faint.

<sup>11</sup> During Israel's wilderness trek, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram rebelled against the authority of Moses and Aaron. Because of pride, the rebels made independent arrangements to worship Jehovah. How did Jehovah respond? He executed them. (Num. 26:8-10) What a crucial lesson this historical account teaches us! Rebellion against Jehovah leads to disaster. Let us also remember that "pride is before a crash."—Prov. 16:18; Isa. 13:11.

<sup>12</sup> Consider, too, the matter of greed. A greedy person often takes liberties and oversteps the limits of proper behavior. After the Syrian army chief Naaman was healed of his leprosy, he offered

gifts to the prophet Elisha, who refused them. However, Elisha's attendant, Gehazi, coveted those gifts. Gehazi said to himself: "As surely as Jehovah is living, I will run after [Naaman] and take something from him." Behind Elisha's back, he ran after Naaman and resorted to outright lies to request "a talent of silver and two changes of garments." What happened because Gehazi did this and lied to Jehovah's prophet? Why, Naaman's leprosy stuck to greedy Gehazi!—2 Ki. 5:20-27.

<sup>13</sup> Greed may start small, but if it is not curbed, it can grow rapidly and overcome a person. The Bible account of Achan illustrates the power of greed. Note how quickly Achan's greed progressed. He stated: "When I *saw* among the spoil a good-looking official garment from Shinar and 200 shekels of silver and one gold bar weighing 50 shekels, I *desired* them, so I *took* them." Instead of rejecting the wrong desire, Achan greedily stole the goods and hid them in his tent. When Achan's wrongdoing came to light, Joshua told him that Jehovah would bring disaster upon him. Achan and his family were stoned to death on that very day. (Josh. 7:11, 21, 24, 25) Greed is an ever-present danger that can overtake us. Let us therefore "guard against every sort of greed." (Luke 12:15) While we may occasionally have an unwholesome thought or imagine immoral things, it is vital that we bring our mind under control and not allow our desires to escalate to the point that we commit a sin.—**Read James 1:14, 15.**

<sup>14</sup> Both pride and greed can lead to disaster. Reflection on the outcome of pursuing a wrong course will help us not to

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**10, 11.** (a) How can pride show itself? (b) What lesson do we learn from the bad course of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram?

**12, 13.** (a) Give an example to show how greed can lead to disaster. (b) Explain how greed can increase rapidly if not curbed.

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**14.** What should we do if we notice in ourselves tendencies toward pride and greed?



allow such inclinations to drown out the voice of Jehovah. (Deut. 32:29) In the Bible, the true God not only tells us what the right course is but also explains the benefits of walking in it as well as the consequences of going the wrong way. If our heart moves us to contemplate doing something that is motivated by pride or greed, how wise it would be to think about the consequences! We should consider how wrongdoing would affect us, our loved ones, and especially our relationship with Jehovah.

### MAINTAIN CLOSE COMMUNICATION WITH JEHOVAH

<sup>15</sup> Jehovah wants the best for us. (Ps. 1:1-3) He provides ample guidance just when we need it. **(Read Hebrews 4:16.)** Although he was perfect, Jesus depended on regular communication with Jehovah, and he prayed incessantly. Jehovah supported and directed Jesus in marvelous ways. He sent angels to minister to him, provided His holy spirit to help him, and guided him in selecting the 12 apostles. Jehovah's voice was heard from the heavens, expressing His support and approval of Jesus. (Matt. 3:17; 17:5; Mark 1:12, 13; Luke 6:12, 13; John 12:28) Like Jesus, we need to pour out our heart in prayer to God. (Ps. 62:7, 8; Heb. 5:7) Through prayer, we can stay in close communication with Jehovah and successfully follow a course in life that brings honor to him.

