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THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

STUDY EDITION

STUDY ARTICLES FOR THE WEEKS OF:

May 4-10

Keep Your Eyes on the Prize

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"Be Vigilant"

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

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PURPOSE OF STUDY ARTICLES

Study Articles 1, 2 PAGES 11-19

This two-part series reminds us of why it is vital to keep focused on the prize, or reward, that God holds out to us. As we consider the dramatic events that lie ahead, we will be encouraged to remain watchful.

Study Articles 3, 4 PAGES 20-28

These articles examine Psalms 111 and 112, which complement each other. Note that Psalm 111 praises Jehovah for his wonderful works and qualities. Psalm 112 shows how Jehovah's great works should cause us both to fear displeasing him and to imitate his beautiful qualities.

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"THE ANGEL OF JEHOVAH IS CAMPING ALL AROUND"

AS TOLD BY
CHRISTABEL CONNELL



We became so absorbed in answering Christopher's Bible questions that neither of us noticed the lateness of the hour; nor did we note that Christopher kept looking out of the window. Finally, he turned to us and said, "It's safe to leave now." With that he escorted us to our bicycles and bade us good-night. What had he observed that was so dangerous?

I WAS born Christabel Earl in Sheffield, England, in 1927. Our home was bombed during World War II, so I was sent to live with my grandmother while I finished my schooling. In one convent school that I attended, I kept asking the nuns why there was so much badness and violence. Neither they nor other religious people I questioned were able to give me a satisfying answer.

After World War II ended, I trained as a nurse. I moved to London to work in Paddington General Hospital, but in the city, I saw more violence. Just after my older brother left for the Korean War, I saw a violent fight right outside the hospital. No one helped the victim, who lost his eyesight as a direct result of the beating. About this time, my mother accompanied me to spiritualist meetings, but I was still no closer to understanding why there was so much wickedness.

Encouraged to Study the Bible

One day my oldest brother, John, who had become one of Jehovah's Witnesses, came to visit. "Do you know why all these bad things happen?" he asked. "No," I replied. He opened his Bible and read Revelation 12:7-12. Now I could see that Satan and the demons are basically responsible for the evil in the world. So, taking John's advice, I accepted a Bible study soon afterward. At that time, however, I let fear of man hold me back from getting baptized.—Prov. 29:25.

My sister, Dorothy, had also become a Witness. When she returned from the international convention in New York (1953) with her fiancé, Bill Roberts, I told them that I had studied the Bible. Bill asked me: "Did you check all the scriptures? Did you underline the answers in the book?" When I said no, he responded: "Then you never studied! Contact that sister, and start

again!" About that time the demons began to torment me. I can remember asking Jehovah to protect me and free me from their influence.

Pioneering in Scotland and Ireland

I was baptized on January 16, 1954, finished my nursing contract in May, and began pioneering in June. Eight months later, I was sent as a special pioneer to Grangemouth, Scotland. There I felt that Jehovah's angels were "camping all around" while I worked in such an isolated assignment.—Ps. 34:7.

In 1956, I was invited to serve in Ireland. With two others, I was assigned to the city of Galway. On the very first day, I called on a priest. Minutes later, a policeman arrived and took my companion and me to the police station. When he got our names and addresses, he immediately went to the telephone. We heard him say, "Yes, Father, I know exactly where they live." He was sent by the priest! Our landlord was pressured to evict us, so the branch office recommended that we leave the area. We arrived at the railway station ten minutes late. But the train was still there, and a man was waiting to make sure that we boarded it. That was after only three weeks in Galway!

We were assigned to Limerick, another city where the Catholic Church exerted tremendous power. Mobs constantly jeered us. Many people were afraid to open their doors. A year earlier a brother had been beaten up in the nearby small town of Cloonlara. So we were happy to meet Christopher, mentioned at the outset, who asked us to return to discuss his Bible questions. During our visit, a priest walked in and demanded that Christopher make us leave. Confronting the priest, he said: "These women were invited into my home and knocked before

they entered. You were not invited, nor did you knock." Angrily, the priest left.

Unbeknownst to us, the priest had gathered a large group of men, who were waiting for us outside Christopher's house. Knowing they were hostile, Christopher acted as described at the start. He had us stay until they dispersed. We found out later that he and his family were soon forced to move out of the area, and they immigrated to England.

Invited to Gilead

I was already planning to attend the 1958 Divine Will International Assembly in New York when I received an invitation to the 33rd class of Gilead. Rather than returning home after the assembly, I served in Collingwood, Ontario, Canada, until Gilead School began in 1959. But during the assembly, I met Eric Connell. He had learned the truth in 1957 and had begun pioneering in 1958. After the assembly, he wrote to me every day during my stay in Canada and throughout the Gilead course. I wondered what would happen to us after I graduated.

Attending Gilead was a highlight of my life. Dorothy and her husband were in the same class. Their missionary assignment was to Portugal. To my surprise, I was assigned to Ireland. How disappointed I was not to be going with my sister! I asked one of the instructors if I had done something wrong. "No," he replied. "You and your partner, Eileen Mahoney, agreed to go anywhere in the world," and Ireland was certainly included in that.

Back to Ireland

I arrived back in Ireland in August 1959 and was assigned to the Dun Laoghaire Congregation. Eric, meanwhile, had returned to England and was very pleased that I was so near. He too wanted to be a missionary. He

reasoned that since Ireland at the time was a missionary field, he would pioneer there. He moved to Dun Laoghaire, and we were married in 1961.

Six months later, Eric was in a serious motorbike accident. His skull was fractured, and the doctors were not sure that they could save his life. After he spent three weeks in the hospital, I nursed him at home for five months until he recovered. I continued my ministry as best I could.

In 1965 we were assigned to a congregation of eight publishers in Sligo, a port on the northwestern coast. Three years later, we went to another small congregation in Londonderry, farther north. One day we returned from service to find a barbed-wire fence across the road where we lived. The Northern Ireland Troubles had begun. Gangs of youths burned cars. The city was already divided into Protestant and Catholic areas. It was dangerous to cross from one area in the city to another.

Living and Witnessing Through the Troubles

Our ministry, however, took us everywhere. Again, we felt as if the angels were camping around us. When we found ourselves in areas where rioting broke out, we quickly left and returned when things had calmed down. Once when there was rioting close to our apartment, burning debris from a nearby paint store landed on our windowsill. We could not go to sleep in case our apartment block caught fire. After moving to Belfast in 1970, we learned that a petrol bomb had, in fact, set fire to the paint store and that our former apartment block had burned down that time.

Another time, a sister and I were out in service and noticed an odd-looking length of pipe on a windowsill. We walked on. Minutes later, it exploded. Local people who

came out thought that we had set off the pipe bomb! Just then a sister who lived in the area invited us into her house. Her neighbors accepted this as proof of our innocence.

In 1971 we returned to Londonderry to visit a sister. When we described our route and the barricade we passed through, she asked, "Was no one at the barricade?" When we said, "Yes, but they just ignored us," she was amazed. Why? Because during the previous days a doctor and a policeman had had their cars hijacked and burned.

In 1972 we moved to Cork. Later, we served in Naas, then Arklow. Finally, in 1987, we were assigned to Castlebar, where we are today. Here we felt immensely privileged to help build a Kingdom Hall. Eric became seriously ill in 1999. Yet, with Jehovah's help and the loving support of the congregation, I was again able to cope and nurse him back to health.

Eric and I have attended the Pioneer Service School twice. He still serves as an elder. I suffer from severe arthritis and have had both hips and both knees replaced. Though I have had to face bitter religious opposition and have lived through times of serious political and social troubles, one of my greatest challenges was having to give up driving. That was a test because it took away much of my independence. The congregation has helped greatly, being very supportive. I get around now with the help of a walking stick, and I use a battery-powered tricycle for some longer distances.

Together, Eric and I have served as special pioneers for a total of over 100 years—98 of them here in Ireland. We have no thought of retiring. We are not relying on miracles, but we believe that Jehovah's powerful angels are "camping all around" those fearing him and serving him faithfully.

You Must *Not Forget* Jehovah

SOME in the group had done something like it before. For the majority, though, it was the first and only time they would walk across the bed of a body of water without getting wet. Jehovah had just caused the waters of the Jordan River to be dammed up. Now, in a long, wide procession, millions of Israelites advanced over the streambed into the Promised Land. Like their ancestors 40 years earlier at the Red Sea, many now crossing the Jordan must have thought, 'I will never forget what Jehovah did here.'—Josh. 3:13-17.

Jehovah knew, however, that some Israelites would 'quickly forget his works.' (Ps. 106:13) So he ordered Israel's leader, Joshua, to take 12 stones from the river bottom and deposit them at their first encampment. Joshua explained: "These stones must serve as a memorial to the sons of Israel." (Josh. 4:1-8) That monument of stones would remind the nation of Jehovah's mighty acts and impress on them why they should always serve him loyally.

Does that account have importance for God's people today? Yes. We too must never forget Jehovah; we must continue to serve him loyally. Other warnings to the nation of Israel can be applied to Jehovah's servants today. Consider Moses' words: "Watch out for yourself that you may not forget Jehovah your God so as not to keep his commandments and his judicial decisions and his statutes." (Deut. 8:11) That links forgetting Jehovah to willful disobedience. The danger is real in our day too. In writing to Christians, the apostle Paul warns against "the same

pattern of disobedience" that the Israelites displayed in the wilderness.—Heb. 4:8-11.

Let us consider some events in Israel's history that will underscore that we should not forget God. In addition, lessons from the lives of two loyal Israelite men will help us to serve Jehovah with endurance and gratitude.

Reasons to Remember Jehovah

Through all the years that the Israelites were in Egypt, Jehovah never forgot them. He "remembered his covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob." (Ex. 2:23, 24) What he then did to free them from slavery was truly memorable.

Jehovah struck Egypt with nine plagues. Pharaoh's magic-practicing priests were powerless to stop them. Still, Pharaoh defied Jehovah, refusing to let the Israelites go. (Ex. 7:14-10:29) The effects of the tenth plague, however, forced that proud ruler to conform to God's will. (Ex. 11:1-10; 12:12) With Moses in the lead, the nation of Israel and a vast mixed company, perhaps totaling 3,000,000 people, left Egypt. (Ex. 12:37, 38) They were not long gone before Pharaoh changed his mind. He ordered his armed chariots and cavalry—the most powerful army on earth at that time—to recapture his former slaves. Meanwhile, Jehovah told Moses to take the Israelites to a place wedged between the Red Sea and a ridge of mountains, a seeming dead end called Pihahiroth.—Ex. 14:1-9.

