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STUDY EDITION

STUDY ARTICLES FOR THE WEEKS OF:

September 26–October 2

They Waited for the Messiah

PAGE 8 SONGS TO BE USED: 116, 30

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They Found the Messiah!

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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 8-16 ▲

The Hebrew Scriptures contain scores of Messianic prophecies. Examining some of them will enable you to identify the promised Messiah. The information in these articles should prove useful to you as you engage in the ministry. The material will also undoubtedly strengthen your faith in Jehovah's prophetic word.

STUDY ARTICLES 3, 4 PAGES 23-31

The unity enjoyed by Jehovah's Witnesses is unique, and we should never take it for granted. The first article highlights Bible examples that encourage us to be peacemakers. The second article shows how we can pursue peace.

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The Internet Making Wise Use of a Global Tool

THE invention of printing, centuries ago, changed the way in which people communicate with one another. The invention of the Internet in modern times has been compared to that. This practical tool has been called a global tool of communication, and rightly so. As you travel down the “information superhighway,” you can pick up facts, statistics, and opinions on a wide variety of subjects.

The ability to communicate is a wonderful gift from our Creator. It enables us to exchange ideas and share information with others. Jehovah was the first to communicate with his human family, providing clear, unambiguous information on how to lead a meaningful life. (Gen. 1:28-30) As made evident by what happened early in human history, however, the gift of communication can be misused. Satan gave utterly false information to Eve. She accepted what he said and passed it on to Adam, who led humankind into a course of calamity.—Gen. 3:1-6; Rom. 5:12.

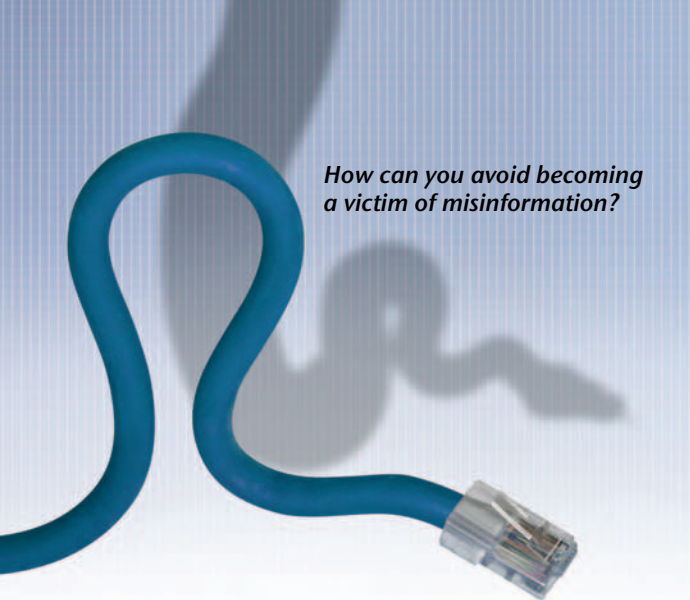
What can be said about using the Internet? While the Internet can provide valuable information, save us time, and serve a useful function, it can also misinform us, consume

an inordinate amount of our time, and corrupt us morally. Let us consider how we can use this global tool to our benefit.

Information—Reliable or False?

Never assume that all information found on the Internet is good and beneficial. Internet search engines might be compared to a legion of mushroom pickers who tirelessly collect all types of mushrooms—edible as well as poisonous—throwing them into a single container and dishing them out for us to eat. Would you start eating these mushrooms without carefully examining each one? Of course not! Internet search engines use a huge number of computers to harvest or select from billions of Web pages containing everything from the very best to the very worst. We need discernment to separate the wheat from the chaff, as it were, lest we poison our minds with misinformation.

In 1993 a well-known magazine had a cartoon showing two dogs in front of a computer. One dog explains to the other: “On the Internet, nobody knows you’re a dog.” Long ago, Satan hid behind a serpent to start a “chat” with Eve and told her that she could



How can you avoid becoming a victim of misinformation?

be like God. Today, anyone with an Internet connection can become a desktop professor, pretending to be in the know, without even revealing his name. And there are no rules on who can publish ideas, information, images, and suggestions.

Do not become an “Internet Eve.” Be critical and suspicious of the information. Before trusting it, ask: (1) Who published this material? What are the author’s credentials? (2) Why was this published? What motivated the writer? Is there any bias? (3) Where did the author get the information? Does he supply sources that can be checked? (4) Is the information current? In the first century, the apostle Paul gave Timothy advice that applies with equal force today. Paul wrote: “Guard what is laid up in trust with you, turning away from the empty speeches that violate what is holy and from the contradictions of the falsely called ‘knowledge.’” —1 Tim. 6:20.

Saves Time or Takes Time?

If used wisely, the Internet can undoubtedly save us time, energy, and funds. We can conveniently buy something without leaving home. Comparing prices may help us

save money. Online banking has made the life of many people easier; financial matters can be handled at any time in the comfort of our home. The Internet provides essential tools to work out a convenient and economical itinerary for a trip we may be planning and helps us make the necessary bookings. With a little effort, we can look up phone numbers, addresses, and various ways to get to our intended destination. Worldwide, branch offices of Jehovah’s Witnesses use many of these services to save time, personnel, and funds.

There is, however, a dark side to be considered. It concerns the amount of time that using the Internet may consume. For some, the Internet has become a fascinating toy instead of a helpful tool. They spend excessive amounts of time playing, shopping, chatting, e-mailing, searching, and surfing. Eventually, they may start to neglect the more important things involving family, friends, and congregation. The Internet can even become addictive. For example, an estimate published in 2010 indicated that 18.4 percent of Korean adolescents were affected by Internet addiction. German researchers stated that “more and more women are complaining about the addiction [of] their partners.” One woman complained that dependence on the Internet has changed her husband dramatically to the point that it has destroyed their marriage.

A branch office of Jehovah’s Witnesses received a letter from an individual who called himself an Internet junkie. He sometimes spent up to ten hours a day on the Internet. After remarking that “at first, it all seemed so innocent,” he added: “In time, my meeting attendance dwindled and I stopped praying.” When he went to the meetings, he was unprepared and his mind was at home longing to “be able to log on again.” Happily, he

realized the seriousness of the problem and took measures to correct it. May we never get to the point that using the Internet has become an addiction for us.

Information—Worthy or Not?

At 1 Thessalonians 5:21, 22, we read: “Make sure of all things; hold fast to what is fine. Abstain from every form of wickedness.” We need to determine whether the information we find on the Internet is worthy of God’s approval, meeting his high standards. It should be morally unobjectionable and appropriate for a Christian. Internet pornography has become especially pervasive, and if we are not careful, it can easily lure us into its trap.

We are wise to ask ourselves, ‘Is what I see on the screen something I would quickly hide from my mate, my parents, or my Christian brothers if they entered the room?’ If the answer is yes, we would do well to use the Internet only when others are present. The Internet has indeed changed the way we communicate and shop. In addition, it has opened up a completely new way to ‘commit adultery in our heart.’—Matt. 5:27, 28.

To Forward or Not to Forward?

Using the Internet includes getting information as well as distributing it. Though we have the freedom to obtain and pass on information, we also have the responsibility to ascertain its truthfulness and morality. Can we vouch for the accuracy of what we write or forward to others? Do we have permission to pass the information on? Is it worthwhile and upbuilding? What are our

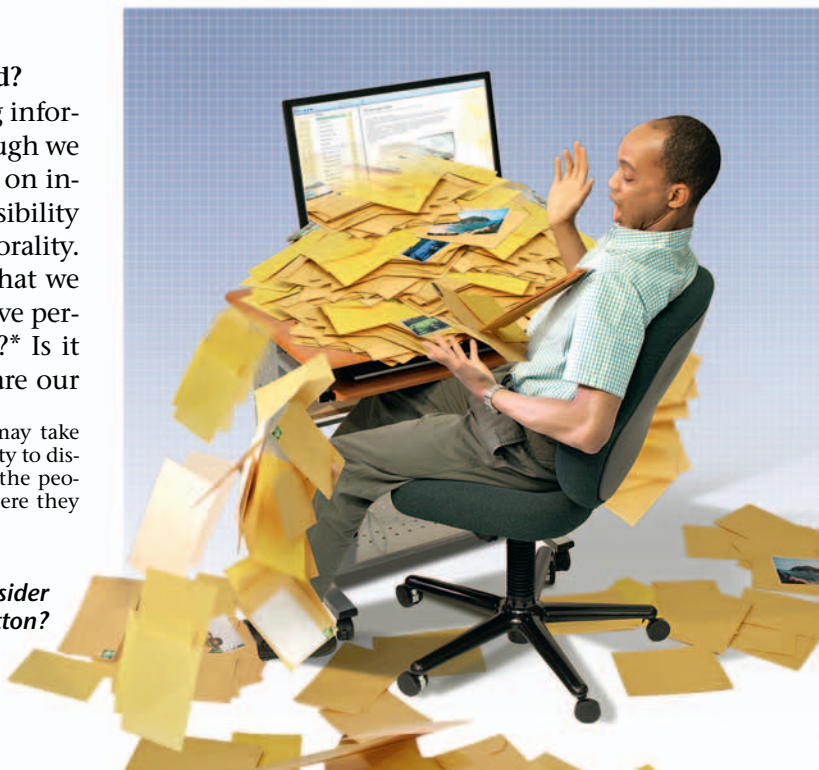
* The same applies to photos. Though we may take pictures for our own use, we may not be at liberty to distribute them, much less supply the names of the people represented in the photos and indicate where they live.

*What should you consider
before hitting the send button?*

motives in making it available? Do we want to do so simply to impress others?

If used properly, e-mail can be a blessing. It can also flood us with information. Are we overloading others by broadcasting the latest news or trivia to long lists of acquaintances, perhaps consuming their valuable time? Should we not examine our motives before we hit the send button? What do we really want to accomplish? People used to write letters to share their own experiences with family and friends, keeping them up-to-date with what was going on in their life. Should this not be the focus of our e-mail? Why pass on to others something we cannot verify?

So, then, what should we do with regard to the Internet? Shun it altogether? That may be necessary in some cases. The Internet junkie mentioned earlier did that in order to overcome years of addiction. On the other hand, using the Internet can benefit us, provided we let ‘thinking ability keep guard over us and discernment safeguard us.’—Prov. 2:10, 11.



