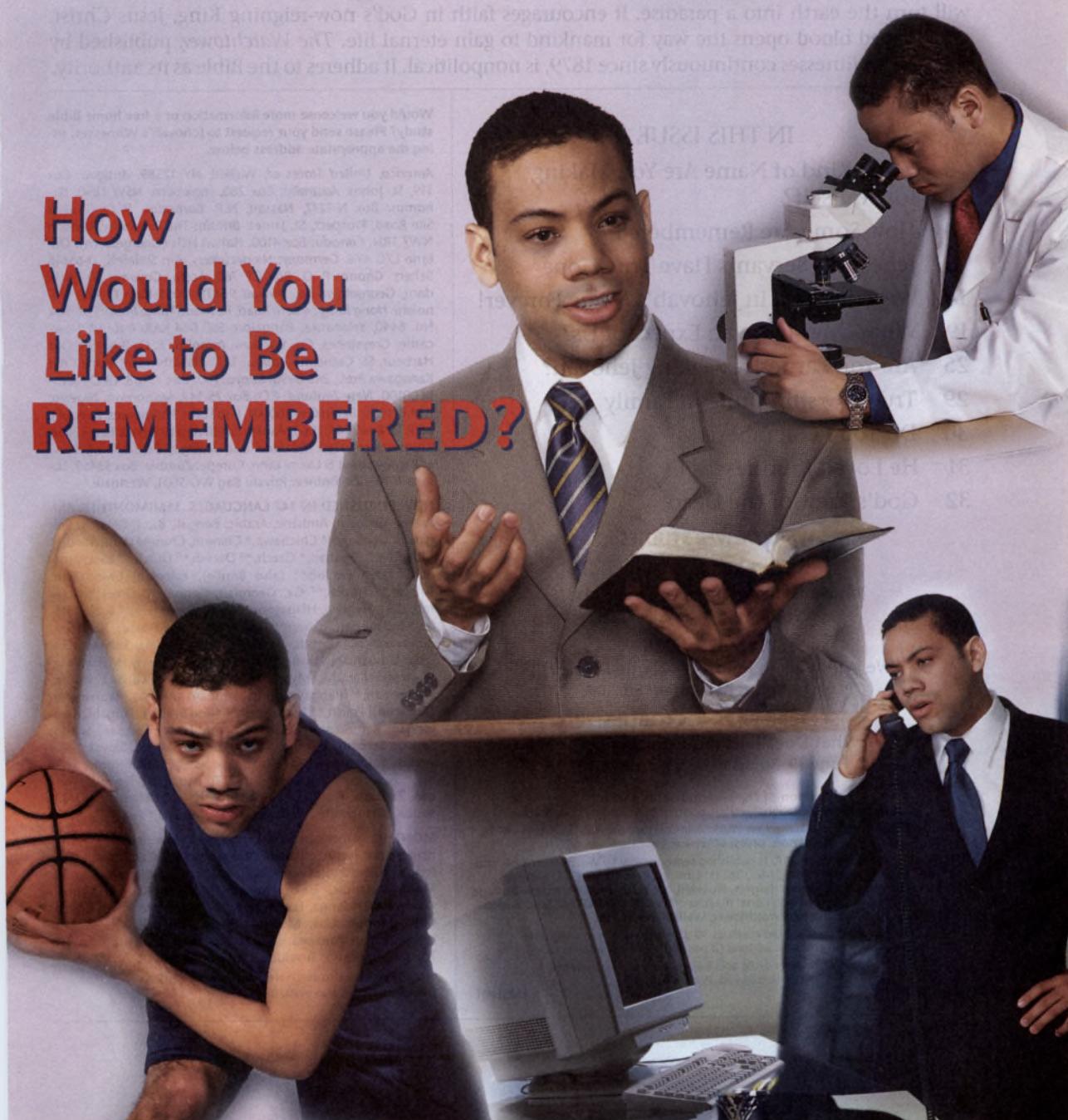


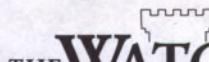
AUGUST 15, 2003

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

How
Would You
Like to Be
REMEMBERED?





THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

August 15, 2003

Average Printing Each Issue: 25,203,000

Vol. 124, No. 16

THE PURPOSE OF *THE WATCHTOWER* is to exalt Jehovah God as Sovereign Lord of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as these fulfill Bible prophecy. It comforts all peoples with the good news that God's Kingdom will soon destroy those who oppress their fellowmen and that it will turn the earth into a paradise. It encourages faith in God's now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 What Kind of Name Are You Making for Yourself?
- 4 How Some Are Remembered
- 9 Jehovah's Servants Have True Hope
- 14 We Will Walk in Jehovah's Name Forever!
- 19 What Does Jehovah Expect of Us?
- 25 Are You Earnestly Seeking Jehovah?
- 29 True Worship Unites a Family
- 30 Do You Remember?
- 31 He Loved Kindness
- 32 God's View of the Dead

WATCHTOWER STUDIES

SEPTEMBER 15-21:

- Jehovah's Servants Have True Hope
Page 9. Songs to be used: 17, 119.

SEPTEMBER 22-28:

- We Will Walk in Jehovah's Name Forever!
Page 14. Songs to be used: 80, 209.

SEPTEMBER 29-OCTOBER 5:

- What Does Jehovah Expect of Us?
Page 19. Songs to be used: 55, 67.

Publication of *The Watchtower* is part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations.

The Bible translation used is the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*, unless otherwise indicated.

The Watchtower (ISSN 0043-1087) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Watchtower, Wallkill, NY 12589.

Changes of address should reach us 30 days before your moving date.
Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label).

© 2003 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania.
All rights reserved. Printed in U.S.A.

Semimonthly

ENGLISH

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using the appropriate address below.

America, United States of: Wallkill, NY 12589. **Antigua:** Box 119, St. Johns. **Australia:** Box 280, Ingleburn, NSW 1890. **Bahamas:** Box N-1247, Nassau, N.P. **Barbados, W.I.:** Crusher Site Road, Prospect, St. James. **Britain:** The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN. **Canada:** Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario L7G 4Y4. **Germany:** Niederselters, Am Steinfels, D-65618 Selters. **Ghana:** P. O. Box GP 760, Accra. **Guyana:** 50 Brickdam, Georgetown 16. **Hawaii 96819:** 2055 Kam IV Rd., Honolulu. **Hong Kong:** 4 Kent Road, Kowloon Tong. **India:** Post Box No. 6440, Yelahanka, Bangalore 560 064 KAR. **Ireland:** Newcastle, Greystones, Co. Wicklow. **Jamaica:** P. O. Box 103, Old Harbour, St. Catherine. **Japan:** 1271 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa Pref., 243-0496. **Kenya:** P.O. Box 47788, GPO Nairobi 00100. **New Zealand:** P.O. Box 75-142, Manurewa. **Nigeria:** P.M.B. 1090, Benin City 300001, Edo State. **Philippines, Republic of:** P. O. Box 2044, 1060 Manila. **South Africa:** Private Bag X2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. **Trinidad and Tobago, Republic of:** Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe. **Zambia:** Box 33459, Luaka 10101. **Zimbabwe:** Private Bag WG-5001, Westgate.

NOW PUBLISHED IN 147 LANGUAGES. SEMIMONTHLY: Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Bicol, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano, * Chichewa,* Chinese, Chinese (Simplified),* Cibemba,* Croatian,* Czech,** Danish,** Dutch,** East Armenian, Efik,* English** (also Braille), Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish,** French,** Ga, Georgian, German,* Greek,* Gujerati, Gun, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian,* Igbo,* Ilokano,* Indonesian, Italian,* Japanese** (also Braille), Kannada, Kinyarwanda, Kirundi, Korean** (also Braille), Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Luvale, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Marathi, Myanmar, Nepali, New Guinea Pidgin, Norwegian,** Pangasinan, Papiamento (Aruba), Papiamento (Curaçao), Polish,** Portuguese** (also Braille), Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian,* Russian,* Samar-Leyte, Samoan, Sango, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona,* Silozi, Sinhala, Slovak,* Slovenian, Solomon Islands Pidgin, Spanish,** Sranantongo, Swahili,* Swedish,** Tagalog,* Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Tigrinya, Tongan, Tshiluba, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian,* Urdu, Venda, Vietnamese, Wallisian, Xhosa, Yoruba,* Zulu*

MONTHLY: American Sign Language (Videocassette), Armenian, Assamese, Azerbaijani (Roman script), Cambodian, Chitonga, Gilbertese, Greenlandic, Haitian Creole, Hausa, Hiri Motu, Icelandic, Isoko, Kaonde, Kazakh, Kiluba, Kirghiz, Kwanyama/Ndonga, Luganda, Marshallese, Mauritian Creole, Mizo, Monokutuba, Moore, Nuean, Ossetian, Otetela, Palauan, Persian, Ponapean, Seychelles Creole, Tahitian, Tatar, Tiv, Trukese, Tumbuka, Tuvaluan, Umbundu, Yapese, Zande

* Study articles also available in large-print edition.

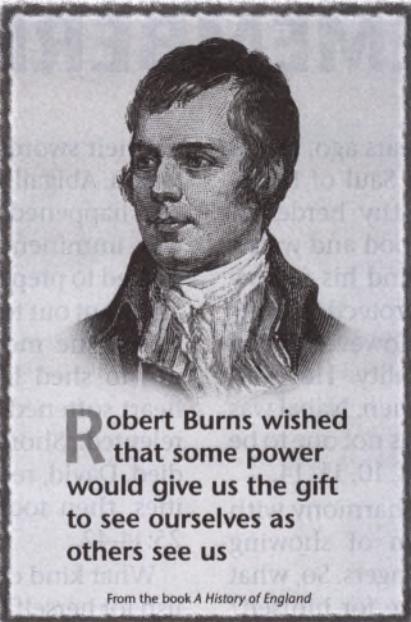
** Audio cassettes also available.

What Kind of NAME Are You Making for Yourself?

HAVE you ever read an obituary column in your local newspaper or seen a lengthy report on a deceased person's life and accomplishments? Did you ask yourself, 'What would people be saying about me?' How many ever think about how they will be remembered after their death? Thus, the frank questions: What would people be saying about you today if you had died yesterday? What kind of reputation are you making for yourself? How would you like to be remembered by those who have known you and by God?

The wise writer of the Bible book of Ecclesiastes said: "A name is better than good oil, and the day of death than the day of one's being born." (Ecclesiastes 7:1) Why would the day of one's death be better than the day of one's birth? Because at birth a person has no established reputation. His personal slate is totally blank. His life course will result in either a positive or a negative reputation. For those who have established a good name over the years, the day of death is indeed better in that respect than the day of birth.

So we have a choice. In fact, daily we have many choices that will determine our reputation on the day of our demise, especially how



Robert Burns wished that some power would give us the gift to see ourselves as others see us

From the book *A History of England*

we will be remembered by God. Thus, the same wise Hebrew wrote: "The remembrance of the righteous one is due for a blessing, but the very name of the wicked ones will rot." (Proverbs 10:7) To be remembered by God for a blessing—what a privilege!