<sup>16</sup> Although Jehovah makes his counsel freely available, he does not force anyone to follow it. We need to ask for his holy spirit, and he will give it to us generously. **(Read Luke 11:10-13.)** It is es-

sential, though, that we 'pay attention to how we listen.' (Luke 8:18) For example, it would be hypocritical to ask Jehovah for help to overcome an inclination toward immorality while continuing to look at pornography or watch immoral movies. We actually need to put ourselves in places or circumstances where Jehovah's spirit is. We know that his spirit is at the congregation meetings. Many servants of Jehovah have avoided disaster by listening to Jehovah during our meetings. As a result, they have become aware of wrong desires developing in their heart and have corrected their ways.—Ps. 73:12-17; 143:10.

### REMAIN CLOSELY ATTUNED TO JEHOVAH'S VOICE

<sup>17</sup> Consider King David of ancient Israel. As a young person, he was victorious over the Philistine giant Goliath. David became a soldier, a king, a protector, and a decision-maker for a nation. But when David relied on himself, his heart deceived him and he committed a serious sin with Bath-sheba, even arranging to have her husband, Uriah, killed. When disciplined, David humbly admitted his error and reestablished his relationship with Jehovah.—Ps. 51:4, 6, 10, 11.

<sup>18</sup> Let us heed the advice found at 1 Corinthians 10:12 and not become overconfident. Since we are unable to 'direct our step,' eventually we will listen either to the voice of Jehovah or to the voice of his Adversary. (Jer. 10:23) May we pray constantly, follow the leadings of the holy spirit, and always listen closely to Jehovah's voice.

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<sup>15</sup>. What can we learn about communication from the example of Jesus?

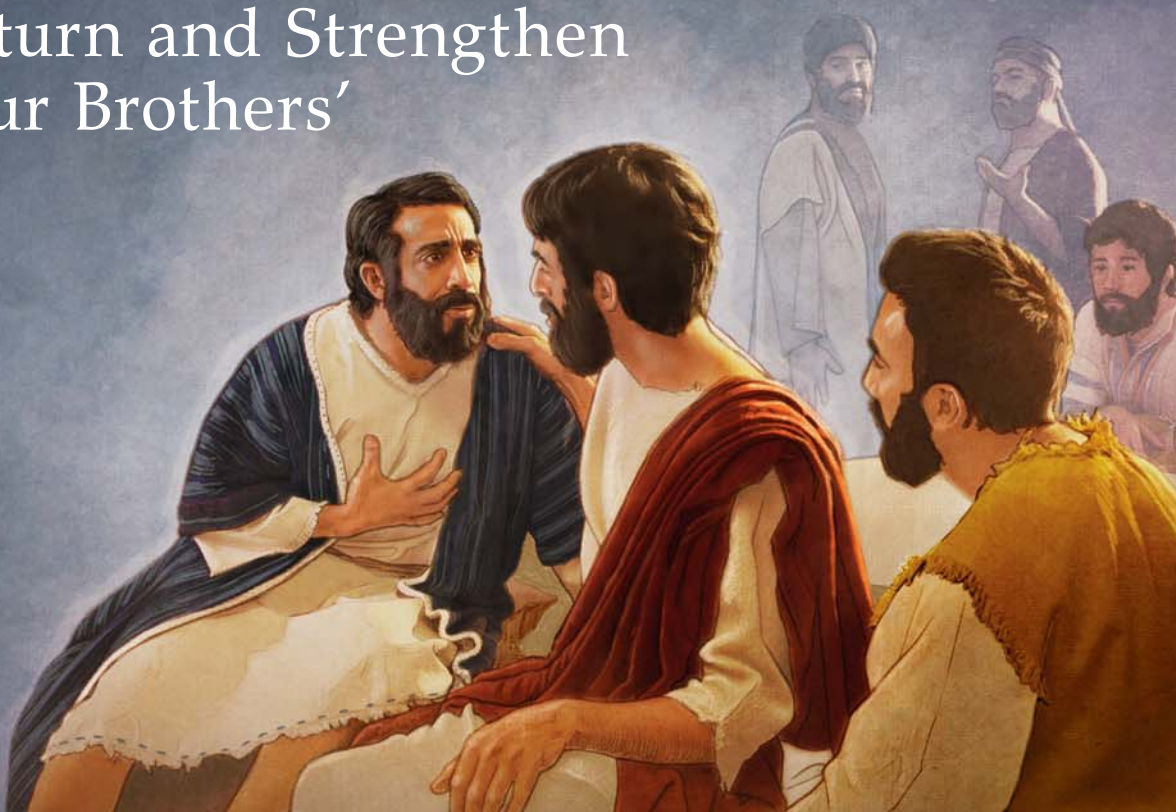
<sup>16</sup>. How can we receive Jehovah's help to acquire the ability to hear his voice?

