

# References for *Life and Ministry Meeting Workbook*

## AUGUST 5-11

### TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | 2 TIMOTHY 1-4

#### **"God Did Not Give Us a Spirit of Cowardice"**

**(2 Timothy 1:7)** For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but one of power and of love and of soundness of mind.

w09 5/15 15 ¶9

#### **Youths—Make Your Advancement Manifest**

<sup>9</sup>To help Timothy, Paul later reminded him: "God gave us not a spirit of cowardice, but that of power and of love and of *soundness of mind*." (2 Tim. 1:7) "Soundness of mind" involves being able to think and reason sensibly. It includes the ability to face things as they are—not the way you would like them to be. Some immature youths manifest a spirit of cowardice and mentally try to escape stressful situations by resorting to excessive sleep or TV viewing, drug or alcohol abuse, constant partying, or sexual immorality. Christians are admonished "to repudiate ungodliness and worldly desires and to live with soundness of mind and righteousness and godly devotion amid this present system of things."—Titus 2:12.

**(2 Timothy 1:8)** So do not become ashamed either of the witness about our Lord or of me, a prisoner for his sake, but take your part in suffering adversity for the good news by relying on the power of God.

w03 3/1 9 ¶7

#### **'Be Courageous and Strong!'**

<sup>7</sup>Paul, writing to Timothy, said: "God gave us not a spirit of cowardice, but that of power . . . Therefore do not become ashamed of the witness about our Lord." (2 Timothy 1:7, 8; Mark 8:38) Having read those words, we can ask our-

selves: 'Am I ashamed of my faith, or am I courageous? At the place where I work (or go to school), do I let those around me know that I am a Witness of Jehovah, or do I try to hide the fact? Am I ashamed to be different from others, or am I proud to stand out because of my relationship with Jehovah?' If anyone has negative feelings about preaching the good news or taking an unpopular stand, let him remember Jehovah's counsel to Joshua: "Be courageous and strong." Never forget, it is not the opinion of our workmates or our schoolmates that counts but the viewpoint of Jehovah and Jesus Christ.—Galatians 1:10.

#### **Digging for Spiritual Gems**

**(2 Timothy 2:3, 4)** As a fine soldier of Christ Jesus, take your part in suffering adversity.

<sup>4</sup>No man serving as a soldier involves himself in the commercial businesses of life, in order to gain the approval of the one who enrolled him as a soldier.

w17.07 10 ¶13

#### **Seeking Riches That Are True**

<sup>13</sup>Timothy was a man of faith. After calling Timothy "a fine soldier of Christ Jesus," Paul told him: "No man serving as a soldier involves himself in the commercial businesses of life, in order to gain the approval of the one who enrolled him as a soldier." (2 Tim. 2:3, 4) Jesus' followers today, including an army of over one million full-time ministers, apply Paul's counsel to the extent that their circumstances allow. Resisting the pressures of advertising and the world around them, they remember the principle: "The borrower is a slave to the lender." (Prov. 22:7) Satan would like nothing better than to have us spend all our time and energy as slaves to his commercial world. Some decisions could keep us in financial bondage for years. Huge home mortgages, lingering

student loans, expensive car payments, even extravagant weddings can result in great financial pressure. We demonstrate practical wisdom when we simplify our life and reduce debt and expenses, setting ourselves free to slave for God rather than for today's commercial system. —1 Tim. 6:10.

**(2 Timothy 2:23)** Further, reject foolish and ignorant debates, knowing that they produce fights.

**w14 7/15 14 ¶10**

**Jehovah's People "Renounce Unrighteousness"**

<sup>10</sup> Today, Jehovah's people are not often confronted with apostasy within the congregation. Still, when exposed to unscriptural teachings, regardless of the source, we must decisively reject them. It would be unwise to engage in debates with apostates, whether in person, by responding to their blogs, or by any other form of communication. Even when the intention is to help the individual, such conversation would be contrary to the Scriptural direction we just considered. Rather, as Jehovah's people, we completely avoid, yes reject, apostasy.