If we are wise, our aim will be to please God by living in harmony with his standards. That means following the basic principles that Christ expressed: "'You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. The second, like it, is this, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments the whole Law hangs, and the Prophets."—Matthew 22:37-40.

Some are remembered as philanthropists, humanitarians, advocates of civil rights, or for their accomplishments in business, science, medicine, or other activities. How, though, would you like to be remembered?

The Scottish poet Robert Burns (1759-96) expressed the wish that some power would give us the gift to see ourselves as others see us. Can you look at yourself objectively and say that you have a fine reputation with other

people and with God? In the long run, our relationships with others are surely more significant than any short-term achievements we may have in the world of sports or business. Therefore the question is: How do our dealings with others—our conversation, our manner, our body language—affect them?

Do we come across as approachable or as aloof? As kind or as harsh? As flexible or as exacting? As warm and humane or as cold and impersonal? As a destructive critic or as a constructive counselor? Let us examine some examples from the past and from modern times to see what we can learn.

How Some Are REMEMBERED

ABOUT three thousand years ago, David was fleeing from King Saul of Israel. David sent to Nabal, a wealthy herder of sheep and goats, asking for food and water. Actually, Nabal owed David and his followers a favor because of the protection they had given to Nabal's flocks. However, Nabal refused to offer any hospitality. He even screamed rebukes at David's men. Nabal was playing with fire, for David was not one to be trifled with.—1 Samuel 25:5, 8, 10, 11, 14.

Nabal's attitude was out of harmony with the Middle Eastern tradition of showing hospitality to visitors and strangers. So, what kind of name did Nabal make for himself? The Bible record says that he "was harsh and bad in his practices" and "a good-for-nothing fellow." His name means "senseless," and he certainly lived up to it. (1 Samuel 25:3, 17, 25) Would you want to be remembered that way? Are you harsh and unrelenting when dealing with others, especially if it appears that they are at a disadvantage? Or are you kind, hospitable, and considerate?

Abigail—A Prudent Woman

As a result of his harsh attitude, Nabal was in trouble. David and 400 of his men girded

on their swords and set out to teach Nabal a lesson. Abigail, Nabal's wife, got to hear what had happened. She knew that a showdown was imminent. What could she do? She rushed to prepare ample food and provisions and went out to intercept David and his men. When she met them, she implored David not to shed blood without cause. David's heart softened. He listened to her pleas and relented. Shortly after these events, Nabal died. David, recognizing Abigail's good qualities, then took her as his wife.—1 Samuel 25:14-42.

What kind of reputation did Abigail establish for herself? She was "good in discretion," or "intelligent," as the original Hebrew expresses it. She was obviously sensible and practical and knew how and when to take the initiative. She acted loyally to protect her foolish husband and his household from disaster. Eventually she died, but with an outstanding reputation as a prudent woman.—1 Samuel 25:3; *New International Version*.

What Record Did Peter Leave Behind?

Let us move forward in time to the first century C.E. and consider Jesus' 12 apostles. Without a doubt one of the most expressive



*Abigail is remembered
for her discretion*

and impulsive was Peter, or Cephas, formerly a fisherman in Galilee. He was evidently a dynamic person who was not afraid to express his feelings. For example, there was the occasion when Jesus washed his disciples' feet. How did Peter react when it was his turn to have his feet washed?

Peter said to Jesus: "Lord, are you washing my feet?" In answer Jesus said: "What I am doing you do not understand at present, but you will understand after these things." Peter replied: "You will certainly never wash my feet." Notice Peter's emphatic but impulsive reaction. How did Jesus respond?

"Unless I wash you," Jesus answered, "you have no part with me." Simon Peter said to him: "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." Now Peter goes to the

other extreme! But you always knew where you stood with Peter. There was no guile or duplicity.—John 13:6-9.

Peter is also remembered for his very human weaknesses. For example, he denied Christ three times in front of people who accused him of being a follower of the condemned Jesus of Nazareth. When Peter realized his mistake, he wept bitterly. He was not afraid to express his sorrow and regret. It is also significant that this account of Peter's denial was recorded by the Gospel writers—in all probability thanks to information that Peter himself supplied! He was humble enough to admit his failings. Do you have that virtue?—Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72; Luke 22:54-62; John 18:15-18, 25-27.

Within a few weeks of his denying Christ, Peter, imbued with holy spirit, boldly preached to a multitude of Jews at Pentecost. This was a sure sign that the resurrected Jesus had confidence in him.—Acts 2:14-21.

On another occasion, Peter fell into a different trap. The apostle Paul explained that prior to the arrival of certain Jewish brothers in Antioch, Peter had freely mixed with Gentile believers. However, he separated himself from these “in fear of those of the circumcised class” who had just arrived from Jerusalem. Paul exposed Peter’s double standard.—Galatians 2:11-14.

Still, who of the disciples spoke up at a critical moment when it seemed that many of Jesus’ followers were ready to desert him? The occasion was when Jesus revealed something new, regarding the significance of eating his flesh and drinking his blood. He said: “Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in yourselves.” The majority of Jesus’ Jewish followers were stumbled and said: “This speech is shocking; who can listen to it?” What happened then? “Owing to this many of his disciples went off to the things behind and would no longer walk with him.”—John 6:50-66.

At this crucial moment, Jesus turned to the 12 apostles and asked the poignant question: “You do not want to go also, do you?” Peter responded: “Lord, whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life; and we have believed and come to know that you are the Holy One of God.”—John 6:67-69.

What kind of reputation did Peter establish? One who reads the accounts about him cannot help but be impressed by his honest and open personality, by his loyalty, and by his willingness to acknowledge his own weaknesses. What a fine name he made for himself!

What Did People Remember About Jesus?

Jesus’ earthly ministry lasted a mere three and a half years. Yet, how is he remembered by his followers? Because he was perfect, without sin, was he aloof and distant? Did he throw his weight around because he knew that he was the Son of God? Did he intimidate and coerce his followers into obedience? Did he take himself so seriously that he lacked a sense of humor? Was he so busy that he had no time for the weak and the sick or for children? Did he look down on people of other races and on women, as males often did back then? What does the record tell us?

Jesus was interested in people. A study of his ministry reveals that on many occasions he healed the lame and the sick. He put himself out to help the needy. He showed interest in young ones, instructing his disciples: “Let the young children come to me; do not try to stop them.” Then Jesus “took the children into his arms and began blessing them, laying his hands upon them.” Do you make time for children, or are you too busy even to notice their presence?—Mark 10:13-16; Matthew 19:13-15.

When Jesus was on earth, the Jewish people were weighed down with religious rules and regulations that went beyond the requirements of the Law. Their religious leaders were burdening people with heavy loads, while they themselves were not budging the loads with one of their fingers. (Matthew 23:4; Luke 11:46) What a contrast, therefore, was Jesus! He said: “Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you.”—Matthew 11:28-30.

People were refreshed when they associated with Jesus. He did not intimidate his disciples, so that they were afraid to express themselves. In fact, he asked questions

Peter is remembered for his impulsive yet honest personality

to draw them out. (Mark 8: 27-29) Christian overseers do well to ask themselves: 'Do I make the same impression on fellow believers? Do other elders really tell me what they believe, or do they hesitate to do so?' How refreshing it is when overseers are approachable, listen to others, and remain flexible! Unreasonable-ness only discourages frank and free discussion.

Even though Jesus was the Son of God, he never misused his power or authority. Rather, he reasoned with his listeners. Such was the case when the Pharisees tried to trap him with the trick question: "Is it lawful to pay head tax to Caesar or not?" Jesus told them to show him a coin and asked them: "Whose image and inscription is this?" They replied: "Caesar's." Then he said to them: "Pay back, therefore, Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God." (Matthew 22:15-21) Simple logic was enough.

Did Jesus have a sense of humor? Some readers may sense a touch of humor when they come across the passage where Jesus said that it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God. (Matthew 19:23, 24) The very idea of a camel attempting to pass through the eye of a literal sewing needle is exaggerated. Another example of such hyperbole is that of seeing the straw in a brother's eye but not observing the rafter in one's own eye. (Luke 6:41, 42) No, Jesus was not a tight-lipped martinet. He was warm and friendly. For Christians today,



a sense of humor can lighten the gloom in times of stress.

Jesus' Compassion for Women

How did women feel in Jesus' presence? Certainly he had many loyal female followers, including his own mother, Mary. (Luke 8:1-3; 23:55, 56; 24:9, 10) Women felt free to approach Jesus to such a degree that on one occasion a woman 'known to be a sinner' washed his feet with her tears and greased them with perfumed oil. (Luke 7:37, 38) Another woman, who had suffered with a flow of blood for years, pushed forward to touch his garment in order to be healed. Jesus praised her faith. (Matthew 9:20-22) Yes, women found Jesus approachable.

On another occasion, Jesus spoke to a Samaritan woman at a well. She was so surprised that she said: "How is it that you, despite being a Jew, ask me for a drink, when I am a Samaritan woman?" You see, Jews had no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus went on to teach her a marvelous truth about the 'water that bubbles up to impart everlasting



Jesus took time for children

life.' He was at ease with women. He did not feel challenged.—John 4:7-15.

Jesus is remembered for his many humane qualities, including his self-sacrificing spirit. He was the epitome of godly love. Jesus sets the standard for all who want to be his followers. How closely do you follow his example?—1 Corinthians 13:4-8; 1 Peter 2:21.

How Are Modern-Day Christians Remembered?

In modern times, thousands of faithful Christians have died, many in old age, others relatively young. But they have left behind a good reputation. Some, like Crystal, who died in old age, are remembered for their warm heart and gregarious nature. Others, like Dirk, who died in his 40's, are remembered for a happy disposition and a willing spirit.

Then there is the case of José from Spain. Back in the 1960's, when the preaching work of Jehovah's Witnesses was under ban in that country, José was married

and had three young daughters. He had a steady job in Barcelona. But at that time, there was a need for mature Christian elders in southern Spain. José left his secure employment and moved to Málaga with his family. They had to survive difficult economic times, often being without employment.

Yet, José was known for his faithful, reliable example in the ministry and for the exemplary upbringing of his daughters, which he accomplished with the help of his supportive wife, Carmela. When someone was needed to organize Christian conventions in the region, José always made himself available. Unfortunately, while in his 50's, he was stricken with a serious illness that caused his death. However, he left behind a reputation of being a reliable, hard-working elder and loving husband and father.

So how will you be remembered? If you had died yesterday, what would people be saying about you today? This is a question that might motivate all of us to improve on how we act.

What can we do to establish a good reputation? We can always improve in displaying the fruitage of the spirit—love, long-suffering, kindness, mildness, and self-control among others. (Galatians 5:22, 23) Yes, to be sure, "a [good] name is better than good oil, and the day of death than the day of one's being born."—Ecclesiastes 7:1; Matthew 7:12.

JEHOVAH'S SERVANTS HAVE TRUE HOPE

"The remaining ones of Jacob must become in the midst of many peoples like dew from Jehovah . . . that does not hope for man." —MICAH 5:7.