Ideas for Family Worship and Personal Study



AT THE beginning of 2009, congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide adjusted their meeting schedule. The two mid-week meetings were combined, and all were encouraged to use the free evening for family worship or personal study. Have you been taking advantage of the new arrangement? Are you benefiting fully from it?

Some have wondered what material they should select for consideration during family worship. It is not the intention of the Governing Body to establish one format for all families. Since circumstances vary, it is appropriate for each family head or individual to evaluate how this weekly occasion can be used in the best way.

Some have been preparing for congregation meetings, but family worship need not be limited to that. Others have been reading, discussing, and even dramatizing Scriptural information, especially for the benefit of younger children. It may not always be necessary or even desirable to use a question-and-answer method, as is done at formal meetings. A relaxed atmosphere is often more conducive to a stimulating discussion and the exchange of ideas. Such an atmosphere promotes creative thinking,

which can make the occasion memorable and enjoyable for all.

One father of three children writes: "What we have been doing is mostly based on the Bible reading. We each read the chapters ahead of time, the children pick some aspect for research, and then they present their findings. Michael [age seven] will often draw a picture or write a paragraph. David and Kaitlyn [ages 13 and 15] might write about a Bible account from the point of view of an observer. For example, when we were reading about Joseph's interpretation of the dreams of Pharaoh's baker and his cupbearer, Kaitlyn wrote a composition from the standpoint of a prisoner watching the scene unfold."—Gen., chap. 40.

Naturally, situations differ. What works for one individual or family may not work for another. The accompanying box presents a number of ideas that may be used during your periods of family worship or personal study. Very likely, you can think of many others.

*For families
with teens:*

- Read and discuss *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*.
- Practice “What if . . . ?” situations. (See *The Watchtower* of May 15, 1996, page 14, paragraphs 17-18.)
- Talk about long-term and short-term goals.
- From time to time, watch and discuss a Bible-based video.
- Consider the *Watchtower* feature “For Young People.”

*For couples
with no children:*

- Discuss chapters 1, 3, 11-16 of the book *The Secret of Family Happiness*.
- Share the results of research on points from Bible reading.
- Prepare for the Congregation Bible Study or the *Watchtower* Study.
- Discuss ways to expand your ministry as a couple.

*For single brothers and
sisters or for those in
religiously divided
households:*

- Study new publications received at district conventions.
- Read current and past *Yearbooks*.
- Do research on questions common in your local territory.
- Prepare presentations for the field ministry.

*For families
with young children:*

- Dramatize Bible scenes.
- Play memory games, such as those on pages 30 and 31 of *Awake!*
- Occasionally, do something imaginative. (See “Studying the Bible—In the Zoo!” in *Awake!* of March 8, 1996, pages 16-19.)
- Consider the *Watchtower* feature “Teach Your Children.”



THEY WAITED FOR THE MESSIAH

*“The people were waiting, and all were reasoning
in their hearts concerning John, whether he were not the Messiah.”*

—LUKE 3:15, THE EMPHATIC DIAGLOTT.

NIGHT has fallen. Shepherds are out-of-doors, keeping watch over their flocks. How startled they are when Jehovah’s angel stands nearby and God’s glory gleams around them! Listen! The angel makes this dramatic proclamation: “Have no fear, for, look! I am declaring to you good news of a great joy that all the people will have, because there was born to you today a Savior,

1. Certain shepherds heard what angelic announcement?

who is Christ the Lord,” the one who would prove to be the Messiah. The shepherds can find this infant lying in a manger in a nearby town. Suddenly, “a multitude of the heavenly army” begin praising Jehovah, saying: “Glory in the heights above to God, and upon earth peace among men of goodwill.” —Luke 2:8-14.

² Of course, the Jewish shepherds know that “Messiah,” or “Christ,” refers to God’s “Anointed One.” (Ex. 29:5-7) But how can they learn more and convince others that the baby mentioned by the angel will be Jehovah’s appointed Messiah? By examining prophecies found in the Hebrew Scriptures and comparing these with the activities and life course of this child.

Why Were People in Expectation?

³ When John the Baptizer came on the scene years later, his words and deeds led some to wonder if the Messiah had arrived. (**Read Luke 3:15.**) It is possible that some correctly understood a Messianic prophecy involving “seventy weeks.” If

2. What does “Messiah” mean, and how can he be identified?

3, 4. How do we understand Daniel 9:24, 25?



so, they could have determined when the Messiah would appear. In part, the prophecy stated: "From the going forth of the word to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Leader, there will be seven weeks, also sixty-two weeks." (Dan. 9:24, 25) Various scholars agree that these are weeks of years. For instance, the *Revised Standard Version* says: "Seventy weeks of years are decreed."

⁴ Today, Jehovah's servants are aware that the 69 weeks, or 483 years, of Daniel 9:25 began in 455 B.C.E. when Persian King Artaxerxes authorized Nehemiah to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. (Neh. 2:1-8) Those weeks ended 483 years later, in 29 C.E., when Jesus of Nazareth was baptized and anointed with holy spirit, thus becoming the Messiah. —Matt. 3:13-17.*

⁵ Let us now consider a few of many other prophecies regarding the Messiah that found fulfillment in Jesus' birth, early life, and ministry. This will undoubtedly strengthen our faith in God's prophetic word. It will also provide clear evidence that Jesus was indeed the long-awaited Messiah.

His Early Life Foretold

⁶ *The Messiah was to be born of Israel's tribe of Judah.* In his deathbed blessing of his sons, the patriarch Jacob foretold: "The scepter will not turn aside from Judah, neither the commander's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to him the obedience of the peoples will belong." (Gen. 49:10) Many Jewish scholars of the past associated those words with the Messi-

* For a detailed discussion of the "seventy weeks," see chapter 11 of the book *Pay Attention to Daniel's Prophecy!*

5. What prophecies will we now consider?

6. Explain how Genesis 49:10 was fulfilled.

ah. Starting with the rule of Judean King David, the scepter (royal sovereignty) and the commander's staff (power to command) resided with the tribe of Judah. "Shiloh" signifies "He Whose It Is; He to Whom It Belongs." The regal line of Judah would end in "Shiloh" as the permanent kingly Heir, for God told Zedekiah, the last Judean king, that rulership would be given to one having the legal right to it. (Ezek. 21:26, 27) After Zedekiah, Jesus was the only descendant of David to whom kingship was promised. Before Jesus' birth, the angel Gabriel told Mary: "Jehovah God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule as king over the house of Jacob forever, and there will be no end of his kingdom." (Luke 1:32, 33) Shiloh must be Jesus Christ, who was a descendant of Judah and David. —Matt. 1:1-3, 6; Luke 3:23, 31-34.

⁷ *The Messiah's birth would take place in Bethlehem.* "You, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, the one too little to get to be among the thousands of Judah," wrote the prophet Micah, "from you there will come out to me the one who is to become ruler in Israel, whose origin is from early times, from the days of time indefinite." (Mic. 5:2) The Messiah was to be born in the Judean town of Bethlehem, evidently once named Ephrathah. Although Jesus' mother, Mary, and his adoptive father, Joseph, lived in Nazareth, a Roman registration decree had taken them to Bethlehem, where Jesus was born in 2 B.C.E. (Matt. 2:1, 5, 6) What a remarkable fulfillment of prophecy!

⁸ *The Messiah would be born of a virgin. (Read Isaiah 7:14.)* The Hebrew word *bethu·lah'* means "virgin," but another

7. Where was the Messiah born, and why is this significant?

8, 9. What was foretold about the Messiah's birth and the events that followed it?

term (*'al-mah'*) appears at Isaiah 7:14. There it was prophesied that “the maiden [*ha-'al-mah'*]” would give birth to a son. The word *'al-mah'* is applied to the maiden Rebekah before her marriage. (Gen. 24:16, 43) Under inspiration, Matthew used the Greek word for “virgin” (*par-the'nos*) when showing that Isaiah 7:14 was fulfilled in connection with the birth of Jesus. The Gospel writers Matthew and Luke state that Mary was a virgin who became pregnant through the operation of God’s spirit.—Matt. 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35.

⁹ *Young children would be killed after the Messiah’s birth.* Something similar happened centuries earlier when Egypt’s Pharaoh decreed that Hebrew male babies be cast into the Nile River. (Ex. 1:22) But especially noteworthy is Jeremiah 31:15, 16, where Rachel is depicted as weeping over her sons who were taken to “the land of the enemy.” Her lamentation was heard in distant Ramah, in the territory of Benjamin, north of Jerusalem. Matthew shows that Jeremiah’s words were fulfilled when King Herod ordered the slaughter of young male children in Bethlehem and its surrounding territory. (***Read Matthew 2:16-18.***) Imagine the grief in that area!

¹⁰ *Like the Israelites, the Messiah would be called out of Egypt.* (Hos. 11:1) Before Herod’s death-dealing decree, an angel directed that Joseph, Mary, and Jesus go to Egypt. There they remained “until the decease of Herod, for that to be fulfilled which was spoken by Jehovah through his prophet [Hosea], saying: ‘Out of Egypt I called my son.’” (Matt. 2:13-15) Of course, Jesus himself could not have orchestrated any of the foretold events associated with his birth and early life.

10. Explain how Hosea 11:1 was fulfilled in Jesus.

The Messiah Goes Into Action!

¹¹ *The way was to be prepared before God’s Anointed One.* Malachi foretold that “Elijah the prophet” would do this work, preparing the hearts of the people for the coming of the Messiah. (***Read Malachi 4:5, 6.***) Jesus himself identified this “Elijah” as John the Baptizer. (Matt. 11:12-14) And Mark pointed out that the ministry of John fulfilled the prophetic words of Isaiah. (Isa. 40:3; Mark 1:1-4) Jesus did not arrange for John to do an Elijahlike work as His forerunner. The activity of this foretold “Elijah” was done in harmony with God’s will as a means of identifying the Messiah.

¹² *A God-given commission helps to identify the Messiah.* In the synagogue at Nazareth, the town where he had been reared, Jesus read from the scroll of Isaiah and applied to himself the words: “Jehovah’s spirit is upon me, because he anointed me to declare good news to the poor, he sent me forth to preach a release to the captives and a recovery of sight to the blind, to send the crushed ones away with a release, to preach Jehovah’s acceptable year.” Because he truly was the Messiah, Jesus could rightly say: “Today this scripture that you just heard is fulfilled.” —Luke 4:16-21.