## **Bible Reading**

**(2 Timothy 1:1-18)** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will according to the promise of the life that is through Christ Jesus, <sup>2</sup> to Timothy, a beloved child: May you have undeserved kindness, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord. <sup>3</sup> I am grateful to God, to whom I am rendering sacred service as my forefathers did, and with a clean conscience, never ceasing to remember you in my supplications night and day. <sup>4</sup> As I remember your tears, I am longing to see you, so that I may get filled with joy. <sup>5</sup> For I recall your unhypocritical faith, which dwelled first in your grandmother Lo'is and your mother Eu'nice, but which I

am confident is also in you. <sup>6</sup> For this reason I remind you to stir up like a fire the gift of God that is in you through the laying of my hands on you. <sup>7</sup> For God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but one of power and of love and of soundness of mind. <sup>8</sup> So do not become ashamed either of the witness about our Lord or of me, a prisoner for his sake, but take your part in suffering adversity for the good news by relying on the power of God. <sup>9</sup> He saved us and called us with a holy calling, not because of our works, but because of his own purpose and undeserved kindness. This was given to us in connection with Christ Jesus before times long ago, <sup>10</sup> but now it has been made clearly evident through the manifestation of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has abolished death and has shed light on life and incorruption through the good news, <sup>11</sup> for which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher. <sup>12</sup> This is why I am also suffering these things, but I am not ashamed. For I know the One whom I have believed, and I am confident that he is able to guard what I have laid up in trust with him until that day. <sup>13</sup> Keep holding to the standard of wholesome words that you heard from me with the faith and love that result from union with Christ Jesus. <sup>14</sup> Guard this fine trust by means of the holy spirit, which is dwelling in us. <sup>15</sup> You know this, that all the men in the province of Asia have turned away from me, including Phy-gel'us and Her-mog'e-nes. <sup>16</sup> May the Lord grant mercy to the household of On-e-siph'o-rus, for he often refreshed me, and he did not become ashamed of my prison chains. <sup>17</sup> On the contrary, when he was in Rome, he diligently looked for me and found me. <sup>18</sup> May the Lord grant him to find mercy from Jehovah in that day. And you well know all the services he rendered in Eph'e-sus.

**AUGUST 12-18**

**TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | TITUS 1-  
PHILEMON**

**“Make Appointments of Elders”**

**(Titus 1:5-9)** I left you in Crete so that you would correct the things that were defective and make appointments of elders in city after city, as I instructed you: <sup>6</sup> if there is any man free from accusation, a husband of one wife, having believing children who are not accused of debauchery or rebelliousness. <sup>7</sup> For as God's steward, an overseer must be free from accusation, not self-willed, not quick-tempered, not a drunkard, not violent, not greedy of dishonest gain, <sup>8</sup> but hospitable, a lover of goodness, sound in mind, righteous, loyal, self-controlled, <sup>9</sup> holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching, so that he may be able both to encourage by the teaching that is wholesome and to reprove those who contradict.

**w14 11/15 28-29**

**Questions From Readers**

Although the Scriptures do not explain in detail how every appointment was made back then, we do see some indication of how this was done. We are told that when Paul and Barnabas were on their way back home from their first missionary trip, “*they appointed elders* for them in each congregation, offering prayer with fasting, and they entrusted them to Jehovah, in whom they had become believers.” (Acts 14:23) Years later, Paul wrote to his traveling companion Titus, saying: “I left you in Crete so that you would correct the things that were defective and *make appointments of elders* in city after city, as I instructed you.” (Titus 1:5) Likewise, Timothy, who traveled extensively with the apostle Paul, appears to have been given similar authority. (1 Tim. 5:22) Clearly, then, these appointments were made by traveling over-

seers, not by the apostles and older men in Jerusalem.

With this Biblical precedent in mind, the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses has adjusted how the appointments of elders and ministerial servants are made. As of September 1, 2014, appointments are being made as follows: Each circuit overseer carefully reviews the recommendations being made in his circuit. During his visits to the congregations, he will try to get to know those who are recommended, working along with them in the ministry if at all possible. After discussing the recommendations with the local body of elders, the circuit overseer has the responsibility of appointing the elders and ministerial servants in the congregations in his circuit. In this way, the arrangement is closer to the first-century pattern.

Who handle the various roles in this process? As always, “the faithful and discreet slave” has the primary responsibility of feeding the domestics. (Matt. 24:45-47) This includes searching the Scriptures, with the help of the holy spirit, in order to provide direction on the practical application of Bible principles that have a bearing on the way the worldwide congregation is organized. The faithful slave also appoints all circuit overseers and Branch Committee members. In turn, each branch office provides practical assistance in implementing the direction given. Each body of elders has the solemn duty to review thoroughly the Scriptural qualifications of the brothers they recommend for appointment in God's congregation. Each circuit overseer has the serious responsibility to consider carefully and prayerfully the recommendations made by the elders and then to appoint the men who qualify.