JEHOVAH is the great Maker of rain and dew. It is futile to hope in men for either dew or rain. Wrote the prophet Micah: "The remaining ones of Jacob must become in the midst of many peoples like dew from Jehovah, like copious showers upon vegetation, that does not hope for man or wait for the sons of earthling man." (Micah 5:7) Who are the present-day "remaining ones of Jacob"? They are spiritual Israelites, the remnant of "the Israel of God." (Galatians 6:16) To "many peoples" of the earth, they are like refreshing "dew from Jehovah" and "copious showers upon vegetation." Yes, anointed Christians today are a blessing from God to the people. As Kingdom proclaimers, they are used by Jehovah to give the people his message of true hope.

² It should come as no surprise that this world lacks true hope. Political instability, moral breakdown, crime, economic crisis, terrorism, warfare—we expect such things in a world dominated by Satan the Devil. (1 John 5:19) Many are afraid of what the future may hold. As Jehovah's worshipers, however, we are not afraid, for we have a sure



Micah's prophecy can strengthen us spiritually

hope for the future. It is a true hope because it is based on God's Word. We have faith in Jehovah and in his Word because what he says always comes true.

³ The divinely inspired prophecy of Micah strengthens us to walk in Jehovah's name and gives us a basis for true hope. In the eighth century B.C.E., when Micah prophesied, God's covenant people were divided into two nations—Israel and Judah—and both were ignoring God's covenant. The result was moral breakdown, religious apostasy, and gross materialism. Hence,

Jehovah warned that he would take action against them. Of course, God's warnings were directed to Micah's contemporaries. However, the present-day situation is so much like that of Micah's time that his words also apply now. This will become evident as we consider some highlights of the seven chapters of the book of Micah.

What an Overview Reveals

⁴ Let us take a brief look at the contents of the book of Micah. In chapter 1, Jehovah exposes the revolt of Israel and Judah. As a

1. How is spiritual Israel a source of refreshment?
2. Why do we have true hope despite living in this troubled world?

3. (a) Why was Jehovah going to take action against Israel and Judah? (b) Why do Micah's words apply today?
4. Micah chapters 1 through 3 provide what information?

result of their delinquency, Israel will be destroyed and Judah's punishment will reach even to the gates of Jerusalem. Chapter 2 reveals that the wealthy and powerful are oppressing the weak and helpless. Yet, there is also a divine promise. God's people will be gathered together in unity. Chapter 3 reports Jehovah's pronouncements against the national leaders and the delinquent prophets. The leaders are perverting justice, and the prophets are uttering lies. In spite of this, Micah is empowered by holy spirit to proclaim Jehovah's coming judgment.¹⁸

⁵ Chapter 4 foretells that in the final part of the days, all nations will come to the elevated mountain of the house of Jehovah to be instructed by him. Before that, Judah will be exiled to Babylon, but Jehovah will deliver her. Chapter 5 reveals that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem of Judah. He will shepherd his people and deliver them from oppressive nations.

⁶ Micah chapter 6 records Jehovah's accusations against his people in the form of a legal case. What has he

5. What is the gist of Micah chapters 4 and 5?

6, 7. What points are presented in chapters 6 and 7 of Micah's prophecy?

done to cause them to rebel? Nothing. Actually, his requirements are very reasonable. He wants his worshipers to exercise justice and to be kind and modest as they walk with him. Rather than do that, Israel and Judah have followed a course of revolt and will have to suffer the consequences.

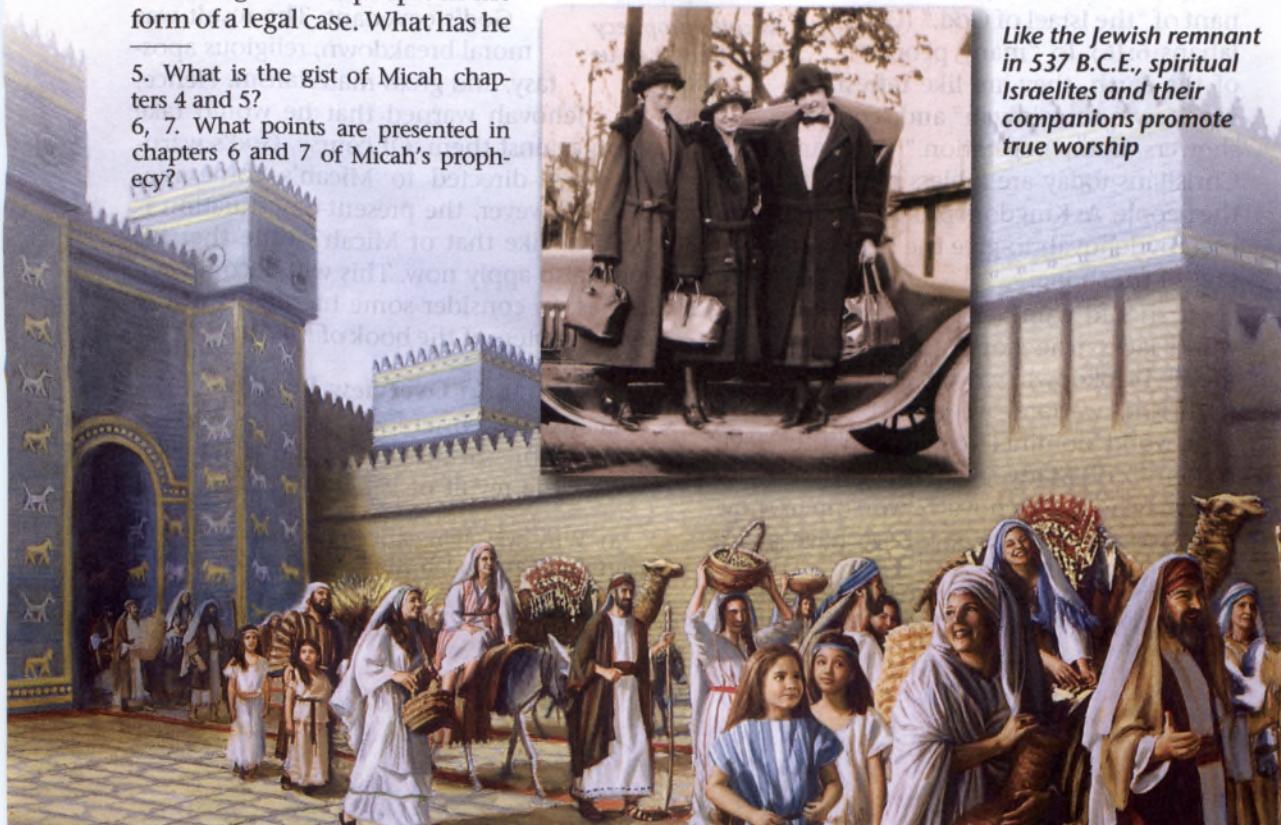
⁷ In the final chapter of his prophecy, Micah denounces the wickedness of his contemporaries. He does not lose heart, however, for he is determined to "show a waiting attitude" for Jehovah. (Micah 7:7) The book concludes with an expression of confidence that Jehovah will have mercy on his people. History testifies that this hope was realized. In 537 B.C.E., when Jehovah's disciplining of his people was completed, he mercifully restored a remnant to their own land.

⁸ What fine information Jehovah reveals through Micah! This inspired book provides warning examples of how God deals with

8. How would you summarize the contents of the book of Micah?



Like the Jewish remnant in 537 B.C.E., spiritual Israelites and their companions promote true worship



those who claim to serve him but who are unfaithful. It foretells events that are occurring today. And it gives divine counsel about how we should conduct ourselves during these difficult times so as to make our hope firm.

The Sovereign Lord Jehovah Speaks

⁹ Let us now examine the book of Micah in more detail. At Micah 1:2, we read: "Hear, O you peoples, all of you; pay attention, O earth and what fills you, and let the Sovereign Lord Jehovah serve against you as a witness, Jehovah from his holy temple." If you had been living in Micah's time, those words would no doubt have captured your attention. Indeed, they do capture your attention because Jehovah is speaking from his holy temple and is addressing not only Israel and Judah but people everywhere. In Micah's day, people had ignored the Sovereign Lord Jehovah for too long. Soon, that would change. Jehovah was determined to take decisive action.

¹⁰ The same is true in our day. Revelation 14:18-20 shows that Jehovah is again communicating from his holy temple. He will soon take decisive action, and momentous events will again rock mankind. This time, the wicked "vine of the earth" will be cast into the great winepress of Jehovah's anger, to the complete destruction of Satan's system of things.

¹¹ Listen to what Jehovah is going to do. Micah 1:3, 4 says: "Look! Jehovah is going forth from his place, and he will certainly come down and tread upon earth's high places. And the mountains must melt under him, and the low plains themselves will split apart,

9. According to Micah 1:2, what was Jehovah going to do?

10. Why are the words of Micah 1:2 of importance to us?

11. What is meant by the words of Micah 1:3, 4?

like wax because of the fire, like waters being poured down a steep place." Will Jehovah leave his heavenly abode and physically tread the mountains and plains of the Promised Land? No. He does not need to. He will merely have to turn his attention to the earth for his will to be accomplished. Moreover, it is, not the physical landscape, but the inhabitants who will suffer the things described. When Jehovah acts, the result will be disastrous for unfaithful ones—as if the mountains had melted like wax and the plains had been split apart by an earthquake.

¹² The prophetic words of Micah 1:3, 4 may remind you of another inspired prophecy foretelling disastrous events on earth. As recorded at 2 Peter 3:10, the apostle Peter wrote: "Jehovah's day will come as a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a hissing noise, but the elements being intensely hot will be dissolved, and earth and the works in it will be discovered." Similar to Micah's prophecy, Peter's words do not apply to the literal heavens and earth. They refer to a great tribulation coming upon this ungodly system of things.

¹³ Despite that coming disaster, Christians can have confidence in the future, just as Micah did. How? By following the counsel found in the succeeding verses of Peter's letter. The apostle exclaims: "What sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion, awaiting and keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah!" (2 Peter 3:11, 12) Our hope for the future will be certain if we cultivate an obedient heart and make sure that our conduct is holy and our life is filled with deeds of godly devotion. To make our hope secure, we must also remember that Jehovah's day will definitely come.

12, 13. In harmony with 2 Peter 3:10-12, what makes our hope secure?

¹⁴ Jehovah explains why his ancient people deserve to be punished. Micah 1:5 states: "It is because of the revolt of Jacob that there is all this, even because of the sins of the house of Israel. What is the revolt of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? And what are the high places of Judah? Are they not Jerusalem?" Israel and Judah owe their very existence to Jehovah. Yet, they have rebelled against him, and their rebellion reaches right into their respective capital cities, Samaria and Jerusalem.

Wicked Practices Abound

¹⁵ An example of the wickedness of Micah's contemporaries is vividly described at Micah 2:1, 2: "Woe to those who are scheming what is harmful, and to those practicing what is bad, upon their beds! By the light of the morning they proceed to do it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they have desired fields and have seized them; also houses, and have taken them; and they have defrauded an able-bodied man and his household, a man and his hereditary possession."