Pharaoh believed that the Israelites had walked into a trap, and his army was about to attack them. But Jehovah kept the Egyptians back by placing a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire between them and the Israelites. Then

God split the Red Sea, opening a corridor of seabed with walls of water perhaps as much as 50 feet high on each side. Israel began crossing the sea on dry land. Soon the Egyptians were at the shore, watching the Israelites draw away toward the other side.—Ex. 13:21; 14:10-22.

A more prudent head would have abandoned the chase—but not Pharaoh. Brimming with self-confidence, he had his chariots and cavalymen charge down onto the seabed. On and on the Egyptians rode. But before they could overrun the Israelite rear guard, their mad chase came to an end. The Egyptian chariots would no longer roll! Jehovah had taken their wheels off.—Ex. 14:23-25; 15:9.

While the Egyptians struggled with their crippled war vehicles, all Israel reached the eastern shore. Moses now stretched out his hand over the Red Sea. At that, Jehovah made the walls of water forming the corridor collapse. Millions of tons of water roared in

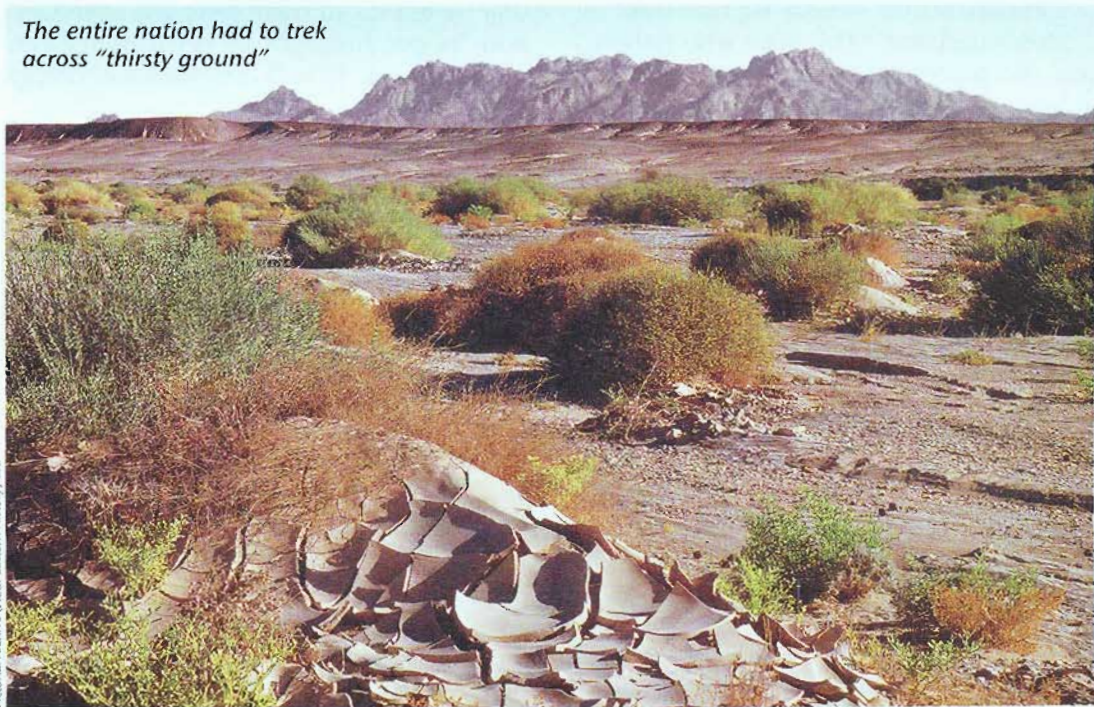
upon Pharaoh and his warriors, drowning them. None of those enemies survived. Israel was free!—Ex. 14:26-28; Ps. 136:13-15.

News of this event left surrounding nations with an enduring sense of dread. (Ex. 15:14-16) Forty years later, Rahab of Jericho told two Israelite men: “The fright of you has fallen upon us, . . . for we have heard how Jehovah dried up the waters of the Red Sea from before you when you came out of Egypt.” (Josh. 2:9, 10) Not even those pagan nations had forgotten how Jehovah delivered his people. Clearly, Israel had even more reasons to remember him.

‘Safeguarding Them as the Pupil of His Eye’

After passing through the Red Sea, Israel entered the Sinai Desert, a “great and fear-inspiring wilderness.” As they trekked across that ‘thirsty ground with no water’—and no food for such a multitude—Jehovah’s hand was not short. Moses recalled: “[Jehovah]

The entire nation had to trek across “thirsty ground”



came to find [Israel] in a wilderness land, and in an empty, howling desert. He began to encircle him, to take care of him, to safeguard him as the pupil of his eye." (Deut. 8:15; 32:10) How did God care for them?

Jehovah gave them 'bread from the heavens,' called manna, which appeared miraculously "upon the surface of the wilderness." (Ex. 16:4, 14, 15, 35) Jehovah also made water flow "out of the flinty rock." With God's blessing, their mantles did not wear out, nor did their feet swell up during the 40 years they spent in the wilderness. (Deut. 8:4) What did Jehovah rightly expect of them in return? Moses told Israel: "Watch out for yourself and take good care of your soul, that you may not forget the things that your eyes have seen and that they may not depart from your heart all the days of your life." (Deut. 4:9) If the Israelites gratefully remembered Jehovah's saving acts, they would always serve him and strive to obey his laws. What would Israel do?

Forgetfulness Breeds Ingratitude

Moses declared: "The Rock who fathered you, you proceeded to forget, and you began to leave God out of memory." (Deut. 32:18)

Jehovah's acts at the Red Sea, his provisions that kept the nation alive in the wilderness, and all the other good things that Jehovah had done were soon ignored or forgotten. The Israelites became rebellious.

At one point the Israelites reproached Moses because of a supposed lack of water. (Num. 20:2-5) Regarding the manna that kept them alive, they complained: "Our soul has come to abhor the contemptible bread." (Num. 21:5) They questioned God's judgment and rejected Moses as leader, saying: "If only we had died in the land of Egypt, or if only we had died in this wilderness! . . . Let us appoint a head, and let us return to Egypt!" —Num. 14:2-4.

How did Israel's disobedience affect Jehovah? Looking back on those events, a psalmist later wrote: "How often they would rebel against him in the wilderness, they would make him feel hurt in the desert! And again and again they would put God to the test, and they pained even the Holy One of Israel. They did not remember his hand, the day that he redeemed them from the adversary, how he put his signs in Egypt itself." (Ps. 78:40-43) Yes, Israel's forgetfulness deeply hurt Jehovah.

While Israel encamped at Kadesh-barnea, spies were sent into the Promised Land





After years in the wilderness, the Israelites could be thankful for the fertile Promised Land

Two Who Did Not Forget

Some Israelites, however, did not forget Jehovah. Two were Joshua and Caleb. They had been in a group of 12 spies sent out from Kadesh-barnea to explore the Promised Land. Ten made a negative report, but Joshua and Caleb told the people: "The land that we passed through to spy it out is a very, very good land. If Jehovah has found delight in us, then he will certainly bring us into this land and give it to us, a land that is flowing with milk and honey. Only against Jehovah do not rebel." When the people heard those words, they spoke of stoning Joshua and Caleb. But the two of them stood firm with confidence in Jehovah.—Num. 14:6-10.

Years later, Caleb told Joshua: "Moses the servant of Jehovah sent me out of Kadesh-barnea to spy out the land, and I came bringing him back word just as it was in my heart. And my brothers who went up with me caused the heart of the people to melt; but as for me, I followed Jehovah my God fully." (Josh. 14:6-8) With trust in God, Caleb and Joshua endured various hardships. They

were determined to remember Jehovah all the days of their life.

Caleb and Joshua also showed gratitude, recognizing that Jehovah had fulfilled his promise of a fertile land for his people. Yes, the Israelites owed their lives to him. Joshua wrote: "Jehovah gave Israel all the land that he had sworn to give to their forefathers . . . Not a promise failed out of all the good promise that Jehovah had made to the house of Israel; it all came true." (Josh. 21:43, 45) How can we today show gratitude like that of Caleb and Joshua?

Be Thankful

A godly man once asked: "What shall I repay to Jehovah for all his benefits to me?" (Ps. 116:12) So large is our debt to God for his material blessings, his spiritual guidance, and his means of future salvation that eternity will not be long enough for us to repay him. Actually, we can never repay Jehovah. But gratitude is within the reach of us all.

Has Jehovah's counsel helped you to avoid problems? Has his forgiveness helped you to



Focusing on Jehovah's purposes enables us to endure whatever challenges we face

regain a clean conscience? The benefits from those acts of God last a long time, and so should your gratitude toward him. A 14-year-old girl named Sandra faced serious problems but overcame them with Jehovah's help. She says: "I prayed to Jehovah for help, and his ways of working things out have impressed me. Now I know why my father often spoke to me about Proverbs 3:5, 6: 'Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight.' I am sure that just as Jehovah has helped me till now, he will always help me."

Show That You Remember Jehovah by Enduring

The Bible emphasizes another quality linked to remembering Jehovah: "Let endurance have its work complete, that you may be complete and sound in all respects, not lacking in anything." (Jas. 1:4) What does being "complete and sound in all respects" involve? It involves developing the qualities that will help us to face our trials with trust in Jehovah and with determination to see them through, not giving up. That kind of endurance brings great satisfaction when tests of faith end. And they always end.—1 Cor. 10:13.

A longtime servant of Jehovah who has faced many severe health challenges explains what has helped him to endure: "I try to think of what Jehovah is doing, not what I want to do. Integrity means keeping my eyes on God's purposes, not my desires. When facing problems, I don't say, 'Why me, Jehovah?' I simply go on serving him and stick with him even when unexpected trouble comes up."

Today the Christian congregation worships Jehovah "with spirit and truth." (John 4:23, 24) As a group, true Christians will never forget God the way the nation of Israel did. But being part of the congregation does not in itself guarantee our personal integrity. Like Caleb and Joshua, each one of us must show gratitude and endurance in Jehovah's service. We have good reason to do so, for Jehovah continues to guide and care for us individually in this difficult time of the end.

Like the monument of stones that Joshua erected, the record of God's saving acts assures us that he will not abandon his people. So may you share the feelings of the psalmist who wrote: "I shall remember the practices of Jah; for I will remember your marvelous doing of long ago. And I shall certainly meditate on all your activity, and with your dealings I will concern myself."—Ps. 77:11, 12.

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PRIZE

"I am pursuing down toward the goal for the prize."—PHIL. 3:14.