**Digging for Spiritual Gems**

**(Titus 1:12)** A certain one of them, their own prophet, said: “Cre'tans are always liars, injurious wild beasts, idle gluttons.”

**Questions From Readers**

He certainly was not agreeing with any all-encompassing racial or ethnic slur against the Cretans. We can be sure of that, for Paul knew that on Crete there were fine Christians whom God had approved and anointed with His holy spirit. (Acts 2:5, 11, 33) There were enough devoted Christians to make up congregations in “city after city.” While such Christians were not perfect humans, we can be sure that they were not liars and lazy gluttons; otherwise they would not have continued to have Jehovah’s approval. (Philippians 3:18, 19; Revelation 21:8) And as we today find in all nations, likely there were on Crete honesthearted people who were saddened by the low moral standards around them and were ready to respond to the Christian message.—Ezekiel 9:4; compare Acts 13:48.

**(Philemon 15, 16)** Perhaps this is really why he broke away for a short while, so that you may have him back forever, <sup>16</sup> no longer as a slave, but as more than a slave, as a brother who is beloved, especially so to me, but how much more so to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord.

**Highlights From the Letters to Titus, to Philemon, and to the Hebrews**

**15, 16—Why did Paul not ask Philemon to grant freedom to Onesimus?** Paul desired to stick strictly to his commission to ‘preach the kingdom of God and teach the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ.’ Therefore, he chose to stay away from involvement in social issues, such as those concerning slavery.—Acts 28:31.

**Bible Reading**

**(Titus 3:1-15)** Continue reminding them to be in subjection and to be obedient to governments and authorities, to be ready for every good work, <sup>2</sup> to speak injuriously of

no one, not to be quarrelsome, but to be reasonable, displaying all mildness toward all men. <sup>3</sup> For we too were once senseless, disobedient, led astray, being slaves to various desires and pleasures, carrying on in badness and envy, detestable, hating one another. <sup>4</sup> However, when the kindness of our Savior, God, and his love for mankind were manifested <sup>5</sup> (not because of any righteous works we had done, but because of his own mercy), he saved us by means of the bath that brought us to life and by making us new by holy spirit. <sup>6</sup> He poured this spirit out richly on us through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that after being declared righteous through the undeserved kindness of that one, we might become heirs according to a hope of everlasting life. <sup>8</sup> These words are trustworthy, and I want you to keep stressing these matters, so that those who have believed God may keep their minds focused on maintaining fine works. These things are fine and beneficial to men. <sup>9</sup> But have nothing to do with foolish arguments and genealogies and disputes and fights over the Law, for they are unprofitable and futile. <sup>10</sup> As for a man who promotes a sect, reject him after a first and a second admonition, <sup>11</sup> knowing that such a man has deviated from the way and is sinning and is self-condemned. <sup>12</sup> When I send Ar’temas or Tych’i-cus to you, do your utmost to come to me at Ni-cop’o-lis, for that is where I have decided to spend the winter. <sup>13</sup> Carefully supply Ze’nas, who is versed in the Law, and A-pol’los so that they may lack nothing for their trip. <sup>14</sup> But let our people also learn to maintain fine works so as to help in cases of urgent need, so that they may not be unproductive. <sup>15</sup> All those with me send you their greetings. Give my greetings to those who have affection for us in the faith. May the undeserved kindness be with all of you.

## AUGUST 19-25

### TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | HEBREWS 1-3

**“Love Righteousness and Hate Lawlessness”**

**(Hebrews 1:8)** But about the Son, he says: “God is your throne forever and ever, and the scepter of your Kingdom is the scepter of uprightness.

**w14 2/15 5 ¶18**

**Hail Christ, the Glorious King!**

<sup>8</sup> Jehovah installed his Son as his Messianic King in the heavens in 1914. ‘The scepter of his kingdom is a scepter of uprightness,’ so the righteousness and equity of his reign are guaranteed. His authority is legitimate, since ‘God is his throne.’ That is, Jehovah is the foundation of his kingdom. Moreover, Jesus’ throne will last “forever and ever.” Are you not proud to be serving Jehovah under such a mighty, God-appointed King?