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<sup>17</sup>. Why is it dangerous to rely on ourselves?

<sup>18</sup>. What can help us to keep on listening to Jehovah's voice?

# ‘Return and Strengthen Your Brothers’



PETER wept bitterly after he denied knowing Jesus. Though the apostle would have to struggle to regain his spiritual balance, Jesus wanted to use him to help others. Hence, Jesus told him: “Once you have returned, strengthen your brothers.” (Luke 22:32, 54-62) Peter went on to become one of the pillars of the first-century Christian congregation. (Gal. 2:9) Similarly, a man who once served as an elder may be able to shoulder that responsibility again and find joy in strengthening fellow believers spiritually.

Some who at one time served as overseers have been removed, and that may have resulted in a feeling of failure. Julio,\* who served as an elder in South America for over 20 years, said: “Preparing talks, visiting the brothers, and shepherding members of the congregation filled such

a large part of my life! Suddenly it was gone, leaving a gaping hole in my life. All in all, this was a traumatic period.” Today, Julio again serves as an elder.

## “CONSIDER IT ALL JOY”

The disciple James wrote: “Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you meet with various trials.” (Jas. 1:2) James was referring to trials that result from persecution and from our imperfection. He mentioned selfish desires, showing favoritism, and so forth. (Jas. 1:14; 2:1; 4:1, 2, 11) When Jehovah disciplines us, the experience may be painful. (Heb. 12:11) But such trials need not rob us of joy.

Even if we have been removed from a position of responsibility in the congregation, we still have an opportunity to examine the quality of our faith and demonstrate our love for Jehovah. We can

\* Some names have been changed.

also reflect on why we served. Was it for our own benefit, or were we moved to reach out for such a privilege because of our love for God and our conviction that the congregation belongs to him and deserves tender care? (Acts 20:28-30) Former elders who joyfully continue to render sacred service prove to all, including Satan, that their love for Jehovah is genuine.

When King David was disciplined for committing serious sins, he accepted the reproof and was forgiven. David sang: "Happy is the one whose transgression is pardoned, whose sin is covered. Happy is the man whom Jehovah does not charge with guilt, in whose spirit there is no deceit." (Ps. 32:1, 2) Discipline refined David and undoubtedly made him a better shepherd of God's people.

Often, brothers who return to serve as elders become finer shepherds than they were before. "Now I understand better how to care for those who make a mistake," said one such elder. Another elder stated: "Now I place a higher value on my privilege of serving the brothers."

#### CAN YOU RETURN?

"[Jehovah] will not always find fault," wrote the psalmist. (Ps. 103:9) So we should not think that

God would never again trust a person who made a serious error. "I was bitterly disappointed by my own failure," says Ricardo, who lost his privileges as an elder after serving in that capacity for many years. "For a long time, my feelings of inadequacy prevented me from returning to serve the brothers as an overseer. I lacked confidence that I could again prove myself trustworthy. But since I enjoy helping others, I was able to conduct Bible studies, encourage the brothers at the Kingdom Hall, and work with them in the field ministry. That helped me regain my confidence, and now I am again serving as an elder."

Harboring resentment can hinder a brother from serving as an elder. How much better it is to be like Jehovah's servant David, who had to flee from jealous King Saul! David refused to take

Jehovah has helped men  
to recover their joy and  
their desire to serve again





revenge on Saul, even when opportunities to do so arose. (1 Sam. 24:4-7; 26:8-12) When Saul died in battle, David mourned his death, referring to him and his son Jonathan as “beloved and cherished” individuals. (2 Sam. 1:21-23) David did not harbor resentment.