THE apostle Paul, also known as Saul of Tarsus, came from a prominent family. He was instructed in his ancestral religion by the famous Law teacher Gamaliel. (Acts 22:3) Paul had what was considered a fine career ahead of him; yet he abandoned his religion and became a Christian. He then looked forward to the prize of eternal life that was held out to him—that of being an immortal king and priest in God's heavenly Kingdom. That Kingdom will rule over a paradise earth. —Matt. 6:10; Rev. 7:4; 20:6.

² Showing how highly Paul valued that prize, he said: "What things were gains to me, these I have considered loss on account of the Christ. Why, for that matter, I do indeed also consider all things to be loss on account of the excelling value of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. On account of him I have taken the loss of all things and I consider them as a lot of refuse." (Phil. 3:7, 8) The things that most people consider important—position, wealth, career, prestige—Paul considered to be refuse after he learned the truth about Jehovah's purpose for mankind.

³ From then on, what really mattered to Paul was the precious knowledge of Jehovah and Christ, regarding which Jesus said in prayer to God: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) Paul's earnest desire to attain eternal life is evident in his words recorded at Philippians 3:14: "I am pursuing down toward the goal for the prize

of the upward call of God by means of Christ Jesus." Yes, his eyes were focused on the prize of eternal life in the heavens as part of God's Kingdom government.

Living Forever on Earth

⁴ For the great majority of those who choose to do God's will, the prize worth working for is eternal life in a new world of God's making. (Ps. 37:11, 29) Jesus confirmed that this was a valid hope. He said: "Happy are the mild-tempered ones, since they will inherit the earth." (Matt. 5:5) Jesus himself is the principal one to inherit our earth, as Psalm 2:8 indicates, and he will have 144,000 corulers in heaven. (Dan. 7:13, 14, 22, 27) Those sheeplike ones who actually will live on earth will "inherit" the earthly realm of the Kingdom 'prepared for them from the founding of the world.' (Matt. 25:34, 46) And we are guaranteed that this will all come to pass because God, who promises it, "cannot lie." (Titus 1:2) We can have the same confidence in the fulfillment of God's promises that Joshua had when he told the Israelites: "Not one word out of all the good words that Jehovah your God has spoken to you has failed. They have all come true for you. Not one word of them has failed." —Josh. 23:14.

⁵ Life in God's new world will not be like today's unsatisfying existence. It will be very different: free from war, crime, poverty, injustice, illness, and death. People then will have perfect health and will live on an earth that has been transformed into a paradise.

1. What prize was held out to the apostle Paul?

2, 3. How highly did Paul value the prize of heavenly life?

4, 5. What prize is held out to millions who are doing God's will today?

That life will be fulfilling and satisfying beyond our fondest dreams. Yes, then every day will be one of exquisite delight. What a marvelous prize!

⁶ When Jesus was on earth, he was empowered by God's holy spirit to demonstrate the kind of wonderful things that will take place earth wide in the new world. For example, Jesus told a man who had been paralyzed for 38 years to walk. The Bible reports that the man did so. (*Read John 5:5-9.*) In another instance, Jesus encountered "a man blind from birth" and healed him. Later, the man formerly blind was asked about the One who had healed him, and he answered: "From of old it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of one born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing at all." (John 9:1, 6, 7, 32, 33) Jesus could do all of this because he was empowered by God. Everywhere he went, Jesus "healed those needing a cure."—Luke 9:11.

⁷ Not only could Jesus heal the sick and crippled but he could also raise the dead. As an example, a 12-year-old girl had died, causing great sorrow to her parents. But Jesus said: "Maiden, I say to you, Get up!" And she did! Can you imagine the reaction of the parents and others who were there? (*Read Mark 5:38-42.*) In God's new world, there will be "great ecstasy" when billions are resurrected, for "there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous." (Acts 24:15; John 5:28, 29) These will be given a fresh start in life with the prospect of living from that time forward, even forever.

⁸ The resurrected ones are not doomed to failure. Those who come back in the resur-

rection will not be condemned for sins they committed before they died. (Rom. 6:7) During Christ's Millennial Reign, as the benefits of the ransom sacrifice are applied, obedient subjects of the Kingdom will grow to perfection, eventually becoming completely free from all the effects of Adam's sin. (Rom. 8:21) Jehovah "will actually swallow up death forever, and the Sovereign Lord Jehovah will certainly wipe the tears from all faces." (Isa. 25:8) God's Word also says that "scrolls [will be] opened," indicating that those living at that time will be given new information. (Rev. 20:12) As the earth is transformed into a paradise, "righteousness is what the inhabitants of the productive land will certainly learn."—Isa. 26:9.

⁹ The resurrected ones will be judged, not on the basis of sin inherited from Adam, but by what they themselves choose to do. Revelation 20:12 says: "The dead were judged out of those things written in the scrolls according to their deeds," that is, their deeds following their resurrection. What a marvelous example of Jehovah's justice, mercy, and love! Additionally, the painful things of their past life in this old world "will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart." (Isa. 65:17) With upbuilding new information available and a life filled with good things, they will no longer be distressed by the bad things of the past. Those past experiences can be put out of their minds. (Rev. 21:4) The same will be true of the "great crowd," who survive Armageddon.—Rev. 7:9, 10, 14.

¹⁰ In God's new world, people will be able to live without getting sick again or dying. "No resident will say: 'I am sick.'" (Isa. 33:24) Eventually, the inhabitants of the new earth

6, 7. (a) How did Jesus demonstrate what we can expect to take place in God's new world? (b) How will even the dead be given a fresh start?

8, 9. (a) During Christ's Millennial Reign, what will happen to sin inherited from Adam? (b) On what basis are the dead to be judged?

10. (a) What will life in God's new world be like? (b) What can you do to help you keep your eyes on the prize?

will wake up each morning to perfect health, thrilled with the prospect of another marvelous day. They will look forward to satisfying work and association with others who have only their best interests at heart. Such a life is a wonderful prize indeed! As a suggestion, why not open your Bible to the prophecies at Isaiah 33:24 and 35:5-7? Try putting yourself in the picture. That will help you keep your eyes on the prize.

Losing Sight of the Prize

¹¹ Once we have learned about the prize, we have to work diligently to keep our eyes focused on it because we could lose sight of it. For example, when Solomon became king of ancient Israel, he humbly prayed to God for understanding and discernment so that he could judge His people correctly. (*Read 1 Kings 3:6-12.*) As a result, the Bible states,

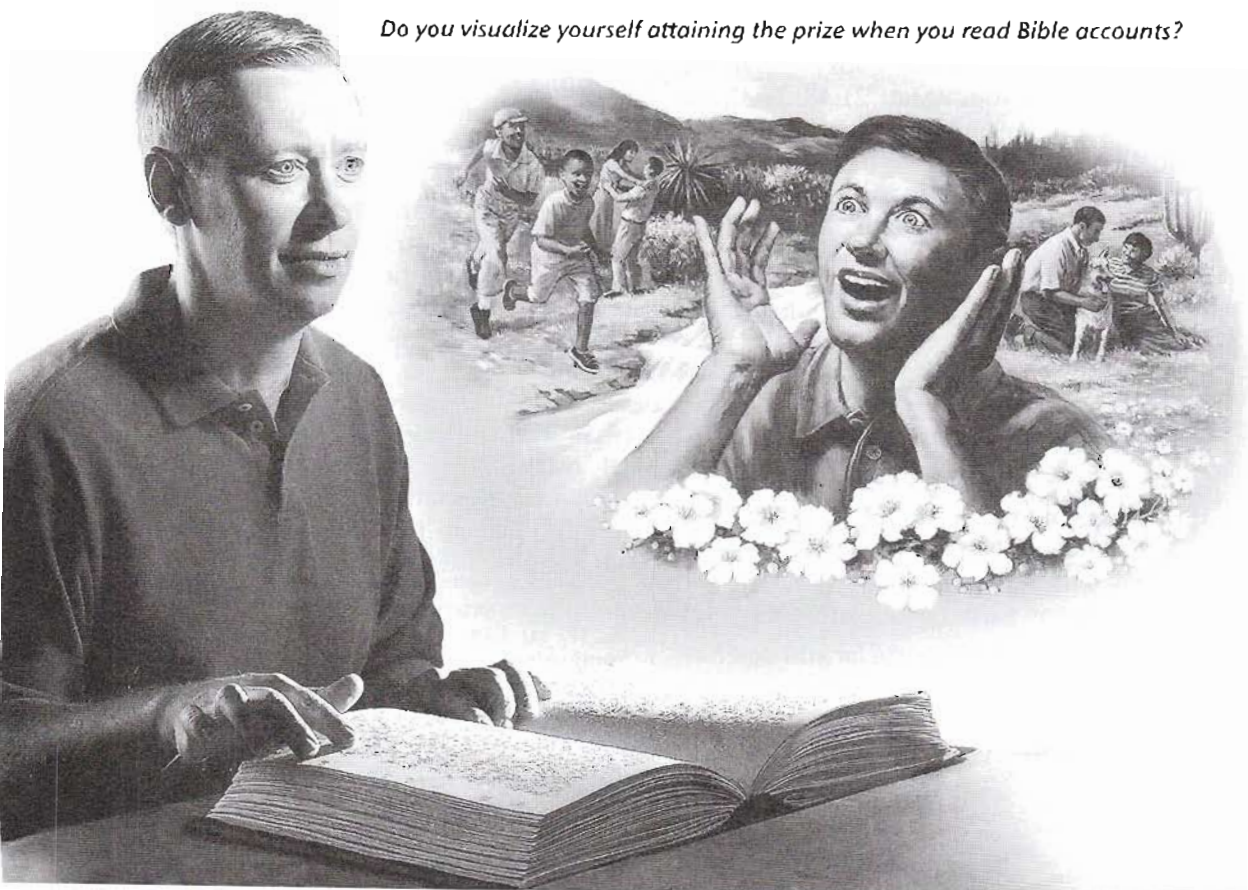
11. Describe the fine beginning of Solomon's reign.

"God continued giving Solomon wisdom and understanding in very great measure." Indeed, "Solomon's wisdom was vaster than the wisdom of all the Orientals and than all the wisdom of Egypt."—1 Ki. 4:29-32.

¹² However, earlier Jehovah had warned that anyone who became king "should not increase horses for himself" and that he "should also not multiply wives for himself, that his heart may not turn aside." (Deut. 17:14-17) Increasing his horses would show that the king depended upon military might to protect the nation instead of depending on Jehovah, the Protector. And multiplying wives would be dangerous because some of them could be from surrounding pagan nations that engaged in false worship, and those wives could turn the king aside from the true worship of Jehovah.

