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THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



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1922

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO

“GOD . . . giveth us . . . victory through . . . Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor. 15:57, *King James Version*) These words, chosen as the yeartext for 1922, assured the Bible Students that their faithfulness would be rewarded. During that year, Jehovah did reward these zealous preachers. He blessed them as they started to print and bind their own books and to use the radio to spread Kingdom truths. Then later in 1922, it was clear once again that Jehovah was blessing his people. The Bible Students were able to gather at a landmark convention in Cedar Point, Ohio, U.S.A. That convention has influenced the course of Jehovah’s organization down to this day.

“A BREATH-TAKING IDEA”

Demand for literature increased as the preaching work expanded. The brothers at Brooklyn Bethel were producing magazines, but they still depended on commercial firms for hardcover books. After a book shortage lasted for months and began to hinder the preaching work, Brother Rutherford asked

Robert Martin, the factory manager, about the possibility of producing books.

“It was a breath-taking idea,” recalled Brother Martin, “because it meant the opening of a complete typesetting, electroplating, printing, and binding plant.” The brothers leased space at 18 Concord Street in Brooklyn and obtained the needed equipment.

Not everyone was happy about this new development. The president of a company that had been producing our books visited the new facility. He remarked: “Here you are with a first-class printing establishment on your hands, and nobody around the place that knows a thing about what to do with it. In six months the whole thing will be a lot of junk.”

“That sounded logical enough,” Brother Martin reported, “but it left out the Lord; and he has always been with us.” Brother Martin was right. Soon the new bindery was producing 2,000 books per day.

REACHING THOUSANDS BY RADIO

In addition to printing some of their own books, Jehovah’s people began using a new method of spreading the good news—radio broadcasting. On Sunday afternoon, February 26, 1922, Brother Rutherford spoke on the radio for the first time. He delivered the talk “Millions Now Living Will Never Die” on



A. The Concord Street factory in Brooklyn, New York

B. Operators standing by their linotype machines on the factory floor

radio station KOG in Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.

An estimated 25,000 heard the program. Some of them sent letters expressing appreciation for the broadcast. One of these letters was from Willard Ashford, a resident of Santa Ana, California. He commended Brother Rutherford for an “entertaining and interesting” presentation. He then added: “With three sick ones in the house it would have been impossible for any of us to have heard you except through this means, even had you spoken in the next block.”

More broadcasts followed in the coming weeks. By year’s end, *The Watch Tower* estimated that “at least 300,000 people [had] received the message by wireless [radio].”

Encouraged by the response, the Bible Students determined to build a radio station on a property in Staten Island, not far from Brooklyn Bethel. In the coming years, the Bible Students would use this station, WBBR, to spread the Kingdom message extensively.

“ADV”

The June 15, 1922, issue of *The Watch Tower* announced that a general convention would be held in Cedar Point, Ohio, from September 5 to 13, 1922. Excitement ran high among the Bible Students as they descended on Cedar Point.

In his welcoming address, Brother Rutherford told the audience: “I come to think, with absolute confidence, that the Lord will . . . bless this convention and send forth a witness as has never been given here on earth.” The speakers at that convention repeatedly encouraged the preaching work.

Then on Friday, September 8, some 8,000 attendees filed into the auditorium, eagerly anticipating a talk by Brother Rutherford. They were hoping that he would explain the meaning of “ADV,” which was printed on their invitations. As they took their seats, some no doubt noticed a large roll of canvas above the platform. Arthur Claus, who had traveled to the convention from Tulsa, Oklahoma, U.S.A., found a seat

that would allow him to hear well, a real feat in the days before sound amplification was used.

“We were hanging on every word”

To ensure that there were no interruptions, the chairman announced that no latecomers would be admitted to the auditorium during Brother Rutherford’s talk. At 9:30 a.m., Brother Rutherford began by quoting Jesus’ words found at Matthew 4: 17: “The kingdom of heaven is at hand.” (*King James Version*) When discussing how humans would hear about this Kingdom, he stated: “Jesus himself declared that in the time of his presence he would conduct a harvest of his people, during which he would gather unto himself the true and loyal ones.”

Brother Claus, who was sitting in the main auditorium, recalled: “We were hanging on

every word.” But suddenly, he felt sick and had to leave the auditorium. Arthur exited reluctantly, knowing that he would not be readmitted.

In a few minutes, he began to feel better. He related that as he walked back toward the auditorium, he heard a great applause. That set him on fire! He decided that he would hear the rest of this wonderful lecture even if he had to climb on the roof to do so. Brother Claus, a young man of 23 at the time, found a way to climb to the roof. The skylights were open, and as he approached them, he noted that “the hearing was excellent.”

But Arthur was not alone. Some of his friends were also on the roof. One of them, Frank Johnson, ran over and asked him, “Do you have a sharp pocket knife?”

“Yes, indeed,” said Arthur.

“You are the answer to our prayers,” replied Frank. “Do you see this huge roll?



C



D

C. The crowd attending the 1922 Cedar Point, Ohio, convention

D. Close-up picture of the stage and the banner above it

It is a banner, tied to these nails. Listen carefully to the Judge.* When he says, ‘and you must advertise, advertise,’ cut these four cords.”

So Arthur, knife in hand, waited with the others for the signal. Soon Brother Rutherford reached the climax of his talk. Spurred on by emotion and zeal, Brother Rutherford must have fairly shouted: “Be faithful and true witnesses for the Lord. Go forward in the fight until every vestige of Babylon lies desolate. Herald the message far and wide. The world must know that Jehovah is God and that Jesus Christ is King of kings and Lord of lords. This is the day of all days. Behold, the King reigns! You are his publicity agents. Therefore, advertise, advertise, advertise, the King and his Kingdom!”

Arthur related that he and the other brothers cut the cords and the banner rolled down as smoothly as any banner could. In harmony with the letters “ADV,” the banner read: “Advertise the King and Kingdom.”

AN IMPORTANT WORK

The convention in Cedar Point helped the brothers to focus on the important work of Kingdom preaching, and those with a willing spirit were happy to have a share. A colporteur (now known as a pioneer) from Oklahoma, U.S.A., wrote, “The district we worked is in the coal region, and the poverty there is great.” He said that often when people heard the message found in the *Golden Age* magazine, “they [would] burst into tears.” He summed it up this way, “It is such a blessing to comfort them.”

These Bible Students felt the urgency of Jesus’ words found at Luke 10:2: “The harvest is great, but the workers are few.”

* Brother Rutherford was sometimes called “the Judge” because he had served on occasion as a special judge in Missouri, U.S.A.

As the year ended, they were more determined than ever to advertise the Kingdom message far and wide.

Witnessing to the World

On February 26, 1922, the Bible Students participated in a “world-wide witness.” Bible Students around the world held special meetings where interested people could hear the talk “Millions Now Living Will Never Die.”

The talk was translated into at least 33 languages, and *The Watch Tower* noted that nearly every qualified public speaker was used to deliver this talk. Bible Students in Great Britain organized 306 meetings, and 67,010 people attended. In Belgium, France, and Switzerland, more than 15,000 French-speaking people attended these meetings. Encouraged by the positive response, the Bible Students organized subsequent “world-wide witness” days in that same year—on June 25, October 29, and December 10.

SONG 110

“The Joy of Jehovah”

PREVIEW

For many, real happiness is hard to find because they go about looking for it in the wrong way by pursuing pleasures, wealth, fame, or power. Yet, when Jesus was on earth, he told people how to find it. In this article, we will examine three steps that can help us find true happiness.