¹³ *The Messiah’s public ministry in Galilee was foretold.* Concerning “the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali . . . Galilee of the nations,” Isaiah wrote: “The people that were walking in the darkness have seen a great light. As for those dwelling in the land of deep shadow, light itself has shone upon them.” (Isa. 9:1, 2) Jesus began his public

11. How was the way prepared before Jehovah’s Anointed One?

12. What commission helps to identify the Messiah?

13. How was Jesus’ public ministry in Galilee foretold?

ministry in Galilee, residing at Capernaum, where many residents of Zebulun and Naphtali enjoyed the benefits of the spiritual light he brought them. (Matt. 4:12-16) In Galilee, Jesus gave his thought-provoking Sermon on the Mount, chose his apostles, performed his first miracle, and likely appeared to some 500 disciples after his resurrection. (Matt. 5:1-7:27; 28:16-20; Mark 3:13, 14; John 2:8-11; 1 Cor. 15:6) He thus fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy by preaching in "the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali." Of course, Jesus went on to preach the Kingdom message elsewhere in Israel.

The Messiah's Other Activities Foretold

¹⁴ *The Messiah would speak in parables, or illustrations.* The psalmist Asaph sang: "In a proverbial saying I will open my mouth." (Ps. 78:2) How do we know that this prophetically applied to Jesus? Matthew tells us so. After relating illustrations in which Jesus likened the Kingdom to a developing mustard grain and to leaven, Matthew states: "Without an illustration [Jesus] would not speak to them; that there might be fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet who said: 'I will open my mouth with illustrations, I will publish things hidden since the founding.'" (Matt. 13:31-35) Proverbial sayings, or parables, were among Jesus' effective means of teaching.

¹⁵ *Our infirmities were to be borne by the Messiah.* Isaiah foretold: "Truly our sicknesses were what he himself carried; and as for our pains, he bore them." (Isa. 53:4) Matthew pointed out that after curing Peter's mother-in-law, Jesus healed others so that "there might be fulfilled what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying: 'He him-

self took our sicknesses and carried our diseases.'" (Matt. 8:14-17) And this is but one of many recorded instances when Jesus cured the ailing.

¹⁶ *Despite all the good done by the Messiah, many people would not believe in him. (Read Isaiah 53:1.)* Showing that this prophecy was fulfilled, the apostle John wrote: "Although [Jesus] had performed so many signs before them, they were not putting faith in him, so that the word of Isaiah the prophet was fulfilled which he said: 'Jehovah, who has put faith in the thing heard by us? And as for the arm of Jehovah, to whom has it been revealed?'" (John 12:37, 38) Also, few put faith in the good news about Jesus, the Messiah, during the ministry of the apostle Paul.—Rom. 10:16, 17.

¹⁷ *The Messiah would be hated without cause.* (Ps. 69:4) The apostle John quotes Jesus as saying: "If I had not done among [the people] the works that no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have both seen and hated me as well as my Father. But it is that the word written in their Law may be fulfilled, 'They hated me without cause.'" (John 15:24, 25) Often the "Law" means the whole body of Scripture. (John 10:34; 12:34) The Gospel accounts prove that Jesus was hated, especially by the Jewish religious leaders. Moreover, Christ said: "The world has no reason to hate you, but it hates me, because I bear witness concerning it that its works are wicked."—John 7:7.

¹⁸ Jesus' first-century followers were certain that Jesus was the Messiah, for he did indeed fulfill the Messianic prophecies found in the Hebrew Scriptures. (Matt. 16:

14. In what way was Psalm 78:2 fulfilled by Jesus?

15. Point out how Isaiah 53:4 found fulfillment.

16. How did the apostle John show that Jesus fulfilled Isaiah 53:1?

17. John made what application of Psalm 69:4?

18. What further examination should strengthen our conviction that Jesus is the Messiah?

16) As we have seen, some of these underwent fulfillment during the early life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth. Additional Messianic prophecies will be examined in the next article. Our prayerful reflection on them will surely strengthen our conviction that Jesus Christ truly is the Messiah who was appointed by our heavenly Father, Jehovah.

How Would You Answer?

- What prophecies were fulfilled in connection with Jesus' birth?
- How was the way prepared before the Messiah?
- What prophetic words of Isaiah chapter 53 found fulfillment in Jesus?

THEY FOUND THE MESSIAH!

"We have found the Messiah."—JOHN 1:41.

JOHN THE BAPTIZER is standing with two of his disciples. As Jesus approaches, John exclaims: "See, the Lamb of God!" Andrew and the other disciple promptly follow Jesus and spend the day with him. Later, Andrew finds his brother, Simon Peter, and leads him to Jesus after making the dramatic announcement: "We have found the Messiah."—John 1:35-41.

² As time passes, Andrew, Peter, and others will have ample opportunity to delve into the Scriptures and will unreservedly declare that Jesus of Nazareth is the promised Messiah. Our own faith in God's Word and his Anointed One will be bolstered as we now continue our examination of Messianic prophecies.

"Look! Your King Is Coming"

³ *The Messiah would make a triumphal*

1. What led up to the statement: "We have found the Messiah"?
2. How will we benefit from further examination of Messianic prophecies?
3. What prophecies were fulfilled by Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem?

entry into Jerusalem. Zechariah's prophecy stated: "Be very joyful, O daughter of Zion. Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem. Look! Your king himself comes to you. He is righteous, yes, saved; humble, and riding upon an ass, even upon a full-grown animal the son of a she-ass." (Zech. 9:9) The psalmist wrote: "Blessed be the One coming in the name of Jehovah." (Ps. 118:26) Jesus could not have manipulated the crowd's actions. However, in fulfillment of prophecy, that throng spontaneously cried out with boundless joy. As you read the account, visualize the scene and hear the happy voices. —**Read Matthew 21:4-9.**

⁴ *Although many would reject Jesus despite his Messianic credentials, he is precious to God.* As foretold, Jesus 'was despised and considered to be of no account' by those who refused to believe the evidence. (Isa. 53:3; Mark 9:12) However, God had inspired the psalmist to say: "The stone that the builders rejected has become the head of

4. Explain what happened in fulfillment of Psalm 118:22, 23.



Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem fulfilled which prophecies?

the corner. This has come to be from Jehovah himself." (Ps. 118:22, 23) Jesus drew this passage to the attention of his religious opposers, and Peter said that it was fulfilled in Christ. (Mark 12:10, 11; Acts 4:8-11) Jesus did become the "foundation cornerstone" of the Christian congregation. Rejected by godless men, he is "chosen, precious, with God."—1 Pet. 2:4-6.

Betrayed and Abandoned!

⁵ *It was foretold that the Messiah would be betrayed by a treacherous associate.* David prophesied: "The man at peace with me, in whom I trusted, who was eating my bread, has magnified his heel against me." (Ps. 41:9) A person who ate bread with someone was thought to be his friend. (Gen. 31:54) So the betrayal of Jesus by Judas Iscariot was treachery of the worst sort. Jesus called attention to the fulfillment of David's prophetic words when He referred to his betray-

5, 6. What was foretold and fulfilled regarding the Messiah's betrayal?

er and told his apostles: "I am not talking about all of you; I know the ones I have chosen. But it is in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, 'He that used to feed on my bread has lifted up his heel against me.'"—John 13:18.

⁶ *The Messiah's betrayer would receive 30 pieces of silver—the price of a slave!* Drawing on Zechariah 11:12, 13, Matthew showed that Jesus was betrayed for such a paltry sum. But why did Matthew say that this had been foretold "through Jeremiah the prophet"? In Matthew's day, Jeremiah may have been

placed first in a group of Bible books that included Zechariah. (Compare Luke 24:44.) Judas never spent his ill-gotten sum, for he threw the money into the temple and went off and committed suicide.—Matt. 26:14-16; 27:3-10.

⁷ *Even the Messiah's disciples would scatter.* "Strike the shepherd," wrote Zechariah, "and let those of the flock be scattered." (Zech. 13:7) On Nisan 14, 33 C.E., Jesus told his disciples: "All of you will be stumbled in connection with me on this night, for it is written, 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered about.'" And that is exactly what happened, for Matthew reported that "all the disciples abandoned [Jesus] and fled."—Matt. 26:31, 56.

Accused and Smitten

⁸ *The Messiah would be tried and*

7. How did Zechariah 13:7 undergo fulfillment?

8. Under what circumstances was Isaiah 53:8 fulfilled?

condemned. (**Read Isaiah 53:8.**) At dawn on Nisan 14, the entire Sanhedrin met, had Jesus bound, and handed him over to Roman Governor Pontius Pilate. He questioned Jesus and found him guilty of nothing at all. When Pilate offered to release Jesus, however, the crowd shouted: “Impale him!” and called for the freeing of the criminal Barabbas. Wishing to satisfy the throng, Pilate released Barabbas, had Jesus whipped, and handed him over to be impaled.—Mark 15: 1-15.

⁹ *False witnesses would testify against the Messiah.* “Violent witnesses rise up,” said the psalmist David. “What I have not known they ask me.” (Ps. 35:11) True to prophecy, “the chief priests and the entire Sanhedrin were looking for false witness against Jesus in order to put him to death.” (Matt. 26:59) In fact, “many, indeed, were giving false witness against him, but their testimonies were not in agreement.” (Mark 14:56) Lying testimony mattered little to Jesus’ rabid enemies, who sought his death.

¹⁰ *The Messiah would be silent before his accusers.* Isaiah prophesied: “He was hard pressed, and he was letting himself be afflicted; yet he would not open his mouth. He was being brought just like a sheep to the slaughtering; and like a ewe that before her shearers has become mute, he also would not open his mouth.” (Isa. 53:7) While Jesus “was being accused by the chief priests and older men, he made no answer.” Pilate asked: “Do you not hear how many things they are testifying against you?” Nevertheless, Jesus “did not answer him, no, not a word, so that the governor wondered very much.” (Matt. 27:12-14) Jesus did not

revile his accusers.—Rom. 12:17-21; 1 Pet. 2:23.