12. What warning did Jehovah give those who would become kings in Israel?

Do you visualize yourself attaining the prize when you read Bible accounts?



¹³ Solomon did not heed those warnings. Rather, he did what Jehovah specifically said kings should not do. He accumulated thousands of horses and horsemen. (1 Ki. 4:26) He also came to have 700 wives and 300 concubines, many from the pagan nations nearby. These “inclined his heart to follow other gods; and his heart did not prove to be complete with Jehovah.” Solomon engaged in the disgusting false worship of the pagan nations that his foreign wives had introduced him to. As a result, Jehovah said that he would “without fail rip the kingdom away” from Solomon.—1 Ki. 11:1-6, 11.

¹⁴ Solomon no longer focused on the precious privilege he had of representing the true God. The king became immersed in false worship. In time, the entire nation turned apostate, resulting in its destruction in 607 B.C.E. Even though the Jews eventually restored true worship, centuries later Jesus was prompted to declare: “The kingdom of God will be taken from you and be given to a nation producing its fruits.” That is just what happened. Jesus declared: “Look! Your house is abandoned to you.” (Matt. 21:43; 23:37, 38) As a result of its unfaithfulness, the nation lost the great privilege of representing the true God. In 70 C.E., Roman armies devastated Jerusalem and the temple, and many of the remaining Jews became slaves.

13. How did Solomon lose sight of what he had been given?

14. Disobedience by Solomon and by the nation of Israel resulted in what?

Do You Recall?

- How did Paul feel about the prize held out to him?
- On what basis will those who will live forever on earth be judged?
- What is the wise course for you now?

¹⁵ Judas Iscariot was one of the 12 apostles of Jesus. Judas heard the wonderful teachings of Jesus and saw the miracles he performed with the help of God’s holy spirit. Yet, Judas did not guard his heart. He had been entrusted with the money box holding the finances of Jesus and the 12 apostles. But “he was a thief and had the money box and used to carry off the monies put in it.” (John 12:6) His greediness reached a climax when he plotted with the hypocritical chief priests to betray Jesus for 30 pieces of silver. (Matt. 26:14-16) Another who lost focus was Demas, who was a companion of the apostle Paul. Demas did not guard his heart. Paul stated: “Demas has forsaken me because he loved the present system of things.”—2 Tim. 4:10; read *Proverbs* 4:23.

A Lesson for Each of Us

¹⁶ All of God’s servants should take to heart examples set out in the Bible, for we are told: “Now these things went on befalling them as examples, and they were written for a warning to us upon whom the ends of the systems of things have arrived.” (1 Cor. 10:11) Today, we are living during the last days of this present wicked system of things.—2 Tim. 3:1, 13.

¹⁷ Satan the Devil, “the god of this system of things,” knows that “he has a short period of time” left. (2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 12:12) He will do all he can to entice Jehovah’s servants to break their integrity as Christians. Satan controls this world, including its propaganda channels. However, Jehovah’s people have something far more powerful—“the power beyond what is normal.” (2 Cor. 4:7) We can rely on this power from God to help us withstand whatever Satan brings against us. Thus, we are urged to pray constantly, confident

15. Give examples of men who lost focus on what was truly important.

16, 17. (a) How powerful is the opposition confronting us? (b) What can help us to withstand whatever Satan brings against us?

that Jehovah will “give holy spirit to those asking him.”—Luke 11:13.

¹⁸ We are also fortified by the knowledge that Satan’s entire system will soon be destroyed but true Christians will survive. “The world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever.” (1 John 2:17) In view of this, how unwise it would be for one of God’s servants to think that there is something in this present

18. What attitude should we have toward this present world?

system of things that could be of more lasting value than his relationship with Jehovah! This world under Satan is like a sinking ship. Jehovah has provided the Christian congregation as a “lifeboat” for his faithful servants. As they head toward the new world, they can have confidence in this promise: “Evildoers themselves will be cut off, but those hoping in Jehovah are the ones that will possess the earth.” (Ps. 37:9) Hence, keep your eyes focused on this wonderful prize!

“BE VIGILANT”

“The end of all things has drawn close. . . . Be vigilant with a view to prayers.”—1 PET. 4:7.

WHEN Jesus Christ was on earth, the theme of his teaching was God’s Kingdom. By means of that Kingdom, Jehovah will vindicate his universal sovereignty and sanctify his name. Thus, Jesus taught his disciples to pray to God: “Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth.” (Matt. 4:17; 6:9, 10) That Kingdom government is very shortly going to bring an end to Satan’s world and then supervise the doing of God’s will throughout the earth. As Daniel foretold, God’s Kingdom “will crush and put an end to all these [present-day] kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite.”—Dan. 2:44.

² Because the coming of God’s Kingdom was of great importance to Jesus’ followers, they asked him: “What will be the sign of

your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things?” (Matt. 24:3) A visible sign would be provided in view of the fact that Christ’s presence in Kingdom power would be invisible to those on earth. That sign would be composed of various features foretold in the Scriptures. Accordingly, Jesus’ followers alive at that time could discern that he had begun ruling in heaven. It would also mark the beginning of the period of time known in the Bible as “the last days” of the wicked system of things that now dominates the earth.—2 Tim. 3:1-5, 13; Matt. 24:7-14.

Be Vigilant in the Last Days

³ The apostle Peter wrote: “The end of all things has drawn close. Be sound in mind, therefore, and be vigilant with a view to prayers.” (1 Pet. 4:7) Jesus’ followers would need to be vigilant, watchful of world events indicating that he was present in Kingdom

3. Why would Christians need to be vigilant?

1. What was the theme of Jesus’ teaching?
2. (a) How would the followers of Jesus know that he was present in Kingdom power? (b) What else would the sign indicate?

THE AGE OF TURBULENCE BEGAN



The Age of Turbulence: Adventures in a New World is the title of a 2007 book by Alan Greenspan. For almost 20 years, he was chairman of the United States Federal Reserve Board, which oversees that nation's entire central banking system. Greenspan highlights the marked contrast between the world situation before 1914 and what followed:

"By all contemporaneous accounts, the

world prior to 1914 seemed to be moving irreversibly toward higher levels of civility and civilization; human society seemed perfectible. The nineteenth century had brought an end to the wretched slave trade. Dehumanizing violence seemed on the decline. . . . The pace of global invention had advanced throughout the nineteenth century, bringing railroads, the telephone, the electric

light, cinema, the motor car, and household conveniences too numerous to mention. Medical science, improved nutrition, and the mass distribution of potable water had elevated life expectancy. . . . The sense of the irreversibility of such progress was universal."

power. And their vigilance would take on greater urgency as the end of the present wicked system of things approached. Jesus told his disciples: "Keep on the watch, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming [to execute judgment on Satan's world]."—Mark 13:35, 36.

⁴ People in general are under Satan's domination, and they have not been watchful as to the meaning of world events. They do not discern Christ's presence in Kingdom power. But Christ's true followers have been vigilant and have discerned the real meaning of what has happened in the past century. Since 1925, Jehovah's Witnesses have recognized that World War I and the events that followed amount to sure evidence that Christ's presence in heavenly Kingdom power began in 1914. Thus, the last days of this wicked system of things under Satan had started. Many

4. Contrast the attitude of people who are part of Satan's world with that of Jehovah's servants. (Include box.)

observant people, though not knowing the meaning, recognize the dramatic difference between the period before World War I and the period since.—See the box "The Age of Turbulence Began."

⁵ For nearly a century now, horrendous events taking place around the world testify that we are living in the last days. There is very little time left before Jehovah gives Christ the command to lead powerful angelic forces against Satan's world. (Rev. 19:11-21) True Christians are told to keep on the watch. Hence, it is urgent to continue to do that as we anticipate this system's end. (Matt. 24:42) We must remain watchful, and under Christ's direction, we must accomplish a specific work throughout the entire earth.

An Earth-Wide Work

⁶ The work that Jehovah's servants are to do was foretold as part of the composite sign

5. Why is it vital that we continue to be vigilant?
6, 7. How has the Kingdom-preaching work progressed during the last days?

But . . . "World War I was more devastating to civility and civilization than the physically far more destructive World War II: the earlier conflict destroyed an idea. I cannot erase the thought of those pre-World War I years, when the future of mankind appeared unencumbered and without limit. Today our outlook is starkly different from a century ago but perhaps a bit more consonant with reality. Will terror, global warming, or resurgent populism do to the current era of life-advancing globalization what World War I did to the previous one? No one can be confident of the answer."

Greenspan recalled from his student days a statement by Economics Professor Benjamin M. Anderson (1886-1949): "Those who have an adult's recollection and an adult's under-

standing of the world which preceded World War I look back upon it with a great nostalgia. There was a sense of security then which has never since existed."—*Economics and the Public Welfare*.

A similar conclusion is reached in the volume *A World Undone*, by G. J. Meyer, published in 2006. We read: "Historic events are often said to have 'changed everything.' In the case of the Great War [1914-1918] this is, for once, true. The war really did change *everything*: not just borders, not just governments and the fate of nations, but the way people have seen the world and themselves ever since. It became a kind of hole in time, leaving the postwar world permanently disconnected from everything that had come before."

indicating that we are in the last days of this present wicked system of things. Jesus described this global work when he enumerated various things that would happen in the time of the end. Included in his prophecy was this meaningful statement: "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.

⁷ Think of some facts related to that detail of Jesus' prophecy. The number of people proclaiming the good news was very small when the last days began in 1914. By now that number has grown to huge proportions. There are more than 7,000,000 Witnesses of Jehovah preaching throughout the earth, organized into more than 100,000 congregations. An additional 10,000,000 people gathered with Jehovah's Witnesses in 2008 on the occasion of the Memorial of Christ's death. That was a significant increase in attendance over the preceding year.

⁸ What a mighty witness about God's Kingdom is being given in all nations before this system's end comes! That is despite the fact that Satan is "the god of this system of things." (2 Cor. 4:4) All political, religious, and commercial elements of this world as well as its propaganda channels are being influenced by him. What, then, accounts for the amazing success of the witness work? It has to be Jehovah's backing. Thus, the Kingdom-preaching work proceeds marvelously despite Satan's attempts to stop it.

⁹ The success of the Kingdom-preaching work and the growth and spiritual prosperity of Jehovah's people can be described as a miracle. Without God's support, which includes his guidance and protection of his people, the preaching work would not be possible. (*Read Matthew 19:26.*) We can be

8. Why has opposition not prevented our preaching from being successful?

9. Why can our spiritual prosperity be called a miracle?

sure that with God's holy spirit working on the hearts of vigilant people who are willing to serve, this preaching work will be carried on to a successful conclusion, "and then the end will come." That time is rapidly approaching.