You Can Find True Happiness

“Happy is everyone who fears Jehovah, who walks in His ways.”—PS. 128:1.

TRUE happiness is not simply a lighthearted feeling that comes and goes. It can last throughout a person’s life. How so? Jesus explained in his Sermon on the Mount: “Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need.” (Matt. 5:3) Jesus knew that humans are made with an intense desire to know and worship their Creator, Jehovah God. That is our “spiritual need.” And since Jehovah is “the happy God,” those who worship him can also be happy.—1 Tim. 1:11.

² Do we need ideal circumstances in our life to be happy? No. In his sermon, Jesus said something surprising. “Those who mourn”—either because of being crushed by their sins or because of experiencing distressing circumstances in their lives—can be happy. Jesus said the same about “those who have been persecuted for righteousness’ sake” or those who suffer “reproach” for being a follower of Christ. (Matt. 5:4, 10, 11) But how is it possible to be truly happy in such situations?

³ Jesus was teaching us that happiness results, not from having ideal circumstances in our life, but from satisfying our spiritual need and drawing close to God. (Jas. 4:8) How can we do so? In this article, we will dis-

1. What is our “spiritual need,” and how is it related to happiness?

2-3. (a) According to Jesus, who else can be happy? (b) What will we discuss in this article, and why is this needed?



“Happy are those who have been persecuted for righteousness’ sake.”—Matt. 5:10

(See paragraphs 2-3)

cuss three basic steps that lead to true happiness.

TAKE IN SPIRITUAL FOOD

4 STEP 1: *To be truly happy, we must take in spiritual food.* Both humans and animals need **physical** food to survive. But only humans can take in **spiritual** food. And we need it. That is why Jesus said: “Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every word that comes from Jehovah’s mouth.” (Matt. 4:4) Therefore, we should not let a day go by without taking in some spiritual food from God’s precious Word, the Bible. The psalmist observed: ‘Happy is the man whose delight is in the law of Jeho-

vah and who reads it day and night.’

—**Read Psalm 1:1-3.**

⁵ In the Bible, Jehovah has lovingly given us vital information on how to live a happy life. We learn what his purpose is for our life. We learn how we can draw close to him and gain his forgiveness for our sins. And we learn about the wonderful hope that he promises for the future. (Jer. 29:11) These truths that we gain from a study of the Bible fill our heart with joy!

⁶ As we know, the Bible is also full of practical counsel for everyday life. When we follow that counsel, we can find happiness. Whenever you feel

4. What is the first step toward finding true happiness? (Psalm 1:1-3)

5-6. (a) What can we learn from the Bible? (b) In what ways can reading the Bible help us?

discouraged by life's problems, spend more time reading Jehovah's Word and meditating on it. Jesus said: "Happy are those hearing the word of God and keeping it!"—Luke 11:28.

⁷ As you read God's Word, take your time to savor what you read. To illustrate, have you ever had this experience? Someone cooks one of your favorite meals. But either because you are too hurried or are too preoccupied mentally, you gulp it down without really tasting each morsel. After you finish eating, you realize how quickly you ate and you wish you had slowed down and enjoyed each bite. Well, have you ever read the Bible in such haste that you failed to savor its message? Take the time to enjoy reading God's Word; visualize the scenes, imagine the sounds of the voices, and think about what you have read. The whole experience will add to your happiness.

⁸ Jesus appointed "the faithful and discreet slave" to provide spiritual food at the proper time, and we are very well-fed spiritually.* (Matt. 24:45) The inspired Scriptures are the primary ingredient in everything the faithful slave produces. (1 Thess. 2:13) That spiritual food thus helps us to know Jehovah's thinking as revealed in the Bible. This is why we read the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines and the articles on jw.org. We

* See the article "Are You Receiving 'Food at the Proper Time'?" in the August 15, 2014, issue of *The Watchtower*.

7. How can you get the most out of the time you spend reading God's Word?

8. How is "the faithful and discreet slave" fulfilling its role? (See also footnote.)

prepare for the midweek and weekend congregation meetings. And we watch each monthly program on JW Broadcasting® if available. Taking in ample spiritual food will help us take the second step that leads to real happiness.

LIVE BY JEHOVAH'S STANDARDS

⁹ **STEP 2: To be truly happy, we need to live by Jehovah's standards.** The psalmist wrote: "Happy is everyone who fears Jehovah, who walks in His ways." (Ps. 128:1) To fear Jehovah means that we respect him so much that we avoid doing anything that displeases him. (Prov. 16:6) Thus, we continually strive to conform to God's standards of right and wrong as explained in the pages of the Bible. (2 Cor. 7:1) We will be happy if we do the things that Jehovah loves and reject the things that he hates.—Ps. 37:27; 97:10; Rom. 12:9.

¹⁰ **Read Romans 12:2.** A person may **know** that Jehovah has the authority to decide what is right and what is wrong, but he must also **accept** God's standards for himself. For example, a person may **know** that the government has the right to set highway speed limits. But he may not be willing to **accept** those limits for himself. As a result, he drives faster than he should. We show by our conduct that we truly believe that following Jehovah's standards is the best way to live. (Prov. 12:28) David felt that way, for he said of Jehovah: "You make known to me the path of life. In your presence is

9. What is the second step that leads to true happiness?

10. According to Romans 12:2, what is our responsibility?

abundant joy; there is happiness at your right hand forever.”—Ps. 16:11.

¹¹ When we are troubled or discouraged, we might feel the need for some sort of diversion to escape our problems. That is understandable, but we must be careful not to be drawn into doing something that Jehovah hates.—Eph. 5:10-12, 15-17.

¹² In his letter to the Philippians, the apostle Paul urged Christians to continue considering things that are “righteous, . . . chaste, . . . lovable, [and] virtuous.” (**Read Philippians 4:8.**) Although Paul was not writing specifically on the subject of entertainment, what he wrote should influence the pastimes that we choose. Try this: Whenever the generic word “things” appears in the verse, substitute it with the word “songs,” “movies,” “novels,” or “video games.” Doing this can help you to discern which ones may be acceptable in God’s view and which ones may not be. We want to bring our life into harmony with Jehovah’s lofty standards. (Ps. 119:1-3) Then with a clear conscience, we can take the next step that leads to real happiness.—Acts 23:1.

PUT THE WORSHIP OF JEHOVAH FIRST

¹³ **STEP 3: Make sure that the worship of Jehovah comes first in your life.** As our Creator, Jehovah richly deserves our worship. (Rev. 4:11; 14:6, 7) Thus, we

11-12. (a) When we are troubled or discouraged, of what must we be careful? (b) How can the words of Philippians 4:8 help us when choosing entertainment?

13. What is the third step that leads to true happiness? (John 4:23, 24)

need to give priority to worshipping him in the way that he approves, “with spirit and truth.” (**Read John 4:23, 24.**) We want God’s holy spirit to guide our worship so that it is in harmony with the truths that are found in his Word. Our worship must come first even if we live in a land where our work is restricted or banned. Right now, over 100 of our brothers and sisters are imprisoned simply because they are Jehovah’s Witnesses.* Even so, they happily do whatever they can to pray, study, and tell others about our God and his Kingdom. When we are reproached or persecuted, we can be happy knowing that Jehovah is with us and that he will reward us.—Jas. 1:12; 1 Pet. 4:14.