¹¹ *Isaiah prophesied that the Messiah would be smitten.* “My back I gave to the strikers, and my cheeks to those plucking off the hair,” wrote the prophet. “My face I did not conceal from humiliating things and spit.” (Isa. 50:6) Micah foretold: “With the rod they will strike upon the cheek the judge of Israel.” (Mic. 5:1) Confirming the fulfillment of these prophecies, the Gospel writer Mark said: “Some started to spit on [Jesus] and to cover his whole face and hit him with their fists and say to him: ‘Prophecy!’ And, slapping him in the face, the court attendants took him.” Mark states that soldiers “would hit him on the head with a reed and spit upon him and, bending their knees [in mockery], they would do obeisance to him.” (Mark 14:65; 15:19) Of course, Jesus did nothing to provoke such abuse.

Faithful to Death

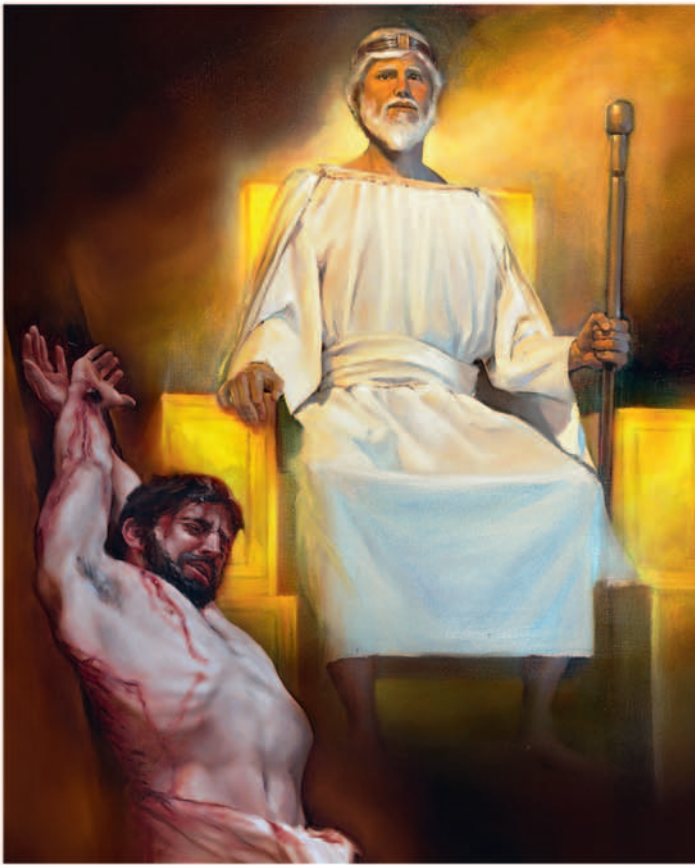
¹² *Aspects of the Messiah’s impalement were foretold.* “The assembly of evildoers themselves have enclosed me,” said the psalmist David. “Like a lion they are at my hands and my feet.” (Ps. 22:16) Reporting an event well-known to Bible readers, the Gospel writer Mark states: “It was now the third hour [about nine o’clock in the morning], and they impaled him.” (Mark 15:25) It had also been foretold that the Messiah would be numbered with sinners. “He poured out his soul to the very death,” wrote Isaiah, “and it was with the transgressors that he was counted in.” (Isa. 53:12) So it was that “two robbers were impaled with [Jesus], one

9. What happened in Jesus’ time as was foretold at Psalm 35:11?

10. Explain how Isaiah 53:7 was fulfilled.

11. What took place in fulfillment of Isaiah 50:6 and Micah 5:1?

12. How did Psalm 22:16 and Isaiah 53:12 apply to Jesus?



*Jesus died for our sins,
but he now rules as Messianic King*

now rescue him if He wants him, for he said, 'I am God's Son.'" (Matt. 27:39-43) Yet, Jesus bore all of this with dignity. What a fine example for us!

¹⁴ *Lots were to be cast for the Messiah's clothing.* "They apportion my garments among themselves," wrote the psalmist, "and upon my clothing they cast lots." (Ps. 22:18) That is what occurred, for "when [the Roman soldiers] had impaled [Jesus] they distributed his outer garments by casting lots."—Matt. 27:35; **read John 19: 23, 24.**

¹⁵ *The Messiah would be given vinegar and gall.* "For food they gave me a poisonous plant," said the psalmist, "and for my thirst they tried to make me drink vinegar." (Ps. 69:21) Matthew tells us: "They gave [Jesus] wine mixed with gall to drink; but, after tasting it, he refused to drink." Later, "one of them ran and took a sponge and soaked it with sour wine and put it on a reed and went giving him a drink."—Matt. 27:34, 48.

¹⁶ *The Messiah would seem forsaken by God. (Read Psalm 22:1.)* In accord with prophecy, "at the ninth hour [about three o'clock in the afternoon] Jesus called out with a loud voice: 'Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?' which means, when translated: 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'" (Mark 15:34) Jesus had not lost faith in his heavenly Father. God abandoned Jesus to

on his right and one on his left."—Matt. 27:38.

¹³ *David prophesied that the Messiah would be reviled. (Read Psalm 22:7, 8.)* Jesus was reviled while suffering on the torture stake, for Matthew reports: "The passersby began speaking abusively of him, wagging their heads and saying: 'O you would-be thrower-down of the temple and builder of it in three days, save yourself! If you are a son of God, come down off the torture stake!'" Similarly, the chief priests, scribes, and older men made fun of him and said: "Others he saved; himself he cannot save! He is King of Israel; let him now come down off the torture stake and we will believe on him. He has put his trust in God; let Him

13. In what way was Psalm 22:7, 8 fulfilled in Jesus?

14, 15. Show how specific prophecies were fulfilled regarding the Messiah's clothing and his being given vinegar.

16. Explain how the prophetic words of Psalm 22:1 were fulfilled.

his enemies by taking away His protection so that Christ's integrity might be fully tested. And by crying out as he did, Jesus fulfilled Psalm 22:1.

¹⁷ *The Messiah would be pierced, but his bones would not be broken.* Inhabitants of Jerusalem would "look to the One whom they pierced through." (Zech. 12:10) And Psalm 34:20 states: "[God] is guarding all the bones of that one; not one of them has been broken." Confirming these points, the apostle John wrote: "One of the soldiers jabbed his [Jesus'] side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he that has seen it [John] has borne witness, and his witness is true . . . These things took place in order for the scripture to be fulfilled: 'Not a bone of his will be crushed.' And, again, a different scripture says: 'They will look to the One whom they pierced.'" —John 19:33-37.

¹⁸ *The Messiah would be buried with the rich. (Read Isaiah 53:5, 8, 9.)* Late in the afternoon of Nisan 14, "a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph," asked Pilate for Jesus' body, and the request was granted. Matthew's account adds: "Joseph took the body, wrapped it up in clean fine linen, and laid it in his new memorial tomb, which he had quarried in the rock-mass. And, after rolling a big stone to the door of the memorial tomb, he left." —Matt. 27:57-60.

Hail the Messianic King!

¹⁹ *The Messiah would be resurrected.* David wrote: "You [Jehovah] will not leave my soul in Sheol." (Ps. 16:10) Imagine the surprise of the women who came to the tomb

17. How were Zechariah 12:10 and Psalm 34:20 fulfilled?

18. How did Jesus come to be buried with the rich?

19. What happened in keeping with the prophetic words of Psalm 16:10?

where Jesus' body had been laid. There they encountered a materialized angel, who told them: "Stop being stunned. You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was impaled. He was raised up, he is not here. See! The place where they laid him." (Mark 16:6) To the crowd present in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost 33 C.E., the apostle Peter declared: "[David] saw beforehand and spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he forsaken in Hades nor did his flesh see corruption." (Acts 2:29-31) God did not allow the physical body of his beloved Son to decay. Moreover, Jesus was miraculously raised to life in the spirit! —1 Pet. 3:18.

²⁰ *As foretold, God declared that Jesus is his Son. (Read Psalm 2:7; Matthew 3:17.)* Also, crowds hailed Jesus and the coming Kingdom, and we joyfully speak about him and his blessed rule. (Mark 11:7-10) Christ will soon destroy his foes as he 'rides in the cause of truth, humility, and righteousness.' (Ps. 2:8, 9; 45:1-6) His kingship will then bring about earth-wide peace and prosperity. (Ps. 72:1, 3, 12, 16; Isa. 9:6, 7) How privileged we are to proclaim these truths as Witnesses of Jehovah, whose beloved Son already reigns in heaven as the Messianic King!

20. How was the foretold rulership of the Messiah fulfilled?

How Would You Answer?

- How was Jesus betrayed and abandoned?
- What were some foretold features of Jesus Christ's impalement?
- Why are you convinced that Jesus is the promised Messiah?

Questions From Readers

Is it possible to say exactly how many Messianic prophecies are contained in the Hebrew Scriptures?

A careful study of the Hebrew Scriptures enables us to identify dozens of prophecies that were fulfilled in Jesus Christ. These prophecies foretold details of the Messiah's background, time of appearance, actions, treatment, and place in Jehovah God's arrangement. They combine to form one grand picture that helps us to identify Jesus as the Messiah. However, caution is needed if we try to determine exactly how many Messianic prophecies are found in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Not everyone agrees on what is or is not a Messianic prophecy. In his book *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Alfred Edersheim stated that the ancient rabbinic writings classified 456 passages from the Hebrew Scriptures as Messianic, although many of them do not specifically mention the Messiah. A close look at these 456 passages raises questions as to whether some of them are prophetic of Jesus Christ. For example, Edersheim said that the Jews regarded Genesis 8:11 as Messianic. They held that "the olive-leaf, brought by the dove, was taken from the Mount of the Messiah." The author also mentioned Exodus 12:42. Explaining how the Jews incorrectly understood this text, he wrote: "As Moses came out of the desert, so would the Messiah come out of Rome." Many scholars and others would undoubtedly find it hard to relate these two texts and erroneous explanations to Jesus Christ.

Even if we restrict our attention to those prophecies that were actually fulfilled in Jesus Christ, we encounter difficulties agreeing

on an exact number. Take, for example, Isaiah chapter 53, which contains several prophetic features regarding the Messiah. Isaiah 53:2-7 prophesies: "No stately form does he have . . . He was despised and was avoided by men . . . Our sicknesses were what he himself carried . . . He was being pierced for our transgression . . . He was being brought just like a sheep to the slaughtering." Should this whole passage in Isaiah chapter 53 be counted as *one* Messianic prophecy, or should each of these characteristics of the Messiah be viewed as a separate prophecy in its own right?