"The Great Tribulation"

¹⁰ The end of this wicked system will come in what is called "the great tribulation." (Rev. 7:14) The Bible does not tell us how long that will last, but Jesus said: "Then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again." (Matt. 24:21) When we consider the tribulation that this world has already experienced, such as in World War II when an estimated 50 to 60 million lives were lost, the coming great tribulation will be very severe indeed. It will reach its climax in the battle of Armageddon. That is when Jehovah will unleash his executorial forces to destroy every vestige of Satan's earthly system.—Rev. 16:14, 16.

¹¹ Bible prophecy does not give a date for the first phase of the great tribulation to begin, though it does tell us what extraordinary event will signal its start. That event is the destruc-

10. How did Jesus describe the coming great tribulation?

11, 12. What event signals the start of the great tribulation?

At Armageddon, Jehovah will unleash powerful angelic forces

tion of all false religion by the political powers. In Bible prophecies found in Revelation chapters 17 and 18, false religion is likened to a harlot who has had immoral intercourse with the political systems of the earth. Revelation 17:16 shows that the time will soon come when these political elements "will hate the harlot and will make her devastated and naked, and will eat up her fleshy parts and will completely burn her with fire."

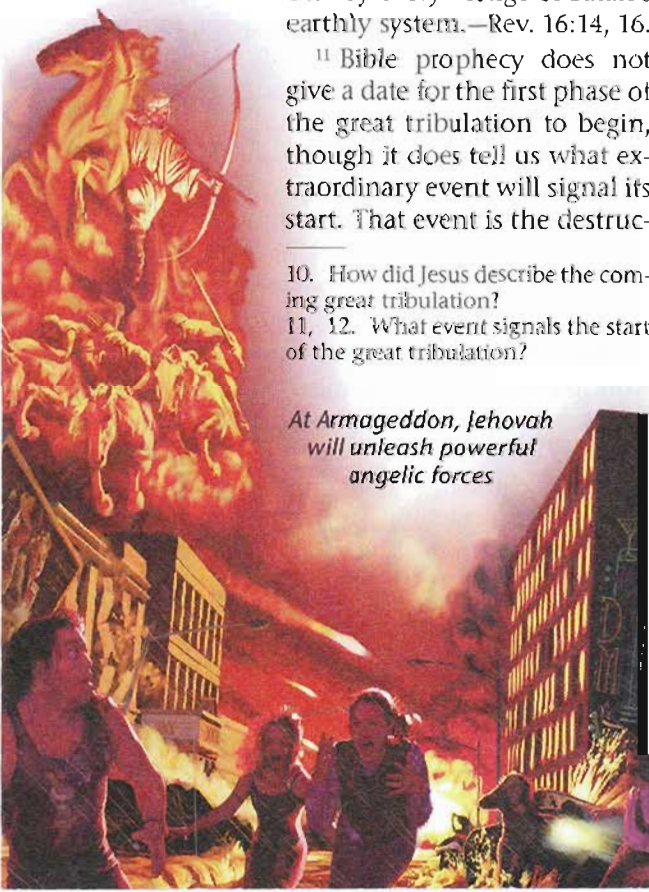
¹² When the time comes for that to happen, God will "put it into their [the political rulers'] hearts to carry out his thought" to destroy all false religion. (Rev. 17:17) So this destruction can be said to come from God. It is his judgment against hypocritical religion that for so long has taught doctrines contrary to God's will and that has persecuted his servants. The world in general does not anticipate this coming destruction of false religion. But Jehovah's faithful servants do. And throughout these last days, they have been telling people about it.

¹³ It will be a great shock for people to see false religion destroyed. Bible prophecy shows that even some of "the kings of the earth" are going to declare regarding that destruction: "Too bad, too bad, . . . because in one hour your judgment has arrived!" (Rev. 18:9, 10, 16, 19) The Bible's use of the words "one hour" shows that this event will take place relatively swiftly.

¹⁴ We understand that some time after false religion has been destroyed, there will be an attack on Jehovah's servants, who have been proclaiming his judgment messages. (Ezek. 38:14-16) When that attack begins, the attackers will have to confront Jehovah, who promises to protect his faithful people. Jehovah declares: "In my ardor, in the fire of

13. What indicates that the end of false religion will take place swiftly?

14. When the enemies of Jehovah finally turn on his servants, how will God respond?



my fury, I shall have to speak. . . . And they will have to know that I am Jehovah.” (*Read Ezekiel 38:18-23.*) God states in his Word: “He that is touching you [his faithful servants] is touching my eyeball.” (Zech. 2:8) So when his enemies begin their global assault on his servants, Jehovah will respond. He will move into action, which will lead to the final phase of the great tribulation—its Armageddon climax. Under Christ’s command, powerful angelic forces will execute Jehovah’s judgments against Satan’s world.

How We Should Be Affected

¹⁵ How should knowing that the end of this wicked system is rapidly approaching affect us? The apostle Peter wrote: “Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion!” (2 Pet. 3:11) Those words emphasize the need to keep close watch to make sure that our conduct is in harmony with God’s requirements and that our life includes works of godly devotion, reflecting our love for Jehovah. Such deeds include doing our utmost in preaching the good news of the Kingdom before the end comes. Peter also wrote: “The end of all things has drawn close. . . . Be vigilant with a view to prayers.” (1 Pet. 4:7) We draw close to Jehovah and show our love for him by constantly going to him in prayer, asking him to give us guidance by means of his holy spirit and his worldwide congregation.

¹⁶ In these perilous times, we need to adhere closely to the counsel of God’s Word: “Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportune time for yourselves, because the days are wicked.” (Eph. 5:15, 16) Wickedness

15. How should we be affected by knowing that this system’s end is near?

16. Why do we need to adhere closely to God’s counsel?

is now more abundant than in any other time in history. Satan has devised many things to prevent people from doing Jehovah’s will or simply to distract them. As God’s servants, we know this, and we do not want to allow anything to undermine our loyalty to God. We also know what is shortly going to take place, and we put our confidence in Jehovah and his purposes.—*Read 1 John 2:15-17.*

¹⁷ There will come to pass the marvelous promise that God has made to restore the dead to life, for “there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.” (Acts 24:15) Notice how emphatic that promise is: “There is going to be a resurrection”! There is no doubt about it, for Jehovah has given his word! Isaiah 26:19 promises: “Your dead ones will live. . . . Awake and cry out joyfully, you residents in the dust! . . . The earth itself will let even those impotent in death drop in birth.” Those words had an initial fulfillment with the restoration of God’s ancient people to their homeland, giving us confidence in the coming literal fulfillment in the new world. What great joy there will be as resurrected ones are reunited with their loved ones! Yes, the end of Satan’s world is near, and a new world of God’s making is at hand. How vital it is that we remain vigilant!

17. Describe how Armageddon survivors will react when the resurrection takes place.

Do You Recall?

- What was the theme of Jesus’ teaching?
- How widespread is the Kingdom-preaching work now?
- Why is it vital to be vigilant?
- What do you find encouraging about the promise at Acts 24:15?

JEHOVAH DESERVES OUR UNITED PRAISE

"Praise Jah, you people!"—PS. 111:1.

"HALLELUJAH!" That exclamation is commonly heard in Christendom's churches. Some people punctuate daily conversations with the expression. Few, however, know its sacred meaning, and the lifestyle of many who use it dishonors God. (Titus 1:16) "Hallelujah," explains one Bible dictionary, is a "word used by the writers of various psalms to invite all to join them in praising Jehovah." In fact, a number of Bible scholars point out that "Hallelujah" means "'Praise ye Jah,' [that is] Jehovah."

² Understandably, in the *New World Translation*, the expression found at Psalm 111:1 is rendered *"Praise Jah, you people!"* A Greek form of this expression appears four times at Revelation 19:1-6 in celebration of the end of false religion. When that takes place, true worshippers will have special reason to use the expression "Hallelujah" in a respectful way.

His Great Works

³ The composer of Psalm 111 gives many reasons why Jehovah is so deserving of our united praise. Verse 1 says: *"I shall laud Jehovah with all my heart in the intimate group of upright ones and the assembly."* Jehovah's Witnesses today feel the same way. The main purpose of our congregating regularly, both in local congregations and at large conventions, is to praise Jehovah.

1. 2. What does "Hallelujah" mean, and how is it used in the Christian Greek Scriptures?
3. What is the main purpose of our congregating regularly?

⁴ *"The works of Jehovah are great, searched for on the part of all those delighting in them."* (Ps. 111:2) Notice the expression "searched for." According to one reference work, the verse can apply to humans who make God's works "the objects of earnest and devout meditation and study." Jehovah's creations abound with wonderful purpose. He set sun, earth, and moon in place, all in proper relation one to another, so that our earth is provided with warmth and light, night and day, the seasons and the tides.

⁵ Scientists have discovered a great deal about earth's position in our solar system as well as the perfect orbit, size, and mass of our large moon. The arrangement and interrelationship of these heavenly bodies makes

4. How can humans search for Jehovah's works?
5. What have advances in man's understanding of the universe revealed?

Our main purpose in congregating regularly is to praise Jehovah



possible the beautiful and regular change of seasons. Also, much has been learned about the fine-tuning of natural forces in the universe. Thus, in an article entitled "The Designed 'Just So' Universe," a professor of mechanical engineering observed: "It is quite easy to understand why so many scientists have changed their minds in the past 30 years, agreeing that it takes a great deal of faith to believe the universe can be explained as nothing more than a fortuitous cosmic accident. Evidence for an intelligent designer becomes more compelling the more we understand about our carefully crafted habitat."

⁶ Another great expression of creation is the way that God made us. (Ps. 139:14) When making humans, he gave them a mind, a body with a full set of necessary organs, and the ability and capacity to do work. There is, for example, the miracle involved in the God-given abilities of speaking and listening, as well as those of writing and reading. Many people have those abilities. You also have a wondrous masterpiece of construction—the upright human frame. Why, the design and balance of your body, its mechanical functions and its chemistry, inspire awe. Beyond that, the amazing nerve connections that enable your mind and your senses to function find no parallel in what scientists have achieved. In fact, human achievements are possible only because of the mind and senses with which mankind is endowed. Even the most trained and capable engineer could not have manufactured anything as beautiful and useful as the ten marvelously designed levers—your fingers and thumbs. Ask yourself, 'Could impressive works of art and construction have been made without the skillful use of God-given fingers?'