A TRUE-LIFE EXAMPLE

¹⁴ Real-life experiences confirm that the three steps we just considered do lead to true happiness, regardless of our circumstances. Consider what happened to 19-year-old Jovidon Bobojonov, from Tajikistan, who refused to take up military service. On October 4, 2019, he was abducted from his home, kept in detention for months, and treated like a criminal. This injustice received international attention. It was reported that he was beaten in an attempt to pressure him to take a military oath of allegiance and to put on a uniform. After that, he was convicted and sent to a labor camp until finally the president of the

* For details, search for “Imprisoned for Their Faith” on jw.org.

14. What happened to a young brother in Tajikistan, and why?



Jovidon took in spiritual food, lived by God's standards, and put the worship of Jehovah first in his life
(See paragraphs 15-17)

country pardoned him and ordered his release. Throughout the entire ordeal, Jovidon maintained his integrity and his happiness. How? By always being conscious of his spiritual need.

¹⁵ While in prison, Jovidon ***took in spiritual food***, even when he did not have a Bible or any of our publications. How was that possible? Local brothers and sisters delivered physical food to him and wrote the day's text on the grocery bags. Thus, he was able to read the

15. How did Jovidon take in spiritual food while in prison?

Bible and meditate on it every day. After his release from prison, he had this advice for those who have not yet faced severe trials: "It is imperative that you use your freedom to the fullest to deepen your knowledge of Jehovah by reading his Word and our publications."

¹⁶ Our brother ***lived by Jehovah's standards***. Rather than dwell on wrong desires and get involved in bad conduct, he focused on Jehovah and on what He values. Jovidon marveled at the beauty of God's creation. Every morning he

16. On what did Jovidon focus his thoughts?

woke up to the sounds of birds chirping and singing. At night he gazed at the moon and the stars. He said: “Those gifts from Jehovah made me feel happy and encouraged.” When we are grateful for Jehovah’s spiritual and physical provisions, we have a joyful heart, and that joy can strengthen our ability to endure.

¹⁷ Jovidon also ***put the worship of Jehovah first***. He knew the importance of keeping his integrity to the true God. Jesus said: “It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service.” (Luke 4:8) Military commanders and soldiers wanted Jovidon to give up his religion. Instead, he prayed intensely every day and every night, asking Jehovah to help him

17. How can the words of 1 Peter 1:6, 7 apply to a person who might be in a situation similar to that of Jovidon?

not to give up and not to compromise his faith. In spite of the unjust treatment he received, Jovidon never did compromise. As a result, he can now greatly rejoice in having something he did not have before he was abducted, beaten, and imprisoned—a tested faith.—**Read 1 Peter 1:6, 7.**

¹⁸ Jehovah knows what we need to be truly happy. If you follow the three steps that lead to true happiness, you can maintain your happiness in spite of difficult challenges. Then you too will be able to say: “Happy is the people whose God is Jehovah!”—Ps. 144:15.

18. How can we maintain our happiness?

PICTURE DESCRIPTION Page 7: In this reenactment, fellow Witnesses show their support for a brother who is being arrested and taken to court to be prosecuted.

HOW DO THE FOLLOWING STEPS LEAD TO TRUE HAPPINESS?

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| ■ Step 1: Taking in spiritual food | ■ Step 2: Living by Jehovah’s standards | ■ Step 3: Putting the worship of Jehovah first |
|------------------------------------|---|--|

SONG 124

Ever Loyal

PREVIEW

The Bible admonishes Christians to obey the superior authorities—the governments of this world. But some governments openly oppose Jehovah and his servants. How can we obey human rulers and still keep our integrity to Jehovah?

“Happy Are Those Who Keep Integrity” to Jehovah

“Happy are those who keep integrity . . . , who walk in the law of Jehovah.”—PS. 119:1, ftn.

RIGHT now, our work is restricted or banned in over 30 lands around the world. In some of those lands, the authorities have imprisoned our brothers and sisters. What did they do wrong? Nothing, as far as Jehovah is concerned. All they have done is read and study the Bible, share their beliefs with others, and attend meetings with fellow believers. They have also refused to take sides in political matters. Despite intense opposition, these faithful servants of God have maintained their integrity*—showing unbreakable devotion to Jehovah. And they are happy for doing just that!

² You have likely seen pictures of some of these courageous Witnesses and noticed their smiling faces. They are joyful because they know that Jehovah is pleased with them for keeping their integrity to him. (1 Chron. 29:17a) Jesus said: “Happy are those who have been persecuted for righteousness’ sake . . . Rejoice and be overjoyed, since your reward is great.”—Matt. 5:10-12.

* **EXPRESSION EXPLAINED:** Keeping **integrity** to Jehovah requires that we never compromise our loyalty to him and to his sovereignty even when we are under test.

1-2. (a) What action have some governments taken against Jehovah’s people, but how do his people react? (b) How can persecution result in happiness? (Comment also on the cover picture.)



Peter and John set the example for modern-day Christians who must appear in court and defend their faith
(See paragraphs 3-4)

AN EXAMPLE FOR US

³ Our brothers and sisters are experiencing what the apostles endured in the first century when they were persecuted for preaching about Jesus. Repeatedly, the judges of the Jewish high court “ordered them to stop speaking on the basis of Jesus’ name.” (Acts 4:18; 5:27, 28, 40) How did the apostles react? **(Read Acts 4:19, 20.)** They knew that a higher authority had ‘ordered them to preach to the people and to give a thorough witness’ about the Christ. (Acts 10:42) So their spokesmen, Peter and John, boldly said that they would obey God rather than those judges and declared that they would not stop speaking about Jesus. In effect, they put this question to those authorities, ‘Do you dare to say that your commands are superior to those of God?’

3. As reported at Acts 4:19, 20, how did the apostles react to persecution in the first century, and why so?

⁴ The apostles set a fine example that all true Christians have followed ever since, namely, to “obey God as ruler rather than men.” **(Read Acts 5:27-29.)** After being beaten for keeping their integrity, the apostles went out from the Jewish high court, “rejoicing because they had been counted worthy to be dishonored in behalf of [Jesus’] name,” and they kept right on preaching!—Acts 5:40-42.

⁵ The example that the apostles set raises some questions. For instance, how did their decision to obey God rather than men harmonize with the Scriptural command to “be in subjection to the superior authorities”? (Rom. 13:1) How can we “be obedient to governments and authorities,” as the apostle Paul said, and still keep integrity to God as our foremost Ruler?—Titus 3:1.

4. As revealed at Acts 5:27-29, what example did the apostles set for all true Christians, and how can we imitate them?

5. What questions do we need to answer?

“THE SUPERIOR AUTHORITIES”

6 Read Romans 13:1. In this verse, the term “superior authorities” refers to human rulers who have power and control over others. Christians are subject to these secular authorities. These rulers maintain public order, enforce the law, and at times even come to the defense of Jehovah’s people. (Rev. 12:16) Thus, we are commanded to render them the taxes, tributes, fear, and honor that they demand. (Rom. 13:7) However, those secular governments have authority only because Jehovah allows them to have it. Jesus made that principle clear when he was interrogated by Roman Governor Pontius Pilate. When Pilate referred to the authority he had either to spare Jesus’ life or to have him put to death, Jesus told him: “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been granted to you from above.” (John 19:11) As was the case with Pilate, the authority of all human rulers and politicians today is limited.

7 Christians submit to human governments when secular laws do not contradict God’s laws. But we cannot obey men when they require what God forbids or when they forbid what God requires. For example, they may require young men to fight in the armed forces of the nation.* Or they may ban our

* See the article “The Ancient Israelites Fought Wars—Why Don’t We?” in this issue.