¹⁶ Greedy individuals lie awake at night scheming how to seize their neighbors' fields and houses. In the morning, they hasten to carry out their schemes. They would not commit such wicked deeds if they remembered Jehovah's covenant. The Mosaic Law contains provisions to protect the poor. Under it, no family should permanently lose possession of its inheritance. However, that does not concern those greedy individuals. They ignore the words of Leviticus 19:18, which says: "You must love your fellow as yourself."

¹⁷ This shows what can happen when people who claim to serve God lose sight of spiriti-

tual goals and seek first material things. Paul warned Christians of his day: "Those who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many senseless and hurtful desires, which plunge men into destruction and ruin." (1 Timothy 6:9) When a person makes the gaining of money his chief goal in life, he is, in effect, worshiping a false god—Mammon, or Riches. That false god offers no sure hope for the future.—Matthew 6:24, footnote.

¹⁸ Many in Micah's day learn the hard way that relying on material things is mere vanity. According to Micah 2:4, Jehovah says: "In that day one will raise up concerning you people a proverbial saying and will certainly lament a lamentation, even a lamentation. One will have to say: 'We have positively been despoiled! The very portion of my people he alters. How he removes it from me! To the unfaithful one he apportions out our own fields!'" Yes, those stealers of homes and fields will lose their own family inheritance. They will be deported to a foreign land, and their possessions will become the spoil of "the unfaithful," or people of the nations. All hopes for a prosperous future will be dashed.

¹⁹ However, the hope of those who trust in Jehovah will not be disappointed. Jehovah is faithful to his covenants with Abraham and David, and he has mercy on those who, like Micah, love him and grieve over the alienation of their countrymen from God. For the sake of upright ones, there will be a restoration in God's due time.

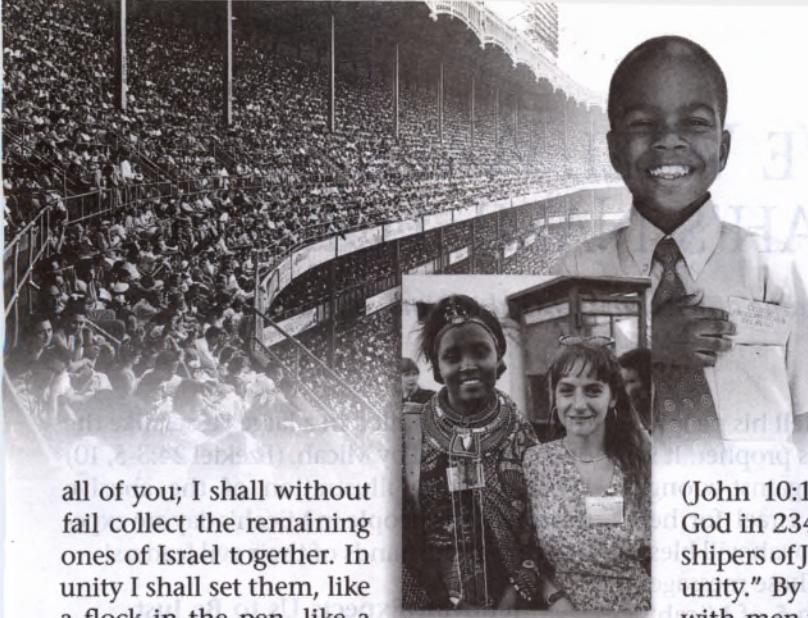
²⁰ That happens in 537 B.C.E., after Babylon falls and when a remnant of Jews return to their homeland. At that time, the words of Micah 2:12 have an initial fulfillment. Jehovah says: "I shall positively gather Jacob,

¹⁸ 18. What was going to happen to materialists in Micah's day?

^{19, 20} 19, 20. What was the experience of Jews who trusted in Jehovah?

14. Why did Israel and Judah deserve punishment?
15, 16. Micah's contemporaries were guilty of what wicked deeds?

17. What can happen when those claiming to serve God put material things first in life?



all of you; I shall without fail collect the remaining ones of Israel together. In unity I shall set them, like a flock in the pen, like a drove in the midst of its pasture; they will be noisy with men." How loving Jehovah is! After disciplining his people, he allows a remnant to return and serve him in the land he gave to their forefathers.

Striking Parallels in Our Day

²¹ As we considered the first two chapters of Micah, were you struck by how much things are the same today? As in Micah's time, many now claim to serve God. Like Judah and Israel, however, they are divided and have even fought wars among themselves. Many of the wealthy in Christendom have oppressed the poor. More and more, religious leaders condone practices that are expressly condemned in the Bible. No wonder Christendom will soon come to her end along with the rest of "Babylon the Great," the world empire of false religion! (Revelation 18:1-5) Following the pattern of Micah's time, though, Jehovah will have faithful servants remaining on earth.

²² In 1919, faithful anointed Christians

21. How do present-day conditions compare with those in Micah's day?
22. What two groups have placed their hope in God's Kingdom?

made a final break with Christendom and set out to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom to all the nations. (Matthew 24:14) To start with, they sought out remaining ones of spiritual Israel. Then "other sheep" began to be gathered, and the two groups became "one flock, one shepherd."

(John 10:16) Although they now serve God in 234 lands, all these faithful worshipers of Jehovah have truly been set "in unity." By now, the sheep pen is "noisy with men," as well as with women and children. Their hope is, not in this system of things, but in God's Kingdom, which will shortly lead to an earthly paradise.

²³ Concerning the faithful worshipers of Jehovah, the final verse of Micah chapter 2 says: "Their king will pass through before them, with Jehovah at the head of them." Do you see yourself in that triumphal procession, following your King, Jesus Christ, with Jehovah himself at the head? If so, you can have the conviction that victory is certain and your hope is sure. This will become even more evident as we consider further highlights of Micah's prophecy.

23. Why are you convinced that your hope is sure?

How Would You Answer?

- In Micah's day, why did Jehovah decide to take action against Judah and Israel?
- What can happen when those claiming to serve God put material interests first in life?
- After considering Micah chapters 1 and 2, why are you convinced that your hope is sure?

WE WILL WALK IN JEHOVAH'S NAME FOREVER!

"We . . . shall walk in the name of Jehovah our God to time indefinite, even forever."

—MICAH 4:5.

JEHOVAH has something to tell his people, and he is using Micah as his prophet. It is God's purpose to take action against wrongdoers. He is going to punish Israel for her apostasy. Happily, though, Jehovah will bless those who walk in his name. These messages ring out in chapters 3 through 5 of Micah's prophecy.

² God's prophet declares: "Hear, please, you heads of Jacob and you commanders of the house of Israel. Is it not your business to know justice?" Yes, that is supposed to be their business, but what are they really doing? Says Micah: "You haters of what is good and lovers of badness, tearing off their skin from people and their organism from off their bones; you the ones who have also eaten the organism of my people, and have stripped their very skin from off them, and smashed to pieces their very bones, and crushed them to pieces like what is in a wide-mouthed pot and like flesh in the midst of a cooking pot."—Micah 3:1-3.

³ Why, the leaders are oppressing the poor, defenseless people! The figures of speech used here are easily understood by those who hear Micah. When a slaughtered sheep is prepared by boiling, it is first skinned and then disjointed. Sometimes the bones are cracked open to free the marrow. Both the flesh and

1. What messages are set out in Micah chapters 3 through 5?

2, 3. (a) Leaders of Israel should display what quality, but what are they actually doing? (b) How would you explain the figures of speech used at Micah 3:2, 3?

the bones are boiled in a large vessel, like the one mentioned by Micah. (Ezekiel 24:3-5, 10) What a fitting illustration of the abusive treatment the people in Micah's day are experiencing at the hands of their evil leaders!

Jehovah Expects Us to Be Just

⁴ There is a striking contrast between the loving Shepherd, Jehovah, and Israel's leaders. Because they do not exercise justice, they fail to fulfill their commission to protect the flock. Instead, they selfishly exploit the figurative sheep, depriving them of justice and subjecting them to "acts of bloodshed," as noted at Micah 3:10. What can we learn from this situation?

⁵ God expects justice to be exercised by those taking the lead among his people. This is what we find to be true of Jehovah's servants today. Moreover, this harmonizes with Isaiah 32:1, where we read: "Look! A king will reign for righteousness itself; and as respects princes, they will rule as princes for justice itself." In Micah's day, however, what do we find? "Haters of what is good and lovers of badness" persist in perverting justice.

Whose Prayers Are Answered?

⁶ Can Micah's wicked contemporaries expect Jehovah's favor? Of course not! Micah

4. What contrast exists between Jehovah and Israel's leaders?

5. Jehovah expects what of those taking the lead among his people?

6, 7. What important point is highlighted at Micah 3:4?

3:4 states: "They will call to Jehovah for aid, but he will not answer them. And he will conceal his face from them in that time, according as they committed badness in their dealings." This highlights a very important point.

⁷ Jehovah will not answer our prayers if we practice sin. That is certainly so if we are living a double life, concealing our wrongdoing while pretending to serve God faithfully. According to Psalm 26:4, David sang: "I have not sat with men of untruth; and with those who hide what they are I do not come in." How much less will Jehovah answer the prayers of those who deliberately violate his Word!

Empowered by God's Spirit

⁸ What deplorable practices are common among Israel's spiritual leaders! False prophets cause God's people to wander spiritually. The greedy leaders call out "Peace!" but actually sanctify war against anyone who does not put something into their mouths. "Therefore," says Jehovah, "you men will have night, so that there will be no vision;

8. The false prophets of Micah's time were warned of what?

Can you explain Micah's illustration involving a cooking pot?



and darkness you will have, so as not to practice divination. And the sun will certainly set upon the prophets, and the day must get dark upon them. And the visionaries will have to be ashamed, and the diviners will certainly be disappointed. And they will have to cover over the mustache."—Micah 3:5-7a. 992 1990

⁹ Why "cover over the mustache"? This is something that Micah's wicked contemporaries do out of shame. And these evil men ought to be ashamed. "There is no answer from God," as far as they are concerned. (Micah 3:7b) Jehovah pays no attention to the prayers of any haughty wicked ones.

¹⁰ Micah has no reason to "cover over the mustache." He is not ashamed. Jehovah answers his prayers. Notice Micah 3:8, where the faithful prophet says: "On the other hand, I myself have become full of power, with the spirit of Jehovah, and of justice and mightiness." How thankful Micah is that throughout his long and faithful ministry, he has always been "full of power, with the spirit of Jehovah"! This has given him the strength "to tell to Jacob his revolt and to Israel his sin."

¹¹ Micah needs more than human strength in order to proclaim God's message of adverse judgment. Jehovah's spirit, or powerful active force, is vital. What about us? Our preaching commission can be fulfilled only if Jehovah strengthens us by means of his holy spirit. Attempts to preach are sure to fail utterly if we willfully practice sin. In that case God could not answer our prayers for strength to do this work. We certainly

ly cannot declare our heavenly Father's judgment messages unless "the spirit of Jehovah" rests upon us. Through

9, 10. What is meant by 'covering over the mustache,' and why does Micah have no reason to do such a thing?

11. How are humans empowered to declare God's messages?

prayers that are heard and with the help of the holy spirit, we are able to speak God's word courageously like Micah.