If you feel that you are the victim of a misunderstanding or an injustice, do not allow resentment to dominate your thoughts. For example, when William was relieved of his responsibilities as an elder after serving for some 30 years in that capacity in Britain, he felt resentment toward some of the elders. What helped William to regain his balance? “Reading the book of Job encouraged me,” he said. “If Jehovah helped Job to make peace with his three companions, how much more would He help me to make peace with the Christian elders!”—Job 42:7-9.

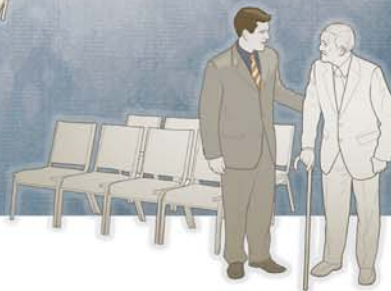
#### **GOD BLESSES THOSE WHO AGAIN SERVE AS SHEPHERDS**

If you chose to step aside from shepherding the flock of God, it would be good to consider why you did so. Were you overwhelmed by personal

problems? Did other things become more important in your life? Were you discouraged by the imperfections of others? Whatever the case, remember that you were in a position to help others in more ways when you served as an elder. Your talks strengthened them, your example encouraged them, and your shepherding visits helped them to endure their trials. Your work as a faithful elder made Jehovah’s heart rejoice, even as it did yours.—Prov. 27:11.

Jehovah has helped men to recover their joy and their desire to take the lead in the congregation. If you stepped aside from serving as an elder or were removed, you can again ‘reach out to be an overseer.’ (1 Tim. 3:1) Paul “never stopped praying” that the Colossian Christians might be filled with the accurate knowledge of God’s will “so as to walk worthily of Jehovah in order to please him fully.” (Col. 1:9, 10) If you are again privileged to serve as an elder, look to Jehovah for strength, patience, and joy. In these last days, God’s people need the spiritual support of loving shepherds. Are you able and willing to strengthen your brothers?

Prove your love for Jehovah  
by joyfully engaging in  
sacred service





*Jesus told the Sadducees that resurrected ones  
“neither marry nor are given in marriage.”  
(Luke 20:34-36) Was he talking about the  
earthly resurrection?*

■ The question is an important one, especially for those who have lost a beloved mate. Such ones may yearn to be reunited in marriage with their resurrected spouse in the new world. One widower said: “My wife and I did not choose to end our marriage. It was our heartfelt desire to remain united in worship as husband and wife forever. These feelings have not changed for me.” Is there sound reason for hoping that resurrected ones will be able to marry? Put simply, the answer is that we cannot say.

For years, our publications have said that Jesus’ words about the resurrection and getting married likely refer to the earthly resurrection and that those resurrected to life in the new world will evidently not marry.\* (Matt. 22:29, 30; Mark 12:24, 25; Luke 20:34-36) While we cannot be dogmatic, is it possible that Jesus’ words refer to the *heavenly* resurrection? Let us examine what Jesus said.

Consider the setting. **(Read Luke 20:27-33.)** The Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection, tried to entrap Jesus with a question about the resurrection and brother-in-law marriage.<sup>#</sup> Jesus responded: “The children of this system of things marry and are given in marriage, but those who have been counted worthy of gaining that

system of things and the resurrection from the dead neither marry nor are given in marriage. In fact, neither can they die anymore, for they are like the angels, and they are God’s children by being children of the resurrection.”—Luke 20:34-36.

Why have our publications said that Jesus was probably talking about the earthly resurrection? That conclusion is primarily based on two lines of reasoning. First, it is reasoned that the Sadducees likely had in mind an earthly resurrection and that Jesus would have answered them accordingly. Second, Jesus ended his reply by referring to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob—faithful patriarchs who are in line to be resurrected to life on earth.—Luke 20:37, 38.

However, it seems possible that Jesus had in mind the heavenly resurrection. On what basis might we reach that conclusion? Let us consider two key phrases.