**(Hebrews 1:9)** You loved righteousness, and you hated lawlessness. That is why God, your God, anointed you with the oil of exultation more than your companions.”

**w14 2/15 4-5 ¶17**

**Hail Christ, the Glorious King!**

<sup>7</sup> **Read Psalm 45:6, 7.** Because of Jesus’ profound love of righteousness and hatred of anything that might dishonor his Father, Jehovah anointed him as King of the Messianic Kingdom. Jesus was anointed with “the oil of exultation” more than his “companions,” that is, the kings of Judah of the line of David. How so? For one thing, Jesus was anointed by Jehovah himself. Furthermore, Jehovah anointed him as both King and High Priest. (Ps. 2:2; Heb. 5:5, 6) In addition, Jesus was anointed not with oil but with holy spirit, and his kingship is not earthly but heavenly.

### Digging for Spiritual Gems

**(Hebrews 1:3)** He is the reflection of God’s glory and the exact representation of his very being, and he sustains all things by the word of his power. And after he had made a purification for our sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.

**it-1 1185 ¶1**

**Image**

***Has Jesus always reflected his Father’s likeness to the same degree?***

God’s firstborn Son, who later became the man Jesus, is in his Father’s image. (2Co 4:4) Inasmuch as that Son was obviously the one to whom God spoke in saying, “Let us make man in *our* image,” this likeness of the Son to his Father, the Creator, existed from when the Son was created. (Ge 1:26; Joh 1:1-3; Col 1:15, 16) When on earth as a perfect man, he reflected his Father’s qualities and personality to the fullest extent possible within human limitations, so he could say that “he that has seen me has seen the Father also.” (Joh 14:9; 5:17, 19, 30, 36; 8:28, 38, 42) This likeness, however, was certainly heightened at the time of Jesus’ resurrection to spirit life and his being granted “all authority . . . in heaven and on the earth” by his Father, Jehovah God. (1Pe 3:18; Mt 28:18) Since God then exalted Jesus to “a superior position,” God’s Son now reflected his Father’s glory to an even greater degree than he had before leaving the heavens to come to earth. (Php 2:9; Heb 2:9) He is now “the exact representation of [God’s] very being.”—Heb 1:2-4.

**(Hebrews 1:10-12)** And: “At the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands. <sup>11</sup> They will perish, but you will remain; and just like a garment, they will all wear out, <sup>12</sup> and you will wrap them up just as a cloak, as a garment, and they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never come to an end.”

## it-1 1063 ¶7

### Heaven

The words of Psalm 102:25, 26 apply to Jehovah God, but the apostle Paul quotes them with reference to Jesus Christ. This is because God's only-begotten Son was God's personal Agent employed in creating the physical universe. Paul contrasts the Son's permanence with that of the physical creation, which God, if he so designed, could 'wrap up just as a cloak' and set aside. —Heb 1:1, 2, 8, 10-12; compare 1Pe 2:3, ftn.

### Bible Reading

**(Hebrews 1:1-14)** Long ago God spoke to our forefathers by means of the prophets on many occasions and in many ways. <sup>2</sup> Now at the end of these days he has spoken to us by means of a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the systems of things. <sup>3</sup> He is the reflection of God's glory and the exact representation of his very being, and he sustains all things by the word of his power. And after he had made a purification for our sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. <sup>4</sup> So he has become better than the angels to the extent that he has inherited a name more excellent than theirs. <sup>5</sup> For example, to which one of the angels did God ever say: "You are my son; today I have become your father"? And again: "I will become his father, and he will become my son"? <sup>6</sup> But when he again brings his Firstborn into the inhabited earth, he says: "And let all of God's angels do obeisance to him." <sup>7</sup> Also, he says about the angels: "He makes his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire." <sup>8</sup> But about the Son, he says: "God is your throne forever and ever, and the scepter of your Kingdom is the scepter of uprightness. <sup>9</sup> You loved righteousness, and you hated lawlessness. That is why God, your God, anointed you with the oil of exul-

tation more than your companions." <sup>10</sup> And: "At the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the works of your hands. <sup>11</sup> They will perish, but you will remain; and just like a garment, they will all wear out, <sup>12</sup> and you will wrap them up just as a cloak, as a garment, and they will be changed. But you are the same, and your years will never come to an end." <sup>13</sup> But about which of the angels has he ever said: "Sit at my right hand until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet"? <sup>14</sup> Are they not all spirits for holy service, sent out to minister for those who are going to inherit salvation?