Consider, too, Isaiah 11:1, which reads: "There must go forth a twig out of the stump of Jesse; and out of his roots a sprout will be fruitful." In verse 10, this prophecy appears again, with similar wording. Should we count these two verses as two separate prophecies or as one prophecy that is repeated? The conclusions reached on Isaiah chapter 53 and Isaiah chapter 11 would clearly affect the total number of Messianic prophecies.

Hence, we do well to avoid being specific about the total number of Messianic prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures. Jehovah's organization has published lists showing dozens of prophecies concerning Jesus and their fulfillment.* These lists can be of assistance and encouragement to us in our personal and family study and in our public ministry. Moreover, the numerous Messianic prophecies, whatever their number, give us solid evidence that Jesus is the Christ, or Messiah.

* *Insight on the Scriptures*, Volume 1, page 1223; Volume 2, page 387; "All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial," pages 343-344; *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* page 200.

A History-Making Meeting



“BY THE time this meeting is over, you will say, ‘This was truly a theocratic history-making annual meeting!’” With those words, Stephen Lett of the Governing Body of Jehovah’s Witnesses intensified the sense of keen anticipation in the large audience. They were gathered for the 126th annual meeting of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, held on October 2, 2010, at the Assembly Hall of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Jersey City, New Jersey, U.S.A. What were some of the highlights of this historic occasion?

Brother Lett’s opening talk was an enthusiastic discussion of Jehovah’s celestial chariot as described in the Bible book of Ezekiel. This colossal, glorious vehicle pictures God’s organization, with Jehovah in complete control. Its heavenly part, composed of spirit creatures, moves with lightning speed—the speed of Jehovah’s own thoughts, Brother Lett said. The earthly part of Jehovah God’s organization is likewise on the move. Brother Lett noted a number of exciting developments in the visible part of God’s organization in recent years.

For instance, a number of branches are being merged and consolidated, which will al-

low many who were formerly serving in Bethel homes in those countries to focus on the preaching work. Brother Lett urged the audience to keep praying that the Governing Body, as the representative of the slave class, continue to be not only faithful but also wise, or discreet.—Matt. 24:45-47.

Encouraging Reports and Heartwarming Interviews

Tab Honsberger, who serves on the Branch Committee in Haiti, gave a touching report on the aftermath of the January 12, 2010, earthquake, which took an estimated 300,000 lives in that land. He noted that clergymen have been telling people that God punished those victims for being faithless while protecting the good. Yet, thousands of convicted criminals went free when the walls of a prison collapsed in the quake. Many honesthearted Haitians are thus finding comfort in learning the truth about why our times are so troubled. Brother Honsberger quoted a faithful Haitian brother who lost his wife in the disaster as saying: “I shed tears to this day. I don’t know how long I will continue to mourn, but I rejoice to feel the love of Jehovah’s organization. I have hope, and I am determined to share it.”

Mark Sanderson, now a member of the Brooklyn Bethel family, gave a report on the Philippines. A former member of the Branch Committee there, he fairly beamed as he spoke of the country's 32 consecutive peaks in the number of Kingdom publishers and of the way the Bible studies far outnumber the publishers. He told of a brother named Miguel whose grandson was murdered. Miguel worked hard to have the murderer prosecuted and jailed. Later, when witnessing in the prison, Miguel met the murderer. Though nervous, Miguel addressed him mildly and kindly. He eventually studied with the man, who responded well and came to love Jehovah. He is now baptized. Miguel is his close friend and is working to win his new brother an early release from prison.*

The program next featured a get-acquainted interview conducted by Mark Noumair, an instructor in the Theocratic Schools Department. He interviewed three couples—Alex and Sarah Reinmueller, David and Krista Schafer, and Robert and Ketra Ciranko. Alex Reinmueller, a helper to the Publishing Committee, told of how he made the truth his own while pioneering in Canada when he was only 15 years old, often working by himself. Asked who had the most im-

pact on him at Bethel, Brother Reinmueller mentioned three faithful men, pointing out how each of them had helped him to grow spiritually. His wife, Sarah, told of her friendship with a sister who endured decades in Chinese prisons for her faith. Sarah said that she has learned to rely on Jehovah through personal prayer.

David Schafer, a helper to the Teaching Committee, praised his mother for her strong faith and told of brothers who worked as loggers and helped him to auxiliary pioneer as a youth. His wife, Krista, spoke fondly of being influenced by older members of the Bethel family who proved to be “faithful in what is least,” as Jesus recommended.—Luke 16:10.

Robert Ciranko, a helper to the Writing Committee, reminisced about his four grandparents, who were Hungarian immigrants and anointed Christians. As a boy, he was impressed when he attended large conventions in the 1950's and learned that Jehovah's organization was far bigger than his own congregation. His wife, Ketra, told of how she learned about loyalty when serving

* See the 2011 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses, pages 62-63.

The get-acquainted interviews were enjoyed by all in attendance





Jehovah has blessed the preaching work in Ethiopia

as a pioneer in a congregation that was afflicted with apostasy and other problems. She endured and was eventually assigned to serve as a special pioneer in a congregation where the unity touched her heart.

Manfred Tonak next gave a report, on Ethiopia. This land dates back to Bible times, and it is now blessed with over 9,000 publishers of the good news. Most of them live in or near the capital, Addis Ababa. Remote areas thus need more attention. To address this need, Ethiopian Witnesses living in other countries were invited to visit in order to

preach in some remote parts of the country. Many came, encouraged the local Witnesses, and found receptive listeners.

A program highlight was a symposium about Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia and their legal struggles. Aulis Bergdahl of the Branch Committee in Russia presented a history of the persecution of the Witnesses in Russia, particularly in Moscow. Philip Brumley of the Legal Department at the United States branch told about the thrilling developments in recent months when the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) heard the nine charges that had been leveled against the Witnesses. The Court unanimously found that none of the nine charges had any merit, in a number of cases even reasoning carefully to refute the arguments presented. While the results remain to be seen, Brother Brumley spoke hopefully of the impact that the Court's ruling may have on cases in other lands.

Following this exciting news, Brother Lett announced that the ECHR had deemed as admissible the long-running tax case involving the government of France and Jehovah's Witnesses. This highly respected Court admits very few of the cases presented to it. So far, the ECHR has considered a total of 39 cases involving Jehovah's Witnesses, and it has ruled in our favor in 37 of them. Brother Lett encouraged all of God's people to keep the current matter before Jehovah God in prayer.

The final report came from Richard Morlan, a field instructor of the School for Congregation Elders. He spoke enthusiastically about the school and the appreciative response from the elders who have attended.

Other Talks by Governing Body Members

Guy Pierce of the Governing Body gave a heartfelt talk that focused on the yeartext

for 2011, “Take refuge in the name of Jehovah.” (Zeph. 3:12) He noted that while this is a happy time in many ways for Jehovah’s people, it is also a serious, sobering time. Jehovah’s great day is near; yet, people continue to seek refuge in false religion, political institutions, material wealth, escapism, and the like. To find a genuine refuge, we need to call upon Jehovah’s name, which involves knowing, deeply respecting, and trusting the Person represented by that name, loving him with everything we have.

David Splane of the Governing Body next delivered an earnest, thought-provoking discussion on the theme “Have You Entered Into God’s Rest?” He noted that God’s rest does not mean inactivity, since Jehovah and his Son have “kept working” throughout that figurative day of rest in order to bring God’s purpose for the things created regarding the earth to a successful conclusion. (John 5:17) How, then, may we enter into God’s rest? Desisting from sin and from works of self-justification are just part of the answer. We need to exercise faith and live with God’s purpose in mind, making whatever contribution we can to that purpose. At times, that may be a special challenge, but we need to accept the counsel and cooperate with the direction from Jehovah’s organization. Brother Splane entreated the audience to do everything possible to enter into God’s rest.

The final talk, delivered by Anthony Morris of the Governing Body, was entitled “What Are We Waiting For?” With urgency and fatherly warmth, Brother Morris reminded the audience of prophetic developments yet ahead of us, events that all faithful ones eagerly await. These include the cry of “Peace and security!” and the destruction of false religion. (1 Thess. 5:2, 3; Rev. 17:15-17) Brother Morris warned against saying,

“This must be Armageddon,” in response to events in the news that do not fulfill such prophecies. He recommended the joyful, patient, waiting attitude described at Micah 7:7. At the same time, though, he urged all to “close ranks” with the Governing Body, to draw close together as would soldiers entering the thick of the battle. “May your heart be strong,” he said, “all you who are waiting for Jehovah.”—Ps. 31:24.

In conclusion, there were some thrilling, history-making announcements. Geoffrey Jackson of the Governing Body announced plans for the trial of a simplified study edition of *The Watchtower* for those with limited English-reading abilities. Then Stephen Lett announced that the Governing Body will arrange for shepherding visits to be provided for district overseers and their wives in the United States. He next revealed that the Ministerial Training School would henceforth be known as the Bible School for Single Brothers. It would soon be complemented by the Bible School for Christian Couples. This school would give couples further training so that they can be more useful to Jehovah’s organization. Brother Lett also announced that the School for Traveling Overseers and Their Wives and the School for Branch Committee Members and Their Wives would be expanded to two classes each year at Patterson, with provisions for those who have previously attended to attend a second time.

A touching conclusion to the program came when 97-year-old John E. Barr, longtime member of the Governing Body, offered a humble and sincere prayer.* Everyone left with the impression that this had indeed been a historic day.

* Brother Barr finished his earthly course on December 4, 2010.

Questions From Readers

How are we to understand the figures in the annual service report?

Each year, we look forward to the service report published in the *Yearbook*. It is thrilling to see what Jehovah's people as a group have accomplished in the worldwide Kingdom preaching and teaching work. But to derive the greatest benefit from the report, we need a correct understanding of the entries as well as a balanced view of the figures. Consider a few examples.

Service year. This extends from September of one year through August of the next. The *Yearbook* contains the report for the preceding service year. Thus, the 2011 *Yearbook* contains the report for the 2010 service year, which ran from September 1, 2009, to August 31, 2010.