6. How do you feel about the way that God made man?

God's Great Works and His Qualities

⁷ Jehovah's great works include other wonderful things he has done for mankind, as described in the Bible. That book itself is a harmonious masterpiece. Unlike any other book, it is indeed "inspired of God and beneficial for teaching." (2 Tim. 3:16) For instance, the first book of the Bible, Genesis, explains how God cleansed the earth of wickedness in the days of Noah. The second book, Exodus, shows how Jehovah vindicated his Godship by delivering Israel from Egyptian slavery. The psalmist likely had such events in mind when he was moved to say: "[Jehovah's] activity is dignity and splendor themselves, and his righteousness is standing forever. A memorial he has made for his wonderful works. Jehovah is gracious and merciful." (Ps. 111:3, 4) Do you not agree that Jehovah's activity throughout history, including things done during your lifetime, is a memorial to his "dignity and splendor"?

⁸ Notice that the psalmist also stresses Jehovah's beautiful qualities, such as righteousness, graciousness, and mercy. You know that the works of sinful mankind are seldom based on righteousness. Often they are an expression of greed, envy, and haughtiness. That is evident from the fiendish weapons men produce for the wars they foment and for economic gain. These bring untold misery and horror to millions of innocent victims. Also, many human works have been accomplished at the expense of the oppressed poor. An example that many might cite is the use of slaves to build the pyramids. Those mainly served as burial places for the proud Pharaohs. Moreover, many of mankind's present-day works not only

7. Why should we view the Bible as one of God's great works?

8, 9. (a) In what ways do God's works contrast with many human works? (b) What are some of God's qualities that you appreciate?

are oppressive but are “ruining the earth.”
—Read Revelation 11:18.

⁹ How different it is with Jehovah’s works, which are always based on what is right! His works include the merciful provision for the salvation of sinful mankind. In providing the ransom, God was ‘exhibiting his own righteousness.’ (Rom. 3:25, 26) Indeed, “his righteousness is standing forever!” As for graciousness, that has been manifested in the patient manner in which God has dealt with sinful humans. At times, he even used the expression “please” when pleading with them to turn back from their hurtful ways and do what was right.—Read Ezekiel 18:25.

Faithful to His Promises

¹⁰ “Food he has given to those fearing him. To time indefinite he will remember his covenant.” (Ps. 111:5) It seems that the psalmist here referred to the Abrahamic covenant. Jehovah promised to bless Abraham’s seed and said that they would take possession of the gate of their enemies. (Gen. 22:17, 18; Ps. 105:8, 9) In the initial outworking of those promises, Abraham’s seed became the nation of Israel. That nation was long enslaved in Egypt, but then “God remembered his covenant with Abraham” and delivered them. (Ex. 2:24) Jehovah’s subsequent dealings with them show just how generous he is. He provided food for their bodies and spiritual food for their minds and hearts. (Deut. 6:1-3; 8:4; Neh. 9:21) In the centuries that followed, the nation often turned away from God, though he sent prophets to urge them to return. More than 1,500 years after he delivered the Israelites from Egypt, God sent his only-begotten Son to earth. The majority of the Jews rejected Jesus and allowed him to be executed. Then Jehovah formed a new nation, a spiritual one, “the Israel of God.” Along

10. What example of faithfulness did Jehovah set regarding his covenant with Abraham?

with Christ, that nation makes up the spiritual seed of Abraham, which Jehovah foretold he would use to bless mankind.—Gal. 3:16, 29; 6:16.

¹¹ Jehovah continues to “remember his covenant” and the blessings promised through it. Today, he is providing an abundant supply of spiritual food in over 400 languages. Also, he continues to respond to prayers about our physical needs, in line with the words: “Give us our bread for the day according to the day’s requirement.” —Luke 11:3; Ps. 72:16, 17; Isa. 25:6-8.

Jehovah’s Awesome Power

¹² “The power of his works he has told to his people, in giving them the inheritance of the nations.” (Ps. 111:6) One outstanding event in Israel’s history that the psalmist may have had in mind was their miraculous deliverance from Egypt. When Jehovah finally allowed the Israelites to enter the Promised Land, they were able to conquer kingdoms on the east and west sides of the Jordan River. (Read Nehemiah 9:22-25.) Yes, Jehovah gave Israel “the inheritance of the nations.” What a display of God’s power!

¹³ We are well-aware, though, that despite all Jehovah did in their behalf, Israel did not show respect for him nor for their ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. They kept rebelling until God used Babylon to remove them, taking them into exile. (2 Chron. 36:15-17; Neh. 9:28-30) If, as some Bible scholars suggest, the composer of Psalm 111 lived after Israel returned from exile in Babylon, he had further reason to praise Jehovah for His loyalty.

11. How does Jehovah continue to “remember his covenant” with Abraham?

12. In what way was ancient Israel given “the inheritance of the nations”?

13, 14. (a) What display of God’s power in connection with Babylon might the psalmist have had in mind? (b) What further great acts of deliverance has Jehovah accomplished?

alty and power. God showed such by delivering the Jews from Babylon—an empire that had a policy of not releasing captives.—Isa. 14:4, 17.

¹⁴ Some five centuries later, Jehovah used his power in an even greater way by delivering repentant humans from slavery to sin and death. (Rom. 5:12) One result was that the way was opened for 144,000 humans to become spirit-anointed followers of Christ. In 1919, Jehovah used his power to deliver a small remnant of these anointed ones from captivity to false religion. Their accomplishments during this time of the end can only be attributed to God's power. Upon proving faithful to death, they will share with Jesus Christ in ruling from heaven over the earth for the benefit of repentant humans. (Rev. 2:26, 27; 5:9, 10) They will inherit the earth in a far grander way than did ancient Israel. —Matt. 5:5.

*All of Jehovah's laws
are based on eternal,
trustworthy principles*

Everlasting, Trustworthy Principles

¹⁵ *"The works of his hands are truth and judgment; trustworthy are all the orders he gives, well supported forever, to time indefinite, done in truth and uprightness."* (Ps. 111:7, 8) Included among "the works of [Jehovah's] hands" were two tablets of stone on which were engraved ten important laws for Israel. (Ex. 31:18) These laws, together with all the other regulations that became part of the Mosaic Law covenant, are based on eternal, trustworthy principles.

¹⁶ For example, one of the orders, or laws, on those tablets said: "I Jehovah your God am a God exacting exclusive devotion." It further states that Jehovah exercises "loving-kindness toward the thousandth generation in the case of those who love [him] and keep [his] commandments." The tablets of stone also contained such timeless principles as "honor your father and your mother" and "you must not steal," as well as the profoundly insightful law against coveting what belongs to others.—Ex. 20:5, 6, 12, 15, 17.

Our Holy, Fear-Inspiring Redeemer

¹⁷ *"He has sent redemption itself to his people. To time indefinite he has commanded his covenant. His name is holy and fear-inspiring."*

15, 16. (a) What are included among the works of God's hands? (b) What orders did God give to ancient Israel?

17. What reasons did the Israelites have for treating God's name as holy?

Questions for Meditation

- Why does Jehovah deserve our united praise?
- What qualities of Jehovah are revealed in his works?
- How do you view the privilege of bearing God's name?

(Ps. 111:9) Again, the psalmist may have had in mind Jehovah's loyalty to his covenant promise to Abraham. In line with that, Jehovah did not abandon his people first as slaves in ancient Egypt and later as captives in Babylon. In both cases, God redeemed his people. Even if only for those two accomplishments, Israel should have treated God's name as holy.—Read Exodus 20:7; Romans 2:23, 24.

¹⁸ The same is true of Christians today, who have been redeemed from hopeless slavery to sin and death. We should do our very best to live in harmony with the first request in the model prayer: "Let your name be sanc-

18. Why do you feel that bearing God's name is a privilege?

tified." (Matt. 6:9) Meditating on that illustrious name should instill in us godly fear. The writer of Psalm 111 had the correct view of godly fear, stating: "*The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom. All those doing them [keeping his commandments] have a good insight.*"—Ps. 111:10.

¹⁹ A wholesome fear of God will help us to hate what is bad. It will also help us to imitate God's beautiful qualities as shown in Psalm 112, which we will consider in the next article. That psalm shows how we can qualify to be among the millions who will enjoy praising God forever. He deserves nothing less. "*His praise is standing forever.*"—Ps. 111:10.

19. What will we consider in the next article?

RIGHTEOUS ONES WILL PRAISE GOD FOREVER

"The righteous one will prove to be for remembrance . . . His righteousness is standing forever."—PS. 112:6, 9.

WHAT a marvelous future awaits all humans whom God views as righteous! Forever they will delight to learn more about Jehovah's beautiful qualities. Their hearts overflow with praise as they learn ever more about God's creative works. Central to such a glorious future is "righteousness," which is emphasized in Psalm 112. But how can the holy and righteous God, Jehovah, view sinful humans as righteous? No matter how hard we try to do what is right, we make mistakes, sometimes serious ones.—Rom. 3:23; Jas. 3:2.

1. (a) What happy future awaits all whom God views as righteous? (b) What question is raised?

² Lovingly, Jehovah provided a perfect solution. How so? First, by performing the miracle of transferring the life of his beloved heavenly Son to the womb of a virgin so that he could be born as a perfect human. (Luke 1:30-35) Then, after Jesus' enemies put him to death, Jehovah performed another outstanding miracle. God raised Jesus back to life as a glorious spirit creature.—1 Pet. 3:18.

³ Jehovah rewarded Jesus with something

2. What are two miracles Jehovah performed out of love?

3. Why was God pleased to reward his Son with heavenly life?

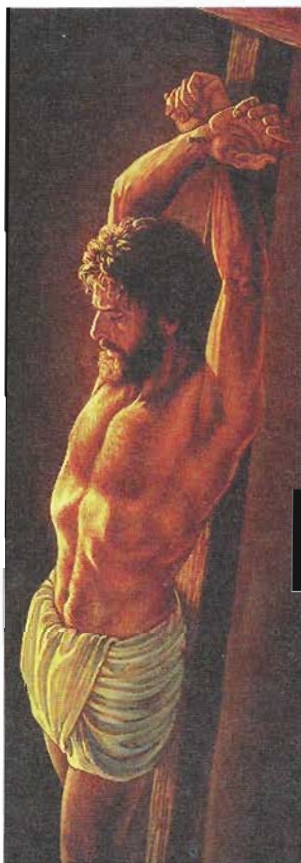
that his Son did not have in his prehuman existence—in destructible life in heaven. (Heb. 7:15-17, 28) Jehovah was pleased to do this because Jesus had kept perfect integrity under severe tests. Jesus thereby provided his Father with the best, yes the complete, answer to Satan's lie that humans serve God with selfish motives and not out of unbreakable love. —Prov. 27:11.