^o¹² Perhaps you recall the account at Acts 4: 23-31. Imagine that you are one of Jesus' first-century disciples. Fanatic persecutors have been seeking to still the lips of Christ's followers. But these loyal ones pray to their Sovereign Lord, pleading: "Jehovah, give attention to their threats, and grant your slaves to keep speaking your word with all boldness."

12. Why could Jesus' early disciples 'keep speaking God's word with all boldness'?



The result? When they make supplication, the place in which they are gathered together is shaken, and they are one and all filled with the holy spirit and speak the word of God with boldness. May we therefore prayerfully look to Jehovah and rely on his help by holy spirit as we carry out our ministry.

¹³ Think again of Micah's day. According to Micah 3:9-12, the bloodguilty rulers judge for a bribe, the priests instruct for a price, and the false prophets practice divination for money. No wonder God has decreed that Judah's capital, Jerusalem, "will become mere heaps of ruins"! Since false worship and moral corruption flourish also in Israel, Micah is inspired to warn that God will make Samaria "a heap of ruins." (Micah 1:6) In fact, the prophet lives to see the foretold destruction of Samaria by Assyrian hordes in 740 B.C.E. (2 Kings 17:5, 6; 25:1-21) It is evident that

13. What will happen to Jerusalem and Samaria, and why?

*Like Micah, we
courageously carry
out our ministry*



these powerful messages against Jerusalem and Samaria could be delivered only in Jehovah's strength.

¹⁴ Judah certainly cannot escape Jehovah's adverse judgment. In fulfillment of the prophecy recorded at Micah 3:12, Zion will be "plowed up as a mere field." From our 21st-century vantage point, we know that these things took place when the Babylonians brought devastation upon Judah and Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E. This occurred years after Micah prophesied, but he was sure that it was coming. Surely we should be just as confident that the present wicked system of things will end in the foretold "day of Jehovah."—2 Peter 3:11, 12.

Jehovah Sets Matters Straight

¹⁵ Looking back, we see that Micah next delivers a thrilling message of hope. What heartening words we find at Micah 4:1-4! Says Micah, in part: "It must occur in the final part of the days that the mountain of the house of Jehovah will become firmly established above the top of the mountains, and it will certainly be lifted up above the hills; and to it peoples must stream. . . . And he will certainly render judgment among many peoples, and set matters straight respecting mighty nations far away. And they will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. They will not lift up sword, nation against nation, neither will they learn war anymore. And they will actually sit, each one under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be no one making them tremble; for the very mouth of Jehovah of armies has spoken it."

¹⁶ Who are the "many peoples" and the "mighty nations" mentioned here? They are

14. How was the prophecy recorded at Micah 3:12 fulfilled, and how should that affect us?

15. In your own words, how would you describe the prophecy recorded at Micah 4:1-4?

16, 17. How is Micah 4:1-4 being fulfilled today?

not the nations and governments of this world. Rather, the prophecy applies to individuals out of all nations who turn to united sacred service in Jehovah's mountain of true worship.

¹⁷ In keeping with Micah's prophecy, the clean worship of Jehovah will soon be practiced in the fullest sense earth wide. Today, people "rightly disposed for everlasting life" are being instructed in Jehovah's ways. (Acts 13:48) Jehovah is rendering judgment and setting matters straight spiritually for believers who take their stand for the Kingdom. They will survive "the great tribulation" as part of the "great crowd." (Revelation 7:9, 14) Having beaten their swords into plowshares, even today they live at peace with fellow Witnesses of Jehovah and with others. What a delight to be among them!

Determined to Walk in Jehovah's Name

¹⁸ In our day, when fear covers the earth like an ominous cloud, we are thrilled that many are learning Jehovah's ways. We long for the time now near at hand when all such lovers of God will learn war no more but will sit under their own vine and fig tree. Fig trees are often planted in vineyards. (Luke 13:6) Sitting under one's own vine and fig tree symbolizes peaceful, prosperous, and secure conditions. Even now, our relationship with Jehovah gives us peace of mind and spiritual security. When such circumstances exist under Kingdom rule, we will be unafraid and totally secure.

¹⁹ To enjoy divine favor and blessing, we must walk in Jehovah's name. This is powerfully expressed at Micah 4:5, where the prophet declares: "All the peoples, for their part, will walk each one in the name of its

18. What is symbolized by 'sitting under one's own vine and fig tree'?

19. What does it mean to walk in Jehovah's name?

god; but we, for our part, shall walk in the name of Jehovah our God to time indefinite, even forever." Walking in Jehovah's name does not mean merely saying that he is our God. It calls for more than our participation in Christian meetings and the Kingdom-preaching work, although such activities are also vital. If we are walking in Jehovah's name, we are dedicated to him and are endeavoring to serve him faithfully out of whole-souled love. (Matthew 22:37) And as his worshipers, surely we are determined to walk in the name of Jehovah our God to all eternity.

²⁰ Now please consider the prophetic words of Micah 4:6-13. "The daughter of Zion" has to go into exile "as far as to Babylon." That is exactly what happened to inhabitants of Jerusalem in the seventh century B.C.E. Nevertheless, Micah's prophecy indicates that a remnant is to return to Judah, and at Zion's restoration Jehovah will see to it that her enemies are pulverized.

²¹ Other dramatic developments are foretold in Micah chapter 5. For instance, note what is said at Micah 5:2-4. Micah prophesies that a God-appointed Ruler—one "whose origin is from early times"—will come out of Bethlehem. He will rule as a shepherd "in the strength of Jehovah." Moreover, this Ruler

20. What was foretold at Micah 4:6-13?

21, 22. How was Micah 5:2 fulfilled?

How Would You Answer?

- What does God expect of those taking the lead among his people?
- Why are prayer and holy spirit important in connection with our service to Jehovah?
- How do people 'walk in Jehovah's name'?

will be great, not just in Israel, but to "the ends of the earth." His identity may baffle the world in general, but it is no mystery to us.

²² Who was the most important person ever born in Bethlehem? And who will "be great as far as the ends of the earth"? None other than the Messiah, Jesus Christ! When Herod the Great asked the chief priests and the scribes where the Messiah was to be born, they answered: "In Bethlehem of Judea." They even quoted the words of Micah 5:2. (Matthew 2:3-6) Some of the common people knew this too, for John 7:42 quotes them as saying: "Has not the Scripture said that the Christ is coming from the offspring of David, and from Bethlehem the village where David used to be?"

True Refreshment for the People

²³ Micah 5:5-15 refers to an Assyrian invasion that will meet with only fleeting success and points out that God will execute vengeance upon disobedient nations. Micah 5:7 promises the restoration of a repentant Jewish remnant to their homeland, but these words also apply to our day. Micah declares: "The remaining ones of Jacob must become in the midst of many peoples like dew from Jehovah, like copious showers upon vegetation." This lovely symbolism is used to foretell that the remnant of spiritual Jacob, or Israel, will be a blessing from God to the people. Jesus' "other sheep," who have an earthly hope, are delighted to serve shoulder to shoulder with the modern-day remnant of "the Israel of God," helping to refresh others spiritually. (John 10:16; Galatians 6:16; Zephaniah 3:9) In this regard, there is a significant point for reflection. As Kingdom proclaimers, all of us should cherish our privilege of bringing true refreshment to others.

23. What is now happening in fulfillment of Micah 5:7?

²⁴ What have you gleaned from chapters 3 through 5 of Micah's prophecy? Perhaps such points as these: (1) God expects justice to be exercised by those taking the lead among his people. (2) Jehovah will not answer our prayers if we willfully practice sin. (3) Our preaching commission can be fulfilled only if God strengthens us by means of

24. What points from Micah chapters 3 through 5 have impressed you?

his holy spirit. (4) To enjoy divine favor, we must walk in Jehovah's name. (5) As Kingdom proclaimers, we should cherish our privilege of bringing true refreshment to the people. Other points may have made an impression on you. What else can we learn from this prophetic Bible book? The next article will help us to draw practical lessons from the last two chapters of Micah's faith-strengthening prophecy.

WHAT DOES JEHOVAH EXPECT OF US?

"What is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to love kindness and to be modest in walking with your God?"—MICAH 6:8.

VERA is a faithful Christian about 75 years of age and in poor health. "Sometimes," she says, "I look out the window and see my Christian brothers and sisters preaching from house to house. It brings tears to my eyes because I want to be with them, but sickness limits my service to Jehovah."

² Have you ever felt like that? Of course, all who love Jehovah want to walk in his name and meet his requirements. Yet, what if we have declining health, are advanced in years, or have family responsibilities? We may be somewhat discouraged because such circumstances may prevent us from doing all that our heart yearns to do in God's service. If this is our situation, a consideration of Micah chapters 6 and 7 is likely to prove very encouraging. These chapters show that Jehovah's requirements are reasonable as well as reachable.

1, 2. Why may some servants of Jehovah become discouraged, but what should prove helpful?

How God Treats His People

³ Let us first look at Micah 6:3-5 and note how Jehovah treats his people. Remember that in Micah's time the Israelites are rebellious. Even so, Jehovah compassionately addresses them with the words, "O my people." He pleads: "O my people, remember, please." Rather than harshly accuse them, he tries to reach their heart by asking, "What have I done to you?" He even encourages them to "testify against" him.

⁴ What an example God sets for all of us! He compassionately called even the rebellious people of Israel and Judah of Micah's day "my people" and addressed them with the term "please." Certainly, then, we should display compassion and kindness in our dealings with those who are a part of the congregation. Granted, some may not be

3. How does Jehovah treat the rebellious Israelites?
 4. God's example of compassion should have what effect on us?

easy to get along with, or they may be spiritually weak. If they love Jehovah, however, we want to help them and show them compassion.

⁵ Next, let us turn to Micah 6:6, 7. Micah asks a series of questions, saying: "With what shall I confront Jehovah? With what shall I bow myself to God on high? Shall I confront him with whole burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams, with tens of thousands of torrents of oil? Shall I give my firstborn son for my revolt, the fruitage of my belly for the sin of my soul?" No, it is not possible to please Jehovah "with thousands of rams, with tens of thousands of torrents of oil." But there is something that will please him. What is that?

We Must Exercise Justice

⁶ At Micah 6:8, we learn what Jehovah expects of us. Micah asks: "What is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to love kindness and to be modest in walking with your God?" These three requirements involve how we feel, think, and act. We must feel inclined to show these qualities, think about how to manifest them, and take action to display them. Let us consider these three requirements one at a time.

⁷ "To exercise justice" means to do what is right. God's way of doing things is the standard of justice. Micah's contemporaries, however, exercise not justice but injustice. In what ways? Consider Micah 6:10. At the end of that verse, merchants are described as using a "scrimped ephah measure," that is, one that is too small. Verse 11 adds that they em-

ploy "deceptive stone weights." And according to verse 12, "their tongue is tricky."

Thus, false measures, false weights, and false speech are rampant in the commercial world of Micah's day.

⁸ Unjust practices are not limited to the marketplace. They are also common in court. Micah 7:3 indicates that "the prince is asking for something, and the one who is judging does so for the reward." Bribes are given to judges so that they will impose unjust sentences upon innocent people. "The great one," or influential citizen, joins in the crimes. In fact, Micah says that the prince, the judge, and the great man "interweave," or coordinate, their wicked deeds.