Peak publishers and average publishers. "Publishers" includes baptized Witnesses of Jehovah as well as unbaptized ones who qualify to be Kingdom preachers. "Peak publishers" is the highest number reporting for any one month of the service year and may include late reports that were not added to the preceding month's report. In this way some publishers may be counted twice. However, the peak figure does not include the number of publishers who actually shared in the ministry but forgot to report. This emphasizes the importance of each publisher reporting promptly each month. "Average publishers" is the typical number of different ones reporting time in the ministry each month.

Total hours. According to the 2011 *Yearbook*, Jehovah's Witnesses spent over 1.6 billion hours in the field ministry. This total, however, does not represent all the hours we

spend in our worship, for it does not include time we regularly devote to such activities as shepherding, attending meetings, and engaging in personal Bible study and meditation.

Money spent. During the 2010 service year, Jehovah's Witnesses spent over \$155 million in caring for special pioneers, missionaries, and traveling overseers in their field service assignments. This figure does *not*, however, include the cost of printing the Bible-based publications we produce; nor does it include the money spent in caring for the more than 20,000 Bethel volunteers staffing the branch facilities around the world.

Memorial partakers. This is the number of baptized individuals who partake of the emblems at the Memorial worldwide. Does this total represent the number of anointed ones on earth? Not necessarily. A number of factors—including past religious beliefs or even mental or emotional imbalance—might cause some to assume mistakenly that they have the heavenly calling. We thus have no way of knowing the exact number of anointed ones on earth; nor do we need to know. The Governing Body does not keep a list of all partakers, for it does not maintain a global network of anointed ones.*

What we do know is that there will be some of the anointed "slaves of our God" on earth when the destructive winds of the great tribulation are released. (Rev. 7:1-3) Until then, the anointed will take the lead in something that is well-documented by our annual service report—the greatest preaching and teaching work in human history.

* See the article "The Faithful Steward and Its Governing Body," in the June 15, 2009, issue of *The Watchtower*, page 24.

JEHOVAH —“THE GOD WHO GIVES PEACE”

“May the God who gives peace be with all of you.”—ROM. 15:33.

THE place is close to Penuel, near the torrent valley of Jabbok on the east side of the river Jordan. Esau has heard that his twin brother, Jacob, is returning home. Even though 20 years have passed since Esau sold his right as firstborn to his brother, Jacob fears that his brother may still harbor a murderous grudge against him. Accompanied by 400 men, Esau marches toward his estranged brother. Anticipating a hostile reception, Jacob sends Esau wave upon wave of gifts amounting to over 550 domestic animals. With each group of animals, Jacob’s servants tell Esau that they are a gift from his brother.

² The moment finally arrives! As Jacob

courageously walks toward Esau, he bows down—not once but seven times. Jacob has already taken the most important measure he can take to soften the heart of his brother. Jacob has prayed to Jehovah for deliverance from Esau’s hand. Does Jehovah answer this prayer? Yes. “Esau went running to meet him,” the Bible tells us, “and he began to embrace him and fall upon his neck and kiss him.”—Gen. 32:11-20; 33:1-4.

³ The account of Jacob and Esau shows that we should make earnest and practical efforts to settle matters when problems arise that may threaten the peace we enjoy within the Christian congregation. Jacob sought to make peace with Esau, but not because Jacob

1, 2. What tense situation is described in Genesis chapters 32 and 33, and what was the outcome?

3. What do we learn from the account of Jacob and Esau?

What was the most important step taken by Jacob in making peace with Esau?



had erred against his brother and owed him an apology. No, Esau had despised his birthright and had sold it to Jacob for a bowl of stew. (Gen. 25:31-34; Heb. 12:16) However, the way Jacob approached Esau illustrates the extent to which we should be willing to go to preserve the peace with our Christian brothers. It also shows that the true God blesses our prayerful efforts to make peace. The Bible contains numerous other examples that instruct us to be peacemakers.

A Superlative Example to Exhort Us

⁴ The most outstanding example of a peacemaker is Jehovah—"the God who gives peace." (Rom. 15:33) Think of the extent to which Jehovah went to enable us to have a peaceful relationship with him. As sinful descendants of Adam and Eve, we deserve "the wages [that] sin pays." (Rom. 6:23) Still, out of his great love, Jehovah arranged for our salvation by sending his beloved Son from heaven to be born as a perfect human. And the Son willingly complied. He allowed himself to be put to death by God's enemies. (John 10:17, 18) The true God resurrected his beloved Son, who afterward presented to the Father the value of his shed blood, which would be a ransom to save repentant sinners from eternal death. —**Read Hebrews 9:14, 24.**

⁵ How does the provision of the ransom sacrifice of God's Son affect the damaged relationship between God and sinful mankind? "The chastisement meant for our peace was upon him," states Isaiah 53:5, "and because of his wounds there has been a healing for us." Instead of being viewed as

God's enemies, obedient humans can now enjoy a peaceful relationship with him. "By means of [Jesus] we have the release by ransom through the blood of that one, yes, the forgiveness of our trespasses."—Eph. 1:7.

⁶ The Bible states: "God saw good for all fullness to dwell in [Christ]." This is because Christ is the key figure in the fulfilling of God's purpose. And what is Jehovah's purpose? It is "to reconcile again to himself all other things by making peace through the [shed] blood" of Jesus Christ. "All other things" that God thus brings into a peaceful relationship with him are "the things in the heavens" and "the things upon the earth." What are they?—**Read Colossians 1:19, 20.**

⁷ The provision of the ransom makes it possible for anointed Christians, who "have been declared righteous" as sons of God, to "enjoy peace with God." (**Read Romans 5:1.**) They are referred to as "the things in the heavens" because they have a heavenly hope and "are to rule as kings over the earth" and serve as priests to God. (Rev. 5:10) On the other hand, "the things upon the earth" refer to repentant humans, who will eventually attain to everlasting life on earth.—Ps. 37:29.

⁸ Expressing his heartfelt gratitude for Jehovah's provision, Paul wrote to the anointed Christians in Ephesus: "God, who is rich in mercy, . . . made us alive together with the Christ, even when we were dead in trespasses—by undeserved kindness you have been saved." (Eph. 2:4, 5) Whether we have a heavenly hope or an earthly hope, we are deeply indebted to God for his mercy and

7. What are "the things in the heavens" and "the things upon the earth" that are brought into a peaceful relationship with God?

8. How are you affected by reflecting on the extent to which Jehovah went to enable mankind to be at peace with him?

4. What is God's provision for saving mankind from sin and death?

5, 6. How does Jesus' shed blood affect the damaged relationship between God and sinful mankind?

undeserved kindness. Our hearts are filled with gratitude as we consider the extent to which Jehovah went to make it possible for mankind to enjoy peace with him. When we are confronted with situations that threaten the peaceful unity of the congregation, should not our appreciatively reflecting on God's example move us to be peacemakers?

Learning From the Ways of Abraham and Isaac

⁹ Concerning the patriarch Abraham, the Bible states: "Abraham put faith in Jehovah, and it was counted to him as righteousness," and he came to be called 'Jehovah's friend.'" (Jas. 2:23) Abraham's faith was made evident by his peace-loving ways. For example, as Abraham's flocks and herds increased, tension developed between his herdsmen and those of his nephew Lot. (Gen. 12:5; 13:7) The obvious solution was that Abraham and Lot separate. How would Abraham deal with this delicate situation? Instead of using his age and status with God to tell his nephew what to do, Abraham proved himself to be a true peacemaker.

¹⁰ "Please, do not let any quarreling continue between me and you and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen," Abraham told his nephew, "for we men are brothers." The patriarch continued: "Is not the whole land available to you? Please, separate from me. If you go to the left, then I will go to the right; but if you go to the right, then I will go to the left." Lot chose the most fertile part of the land, but Abraham held no grudge against him. (Gen. 13:8-11) Later on when Lot was taken captive by invading armies,

9, 10. How did Abraham prove himself to be a peacemaker in dealing with Lot when tension arose among their herdsmen?

Abraham did not hesitate to rescue his nephew.—Gen. 14:14-16.

¹¹ Think also of how Abraham pursued peace with his Philistine neighbors in the land of Canaan. The Philistines had "seized by violence" a well of water dug by Abraham's servants at Beer-sheba. How would a man who had rescued his nephew by overcoming the four kings who had captured him respond to this act? Rather than fight back and repossess his well, Abraham chose to remain silent about the matter. In time, the Philistine king visited Abraham to make a covenant of peace. Only after he got Abraham to swear to him to be kind to the Philistine king's offspring did Abraham bring up the matter of his stolen well. Shocked to hear about this, the king restored the well to Abraham. As for Abraham, he continued to live peacefully as an alien resident in the land.—Gen. 21:22-31, 34.

¹² Abraham's son Isaac followed the peace-loving ways of his father. This is evident from the manner in which Isaac dealt with the Philistines. Because of a famine in the land, Isaac moved his household north, from Beer-lahai-roi in the arid region of the Negeb into the more fertile territory of the Philistines at Gerar. There Jehovah blessed Isaac with bumper crops and increased his livestock. The Philistines began to envy him. Not wanting Isaac to prosper as his father had prospered, the Philistines stopped up the wells that Abraham's servants had dug in the region. Finally, the Philistine king told Isaac to 'move from their neighborhood.' The peaceful man Isaac complied.—Gen. 24:62; 26:1, 12-17.

11. How did Abraham pursue peace with his Philistine neighbors?

12, 13. (a) How did Isaac follow the example of his father? (b) How did Jehovah bless Isaac's peace-loving ways?

¹³ After Isaac moved his encampment farther away, his shepherds dug another well. Philistine shepherds claimed that the water was theirs. Like his father, Abraham, Isaac did not fight over a well. Instead, Isaac again had his men dig a well. The Philistines also claimed this one for themselves. For the sake of peace, Isaac moved his large encampment away to yet another location. There his servants dug a well that Isaac named Rehoboth. In time, he moved to the more fertile region of Beer-sheba, where Jehovah blessed him and told him: “Do not be afraid, because I am with you, and I will bless you and multiply your seed on account of Abraham my servant.”—Gen. 26:17-25.

¹⁴ Isaac surely had the ability to fight for his right to use all the wells that his servants had dug. After all, the Philistine king and his officials came to visit him in Beer-sheba and sought to make a covenant of peace with him, saying: “We have unmistakably seen that Jehovah has proved to be with you.” Still, for the sake of peace, Isaac had more than once opted to move rather than fight. This time too Isaac proved himself to be a peacemaker. The historical record states: “He made a feast for [his visitors] and they ate and drank. Next morning they were early in rising and they made sworn statements one to the other. After that Isaac sent them away . . . in peace.”—Gen. 26:26-31.