6. (a) Who are “the superior authorities” mentioned at Romans 13:1, and what obligation do we have toward them? (b) What is true of all human rulers?

7. In what situations must we not submit to human rulers, and of what should they be aware?

Bible and our Bible-based publications and forbid us to preach and to worship together. When rulers misuse their authority, such as by persecuting Christ’s disciples, they must answer to God. Jehovah is watching!—Eccl. 5:8.

8 The word “superior” means “better, greater, higher in rank.” But it does not mean “best, greatest, highest in rank.” That describes another word—“supreme.” Even though human governments are referred to as “the superior authorities,” there exists another authority that is the highest in rank—supreme. Four times in the Bible, Jehovah God is given the title “the Supreme One.”—Dan. 7:18, 22, 25, 27.

“THE SUPREME ONE”

9 The prophet Daniel saw visions that clearly showed Jehovah’s supremacy over all other authorities. Daniel first saw four huge beasts that symbolize past and present world powers—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome and its modern-day offshoot, Anglo-America. (Dan. 7:1-3, 17) Then Daniel saw Jehovah God sitting enthroned in the heavenly court. (Dan. 7:9, 10) What that faithful prophet saw next should serve as a warning to rulers today.

10 Read Daniel 7:13, 14, 27. God takes all rulership away from human governments and gives it to others more deserving and more powerful. To whom?

8. What is the difference between “superior” and “supreme,” and why does this matter?

9. What did the prophet Daniel see in visions?

10. According to Daniel 7:13, 14, 27, to whom does Jehovah turn over rulership of the earth, and what does this prove about Him?

To “someone like a son of man,” Jesus Christ, and to “the holy ones of the Supreme One,” the 144,000 who will rule “forever and ever.” (Dan. 7:18) Clearly, Jehovah is “the Supreme One,” for he alone has the authority to take such action.

¹¹ The event that Daniel saw in vision harmonizes with something he had stated earlier. “The God of heaven,” Daniel said, “removes kings and sets up kings.” He also wrote that “the Most High is Ruler in the kingdom of mankind and that he gives it to whomever he wants.” (Dan. 2:19-21; 4:17) Have there been occasions when Jehovah removed or set up rulers? Absolutely!

¹² Jehovah has clearly demonstrated his supremacy over “the superior authorities.” Consider three examples. Pharaoh of Egypt enslaved Jehovah’s people and repeatedly refused to release them. But God set them free and drowned Pharaoh in the Red Sea. (Ex. 14:26-28; Ps. 136:15) King Belshazzar of Babylon held a feast and “exalted [himself] against the Lord of the heavens” and “praised gods of silver and gold” instead of Jehovah. (Dan. 5:22, 23) But God humbled that arrogant man. On “that very night,” Belshazzar was killed and his kingdom was given into the hands of the Medes and the Persians. (Dan. 5:28, 30, 31) King Herod Agrippa I of Palestine had the apostle James killed and then imprisoned the apostle

11. What else did Daniel write that shows Jehovah’s supremacy over the nations?

12. Give an example of how Jehovah removed kings from their thrones in times past. (See picture.)



Jehovah took Belshazzar’s kingdom from him and gave it to the Medes and the Persians
(See paragraph 12)

Peter, with the intention of doing away with him. But Jehovah prevented Herod from carrying out his plan. “The angel of Jehovah struck him,” and he died.—Acts 12:1-5, 21-23.

¹³ Jehovah has also shown his supremacy over entire coalitions of rulers. He fought for Israel, enabling them to destroy an alliance of 31 Canaanite kings

13. Give an example of how Jehovah defeated entire coalitions of rulers.



The coalition of nations will be no match for Jehovah's heavenly forces
(See paragraphs 16-17)

and to conquer large portions of the Promised Land. (Josh. 11:4-6, 20; 12: 1, 7, 24) Jehovah also dealt a crushing blow to King Ben-hadad and 32 other Syrian rulers who battled with Israel.—1 Ki. 20:1, 26-29.

¹⁴ Time and again, Jehovah has proved to be the Supreme One! When King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon boasted about 'his own strength and might and the glory of his majesty' instead of humbly acknowledging Jehovah as the One deserving of praise, God struck him with insanity. After he recovered, Nebuchadnezzar "praised the Most High" and acknowledged that "[Jehovah's] rulership is an everlasting rulership." He added: "There is no one who can hinder him." (Dan. 4:30, 33-35) After Daniel's integ-

14-15. (a) What did Kings Nebuchadnezzar and Darius say about Jehovah's sovereignty? (b) What did the psalmist say about Jehovah and His nation?

rity to God was tested and Jehovah rescued him from the lions' pit, King Darius decreed: "People are to tremble in fear before the God of Daniel. For he is the living God and he endures forever. His kingdom will never be destroyed, and his sovereignty is eternal."—Dan. 6:7-10, 19-22, 26, 27, ftn.

¹⁵ The psalmist observed: "Jehovah has frustrated the schemes of the nations; he has thwarted the plans of the peoples." He added: "Happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah, the people he has chosen as his own possession." (Ps. 33:10, 12) What good reason, indeed, we have to keep our integrity to Jehovah!

THE SHOWDOWN

¹⁶ We have read what Jehovah has done in the past. What, then, may we

16. Of what can we be confident regarding the "great tribulation," and why? (See picture.)

expect in the near future? We can be confident that Jehovah will rescue his loyal servants during the coming “great tribulation.” (Matt. 24:21; Dan. 12:1) He will do this when a coalition of nations, known as Gog of Magog, makes its vicious, worldwide assault on those who are faithful to Jehovah. Even if that coalition includes all 193 members of the United Nations, it will be no match for the Supreme One and his heavenly forces! Jehovah promises: “I will certainly magnify myself and sanctify myself and make myself known before the eyes of many nations; and they will have to know that I am Jehovah.”—Ezek. 38:14-16, 23; Ps. 46:10.

¹⁷ Gog’s assault will trigger Jehovah’s final showdown at Armageddon when He destroys “the kings of the entire inhabited earth.” (Rev. 16:14, 16; 19:19-21) In contrast, “only the upright will reside in the earth, and the one who keeps integrity will remain in it.”—Prov. 2:21, ftn.

17. What future does the Bible predict for the kings of the earth and for those who keep integrity to Jehovah?

WE MUST KEEP OUR INTEGRITY

¹⁸ Over the centuries, many true Christians have risked their freedom and even their lives out of love for Jehovah as their Sovereign Ruler. They are integrity-keepers, who have resolve like that of the three Hebrews whose lives were spared in the fiery furnace for remaining faithful to the Supreme One.—**Read Daniel 3:28.**

¹⁹ The psalmist David wrote about the importance of keeping integrity to God: “Jehovah will pass sentence on the peoples. Judge me, O Jehovah, according to my righteousness and according to my integrity.” (Ps. 7:8) Again, David wrote: “May integrity and uprightness safeguard me.” (Ps. 25:21) The best way to live is to remain faithful to Jehovah, maintaining our loyalty to him no matter what comes our way! Then we will feel the same as did the psalmist who wrote: “Happy are those who keep integrity . . . , who walk in the law of Jehovah.”—Ps. 119:1, ftn.

18. What have many true Christians been willing to do, and why? (Daniel 3:28)

19. On what basis will Jehovah judge his people, and what does this require of us now?

CAN YOU EXPLAIN?

- What example did the apostles set for us to follow?
- What determines whether we should obey “the superior authorities”?
- How has Jehovah proved to be “the Supreme One”?