⁹ The injustices practiced by the wicked leaders affect all of Judah and Israel. Micah 7:5 notes that a lack of justice has led to a lack of trust between companions, confidential friends, and even marriage mates. Verse 6 indicates that this has led to a state of affairs wherein relatives as close as sons and fathers, daughters and mothers, despise one another.

¹⁰ What about today? Do we not see similar conditions? Like Micah, we are surrounded by a lack of justice, an atmosphere of distrust, and a breakdown of social and family life. Yet, as God's servants in the midst of this unrighteous world, we do not allow the spirit of this world's unjust dealings to infiltrate the Christian congregation. Rather, we strive to uphold the principles of honesty and integrity, displaying these in our daily affairs of life. Indeed, we "conduct ourselves honestly in all things." (Hebrews 13:18) Do you not agree that by exercising justice we enjoy rich blessings resulting from a brotherhood that manifests real trust?

5. What basic point is made at Micah 6:6, 7?

6. What three divine requirements are set out at Micah 6:8?

7, 8. (a) What does it mean "to exercise justice"? (b) What injustices are rampant in Micah's day?

9. How are Judah and Israel affected by the injustices practiced by the wicked?

10. In the present-day climate of injustice, how do Christians conduct themselves?

How Do People Hear “the Very Voice of Jehovah”?

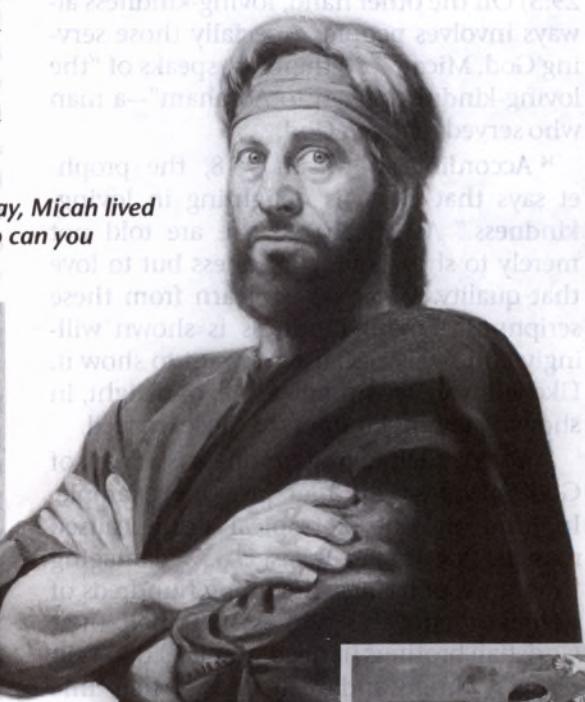
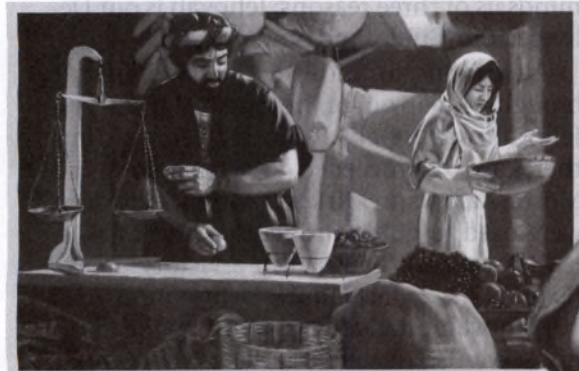
⁵²¹¹ Micah prophesies that despite unjust conditions, justice will reach all sorts of people. The prophet foretells that people will be gathered “from sea to sea, and from mountain to the mountain” to become worshipers of Jehovah. (Micah 7:12) Today, in the final fulfillment of this prophecy, not one particular nation, but individuals of all nations are benefiting from God’s impartial justice. (Isaiah 42:1) How is this proving true?

¹² For an answer, consider Micah’s earlier words. Micah 6:9 states: “To the city the very voice of Jehovah calls out, and the person of practical wisdom will fear your name.” How

11. How is Micah 7:12 being fulfilled?
12. How is “the very voice of Jehovah” being heard today?

Despite the wicked conditions of his day, Micah lived up to Jehovah’s requirements. So can you

do people of all nations hear “the very voice of Jehovah,” and how does this relate to our exercising of justice? Of course, people today do not literally hear God’s voice. Through our worldwide preaching work, however, Jehovah’s voice is being heard by individuals of all races and walks of life. As a result, those who listen ‘fear God’s name,’ coming to have reverential regard for it. We are certainly acting in a just and loving way by serving as zealous Kingdom proclaimers. By making known God’s name to everyone without partiality, we “exercise justice.”



We Must Love Kindness

¹³ Next, let us discuss the second requirement mentioned at Micah 6:8. Jehovah expects us “to love kindness.” The Hebrew word translated “kindness” is also rendered “loving-kindness,” or “loyal love.” Loving-kindness is an active regard for others, a compassionate concern for them. Loving-kindness differs from the quality of love. How so? Love is a broader term, one that can be extended even to things and concepts. For instance, the Scriptures speak of a person who “is loving wine and oil” and of a man who “is loving wisdom.” (Proverbs 21:17; 29:3) On the other hand, loving-kindness always involves people, especially those serving God. Micah 7:20 therefore speaks of “the loving-kindness given to Abraham”—a man who served Jehovah God.

¹⁴ According to Micah 7:18, the prophet says that God “is delighting in loving-kindness.” At Micah 6:8, we are told not merely to show loving-kindness but to love that quality. What do we learn from these scriptures? Loving-kindness is shown willingly and freely because we want to show it. Like Jehovah, we find pleasure, or delight, in showing loving-kindness to those in need.

¹⁵ Today, such loving-kindness is a mark of God’s people. Consider just one example. In June of 2001, a tropical storm caused massive flooding in Texas, U.S.A., damaging thousands of homes, including hundreds of homes of Jehovah’s Witnesses. To help their Christian brothers in need, some 10,000 Witnesses willingly and freely offered their time and energy. For more than half a year, volunteers worked tirelessly, using their days, nights, and weekends to rebuild 8 Kingdom Halls and over 700 homes for their Christian

brothers. Those who could not do such work donated food, supplies, and money. Why did all these thousands of Witnesses come to the aid of their brothers? Because they “love kindness.” And how heartwarming it is to know that such deeds of loving-kindness are shown by our brothers worldwide! Yes, meeting the requirement to “love kindness” is, not a burden, but a joy!

Be Modest in Walking With God

¹⁶ The third requirement found at Micah 6:8 is “to be modest in walking with your God.” This means to recognize our limitations and to depend on God. To illustrate: Picture for a moment a little girl holding on tightly to the hand of her father while they walk through a storm. The girl well knows that her strength is limited, but she has confidence in her father. We too must know our limitations but have confidence in our heavenly Father. How can we maintain this confidence? For one thing, by keeping in mind why it is wise to stay close to God. Micah reminds us of three reasons: Jehovah is our Deliverer, our Guide, and our Protector.

¹⁷ According to Micah 6:4, 5, God says: “I brought you up out of the land of Egypt.” Yes, Jehovah was Israel’s Deliverer. Jehovah further says: “I proceeded to send before you Moses, Aaron and Miriam.” Moses and Aaron were used to guide the nation, and Miriam led the women of Israel in a victory dance. (Exodus 7:1, 2; 15:1, 19-21; Deuteronomy 34:10) Jehovah provided guidance by means of his servants. In verse 5, Jehovah reminds the nation of Israel that he protected them against Balak and Balaam and that he shielded the Israelites during the last leg of their journey from Shittim in Moab to Gilgal in the Promised Land.

13. What is the difference between loving-kindness and love?

14, 15. How is loving-kindness shown, and what evidence of it is cited?

16. What illustration helps to emphasize the need to be modest in walking with God?

17. How did Jehovah deliver, guide, and protect his people of ancient times?



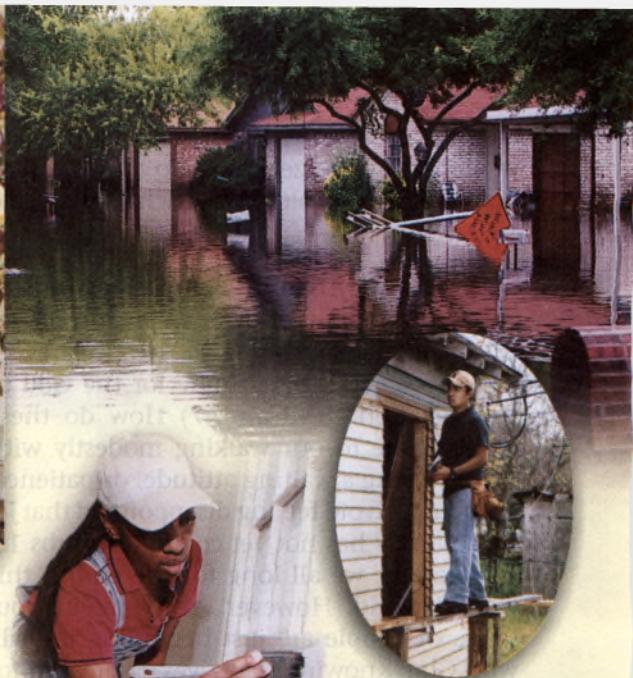
Exercise justice by witnessing to people of all walks of life

¹⁸ As we walk with God, he delivers us from Satan's world, guides us by means of his Word and his organization, and protects us as a group when we are under attack by opposers. We thus have ample reason to hold on tightly to the hand of our heavenly Father as we walk with him through the stormy final leg of our journey to something far greater than the ancient Promised Land—God's righteous new world.

¹⁹ Being modest in walking with God helps us to have a realistic view of our circumstances. This is so because displaying modesty includes being aware of our limitations. Advanced age or failing health may place certain limits on what we can do in Jehovah's service. Instead of allowing this to discourage us, however, it is good to remember that God accepts our efforts and sacrifices 'according to what we have, not according to what we do not have.' (2 Corinthians 8:12) Indeed, Jehovah expects us to serve him in a whole-souled way, doing whatever our

18. How does God act as our Deliverer, Guide, and Protector today?

19. In what way is modesty related to our limitations?



Show that you love kindness by meeting the needs of others

Do what you can while modestly recognizing your limitations



circumstances allow. (Colossians 3:23) When we earnestly and zealously do all we can in his service, God blesses us richly.—Proverbs 10:22.

A Waiting Attitude Brings Blessings

²⁰ Experiencing Jehovah's blessing moves us to imitate Micah's spirit. He declares: "I will show a waiting attitude for the God of my salvation." (Micah 7:7) How do these words relate to our walking modestly with God? Having a waiting attitude, or patience, helps us to avoid feeling disappointed that Jehovah's day has not yet come. (Proverbs 13:12) Frankly, we all long for the end of this wicked world. However, every week thousands of people are just beginning to walk with God. Knowing that gives us a reason for showing a waiting attitude. One longtime Witness said in this connection: "Looking back over 55 years in the preaching work, I am convinced that I have not lost anything by waiting on Jehovah. On the contrary, I have been spared many heartaches." Have you had a similar experience?