⁴ In heaven, Jesus did more. He 'appeared before the person of God for us' with the value of "his own blood." Our loving heavenly Father graciously accepted Jesus' precious offering as "a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins." Therefore, with 'cleansed consciences,' we can render "sacred service to the living God." What a reason to echo the opening words of Psalm 112, "Praise Jah, you people!"—Heb. 9:12-14, 24; 1 John 2:2.

⁵ For us to maintain a righteous standing with God, we must keep on exercising faith in Jesus' shed blood. Not a day should pass by without our thanking Jehovah for loving us so much. (John 3:16) We also need to keep studying God's Word and doing our best to live in harmony with its message. Psalm 112 contains fine advice for all who want to maintain a clean conscience before God.

4. (a) Upon his return to heaven, what did Jesus do for us, and how did Jehovah respond? (b) How do you feel about what Jehovah and Jesus have done for you?

5. (a) What must we do to maintain a righteous standing with God? (b) In what ways are Psalm 111 and Psalm 112 arranged?



To keep a righteous standing with God, we must exercise faith in Jesus' shed blood

This psalm complements Psalm 111. Both open with the exclamation "Praise Jah, you people!" or "Hallelujah!" and are followed by 22 lines, each line beginning with one of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet.*

A Basis for Happiness

⁶ "Happy is the man in fear of Jehovah, in whose commandments he has taken very much delight. Mighty in the earth his offspring will become. As for the generation of the upright ones, it will be blessed." (Ps. 112: 1, 2) Note that the psalmist first mentions an individual "man" and then changes to the plural "upright ones" in the latter part of verse 2. This suggests that Psalm 112 can refer to a composite group made up of many individuals. Interestingly, the apostle Paul was inspired to apply Psalm 112:9 in connection with Christians in the first century. (Read 2 Corinthians 9:8, 9.) How well this psalm depicts how Christ's fol-

lowers on earth today can be happy!

⁷ As indicated at Psalm 112:1, these true Christians experience great happiness as they walk "in fear of Jehovah."

* The complementary nature of these two psalms is seen in their structure as well as in their content. God's qualities extolled in Psalm 111 are imitated by the God-fearing "man" of Psalm 112, as can be seen by comparing Psalm 111:3, 4 with Psalm 112:3, 4.

6. How is the God-fearing "man" described in Psalm 112 blessed?

7. Why do God's servants need to have a wholesome fear of him, and how should you feel about God's commandments?

This wholesome fear of displeasing him helps them to resist the spirit of Satan's world. They take "very much delight" in studying God's Word and in obeying his commandments. That includes the command to preach the good news of the Kingdom throughout the earth. They strive to make disciples of people of all nations while warning the wicked of the coming of God's day of judgment.—Ezek. 3:17, 18; Matt. 28:19, 20.

⁸ Because of obeying such commands, God's servants on earth today now number some seven million. Who can deny that his people have become "mighty in the earth"? (John 10:16; Rev. 7:9, 14) And how "blessed" they will yet be as God carries out his purpose! As a group, those with an earthly hope will be preserved through the coming "great

8. (a) How have God's devoted people today been rewarded for their zeal? (b) What future blessings await those with an earthly hope?

tribulation" to form "a new earth" in which "righteousness is to dwell." In time, Armageddon survivors "will be blessed" even more. They will be on hand to welcome back millions of resurrected ones. What a thrilling prospect! Eventually, those who take "very much delight" in God's commandments will grow to human perfection and enjoy forever "the glorious freedom of the children of God."—2 Pet. 3:13; Rom. 8:21.

Wise Use of Riches

⁹ "Valuable things and riches are in his house; and his righteousness is standing forever. He has flashed up in the darkness as a light to the upright ones. He is gracious and merciful and righteous." (Ps. 112:3, 4) In Bible times, some of God's servants were noted for their material riches. And in another sense,

9, 10. How have true Christians used their spiritual riches, and how will their righteousness stand forever?

Contributions willingly given can help with relief work and the spread of Bible publications



those whom God approves truly become rich, even if that is not in a material sense. The fact is, in the main, those choosing to humble themselves before God may be poor and looked down upon, as was true in Jesus' day. (Luke 4:18; 7:22; John 7:49) But whether one has much or little materially, it is possible to be spiritually rich.—Matt. 6:20; 1 Tim. 6:18, 19; read James 2:5.

¹⁰ Anointed Christians, along with their companions, do not keep their spiritual riches to themselves. Rather, they have "flashed up" in Satan's dark world "as a light to the upright ones." They do so by helping others to benefit from the spiritual treasures of wisdom and knowledge of God. Opposers have tried to put a stop to the Kingdom-preaching work but have failed. Instead, the fruitage of this righteous work will 'stand forever.' By enduring in a course of righteousness, God's servants can have the assurance of living permanently, "standing forever."

¹¹ God's people, both the anointed slave class and those making up the "great crowd," have proved to be generous regarding material things. Psalm 112:9 states: "*He has distributed widely; he has given to the poor ones.*" True Christians today often make material contributions to fellow Christians and even to neighbors who are in need. They also use material resources to support relief campaigns in times of disasters. As Jesus indicated would be so, that is a source of happiness too.—Read Acts 20:35; 2 Corinthians 9:7.

¹² In addition, think of the expenditure to publish this magazine in 172 languages, many of which are spoken by people who are relatively poor. Consider, too, the fact that this journal is made available in various sign languages used by the deaf, as well as in Braille for the blind.

11, 12. What are some ways that God's people use the material things they have?

Gracious and Just

¹³ "*The man is good who is gracious and is lending.*" (Ps. 112:5) You have no doubt observed that people who give help to others are not always gracious. Some give in a patronizing or begrudging way. It is not pleasant to receive help from one who makes you feel inferior or who makes you feel that you are a nuisance or a burden. By contrast, how refreshing it is to receive help from someone who is gracious. Jehovah is the outstanding example of a gracious, happy Giver. (1 Tim. 1:11; Jas. 1:5, 17) Jesus Christ perfectly reflected his Father's gracious example. (Mark 1:40-42) Thus, to be viewed by God as righteous, we give cheerfully and graciously, especially in field service when offering spiritual help to our neighbors.

¹⁴ "*He sustains his affairs with justice.*" (Ps. 112:5) As foretold, the faithful steward class cares for the Master's interests in harmony with Jehovah's justice. (Read Luke 12:42-44.) This is reflected in the Scriptural guidance given to elders, who sometimes have to handle cases of gross sin in the congregation. The just way of dealing with matters is evident also in the Bible-based direction the slave class provides on how all congregations, missionary homes, and Bethel homes should function. Justice is required not only of elders but also of other Christians in their dealings with one another and with unbelievers, including in business matters.—Read Micah 6:8, 11.

Blessings for the Righteous

¹⁵ "*For at no time will he be made to totter. The righteous one will prove to be for*

13. Who set the best examples of gracious giving, and how can we imitate their example?

14. What are some ways in which we can 'sustain our affairs with justice'?

15, 16. (a) What effect does the world's bad news have on righteous ones? (b) What are God's servants determined to keep on doing?

remembrance to time indefinite. He will not be afraid even of bad news. His heart is steadfast, made reliant upon Jehovah. His heart is unshakable; he will not be afraid, until he looks on his adversaries." (Ps. 112:6-8) Never before in history has there been so much bad news, including such things as wars, terrorism, new diseases and resurging old ones, crime, poverty, and ruinous pollution. Those whom God views as righteous cannot escape the effects of this bad news, but it does not paralyze them with fear. Instead, their hearts are "steadfast" and "unshakable" as they look to the future with confidence, knowing that God's righteous new world is near. If disaster does strike, they are better able to cope with the situation because they rely on Jehovah for support. He never allows his righteous ones "to totter"—he gives help and strength to endure.—Phil. 4:13.

¹⁶ God's righteous ones also have to put up with the hatred and lies spread by opposers, but this has failed to silence true Christians and will continue to fail. Rather, God's servants continue steadfast and unmovable in the work Jehovah has given them—to preach the good news of the Kingdom and to make disciples of all who respond. No doubt, the righteous will experience increased opposition as the end draws closer. Such hatred will reach a climax in the worldwide attack of Satan the Devil in his role as Gog of Magog. Then, at last, we will 'look on our adversaries' as they go down in humiliating defeat. What

an experience it will be to see the complete sanctification of Jehovah's name!—Ezek. 38:18, 22, 23.

"Exalted With Glory"

¹⁷ How enjoyable it will be to praise Jehovah unitedly, without opposition from the Devil and his world! Such enjoyment will be the everlasting lot of all who maintain a righteous standing with God. They will not bow down in disgrace and defeat, for Jehovah also promises that the "horn" of his righteous one "will be exalted with glory." (Ps. 112:9) Jehovah's righteous one will exult victoriously on seeing the downfall of all enemies of Jehovah's sovereignty.

¹⁸ "The wicked one himself will see and certainly become vexed. He will grind his very teeth and actually melt away. The desire of the wicked ones will perish." (Ps. 112:10) All who continue to oppose God's people will soon "melt away" in their envy and hatred. Their desire to see an end to our work will perish with them during the coming "great tribulation."—Matt. 24:21.

¹⁹ Will you be among the happy survivors of that grand victory? Or if it happens that you succumb to sickness or advanced age before the end of Satan's world, will you be among "the righteous" who will be resurrected? (Acts 24:15) The answer can be yes if you continue to exercise faith in Jesus' ransom sacrifice and imitate Jehovah, as do those represented by the righteous "man" described in Psalm 112. (Read Ephesians 5:1, 2.) Jehovah will see to it that the "remembrance" of such ones will never be forgotten, nor will their righteous acts be overlooked. They will be remembered and loved by Jehovah forever and ever.—Ps. 112:3, 6, 9.

17. How will the righteous one "be exalted with glory"?

18. How will the concluding words of Psalm 112 be fulfilled?

19. Of what can we be confident?

Questions for Meditation

- What are some reasons we have to cry out "Hallelujah"?
- What modern-day development makes true Christians so happy?
- What kind of giver does Jehovah love?

How Can You *Endure* in the Ministry?

HAVE you ever felt so drained that you wanted to stop sharing in the preaching work? Strong opposition, anxiety, poor health, peer pressure, or a lack of tangible results might test our endurance. Think, though, of the example of Jesus. He endured the severest of tests “for the joy that was set before him.” (Heb. 12:2) He knew that by proving that accusations made against God were totally unfounded, he was making Jehovah’s heart rejoice.—Prov. 27:11.