SONG 88

Make Me Know
Your Ways

PREVIEW

The wisdom Jehovah provides is far superior to anything the world has to offer. In this article, we will examine an intriguing word picture in the book of Proverbs—that of wisdom crying aloud in a city square. We will discuss how we can acquire true wisdom, why some turn a deaf ear to wisdom, and how we benefit when we respond to its call.

True Wisdom Is Crying Aloud

“True wisdom cries aloud in the street. It keeps raising its voice in the public squares.”—PROV. 1:20.

IN MANY lands, it has been common to see happy Kingdom publishers on busy streets offering literature to passersby. Have you ever engaged in this interesting form of the ministry? If you have, no doubt you have thought about the word picture found in the book of Proverbs—that of wisdom calling out in public for people to hear its advice. **(Read Proverbs 1:20, 21.)** The Bible and our publications contain “true wisdom”—Jehovah’s wisdom. This is the very information people need so that they can take the first step toward the path to life. We are delighted when someone accepts one of our publications. But not all do. Some prefer to remain ignorant of what the Bible says. Others laugh at us. They think that the Bible is outdated. Still others criticize the Bible’s teaching on moral matters, claiming that those who follow it are harsh and judgmental. Yet, Jehovah lovingly continues to make true wisdom available to all. In what ways?

² One way in which Jehovah makes true wisdom heard is by means of his Word, the Bible. That book is available to almost everyone. And what about our Bible-based publications? Thanks to Jehovah’s blessing, they are available in more than 1,000 languages. Those who listen, that is, who read and apply what they learn, will benefit. However, most people choose to ignore the voice of true wis-

1. How do many respond to the call of wisdom today? (Proverbs 1:20, 21)

2. How is true wisdom made available today, but what do most people choose to do?

dom. When they have decisions to make, they prefer to rely on themselves or to listen to fellow humans. They may even look down on us because we choose to follow what the Bible says. This article will discuss why people react this way. First, though, let us consider how we can acquire wisdom from Jehovah.

KNOWLEDGE OF JEHOVAH LEADS TO WISDOM

³ Wisdom can refer to the ability to use what we know to make good decisions. However, true wisdom involves more. The Bible states: “The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Most Holy One is understanding.” (Prov. 9:10) So when we have an important decision to make, we should make Jehovah’s thinking—“knowledge of the Most Holy One”—the basis for our decision. We can do that by consulting the Bible and Bible-based publications. When we do, we are showing true wisdom.—Prov. 2:5-7.

⁴ Jehovah is the only one who can give us true wisdom. (Rom. 16:27) Why is he the Source of wisdom? First, as the Creator, he has unlimited knowledge and understanding of his creation. (Ps. 104:24) Second, all of Jehovah’s actions reflect wisdom. (Rom. 11:33) Third, Jehovah’s wise counsel always benefits those who apply it. (Prov. 2:10-12) If we are to acquire true wisdom, we must accept these basic truths and allow them to guide us when making decisions and when taking a course of action.

3. What does true wisdom involve?

4. Why is Jehovah the only one who can give us true wisdom?

⁵ Many we meet in the ministry admit that there is marvelous design in nature; yet, they deny that there is a Creator and give the credit to evolution. Others we meet claim to believe in God, but they view Bible standards as outdated and choose to follow their own course. What has been the result? Is the world a better place because people rely on their own wisdom instead of God’s? Have they found real happiness or a solid hope for the future? What we observe around us convinces us of this truth: “There is no wisdom, nor discernment, nor counsel in opposition to Jehovah.” (Prov. 21:30) What an incentive that is for us to look to Jehovah for true wisdom! Sadly, most people do not. Why?

WHY PEOPLE REJECT TRUE WISDOM

⁶ Many turn a deaf ear when true wisdom “cries aloud in the street.” According to the Bible, there are three groups of people who reject wisdom: “inexperienced ones,” “ridiculers,” and “foolish ones.” (**Read Proverbs 1:22-25.**) Let us look more closely at the traits that cause such ones to reject godly wisdom, and let us also consider how we can avoid developing those traits.

⁷ The “*inexperienced ones*” are those who are naive, easily persuaded, or deceived. (Prov. 14:15, ftn.) We often meet such ones in our ministry. Think, for example, of the millions who are being

5. What is the outcome when people refuse to acknowledge Jehovah as the Source of true wisdom?

6. According to Proverbs 1:22-25, who turn a deaf ear to the call of true wisdom?

7. Why do some choose to remain as “inexperienced ones”?

misled by religious or political leaders. Some are horrified when they learn that they have been fooled by such leaders. But those mentioned at Proverbs 1:22 **choose** to remain inexperienced because they like it that way. (Jer. 5:31) They enjoy following their own inclinations and do not want to learn what the Bible says or to be held accountable to its standards. Many feel as did one devoutly religious woman in Quebec, Canada, who said to a visiting Witness, “If our priest has misled us, it will be his fault, not ours!” We certainly do not want to imitate those who are willfully ignorant! —Prov. 1:32; 27:12.

⁸ With good reason, the Bible encourages us not to remain inexperienced but to “become full-grown in [our] understanding.” (1 Cor. 14:20) We acquire the right kind of experience by applying Bible principles in our life. Little by little, we learn firsthand how those principles help us to avoid problems and make wise decisions. We do well to check our progress in this regard. If we have been studying the Bible and attending meetings for some time, we might ask ourselves why we have still not taken steps to make a dedication to Jehovah and get baptized. If we are baptized, are we making progress as a preacher and teacher of the good news? Do our decisions show that we are guided by Bible principles? Are we displaying Christian qualities in our dealings with others? If we see room for improvement, let us pay attention to Jehovah’s remind-

ers, which ‘make the inexperienced one wise.’—Ps. 19:7.

⁹ The second group of people who ignore godly wisdom are the “**ridiculers**.” At times, we come across such individuals in our preaching work. They enjoy mocking others. (Ps. 123:4) The Bible warned that in the last days, there would be no shortage of ridiculers. (2 Pet. 3:3, 4) Like the sons-in-law of righteous Lot, some people today pay no attention to divine warnings. (Gen. 19:14) Many laugh at those who live by Bible principles. The ridiculers are motivated by “their own desires for ungodly things.” (Jude 7, 17, 18) How well the Bible’s description of ridiculers fits apostates and others who have rejected Jehovah!

¹⁰ How can we safeguard ourselves from following the course of ridiculers? One way is to avoid associating with those who show a critical attitude. **(Read Psalm 1:1.)** This means that we do not listen to or read anything from apostates. We realize that if we are not careful, we could easily develop a critical spirit and begin to doubt Jehovah and the direction we receive through his organization. To avoid such a course, we can ask ourselves: ‘Do I usually have something negative to say when we receive new direction or explanations? Am I inclined to find fault with those taking the lead?’ When we are quick to correct such tendencies in ourselves, Jehovah will be pleased with us.—Prov. 3:34, 35.

9. How do “ridiculers” show that they reject wisdom?

10. As stated at Psalm 1:1, how can we avoid the course of ridiculers?

8. What will help us to gain the right kind of experience?

¹¹ The third group of people who reject wisdom are the “**foolish ones.**” They are foolish because they refuse to live by God’s moral laws. They do what is right in their own eyes. (Prov. 12:15) Such ones reject Jehovah, the Source of wisdom. (Ps. 53:1) When we meet them in the preaching work, they often sharply criticize us for respecting Bible standards. But they have nothing better to offer. The Bible states: “True wisdom is unattainable for a fool; he has nothing to say in the city gate.” (Prov. 24:7) The foolish do not have any words of genuine wisdom to offer. No wonder Jehovah warns us to “stay away from the foolish man!”—Prov. 14:7.