²¹ Walking with Jehovah unquestionably benefits us. As we read at Micah 7:14, Micah compares God's people with sheep securely residing with their shepherd. In the larger

20. Being aware of what should help us to display a waiting attitude like that of Micah?

21, 22. How is Micah 7:14 being fulfilled in our day?

How Would You Answer?

- According to Micah 6:8, what does Jehovah require of us?
- What is necessary if we are "to exercise justice"?
- How can we show that we "love kindness"?
- What is involved in 'being modest in walking with God'?

fulfillment of this prophecy today, the remnant of spiritual Israel as well as the "other sheep" find security with their trusted Shepherd, Jehovah. They reside "alone in a forest—in the midst of an orchard," spiritually separated from this increasingly troubled and dangerous world.—John 10:16; Deuteronomy 33:28; Jeremiah 49:31; Galatians 6:16.

²² Jehovah's people enjoy prosperity, as Micah 7:14 also foretold. Speaking about God's sheep, or people, Micah states: "Let them feed on Bashan and Gilead." Just as sheep in Bashan and Gilead fed on rich pastures and prospered, so God's people today enjoy spiritual prosperity—yet another blessing for those walking modestly with God.—Numbers 32:1; Deuteronomy 32:14.

²³ At Micah 7:18, 19, the prophet highlights Jehovah's desire to forgive those who repent. Verse 18 states that Jehovah is "pardoning error" and is "passing over transgression." According to verse 19, he "will throw into the depths of the sea all their sins." What is one lesson that we can draw from this? We may ask ourselves if we imitate Jehovah in this regard. Do we pardon the errors that others may commit against us? When such ones are repentant and seek to make amends, surely we will want to reflect Jehovah's willingness to forgive completely and permanently.

²⁴ How have we benefited from this consideration of Micah's prophecy? It has reminded us that Jehovah provides true hope for those who are drawn to him. (Micah 2:1-13) We have been encouraged to do everything possible to promote true worship so that we may walk in God's name forever. (Micah 4:1-5) And we have been assured that whatever our circumstances, we can meet Jehovah's requirements. Yes, Micah's prophecy truly strengthens us to walk in Jehovah's name.

23. What lesson can we learn from considering Micah 7:18, 19?

24. How have you benefited from Micah's prophecy?

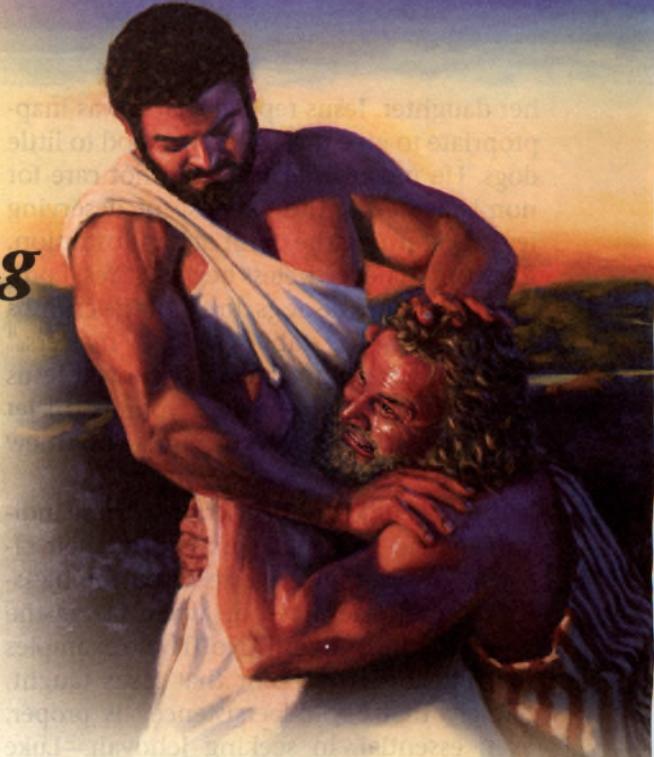
Are You Earnestly Seeking Jehovah?

A CHRISTIAN man keenly desired to share the good news from the Bible with other commuters on the train. (Mark 13:10) Yet, fear paralyzed him. Did he give up? No, he made it a matter of fervent prayer and worked on learning how to strike up a conversation. Jehovah God answered this man's request and gave him the strength to witness.

Such earnestness is vital when we seek Jehovah and his blessing. The apostle Paul said: "He that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." (Hebrews 11:6) Merely seeking Jehovah is not enough. The Greek verb translated "earnestly seeking" is in a form that implies intensity and concentrated effort. This involves one's whole heart, mind, soul, and vital force. If we are earnestly seeking Jehovah, we do not conduct ourselves in an indifferent, self-sparing, or indolent manner. Rather, we show genuine zeal in pursuing him.—Acts 15:17.

Those Who Earnestly Sought Jehovah

The Scriptures abound with examples of those who put forth concerted efforts in seeking Jehovah. One such person was Jacob, who strenuously grappled with God's materialized angel till dawn. As a result, Jacob was given the name Israel (Contender with God) because he "contended," or "persisted," "exerted [himself]," "persevered,"



with God. The angel blessed him for his earnest endeavor.—Genesis 32:24-30, footnote.

Then there was the unnamed Galilean woman who for 12 years suffered from a flow of blood, causing her "many pains." In this condition, she was not supposed to touch other people. Yet, she mustered up courage to go out to meet Jesus. She kept saying: "If I touch just his outer garments I shall get well." Think of her as she worked her way through the 'crowd that was following [Jesus] and pressing against him.' On touching Jesus' outer garment, she sensed that "her fountain of blood dried up"—her chronic illness was cured! When Jesus asked, "Who touched my outer garments?" she became frightened. But Jesus warmly told her: "Daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace, and be in good health from your grievous sickness." Her efforts were rewarded.—Mark 5:24-34; Leviticus 15:25-27.

On still another occasion, a Phoenician woman earnestly pleaded for Jesus to heal

her daughter. Jesus replied that it was inappropriate to give the children's food to little dogs. He meant that he could not care for non-Israelites at the expense of deserving Jews. Discerning the point of his illustration, the woman nevertheless begged: "Yes, Lord; but really the little dogs do eat of the crumbs falling from the table of their masters." Her strong faith and sincerity moved Jesus to say: "O woman, great is your faith; let it happen to you as you wish."—Matthew 15:22-28.

What would have happened to these individuals had they not persisted in their efforts? Would they have received the blessings if they had given up when facing the initial hurdle or rebuff? No! These examples well illustrate the point that Jesus taught, namely that "bold persistence" is proper, even essential, in seeking Jehovah.—Luke 11:5-13.

According to His Will

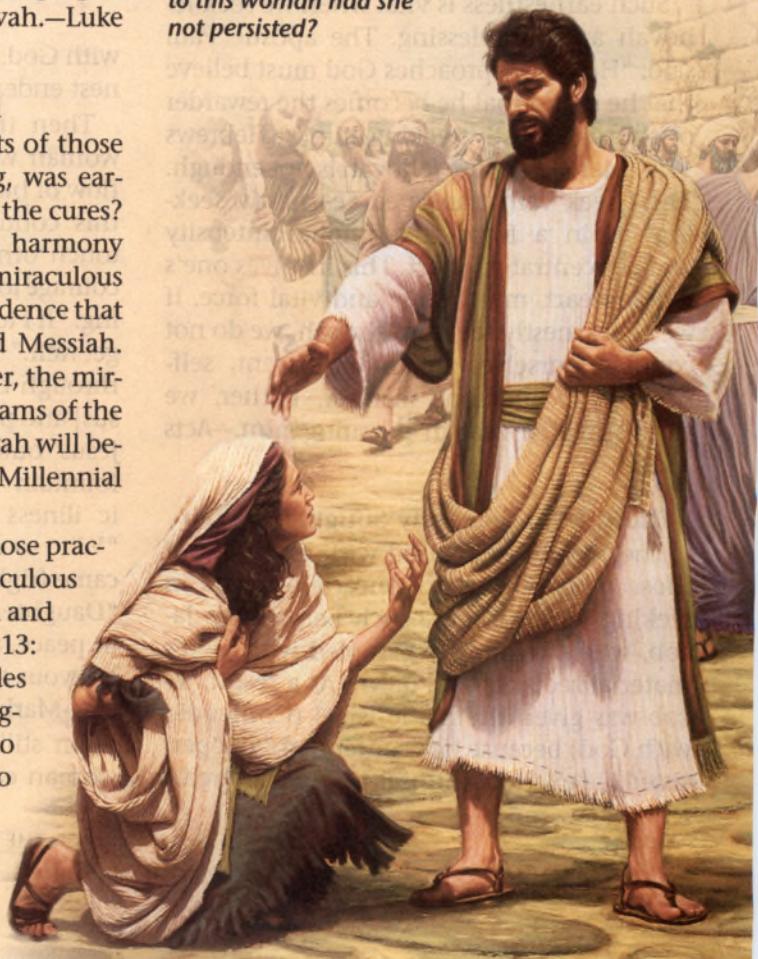
In the aforementioned accounts of those who received miraculous healing, was earnestness the sole requirement for the cures? No, their requests had to be in harmony with God's will. Jesus was given miraculous powers to provide outstanding evidence that he was God's Son, the promised Messiah. (John 6:14; 9:33; Acts 2:22) Further, the miracles Jesus performed gave foregleams of the grand earthly blessings that Jehovah will bestow on mankind during Christ's Millennial Rule.—Revelation 21:4; 22:2.

It is no longer God's will that those practicing the true religion have miraculous powers, such as the ability to heal and speak in tongues. (1 Corinthians 13:8, 13) His will for our day includes having the good news of the Kingdom declared in all the earth so that 'all sorts of men may come to

an accurate knowledge of truth.' (1 Timothy 2:4; Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20) God's servants can rightly expect a favorable hearing of their fervent prayers if they put forth sincere efforts in harmony with his will.

Some may wonder, 'Why exert ourselves when God's purpose will eventually be accomplished anyway?' While it is true that Jehovah will achieve his purpose regardless of human endeavors, he is pleased to have individuals involved in carrying out his will. Jehovah might be likened to a man building a house. The builder has a complete blueprint for the project, but he chooses building materials from those available locally. Similarly, Jehovah has a project to accomplish today

*What would have happened
to this woman had she
not persisted?*



and is pleased to use his servants, who offer themselves willingly.—Psalm 110:3; 1 Corinthians 9:16, 17.

Consider the experience of young Toshio. Upon entering high school, he wanted to give as great a witness as possible in his unique territory. He always had his Bible ready and made a conscientious effort to be an exemplary Christian. Toward the end of his first school year, an opportunity to give a speech to the class presented itself. Toshio prayed to Jehovah for help and was thrilled to see the whole class pay close attention to his talk entitled "My Goal of Making Pioneering a Career." He explained that he wanted to be a full-time minister of Jehovah's Witnesses. One of the students agreed to study the Bible with him and progressed to the point of baptism. Toshio's earnest efforts in harmony with his prayers were richly rewarded.