*“Those who have been counted worthy of gaining . . . the resurrection from the dead.”* Faithful anointed ones are “counted worthy of the Kingdom of God.” (2 Thess. 1:5, 11) They have been declared righteous for life on the basis of the ransom; thus, they do not die as condemned sinners. (Rom. 5: 1, 18; 8:1) Such ones are called “happy and holy” and are deemed worthy of a resurrection to heaven. (Rev. 20:5, 6) In contrast, those who are resurrected to life on earth will include “the unrighteous.” (Acts 24:15) Can it be said of them that they are “counted worthy” of a resurrection?

\* See *The Watchtower*, June 1, 1987, pages 30-31.

<sup>#</sup> In Bible times, brother-in-law, or levirate, marriage was a custom whereby a man would marry his deceased brother’s sonless widow in order to produce offspring to carry on his brother’s family line.—Gen. 38:8; Deut. 25: 5, 6.

*“Neither can they die anymore.”* Jesus did not say: *“They will not die anymore.”* Rather, he said: *“Neither can they die anymore.”* Other translations render that phrase “they are not subject to death any longer” and “death has no more power over them.” Anointed ones who finish their earthly course in faithfulness are raised to heaven and given immortality—endless, indestructible life. (1 Cor. 15:53, 54) Death no longer has any power over those who receive a heavenly resurrection.\*

In view of the foregoing, what might we conclude? It is possible that Jesus’ words about marrying and the resurrection apply to the heavenly resurrection. If so, then his words would tell us several things about those raised to heavenly life: They do not marry, they cannot die, and they are in some respects like angels—spirit creatures who inhabit the spirit realm. Such a conclusion, however, raises several questions.

First, why would Jesus refer to the heavenly resurrection when answering the Sadducees, who probably had in mind an earthly resurrection? Jesus did not always answer his opposers in accord with what they were thinking. For example, to Jews who demanded a sign from him, he said: “Tear down this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” Jesus likely knew that they were thinking about the temple building, “but he was talking about the temple of his body.” (John 2:18-21) Perhaps Jesus felt no need to answer the insincere Sadducees, who did not believe in the resurrection or in the existence of angels. (Prov. 23:9; Matt. 7:6; Acts 23:8) Instead, he may have wanted to reveal truths about the heavenly res-

urrection for the benefit of his sincere disciples, who would one day be in line for receiving such a resurrection.

Second, why would Jesus end his discussion with a reference to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who will be resurrected to life on earth? (**Read Matthew 22:31, 32.**) Note that Jesus prefaced his comment about those patriarchs with the words “regarding the resurrection of the dead.” That transitional phrase may allow for a shift in focus. Then, drawing from the writings of Moses, which the Sadducees claimed to accept, Jesus used the words of Jehovah to Moses at the burning bush to give added proof that the resurrection—an earthly one—is a sure purpose of God.—Ex. 3:1-6.

Third, if Jesus’ words about the resurrection and getting married apply to the heavenly resurrection, does this mean that those who come back in the earthly resurrection will be able to marry? God’s Word does not give a direct answer to that specific question. If Jesus was, in fact, talking about the heavenly resurrection, then his words do not shed any light on whether resurrected ones on earth will be able to marry in the new world.

Meanwhile, we know that God’s Word definitely says that death dissolves the marriage tie. Hence, a widower or a widow need not feel guilty if he or she decides to remarry. That is a personal decision, and such ones should not be criticized for seeking the warm companionship of a marriage mate.—Rom. 7:2, 3; 1 Cor. 7:39.

Understandably, we may have many questions about life in the new world. Rather than needlessly speculating on the answers to those questions, we will just have to wait and see. But of this we can be sure: Obedient humans will be happy, for Jehovah will satisfy all their needs and desires in the best possible way.—Ps. 145:16.

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\* Those who come back in the earthly resurrection will have the prospect of receiving everlasting life, not immortality. To learn more about the difference between immortality and everlasting life, see *The Watchtower*, April 1, 1984, pages 30-31.

# The “Eureka Drama” Helped Many to Find Bible Truth

“EUREKA!” That one word means “I have found it!” During the 19th-century gold rush in California, U.S.A., this shout could be heard when a miner struck gold. Charles Taze Russell and fellow Bible Students, however, had found something far more valuable—Bible truth. And they were eager to share it with others.