¹² Unlike those who hate godly counsel, we cultivate love for God’s ways, including his moral standards. We can strengthen that love by comparing the results of obedience with those of disobedience. Observe the kinds of problems people bring on themselves because they foolishly reject Jehovah’s wise counsel. Then consider how much better your life is because you obey God.—Ps. 32:8, 10.

¹³ Jehovah makes wisdom available to all, but he does not force anyone to accept it. He does, however, describe the results that come to those who do not listen to wisdom. (Prov. 1:29-32) Those who choose not to obey Jehovah will “bear the consequences of their way.” In

time, their lifestyle will bring them nothing but distress, trouble, and eventual destruction. On the other hand, those who listen to Jehovah’s wise counsel and apply what it says are promised: “The one listening to me will dwell in security and be undisturbed by the dread of calamity.”—Prov. 1:33.

TRUE WISDOM BENEFITS US

¹⁴ When we apply God’s wisdom, we always benefit. As we have discussed, Jehovah makes wise counsel freely available. For instance, throughout the book of Proverbs, he provides timeless advice that will improve our life if we apply it. Let us consider just four examples of such wise counsel.

¹⁵ **Protect your figurative heart.** The Bible states: “Above all the things that you guard, safeguard your heart, for out of it are the sources of life.” (Prov. 4:23) Think of what it takes to protect

14-15. What do we learn from Proverbs 4:23?

Participating at the meetings
strengthens us spiritually

(See paragraph 15)



11. How do the “foolish ones” view Jehovah’s moral standards?

12. What will help us reject the course of the foolish ones?

13. Does Jehovah force us to obey his wise counsel?



Having a balanced view of money helps us to be content with what we have
(See paragraph 16)

our literal heart. We need to eat healthy food, get sufficient exercise, and avoid bad habits. We do something similar to protect our figurative heart. We daily feed on God's Word. We prepare for and attend Christian meetings, and we participate in them. We stay active by regularly exerting ourselves in the ministry. And we avoid developing bad habits by staying clear of anything that could corrupt our thinking, such as immoral entertainment and bad association.

16 Be content with what you have. The Bible gives this advice: "Do not wear yourself out to gain wealth. . . . When you cast your eyes on it, it is not there, for it will surely sprout wings like an eagle and fly off into the sky." (Prov. 23:4, 5) Material wealth is not guaranteed to last. Yet, both rich and poor today are obsessed with making money. This preoccupation often causes them to behave in a way that harms their reputa-

16. Why is Proverbs 23:4, 5 so practical today?

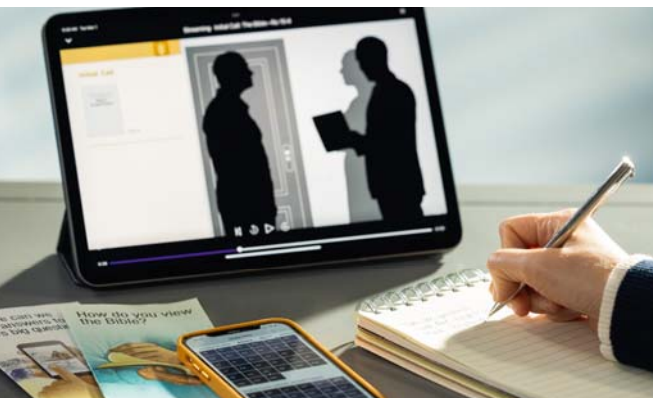
tion, their relationships, and even their health. (Prov. 28:20; 1 Tim. 6:9, 10) On the other hand, wisdom helps us to have a balanced view of money. Such a viewpoint protects us against greed and leads us to contentment and happiness.—Eccl. 7:12.

17 Think before you speak. If not careful, we can cause great harm with our words. The Bible states: "Thoughtless speech is like the stabs of a sword, but the tongue of the wise is a healing." (Prov. 12:18) We preserve good relationships when we avoid gossiping about the faults of others. (Prov. 20:19) For our speech to heal rather than to hurt, we must fill our heart with knowledge from God's Word. (Luke 6:45) When we meditate on what the Bible says, our words can become like a "fountain of wisdom" that refreshes others.—Prov. 18:4.

17. How can we acquire "the tongue of the wise," as mentioned at Proverbs 12:18?

Thinking before we speak helps us avoid harming others with our words
(See paragraph 17)





Following direction from the organization can help us improve our ministry
(See paragraph 18)

18 Follow direction. The Bible offers this practical advice for success: “By wise guidance you will wage your war, and through many advisers there is success.” (Prov. 24:6, ftn.) Consider how applying this principle leads to success in our preaching and teaching work. Rather than carry out the ministry in our

18. How can applying Proverbs 24:6 help us succeed in the ministry?

own way, we try to follow the suggestions we have been given. We receive wise guidance at our Christian meetings, where experienced advisers give Bible-based talks and presentations to train us. In addition, Jehovah’s organization provides useful tools—publications and videos—that can help people to understand the Bible. Are you learning to use these tools effectively?

19 Read Proverbs 3:13-18. How grateful we are for the sound advice found in God’s Word! Where would we be without it? In this article, we have reviewed examples of practical wisdom found in the book of Proverbs. Of course, Jehovah has provided wise sayings throughout the Scriptures. Let us be determined always to act on the wisdom that Jehovah provides. The way the world views such wisdom is not important to us; we are convinced that “those who keep firm hold of [wisdom] will be called happy.”

19. How do you feel about the wisdom that Jehovah provides? (Proverbs 3:13-18)

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- How do we acquire true wisdom?
- Why do many turn a deaf ear to the call of wisdom, but what are the results?
- What counsel from the book of Proverbs do you find especially beneficial?

SONG 144

Keep Your Eyes
on the Prize!

PREVIEW

Jehovah has given us a wonderful hope for the future. That hope brightens our life and helps us see beyond present trials. It empowers us to remain faithful no matter what difficulties we face. And it can protect us from falling prey to ideas that could corrupt our thinking. As we will learn in this article, these are all good reasons for keeping our Christian hope strong.

Keep Your Christian Hope Strong

“Hope in Jehovah.”—PS. 27:14.

JEHOVAH has given us the marvelous hope of everlasting life. Some hope to live forever in heaven as immortal spirit creatures. (1 Cor. 15:50, 53) Most, though, hope to live forever on earth in perfect health and happiness. (Rev. 21:3, 4) Whether we look forward to everlasting life in heaven or on earth, our hope is precious to us.

² The word “hope,” as used in the Bible, can be defined as “the expectation that good things will happen.” Our hope for the future is guaranteed because it comes from Jehovah. (Rom. 15:13) We know what he has promised, and we know that he always keeps his word. (Num. 23:19) We are convinced that Jehovah has both the desire and the power to accomplish everything that he says he will do. Our hope, therefore, is not based on fantasy or wishful thinking; it is based on evidence and reality.

³ Our heavenly Father loves us, and he wants us to trust in him. **(Read Psalm 27:14.)** When our hope in Jehovah is strong, we will be able to endure trials and face the future with courage and joy. Let us consider how our hope protects us. To that end, we will first review how hope is both like an anchor and like a helmet. Then we will discuss how we can strengthen our hope.