Learning From the Son Whom Jacob Loved the Most

¹⁵ Isaac’s son Jacob grew up to be “a blameless man.” (Gen. 25:27) As discussed at the outset, Jacob sought to make peace with his brother, Esau. Undoubtedly, Jacob

14. How did Isaac prove himself to be a peacemaker when the Philistine king sought to make a covenant of peace with him?

15. Why were Joseph’s brothers unable to speak peacefully to him?

had benefited from the peaceable example of his father, Isaac. What can be said about Jacob’s sons? Of his 12 sons, Joseph was the one whom Jacob loved the most. Joseph was an obedient, respectful son who cared deeply for his father’s interests. (Gen. 37:2, 14) However, Joseph’s older brothers became so jealous of him that they were unable to speak peacefully to him. Cruelly, they sold Joseph into slavery and tricked their father into believing that Joseph had been killed by a wild beast.—Gen. 37:4, 28, 31-33.

¹⁶ Jehovah proved to be with Joseph. In time, Joseph became Egypt’s prime minister—second in power only to Pharaoh. When a severe famine brought Joseph’s brothers to Egypt, they did not even recognize him in his official Egyptian attire. (Gen. 42:5-7) How easy it would have been for Joseph to repay his brothers for their cruelty to him and to their father! Rather than seek revenge, however, Joseph tried to make peace with them. When it became clear that his brothers had repented, he made himself known to them, saying: “Do not feel hurt and do not be angry with yourselves because you sold me here; because for the preservation of life God has sent me ahead of you.” Then he proceeded to kiss all his brothers and to weep over them.—Gen. 45:1, 5, 15.

¹⁷ After the death of their father, Jacob, Joseph’s brothers thought that Joseph might take vengeance on them. As they expressed their fears to him, Joseph “burst into tears” and replied: “Do not be afraid. I myself shall keep supplying you and your little children with food.” Peace-loving Joseph “comforted them and spoke reassuringly to them.”—Gen. 50:15-21.

16, 17. How did Joseph prove himself to be a peace-loving brother to his siblings?

“Written for Our Instruction”

¹⁸ “All the things that were written aforetime were written for our instruction,” wrote Paul, “that through our endurance and through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope.” (Rom. 15:4) How have we benefited from considering not only the superlative example of Jehovah but also the Scriptural accounts of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph?

¹⁹ Does not appreciatively reflecting on what Jehovah has done to heal the damaged relationship between him and sinful mankind move us to do all we can to pursue peace with others? The examples of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph show that parents can have a good influence on their chil-

18, 19. (a) How have you benefited from considering the examples of peacemakers discussed in this article? (b) What will we consider in the next article?

dren. Moreover, these accounts also show that Jehovah blesses the efforts of those who try to make peace. No wonder Paul refers to Jehovah as “the God who gives peace”! (*Read Romans 15:33; 16:20.*) The following article will consider why Paul stressed the need for us to pursue peace and how we can be peacemakers.

What Did You Learn?

- In what way did Jacob seek peace when he was about to meet Esau?
- How have you been affected by what Jehovah did to enable mankind to be at peace with him?
- What have you learned from the examples of the peacemakers Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph?

PURSUPE PEACE

“Let us pursue the things making for peace.”—ROM. 14:19.

TRUE peace is hard to find in today’s world. Even people belonging to the same national group and speaking the same language are often divided religiously, politically, and socially. By contrast, Jehovah’s people are united despite the fact that they have come out of “all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues.”—Rev. 7:9.

² The peaceful condition that generally exists among us is no accident. It has come

1, 2. Why do Jehovah’s Witnesses enjoy peace among themselves?

about primarily because we “enjoy peace with God” through our faith in his Son, whose shed blood covers our sins. (Rom. 5:1; Eph. 1:7) Moreover, the true God gives holy spirit to his loyal servants, and the fruitage of that spirit includes peace. (Gal. 5:22) Another reason for our peaceful unity is that we are “no part of the world.” (John 15:19) Rather than taking sides in political issues, we remain neutral. Having ‘beaten our swords into plowshares,’ we do not get involved in civil or international wars.—Isa. 2:4.

³ The peace we can enjoy with one another goes deeper than merely refraining from doing harm to our brothers. Although the congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses that we belong to may be made up of individuals from many different ethnic groups and cultures, we "love one another." (John 15:17) Our peace allows us to "work what is good toward all, but especially toward those related to us in the faith." (Gal. 6:10) Our peaceful spiritual paradise is something to be treasured and safeguarded. Let us, therefore, examine how we may pursue peace within the congregation.

When We Stumble

⁴ "We all stumble many times," wrote the disciple James. "If anyone does not stumble in word, this one is a perfect man." (Jas. 3:2) Hence, differences and misunderstandings between fellow believers are bound to arise. (Phil. 4:2, 3) However, problems between individuals can be solved without disturbing the peace of the congregation. For example, consider the counsel we should apply if we realize that we may have offended someone. —**Read Matthew 5:23, 24.**

⁵ What if we have been wronged in some small way? Should we expect the offender to come to us and apologize? "[Love] does not keep account of the injury," states 1 Corinthians 13:5. When offended, we pursue peace by forgiving and forgetting, that is, by 'not keeping account of the injury.' (**Read Colossians 3:13.**) Minor transgressions in day-to-day life are best handled in this way, for this contributes to a peaceful relationship with fellow worshippers and gives us peace

3. What does the peace we can enjoy make possible, and what will be discussed in this article?

4. What can we do to pursue peace when we have offended someone?

5. How may we pursue peace when we have been wronged?

of mind. A wise proverb states: "It is beauty . . . to pass over transgression."—Prov. 19:11.

⁶ What if we find that a certain offense is too difficult for us to overlook? Spreading the matter to as many ears as are willing to hear is certainly not the course of wisdom. Such gossip serves only to disrupt the peace of the congregation. What should be done to resolve the matter peacefully? Matthew 18:15 states: "If your brother commits a sin, go lay bare his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother." While Matthew 18:15-17 applies to sin of a serious nature, in the spirit of the principle stated in verse 15, we should kindly approach the offender privately and try to restore a peaceful relationship with him.*

⁷ The apostle Paul wrote: "Be wrathful, and yet do not sin; let the sun not set with you in a provoked state, neither allow place for the Devil." (Eph. 4:26, 27) "Be about settling matters quickly with the one complaining against you at law," said Jesus. (Matt. 5:25) Pursuing peace, then, calls for settling difficulties quickly. Why? Because doing so prevents differences from festering like an untreated, infected wound. Let us not allow pride, envy, or the attaching of too much importance to material things prevent us from resolving disputes soon after they arise.—Jas. 4:1-6.

When a Controversy Involves Many

⁸ Sometimes differences in the congrega-

* For Scriptural guidance in dealing with such serious sins as slander and fraud, see *The Watchtower*, October 15, 1999, pages 17-22.

6. What should we do if it is too difficult for us to overlook an offense committed against us?

7. Why should we be quick to settle disputes?

8, 9. (a) What differences of viewpoint existed in the first-century congregation in Rome? (b) What counsel did Paul give Roman Christians regarding their dispute?

tion involve not just two people but many individuals. That was the case with Christians in Rome to whom the apostle Paul wrote an inspired letter. There was a dispute among Jewish and Gentile Christians. Certain ones in that congregation were evidently looking down on those whose consciences were weak, or overly restrictive. Such individuals were improperly judging others on purely personal matters. What advice did Paul give the congregation?—Rom. 14:1-6.

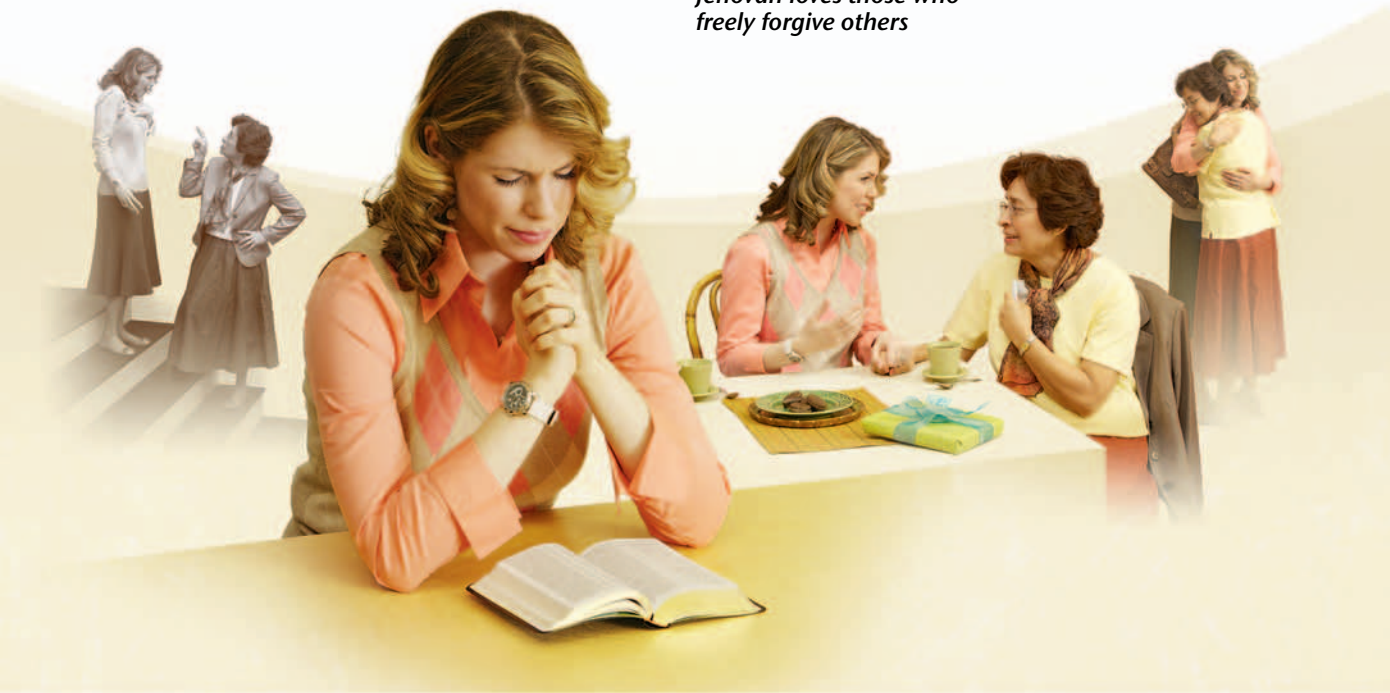
⁹ Paul counseled individuals on both sides of the dispute. He told those who understood that they were not under the Mosaic Law not to look down on their brothers. (Rom. 14:2, 10) Such an attitude could stumble believers who still found it repulsive to eat things that were not permitted under the Law. “Stop tearing down the work of God just for the sake of food,” Paul admonished them. “It is well not to eat flesh or to drink

wine or do anything over which your brother stumbles.” (Rom. 14:14, 15, 20, 21) On the other hand, Paul counseled Christians who had more restrictive consciences not to be judging as unfaithful those who held a broader viewpoint. (Rom. 14:13) He told ‘everyone there among them not to think more of himself than it was necessary to think.’ (Rom. 12:3) Having counseled both sides in this dispute, Paul wrote: “So, then, let us pursue the things making for peace and the things that are upbuilding to one another.”—Rom. 14:19.