How Earnest Are You?

You can show in a variety of ways that you are earnestly seeking Jehovah and his blessings. First, there are basic things you can do, such as preparing well for Christian meetings. By means of well-thought-out comments, motivating talks, and effective demonstrations, you reveal the intensity with which you are seeking Jehovah. You can also demonstrate your earnestness by improving the quality of your ministry. How about trying to be friendlier in your approach at the door and using effective introductions that fit your territory? (Colossians 3:23) By wholeheartedly applying himself, a Christian man may be able to accept assignments in the congregation, such as serving as a ministerial servant or an elder. (1 Timothy 3:1, 2, 12, 13) By making yourself available, you can share in the joy of giving. You may be able to apply to serve on a branch construction project or at a branch office of



*Do you persist
in begging Jehovah
for his blessing?*

Jehovah's Witnesses. If you are a qualified single man, you may want to attend the Ministerial Training School, which equips spiritual men to be good shepherds. If you are married, missionary service might be a way to show your earnest desire to serve Jehovah more. Moving to where the need for the Kingdom preachers is greater may be a possibility for you.—1 Corinthians 16:9.

What really counts is the spirit with which you fulfill an assignment. Whatever

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

One True Christian Faith—A Reality

Praise Jehovah "in the Middle of the Congregation"

Do You Treasure Elderly Fellow Believers?



How can you show that you are earnestly seeking Jehovah?

responsibility you are given, tackle it earnestly, vigorously, and with "sincerity of heart." (Acts 2:46; Romans 12:8) You do well to view each assignment as an opportunity to demonstrate your eagerness to bring praise to Jehovah. Pray constantly for Jehovah's help, and do your best. Then you will reap a rich reward.

Earnest Efforts Rewarded

Remember the Christian man who prayed to overcome his fears so that he could preach to the other commuters? Jehovah blessed his sincere desire. The brother worked at having a pleasant approach, choosing subjects with which to start conversations.

He was able to use the Bible effectively to witness to a man concerned about stressful human relationships. Several return visits on the train led to a home Bible study. Jehovah indeed blessed him for his earnest efforts!

You may have similar results if you continue to seek Jehovah earnestly. If you humbly persevere and put your whole heart into whatever theocratic activity you are involved in, Jehovah will use you in harmony with his purposes and pour out on you a rich blessing.



True Worship Unites a Family

MARIA was 13 years old when she and her younger sister, Lucy, heard about Jehovah from a relative. He also explained the hope of Paradise on earth. Intrigued, they went with him to the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. Maria was impressed by the clear instruction given there. It was so different from the church, where they did little else but sing! Soon the children were studying the Bible with one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Their older brother, Hugo, was interested in philosophy and evolution. He considered himself an atheist. But while doing military service, he read the book *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?** He found answers to questions that no other religion could give. On completing his military service, he started strengthening his newfound faith in God by studying the Bible and attending meetings with his sisters. Maria and Lucy were baptized in 1992, two years after first hearing the truth, and their brother, two years later.

Meanwhile their parents, devoted to Catholic traditions, showed little interest in the truth. They considered Jehovah's Witnesses to be annoying, although they admired the good manners and modest dress of the young Witnesses whom their children invit-



ed to their home. Also, at mealtimes, when the children shared things that they had learned at the meetings, their parents' curiosity was aroused.

Still, both parents were interested in witchcraft. The father was a drunkard who beat the mother. The family was on the verge of a breakup. Then, the father spent two weeks in prison for drunken conduct. While in prison, he started to read the Bible. As he read, he came across Jesus' words concerning the sign of the last days. Bewildered, both father and mother went to the Kingdom Hall and accepted a home Bible study. On learning the truth, they destroyed all their books on witchcraft and found relief from demon attacks by calling on Jehovah's name. They began making considerable changes in their personalities.

Can you imagine how moving it was for Maria and Lucy to watch their parents being baptized by Hugo at one of the district conventions in Bolivia in 1999? Some nine years had passed since Maria and Lucy first heard about Jehovah and his promises. Along with Hugo, they are now in the full-time ministry. How happy they are that true worship brought unity to their family!

* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

Do You Remember?

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

• **What are some ways in which Ruth served as a fine example?**

She was exemplary in her love for Jehovah, in her loyal love toward Naomi, and in displaying the qualities of industriousness and humility. For good reason, people viewed her as "an excellent woman." (Ruth 3:11)—4/15, pages 23-6.

• **How do we know that Jehovah cares for ordinary people?**

He told the Israelites, who had been treated cruelly in Egypt, not to maltreat the underprivileged. (Exodus 22:21-24) Jesus, who imitated his Father, showed genuine interest in common people, and he selected as apostles men who were "unlettered and ordinary." (Acts 4:13; Matthew 9:36) We can imitate God by showing concern for others, such as young people.—4/15, pages 28-31.

• **What reason do we have for believing that Jehovah notices what we do?**

Bible accounts show that Jehovah notices the accomplishments of humans. He noted the sacrifice that Abel offered, and he notices our 'sacrifices of praise, the fruit of lips.' (Hebrews 13:15) Jehovah was aware that Enoch strove to please him by living a clean, moral life. And God observed how a non-Israelite widow of Zarephath shared what little she had with the prophet Elijah. Jehovah also notices our acts of faith.—5/1, pages 28-31.

• **Why can it be said that after Pentecost 33 C.E., Jews who became Christians had to make a personal dedication to God?**

In 1513 B.C.E., the ancient Israelites came into a dedicated relationship with Jehovah. (Exodus 19:3-8) After that, Jews were born into that dedicated nation under the Law covenant. But Jehovah removed the Law covenant by means of Christ's death in 33 C.E. (Colossians 2:14) Thereafter, Jews wanting to serve God acceptably needed to make a dedication to him and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.—5/15, pages 30-1.

• **Does the burning of incense have a place in true worship today?**

The use of incense was part of true worship in ancient Israel. (Exodus 30:37, 38; Leviticus 16:12, 13) But the

Law covenant, including the use of incense, ended with Christ's death. Christians can decide for themselves whether to use incense for nonreligious purposes, but it is not a part of true worship today. The feelings of others should also be considered so as to avoid stumbling them.—6/1, pages 28-30.

• **What recent news item has moved many to give more thought to the reality that Jesus walked the earth?**

Much publicity has been given to a box, an ossuary, found in Israel. It seems to date from the first century, and there is an inscription on it that reads: "James, son of Joseph, brother of Jesus." Some consider this to be "the oldest extrabiblical archaeological evidence" of Jesus' existence.—6/15, page 3-4.

• **How does a human learn to love?**

Humans first learn to love by the example and training of their parents. When husband and wife show love and respect for each other, the children can learn to love. (Ephesians 5:28; Titus 2:4) Even if a person does not come from a loving family, he can learn to love by accepting Jehovah's fatherly guidance, by getting the help of the holy spirit, and by benefiting from the warm support of the Christian brotherhood.—7/1, pages 4-7.

• **Who was Eusebius, and what lesson can we learn from his life?**

Eusebius was an early historian who, in 324 C.E., finished the ten-volume work entitled *History of the Christian Church*. Although he believed that the Father existed before the Son, Eusebius accepted a different view at the council in Nicaea. He apparently ignored Jesus' requirement that His followers be "no part of the world." (John 17:16)—7/15, pages 29-31.

• **Has Jehovah changed his view of polygamy?**

No, Jehovah has not changed his view of polygamy. (Malachi 3:6) God's arrangement for the first man was for him to "stick to his wife" and to become one flesh with her. (Genesis 2:24) Jesus said that divorcing except on the ground of fornication and then remarrying makes one an adulterer. (Matthew 19:4-6, 9) Jehovah's toleration of polygamy came to an end with the formation of the Christian congregation.—8/1, page 28.

He Loved Kindness

MILTON G. HENSCHEL, a longtime member of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses, finished his earthly course on Saturday, March 22, 2003. He was 82 years old.

As a young man, Milton Henschel joined the headquarters staff of Jehovah's Witnesses and served faithfully for well over 60 years. He quickly became known for his good judgment and sincere interest in the Kingdom-preaching work. In 1939 he became secretary to N. H. Knorr, who was then the overseer of the Brooklyn printery of Jehovah's Witnesses. When Brother Knorr began to take the lead among the Witnesses worldwide in 1942, he kept Brother Henschel as his assistant. Brother Henschel married Lucille Bennett in 1956, and together they shared the joys and challenges of life.

Brother Henschel worked closely with Brother Knorr until Knorr's death in 1977. Often at Brother Knorr's side, Brother Henschel traveled to over 150 countries, visiting and encouraging Jehovah's Witnesses around the world, especially missionaries and those in branch offices. Such travels were arduous at times, even dangerous. In 1963 when visiting a convention in Liberia, Brother Henschel was a victim of vicious persecution for refusing to take part in a patriotic cer-



emony.* Undaunted, Brother Henschel returned to Liberia just a few months later to meet with the president of the country and to seek greater freedom of worship for Jehovah's Witnesses there.

In handling difficult problems and challenges, Brother Henschel had a reputation for being practical, flexible, and reasonable. His associates particularly valued his orderliness, his modesty, and his sense of humor. Blessed with a remarkable memory, he delighted many missionaries around the world with his ready knowledge of their names, a phrase or two in the local language, and a witty quip—which he delivered with a twinkle in his eyes.

Micah 6:8 reminds us that Jehovah God wants us "to love kindness." Milton Henschel will be remembered for setting an example in that regard. Despite his heavy load of responsibility, he remained approachable, gentle, and kind. He was fond of saying, "When in doubt, remember that the kind thing is the right thing." While we grieve the loss of this beloved brother, we rejoice that he endured faithfully to the end, assured of receiving his reward, "the crown of life."

—Revelation 2:10.

* See the 1977 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*, pages 171-7.



*M. G. Henschel
with N. H. Knorr*

With his wife, Lucille



GOD'S VIEW OF THE DEAD

THE death of a loved one is indeed distressing. The empty feeling, the loneliness, and the sense of loss are unfathomable. Bereavement can make a person feel helpless, for regardless of how much wealth, power, or influence he might possess, no one now on earth can restore a dead person to life.

However, our Creator looks at matters differently. Having formed the first human from the dust of the ground, he is also able to re-create a dead person. For this reason, God can view the dead as though they were alive. Regarding faithful servants of old who have died, Jesus said: "They are all living from [God's] standpoint."—Luke 20:38, footnote.

While on earth, Jesus was empowered to resurrect the dead. (John 5:21) Hence, he shares his Father's view of those who have

died faithful. For example, when his friend Lazarus died, Jesus told his disciples: "I am journeying . . . to awaken him from sleep." (John 11:11) From a human standpoint, Lazarus was dead, but to Jehovah and Jesus, Lazarus was sleeping.

Under Jesus' Kingdom rule, there will be "a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous." (Acts 24:15) In time, those who are resurrected will receive divine education and have the prospect of everlasting life on earth.—John 5:28, 29.

Yes, the death of a loved one can cause much distress and sorrow, which may last for years. Nevertheless, viewing the dead from God's standpoint can bring us great comfort and fill us with hope.

—2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.