1. What hope has Jehovah given us?
2. On what is our hope based, and why can we say that?
3. What will we discuss in this article? (Psalm 27:14)

OUR HOPE IS LIKE AN ANCHOR

⁴ In his letter to the Hebrews, the apostle Paul likened our hope to an anchor. **(Read Hebrews 6:19.)** He often traveled by sea, so Paul knew that anchors are used to keep a ship from drifting. On one occasion, he was a passenger on a ship when a violent storm came up. During that storm, he saw sailors cast anchors into the water to prevent the ship from being blown onto dangerous rocks. (Acts 27:29, 39-41) As an anchor stabilizes a ship, our hope stabilizes us so that we do not drift away from Jehovah when we face turbulent times. Our firm hope helps us to ride out stormy trials because we are convinced that calmer times lie just ahead. Remember, Jesus warned that we would be persecuted. (John 15:20) So meditating on our promised future reward allows us to keep steady on our Christian course.

⁵ Consider how hope kept Jesus steadfast despite the cruel death that awaited him. On the day of Pentecost 33 C.E., the apostle Peter quoted a prophecy from the book of Psalms that beautifully expresses Jesus' calm assurance: "I will reside in hope; because you will not leave me in the Grave, nor will you allow your loyal one to see corruption. . . . You will fill me with great joy in your presence." (Acts 2:25-28; Ps. 16:8-11) Although Jesus knew that he would die, he had the firm hope that God would resurrect him and that he would have the

joy of being reunited with his Father in heaven.—Heb. 12:2, 3.

⁶ Our Christian hope has helped many of our brothers and sisters to endure. Consider the example of Leonard Chinn, a faithful brother who lived in England. During the First World War, he was imprisoned because he refused to join the military. For two months he was kept in solitary confinement, followed by a period of hard labor. "My experiences," he later wrote, "impressed on me the value of hope to enable us to endure. We have the examples of Jesus, the apostles, and the prophets, and we have the precious promises in the Bible. All of this gives us great hope for the future and fortifies us to endure." Hope was an anchor for Leonard, and it can be an anchor for us too.

⁷ Our hope gets stronger after we endure trials and experience Jehovah's help and approval. **(Read Romans 5:3-5; James 1:12.)** We thus possess a hope that is stronger than when we first accepted the good news. Satan wants our trials to overwhelm us, but with Jehovah's help we can meet each one successfully.

OUR HOPE IS LIKE A HELMET

⁸ The Bible also compares our hope to a helmet. **(Read 1 Thessalonians 5:8.)** A soldier wears a helmet to protect his head from the blows his enemies try

4. How is hope like an anchor? (Hebrews 6:19)

5. How did hope sustain Jesus when he was faced with death?

6. What did one brother say about hope?

7. How do trials strengthen our hope? (Romans 5:3-5; James 1:12)

8. How is hope like a helmet? (1 Thessalonians 5:8)

to inflict on him. In our spiritual warfare, we need to protect our mind from Satan's attacks. He bombards us with temptations and ideas designed to corrupt our thinking. Just as the helmet protects a soldier's head, our hope protects our thinking so that we can remain faithful to Jehovah.

⁹ Our hope of everlasting life will help us to act with wisdom and discernment. On the other hand, if our hope weakens and we allow fleshly thinking to take hold of our mind, we can lose sight of the goal of everlasting life. Consider the case of some Christians living in ancient Corinth. They lost faith in a key promise of God—the hope of the resurrection. (1 Cor. 15:12) Paul argued that people with no hope of a future life live only for the present. (1 Cor. 15:32) Today many who have no hope in God's promises live for the moment, grasping whatever pleasures are available to them. We, however, put our trust in the future promised by God. Our hope acts as a figurative helmet that protects our thinking and safeguards us from choosing a self-indulgent lifestyle, which would spoil our relationship with Jehovah. —1 Cor. 15:33, 34.

¹⁰ Our helmet of hope can also protect us from thinking that there is no point in even trying to please Jehovah. For example, some might reason: 'I will never be among those who live forever. I am just not good enough. I will never be able to measure up to God's stan-

dards.' Recall that Job's false comforter Eliphaz used similar reasoning with Job. Eliphaz said: "What is mortal man that he should be pure?" Further, he said of God: "Look! He has no faith in his holy ones, and even the heavens are not pure in his eyes." (Job 15:14, 15) What lies! Remember who is behind such thinking—Satan. He knows that if you allow yourself to dwell on such thoughts, your hope will fade. Instead, reject such lies and focus on Jehovah's promises. Never doubt that he wants you to live forever and that he will help you to reach that goal.—1 Tim. 2:3, 4.

KEEP YOUR HOPE STRONG

¹¹ It is not always easy to keep our hope strong. We might become impatient while we wait on God. However, Jehovah is eternal, and his view of time is different from ours. (2 Pet. 3:8, 9) He will work out his purpose in the best way possible, but he may not act when we expect him to. What can help us to keep our hope strong as we wait patiently for God to fulfill his promises?—Jas. 5:7, 8.

¹² We will keep our hope strong if we remain close to Jehovah, the one who guarantees our hope. In fact, the Bible closely links hope to faith that Jehovah exists and that he is "the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." (**Read Hebrews 11:1, 6.**) The more real Jehovah is to us, the greater our confidence will be that he will do all that he has promised. Let us consider practical ways

9. What is the outcome when people have no hope?

10. How can hope protect us against false reasoning?

11. Why should we be patient as we wait for our hope to be fulfilled?

12. According to Hebrews 11:1, 6, how is hope linked to faith?

to deepen our relationship with Jehovah and thus keep our hope strong.

13 *Pray to Jehovah, and read his Word.*

Though we cannot see Jehovah, we can draw close to him. We can speak to him in prayer, confident that he will listen to us. (Jer. 29:11, 12) We can listen to God by reading his Word and meditating on it. As we read about how Jehovah cared for those who were loyal to him in the past, our hope will grow ever stronger. Everything in God's Word was "written for our instruction, so that through our endurance and through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope."—Rom. 15:4.

14 *Meditate on how Jehovah has kept his promises.* Consider what God did for Abraham and Sarah. They reached the age when they could not have children. Yet, God promised them that they would have a child. (Gen. 18:10) How did Abraham react? The Bible says: "He had faith that he would become the father of many nations." (Rom. 4:18) Even though from a human perspective the situation appeared hopeless, Abraham was confident that Jehovah would fulfill His promise. That faithful man was not disappointed. (Rom. 4:19-21) Such accounts teach us that we can always rely on Jehovah to fulfill his promises, no matter how impossible the situation may seem to us.

15 *Consider what Jehovah has done for you.* Think about how you have

13. How can we draw close to God?

14. Why reflect on what Jehovah has done for others?

15. Why should we reflect on what God has done for us?



Prayer and meditation
will keep our hope strong
(See paragraphs 13-15)

already benefited personally from the fulfillment of the promises contained in God's Word. For example, Jesus has promised that his Father will provide you with the necessities of life. (Matt. 6:32, 33) Jesus has also assured you that Jehovah will give you holy spirit when you ask for it. (Luke 11:13) Jehovah has kept those promises. Likely, you can think of other promises that he has kept in your behalf. For instance, he promises to forgive you, to comfort you, and to feed you spiritually. (Matt. 6:14; 24:45; 2 Cor. 1:3) When you meditate on what God has done for you already, you will strengthen your hope in what he will do for you in the future.