¹⁰ We can be sure that the congregation in Rome responded well to Paul’s counsel and made the necessary adjustments. When differences among fellow Christians occur today, should we not likewise settle disputes graciously by humbly seeking and applying Scriptural counsel? As was the case with the

10. As with the first-century congregation in Rome, what is needed to resolve differences today?

*Jehovah loves those who
freely forgive others*



Romans, today those on both sides of the controversy may need to make adjustments in order to “keep peace between one another.”—Mark 9:50.

When Called Upon to Help

¹¹ What if a Christian wants to talk to an elder about a problem he or she is having with a relative or with a fellow believer? Proverbs 21:13 states: “Anyone stopping up his ear from the complaining cry of the lowly one, he himself also will call and not be answered.” An elder would certainly not ‘stop up his ear.’ However, another proverb warns: “The first to state his case seems right, until his opponent begins to cross-examine him.” (Prov. 18:17, *New English Translation*) An elder should listen kindly, but he needs to be careful not to take sides with the one reporting the offense. After listening to the matter, he would likely ask whether the offended party has spoken to the one who caused the upset. The elder may also review Scriptural steps that the offended one can take to pursue peace.

¹² Three Biblical examples underscore the danger of acting hastily after hearing only one side of a controversy. Potiphar believed his wife’s story that Joseph had tried to rape her. With unjustified anger, Potiphar had Joseph thrown into prison. (Gen. 39:19, 20) King David believed Ziba, who said that his master, Mephibosheth, had sided with David’s enemies. “Look! Yours is everything that belongs to Mephibosheth” was David’s hasty response. (2 Sam. 16:4; 19:25-27) King Artaxerxes was told that the Jews were rebuilding Jerusalem’s walls and were about to rebel against the Persian Empire.

11. What care should an elder exercise if a Christian wants to talk to him about a dispute with a fellow believer?

12. Cite examples showing the danger of acting hastily after hearing a complaint.

The king believed the false report and ordered that all rebuilding in Jerusalem cease. As a result, the Jews stopped work on God’s temple. (Ezra 4:11-13, 23, 24) Christian elders wisely follow Paul’s counsel to Timothy to avoid making premature judgments. —**Read 1 Timothy 5:21.**

¹³ Even when it seems that both sides of a dispute have come to light, it is important to realize that “if anyone thinks he has acquired knowledge of something, he does not yet know it just as he ought to know it.” (1 Cor. 8:2) Do we really know all the details that led up to the dispute? Can we fully understand the backgrounds of the individuals involved? When called upon to judge, how vital it is that elders not let themselves be deceived by falsehood, clever tactics, or rumors! God’s appointed Judge, Jesus Christ, judges righteously. He does not “judge by any mere appearance to his eyes, nor reprove simply according to the thing heard by his ears.” (Isa. 11:3, 4) Rather, Jesus is guided by Jehovah’s spirit. Christian elders likewise have the benefit of being guided by God’s holy spirit.

¹⁴ Before they make judgments respecting fellow believers, elders need to pray for the help of Jehovah’s spirit and depend on its guidance by consulting God’s Word and the publications of the faithful and discreet slave class.—Matt. 24:45.

Peace at Any Price?

¹⁵ As Christians, we are exhorted to pursue peace. However, the Bible also states: “The wisdom from above is *first of all* chaste, then peaceable.” (Jas. 3:17) Being peaceable is

13, 14. (a) All of us have what limitations respecting the disputes of others? (b) What help do elders have in making correct judgments respecting fellow believers?

15. When should we report a serious sin that we have become aware of?

secondary to chasteness, that is, upholding God's clean moral standards and meeting his righteous requirements. If a Christian becomes aware of a serious sin on the part of a fellow believer, he should encourage that one to confess the sin to the elders. (1 Cor. 6: 9, 10; Jas. 5:14-16) If the wrongdoer does not do so, the Christian who has come to know about the sin should report it. Failure to do this in a mistaken effort to maintain peace with the sinner makes one a party to the wrongdoing.—Lev. 5:1; **read Proverbs 29:24.**

¹⁶ One account involving Jehu shows that God's righteousness takes priority over peaceableness. God sent Jehu to execute His judgment on the house of King Ahab. Wicked King Jehoram, the son of Ahab and Jezebel, rode in his chariot to meet Jehu and said: "Is there peace, Jehu?" How did Jehu respond? He replied: "What peace could there be as long as there are the fornications of Jezebel your mother and her many sorceries?" (2 Ki. 9:22) With that, Jehu drew his bow and shot Jehoram through the heart. Just as Jehu took action, elders must not compromise with willful, unrepentant practicers of sin for the sake of keeping peace. They expel unrepentant sinners so that the congregation can continue to enjoy peace with God.—1 Cor. 5:1, 2, 11-13.

¹⁷ Most disputes between brothers do not involve serious wrongdoing that requires judicial action. How good it is, therefore, lovingly to cover over the mistakes of others. "The one covering over transgression is seeking love," says God's Word, "and he that keeps talking about a matter is separating those familiar with one another." (Prov. 17:9) Complying with those words will help all of

16. What can we learn from Jehu's encounter with King Jehoram?

17. All Christians play what part in pursuing peace?

us to preserve peace in the congregation and maintain a good relationship with Jehovah.—Matt. 6:14, 15.

Pursuing Peace Brings Blessings

¹⁸ Our pursuing "the things making for peace" brings us rich blessings. We enjoy a close personal relationship with Jehovah as we imitate his ways, and we contribute to the peaceful unity of our spiritual paradise. Pursuing peace inside the congregation also helps us to see ways in which we can pursue peace with those to whom we preach "the good news of peace." (Eph. 6:15) We are better prepared 'to be gentle toward all, keeping ourselves restrained under evil.'—2 Tim. 2:24.

¹⁹ Remember, too, that there will be "a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous." (Acts 24:15) When that hope becomes a reality here on earth, millions of people with varying backgrounds, temperaments, and personalities will be brought back to life—and that from times stretching all the way back to "the founding of the world"! (Luke 11:50, 51) Teaching resurrected ones the ways of peace will indeed be a great privilege. What a tremendous help the training we now receive as peacemakers will be to us at that time!

18, 19. What benefits result from pursuing peace?

What Did You Learn?

- How may we pursue peace if we have offended someone?
- What should be done to pursue peace when we have been wronged?
- Why is it unwise to take sides in the disputes of others?
- Explain why peace should not be pursued at any price.

Do You Remember?

Have you carefully read the recent issues of *The Watchtower*?
Well, see if you can answer the following questions:

- **What three keys can help us to resist any tendency toward dishonesty?**

They are: (1) Develop a healthy fear of God. (1 Pet. 3:12) (2) Cultivate a Bible-trained conscience. (3) Work hard to promote a sense of contentment.—4/15, pages 6-7.

- **How do we know that serving God with seriousness does not mean always having a stern appearance or avoiding relaxation?**

We can consider Jesus' example. He enjoyed relaxing meals with others. We know that he was not overly serious or stern. Others, even children, were drawn to and comfortable with him.—4/15, page 10.

- **What can a couple do if their relationship seems to have weakened after they had children?**

They need to reaffirm their love for each other. A husband can strive to allay any feelings of insecurity his wife may have. And both need to work at good communication about their feelings and physical needs.—5/1, pages 12-13.

- **What was illustrated by the olive tree in Romans chapter 11?**

The olive tree pertains to the secondary part of Abraham's seed, spiritual Israel. Jehovah is like the root and Jesus like the trunk of this symbolic olive tree. When most of the natural Jews rejected Jesus, Gentiles who became believers could be grafted in, thus producing the full number of the secondary part of the seed of Abraham.—5/15, pages 22-25.

- **What especially good news can we offer to the poor?**

The good news is: God has appointed Jesus as King. He is the ideal Ruler to end poverty.

Why? Because he is to rule all mankind and has the power to act; he has compassion for the poor; and he can end the cause of poverty, our inherited tendency to be selfish.—6/1, page 7.

- **What did Jesus mean when he told Caiaphas: "You yourself said it"?—Matt. 26: 63, 64.**

Apparently, "you yourself said it" was a common Jewish idiom affirming that a statement was true. High Priest Caiaphas had asked whether Jesus was the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus' response: "You yourself said it" was an affirmative reply.—6/1, page 18.

- **Could the potential descendants of the perfect man Jesus have become part of the ransom?**

No. Though Jesus could have been the source of billions of perfect descendants, such potential offspring were not part of the ransom. Jesus' perfect life alone corresponded to Adam's. (1 Tim. 2:6)—6/15, page 13.

- **How can Christians show that they take to heart the warning about false teachers recorded at Acts 20:29, 30?**

They do not receive into their homes or greet false teachers. (Rom. 16:17; 2 John 9-11) Christians avoid the literature of apostates, TV programs featuring them, and Web sites containing their teachings.—7/15, pages 15-16.

- **Who should teach children about God?**

The father and the mother should share in doing so, in line with what the Bible counsels. (Prov. 1:8; Eph. 6:4) Research shows that when both parents are involved, the effect on the children is positive.—8/1, pages 6-7.