By the summer of 1914, millions in large cities had flocked to the “Photo-Drama of Creation,” an eight-hour epic produced by the International Bible Students Association (I.B.S.A.). With its stunning motion pictures, vivid color slides, fascinating narration, and fine classical music, this Bible-based presentation took viewers from creation through human history to the end of Jesus Christ’s Thousand Year Reign.—Rev. 20:4.\*

But what of those who lived in small towns and rural areas? So that no truth-hungry ones would miss out, in August 1914 the I.B.S.A. released the “Eureka Drama”—a portable version of

the “Photo-Drama” minus the movie segments. There were three types to choose from, each available in a number of languages: The “Eureka X” set had all the recorded narration and music. The “Eureka Y” set contained all recordings plus beautifully tinted slides. And the “Eureka Family Drama,” intended for home use, had selected narration and hymns. Inexpensive phonographs and projection equipment could also be obtained.

Without the need for a film projector or a large screen, Bible Students could take this free presentation to the countryside, reaching new territories with the Kingdom message. The sound-only “Eureka X” set could be played day or night. The “Eureka Y” slide projector could be run without electricity by using a carbide lamp. “We can show these pictures in almost any place,” said a report in the Finnish *Watch Tower*. How true that was!

Instead of renting large theaters, resourceful Bible Students often found free facilities, such as schoolrooms, courthouses, railroad stations, and

\* See “From Our Archives—A 100-Year-Old Epic of Faith” in *The Watchtower*, February 15, 2014, pages 30-32.



A projector was used to show the colored slides





even the parlors of large homes. Many a showing took place outdoors, with a “screen” made from a large white sheet hung on the side of a barn. Anthony Hambuch wrote: “Farmers set up a small stadium in their orchards, made up of numerous logs where the people could sit down and enjoy the program.” This “Eureka” team used a “Drama wagon” for their equipment, baggage, and camping and cooking gear.

“Eureka” audiences ranged from a handful to hundreds. In the United States, 400 attended a schoolhouse showing in a town of 150. Elsewhere, some walked five miles (8 km) each way to see the “Eureka Drama.” In Sweden, Charlotte Ahlberg’s neighbors who gathered at her little house “felt truly touched” at hearing the recordings. Some 1,500 came to one showing in a remote mining city in Australia. The *Watch Tower* reported that at high schools and colleges, “professors and students are charmed with the pictures and with our wonderful phonograph rec-

ords.” The “Eureka Drama” was popular even in places with movie houses.

### CULTIVATING SEEDS OF TRUTH

The “Eureka Drama” became a useful tool in “Class Extension Work,” in which Bible Student classes sent out speakers to start new study classes. How many saw the “Eureka Drama” is hard to determine. Many “Drama” sets saw constant use. Yet, in 1915 only 14 of 86 “Drama” teams reported regularly. Lamenting the incomplete figures, the year-end summary nevertheless stated that over one million had seen the “Drama.” Some 30,000 individuals had requested Bible literature.

The “Eureka Drama” may have left behind a faint footprint in history, but from Australia to Argentina, from South Africa to the British Isles, India, and the Caribbean, millions apparently saw this unique presentation. Many among them found Bible truth—more precious than gold—and could exclaim “Eureka!”



### “The Bible Will Seem Like a New Book to You”

The “Photo-Drama” and the “Eureka Drama” sought to build faith in the Bible as “the Noblest Science and the Best Instruction.” After viewing the “Drama,” many attendees received the *Scenario of the Photo-Drama of Creation*. Its pages, filled with “Drama” illustrations and lectures, made the Bible “seem like a new book.” Millions of *Scenarios* were given away free. Next to the “Drama” itself, wrote one Bible Student, the *Scenario* seemed to be the “most direct way imaginable of opening blind eyes.”

The *Scenario* also became a beloved picture book for Bible Student families. Little Alice Hoffmann and her brother cherished their *Scenario*. She wrote: “How we loved to go through this book and recall each slide!”