REJOICE IN THE HOPE

¹⁶ Our hope of everlasting life is a precious gift from God. We look forward to a wonderful future—one that we can be certain will happen. It acts as our **anchor**, stabilizing us so that we can endure trials, withstand persecution, and even face death. It acts as our **helmet**,

16. Why is hope such a precious gift?

protecting our thinking so that we can reject what is wrong and cling to what is right. Our Bible-based hope draws us closer to God and reveals the depth of his love for us. We benefit greatly as we keep our hope bright and strong.

¹⁷ "Rejoice in the hope," encouraged the apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans. (Rom. 12:12) Paul could rejoice because he was sure that if he remained faithful, he would gain everlasting life in heaven. We too can rejoice in our hope because we are certain that Jehovah will keep his promises. As the psalmist wrote, "happy is the one . . . whose hope is in Jehovah his God, . . . the One who always remains faithful."—Ps. 146: 5, 6.

17. Why does our hope lead to rejoicing?

PICTURE DESCRIPTION Page 27: Just as a helmet protects a soldier's head and an anchor steadies a ship, our hope protects our thinking and stabilizes us during trials. A sister prays confidently to Jehovah. A brother meditates on how God kept His promises to Abraham. Another brother reflects on how he has been blessed.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| ■ Why can we be confident that our hope will be fulfilled? | ■ In what way is our hope both like an anchor and like a helmet? | ■ What will help us keep our hope strong? |
|--|--|---|



The Ancient Israelites Fought Wars—Why Don't We?

“IF ANY one of you refuses to fight against France or England, all of you must die!” barked a Nazi officer to a group of Jehovah’s Witnesses during World War II. Even though fully armed SS soldiers waited nearby, not one of our brothers gave in. What a courageous stance! This example well highlights the view that we share as Jehovah’s Witnesses: We refuse to fight in the wars of this world. Even when threatened with death, we refuse to take sides in this world’s conflicts.

However, not all who call themselves Christians agree. Many believe that a Christian can and should defend his country. They may reason, ‘The ancient Israelites were God’s people and they fought wars, so why shouldn’t Christians today?’ How would you answer? You could explain

that the situation of the ancient Israelites differed significantly from that of God’s people today. Consider five differences.

1. GOD’S PEOPLE ALL BELONGED TO ONE NATION

In the past, Jehovah gathered his people into one nation—Israel. He called the Israelites his “special property out of all peoples.” (Ex. 19:5) God also assigned them a defined territory. So when God commanded the Israelites to go to war against other nations, they were not fighting or killing their fellow worshippers.*

Today, true worshippers are from “all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues.” (Rev. 7:9) If God’s people were to participate in war, they could be fighting against—and even killing—their fellow worshippers.

* At times, Israelite tribes fought one another, although these internal wars displeased Jehovah. (1 Ki. 12:24) Occasionally, though, he approved of such conflicts because certain tribes either had turned against him or had committed other grievous sins.—Judg. 20:3-35; 2 Chron. 13:3-18; 25:14-22; 28:1-8.

2. JEHOVAH COMMANDED THE ISRAELITES TO GO TO WAR

In the past, Jehovah decided when and why the Israelites needed to go to war. For example, God instructed Israel to execute his judgment on the Canaanites, who were notorious for their demon worship, gross sexual immorality, and child sacrifice. Jehovah directed the Israelites to remove this wicked influence from the land that he had promised them. (Lev. 18:24, 25) After the Israelites settled into the Promised Land, God at times authorized warfare to defend Israel from oppressive enemies. (2 Sam. 5:17-25) However, at no point did Jehovah allow the Israelites to decide for themselves to go to war. When they did, the results were often disastrous.—Num. 14:41-45; 2 Chron. 35:20-24.

Today, Jehovah does not authorize humans to go to war. Nations fight to advance human interests rather than God's interests. They may go to war for territorial or economic gain or for political or ideological reasons. But what of those who claim to be fighting in the name of God to protect their worship or to kill God's enemies? Jehovah will protect his true worshippers and destroy his enemies in a *future* war—the battle of Armageddon. (Rev. 16:14, 16) In that war, God's army will consist entirely of his heavenly forces, not his human worshippers.—Rev. 19:11-15.

3. THE ISRAELITES SPARED THOSE WHO EXERCISED FAITH

In the past, the Israelite army often showed mercy to those who demonstrated faith in God and put to death only those whom Jehovah judged as worthy of execution. Note two examples. Although Jehovah ordered the destruction of Jericho, the Israelites spared Rahab and her family because of her faith. (Josh. 2:9-16; 6:16, 17) Later, the entire city of Gibeon was spared after



Does God fight for any nation today the way he did for Israel at Jericho?



Do modern wars spare those who are faithful the way Jehovah's war against Jericho spared Rahab and her family?

the Gibeonites showed a wholesome fear of God.—Josh. 9:3-9, 17-19.

Today, warring nations do not spare those who exercise faith. And, at times, innocent civilians are killed in the conflicts between nations.

4. THE ISRAELITES WERE TO FOLLOW GOD'S RULES OF WAR

In the past, Jehovah required Israelite soldiers to conduct warfare according to his guidelines. For example, God at times asked them to extend “terms of peace” to an opposing city. (Deut. 20:10) Jehovah also expected Israelite soldiers to keep themselves and their camp physically and morally clean. (Deut. 23:9-14) While the armies of the surrounding nations often raped women from conquered territories, Jehovah forbade the Israelites from doing so. In fact, they could not marry a captive woman until one month after capturing a city.—Deut. 21:10-13.

Today, most countries have signed international agreements that regulate warfare. Although these are intended to protect civilians, regrettably, the rules are often violated.

5. GOD FOUGHT FOR HIS NATION

In the past, Jehovah fought for the Israelites, often giving them miraculous victories. For instance, how did Jehovah help the Israelites to defeat the city of Jericho? At Jehovah's direction, when the Israelites “shouted a great war cry, the wall fell down flat,” which made it easier for them to capture the city. (Josh. 6:20) And how did they win a battle against the Amorites? “Jehovah hurled great hailstones from the sky on them . . . In fact, more died from the hail than from the sword of the Israelites.” —Josh. 10:6-11.

Today, Jehovah does not fight for any earthly nation. His Kingdom, with Jesus

as King, “is no part of this world.” (John 18:36) By contrast, Satan is the one who has authority over all human governments. The horrific wars of the world reflect his evil spirit.—Luke 4:5, 6; 1 John 5:19.

TRUE CHRISTIANS ARE PEACEMAKERS

As we have seen, our situation today differs significantly from that of ancient Israel. However, these differences are not the only reasons why we do not go to war. There are others. For example, God foretold that in the last days, those taught by him would not “learn war anymore,” much less participate in it. (Isa. 2:2-4) Additionally, Christ said that his disciples would be “no part of the world”; they would not take sides in the world's conflicts.—John 15:19.

Christ also urged his followers to go one step further. He instructed them to avoid the attitudes that lead to resentment, anger, and war. (Matt. 5:21, 22) Moreover, he instructed his followers to be “peacemakers” and to love their enemies.—Matt. 5:9, 44.

What about us as individuals? Likely, we have no desire to fight in any war, but could there be traces of hostility in our heart that could cause conflicts or division in the congregation? Let us continue to work at eliminating any such feelings from within us. —Jas. 4:1, 11.

Rather than join the conflicts of the nations, we promote peace and love among ourselves. (John 13:34, 35) May we be resolved to remain neutral as we look forward to the day when Jehovah will eliminate all war forever.—Ps. 46:9.

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