By enduring in the ministry, you too can make Jehovah’s heart rejoice. However, what if some obstacles seem to sap you of spiritual energy? Krystyna, who is advanced in years and is in poor health, admits: “It is not unusual for me to feel tired and despondent. My age-related problems, such as poor health and anxieties about daily life, can temporarily dampen my zeal.” How can you persevere in the ministry despite such obstacles?

Imitate the Prophets

To persevere in the preaching work, faithful Kingdom publishers can strive to have a mental attitude like that of the ancient prophets. Take, for example, Jeremiah. When called to serve as a prophet, he was at first reluctant. Yet, Jeremiah was able to endure in his difficult assignment for over 40 years because he learned to put implicit trust in God.—Jer. 1:6; 20:7-11.

Henryk draws encouragement from Jeremiah’s example. He says: “During my more than 70 years in the ministry, I have sometimes been discouraged by the reactions of people—their hostility or their indifference. At such times, I remind myself of the exam-

ple of Jeremiah. His love for Jehovah and his strong spirituality empowered him to continue prophesying.” (Jer. 1:17) Rafał too has been inspired by Jeremiah’s example. He says: “Rather than focusing on himself and his own feelings, Jeremiah relied on God. He carried on undaunted despite widespread animosity. I try to bear that in mind.”

Another prophet whose example helps many to endure in the ministry is Isaiah. God told him that his fellow countrymen would not listen to him. “Make the heart of this people unreceptive, and make their very ears unresponsive,” said Jehovah. Was Isaiah doomed to failure? Not from God’s point of view! When he was commissioned as a prophet, he said: “Here I am! Send me.” (Isa. 6:8-10) Isaiah stuck to his commission. Is that how you respond to the command to preach?

To persevere in the ministry despite an unresponsive audience, as Isaiah did, we need to avoid focusing on the negative reactions that we experience. Rafał deals with discouragement in this way: “I try to avoid dwelling on unkind remarks. People in my territory have the right to respond any way they want to.” Anna adds: “I do not allow my thoughts to linger on anything unpleasant or discouraging. What enables me to do that is prayer and a consideration of the day’s text before I go out in the field service. Any negative thoughts quickly dissipate.”

The prophet Ezekiel served among the stubborn Jewish exiles in Babylon. (Ezek. 2:6) Had the prophet withheld God’s words from the people and had someone wicked died without hearing the warning, Ezekiel

would have been personally accountable. Jehovah told Ezekiel: "His blood I shall ask back from your own hand."—Ezek. 3:17, 18.

Henryk tries to have an outlook like that of Ezekiel: "I want to be clean from the blood of all men. Precious human lives are at stake." (Acts 20:26, 27) Zbigniew shares the sentiment: "Ezekiel had to press on regardless of what others thought. This helps me to see the preaching work from the Creator's point of view."

You Are Not Alone

You are not alone when you engage in the preaching work. Just like the apostle Paul, we can say: "We are God's fellow workers." (1 Cor. 3:9) Krystyna, who admits that she occasionally becomes despondent, says: "That is why I keep begging Jehovah for strength. He never lets me down." Yes, we need God's spirit to support us in our ministry!—Zech. 4:6.

When we share in the field service, holy spirit also helps us to display the qualities that constitute "the fruitage of the spirit." (Gal. 5:22, 23) That, in turn, helps us to persevere in the preaching work, come what may. Henryk observes: "Engaging in the field service helps me to work on my personality. I learn to be patient and considerate and not to give up easily." Enduring in the ministry despite various obstacles can help you to cultivate the fruitage of the spirit even more abundantly.

In directing this unique work, Jehovah uses his angels. (Rev. 14:6) The Bible reveals that there are "myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands" of such spirit creatures. (Rev. 5:11) Under the direction of Jesus, the angels support God's servants on the earth. Do you keep that in mind whenever you are in service?

"Meditating on the fact that the angels are with us in the ministry is a source of encour-

agement to me," says Anna. "I value the help they provide under the oversight of Jehovah and Jesus." What a privilege it is to be able to work with the faithful angels!

How about fellow Kingdom publishers? We have been blessed to become acquainted with a large crowd of faithful Witnesses. No doubt you have experienced the truthfulness of the Bible proverb: "By iron, iron itself is sharpened. So one man sharpens the face of another."—Prov. 27:17.

Working together with others in the ministry provides us with a wonderful opportunity to observe effective methods that may be new to us. Says Elżbieta, "Working with different publishers provides me with opportunities to show love both to my fellow believers and to the people we meet." Try to share in the ministry with different publishers. It will make your ministry interesting.

Take Good Care of Yourself

To maintain our enthusiasm in the ministry, we must plan well, have a good routine of personal study, and get sufficient rest. In other words, we have to take care of ourselves both spiritually and physically.

The Bible says: "The plans of the diligent one surely make for advantage." (Prov. 21:5) Zygmunt, now 88 years old, says: "Being systematic in my service helps me to keep it purposeful. I organize my time carefully so as to have enough time for witnessing."

Thorough knowledge of the Scriptures strengthens and equips us for the ministry. Just as we need to take in physical food to keep on going, we must feed regularly on spiritual food to keep sharing in the preaching work. Feeding on God's Word daily and taking in "food at the proper time" can energize us for the ministry.—Matt. 24:45-47.

Elżbieta made fundamental changes in her lifestyle so as to improve in her ministry. She says: "I have significantly reduced the

amount of time I spend watching television so that I have more time to prepare for the ministry. When I read the Bible each evening, I think about the people I met in the territory. I look for scriptures and articles that might help them."

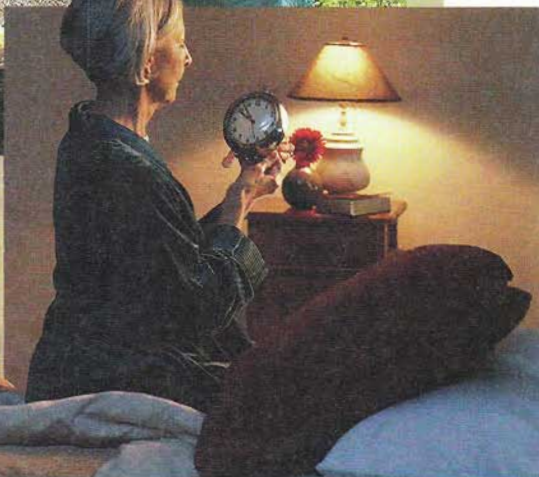
Getting proper rest will help you to keep your energy level high and can enable you to have a full share in the ministry. Conversely, an excessive amount of recreation can have a negative impact on the quality of your work. Andrzej, a zealous publisher, notes: "Lack of rest leads to being overtired, and from there it is just a small step to discouragement. I do everything I can to avoid that."—Eccl. 4:6.

Despite our earnest efforts, relatively few people come to appreciate the good news. Jehovah, however, will never forget our work.

(Heb. 6:10) Even if many do not want to talk to us, they may speak about our visit after we have left their door. The effect can be somewhat like what we read concerning Ezekiel: People will "certainly know . . . that a prophet himself happened to be in the midst of them." (Ezek. 2:5) To be sure, our ministry is not easy, but we derive tangible benefits from it and the people who listen will too.

"Sharing in the ministry helps us to put on the new personality and to show love for God and our neighbors," notes Zygmunt. "It is a privilege to take part in this lifesaving work. It will never be repeated on this scale or under these same conditions," adds Andrzej. You too can reap abundant blessings from persevering in the ministry today. —2 Cor. 4:1, 2.

Caring for our spiritual and physical needs helps us endure in the ministry



Questions From Readers

The Scriptures mention “the book of Jashar” and “the book of the Wars of Jehovah.” (Josh. 10:13; Num. 21:14) Those two books do not appear in the Bible canon. Were these inspired writings that have been lost?

There is no reason to conclude that those two books were produced under inspiration and later lost. Inspired Bible writers referred to quite a few other writings. Some of those may indeed be parts of the Bible that simply were described in terms unfamiliar to modern readers. For example, 1 Chronicles 29:29 mentions “the words of Samuel the seer,” “the words of Nathan the prophet,” and “the words of Gad the visionary.” Those three could constitute a collective reference to books we know as 1 and 2 Samuel, or perhaps the book of Judges.

On the other hand, certain references may be to books that have names similar to books of the Bible but that are not actually part of the Bible. We might illustrate this with four ancient books: “the book of the affairs of the times of the kings of Judah,” “the Book of the Kings of Judah and of Israel,” “the Book of the Kings of Israel,” and “the Book of the Kings of Israel and of Judah.” While those names may sound similar to the names of the Bible books we know as 1 Kings and 2 Kings, the four books were not inspired, nor do those books find a place in the Bible canon. (1 Ki. 14:29; 2 Chron. 16:11; 20:34; 27:7) They were likely just historical writings available back in the period when the prophet Jeremiah and Ezra wrote the accounts that we have in the Bible.

Yes, some Bible writers did refer to or consult *existing* but *uninspired* histories or documents. Esther 10:2 refers to “the Book of the affairs of the times of the kings of Media and

Persia.” Similarly, to prepare his Gospel account, Luke “traced all things from the start with accuracy.” He probably meant that he consulted written sources available to him as he compiled the list of Jesus’ genealogy that we can read in his Gospel. (Luke 1:3; 3:23-38) While the records Luke consulted were not inspired, his resulting Gospel certainly was. And that Gospel remains valuable for us.

As for the two books mentioned in the question—“the book of Jashar” and “the book of the Wars of Jehovah”—they seem to have been existing documents that were not inspired. Because of that, Jehovah did not see to their preservation. The Biblical references to those two books lead scholars to conclude that the two were collections of poetry or songs dealing with conflicts between Israel and its foes. (2 Sam. 1:17-27) One Bible encyclopedia suggests that the contents of those books may have been “the familiar oral repertoire of professional singers in ancient Israel who preserved Israel’s epic and lyric traditions.” Even some men whom God at times used as prophets or visionaries made records that Jehovah did not inspire or choose to have incorporated in the Scriptures, which are “beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight” in our day.—2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Chron. 9:29; 12:15; 13:22.

The fact that certain books were mentioned in the Bible and that they were usable sources should not lead us to conclude that they were inspired. However, Jehovah God has preserved all the writings containing “the word of our God,” and these “will last to time indefinite.” (Isa. 40:8) Yes, what Jehovah chose to include in the 66 Bible books that we have is just what we need to “be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work.” —2 Tim. 3:16, 17.