## AUGUST 26–SEPTEMBER 1

### TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD | HEBREWS 4-6

#### "Do Your Utmost to Enter Into God's Rest"

**(Hebrews 4:1)** Therefore, since a promise of entering into his rest remains, let us be on guard for fear someone among you seems to fall short of it.

**(Hebrews 4:4)** For in one place he has said of the seventh day as follows: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works,"

#### w11 7/15 24-25 ¶3-5

#### God's Rest—What Is It?

<sup>3</sup> Two lines of evidence lead us to the conclusion that the seventh day was still under way in the first century C.E. First, consider Jesus' words to opposers who criticized him for healing on the Sabbath, which they construed as a form of work. The Lord said to them: "My Father *has kept working until now*, and I keep working." (John 5:16, 17) What was the point? Jesus was being accused of working on the Sabbath. His reply: "My Father has kept working" answered that charge. In effect, Jesus was saying to his critics: 'My Father and I are engaged in the same type of work. Since my Father has kept

working during his millenniums-long Sabbath, it is quite permissible for me to keep working, even on the Sabbath.’ Thus, Jesus implied that as regards the earth, God’s great Sabbath day of rest, the seventh day, had not ended in his day.

<sup>4</sup> A second line of evidence is provided by the apostle Paul. When quoting Genesis 2:2 concerning God’s rest, Paul wrote under inspiration: “We who have exercised faith *do enter into the rest.*” (Heb. 4:3, 4, 6, 9) So the seventh day was ongoing in Paul’s day. How much longer was that day of rest to continue?

<sup>5</sup> In order to answer that question, we must remember the purpose of the seventh day. Genesis 2:3 explains what it is: “God proceeded to bless the seventh day and *make it sacred.*” That day was ‘made sacred’—sanctified, or set apart, by Jehovah—in order to bring his purpose to completion. That purpose is for the earth to be inhabited by *obedient* men and women who will take care of it and all life upon it. (Gen. 1:28) It is toward the realization of that purpose that both Jehovah God and Jesus Christ, the “Lord of the sabbath,” have “kept working until now.” (Matt. 12:8) God’s rest day will continue until his purpose in connection with it has been fully realized at the end of Christ’s Thousand Year Reign.

**(Hebrews 4:6)** Therefore, since it remains for some to enter into it, and those to whom the good news was first declared did not enter in because of disobedience,

**w11 7/15 25 ¶6**

**God’s Rest—What Is It?**

<sup>6</sup> God’s purpose was clearly explained to Adam and Eve, but they failed to cooperate with it. Of course, Adam and Eve were only the first humans to pursue a course of disobedience. There have been millions of others since then. Even God’s chosen people, the nation of Israel, fell into a pattern of disobedience. And significantly,

Paul warned first-century Christians that even some of them could fall into the same trap as the ancient Israelites. He wrote: “Let us therefore do our utmost to enter into that rest, for fear anyone should fall in the same pattern of disobedience.” (Heb. 4:11) Notice that Paul links disobedience with failure to enter into God’s rest. What does that mean for us? If we were to rebel against God’s purpose in some way, might we run the risk of not entering into God’s rest? Clearly, the answer to that question is of great importance to us, and we will consider it further. At this point, however, let us see what more we can learn about entering into God’s rest by considering the bad example of the Israelites.

**(Hebrews 4:9-11)** So there remains a sabbath-rest for the people of God. <sup>10</sup> For the man who has entered into God’s rest has also rested from his own works, just as God did from his own. <sup>11</sup> Let us therefore do our utmost to enter into that rest, so that no one may fall into the same pattern of disobedience.

**w11 7/15 28 ¶16-17**

**God’s Rest—What Is It?**

<sup>16</sup> Few Christians today would insist on observing some aspect of the Mosaic Law in order to obtain salvation. Paul’s inspired words to the Ephesians are perfectly clear: “By this undeserved kindness, indeed, you have been saved through faith; and this not owing to you, it is God’s gift. No, it is not owing to works, in order that no man should have ground for boasting.” (Eph. 2:8, 9) What, then, does it mean for Christians to enter into God’s rest? Jehovah set aside the seventh day—his rest day—in order to bring his purpose respecting the earth to a glorious fulfillment. *We can enter into Jehovah’s rest—or join him in his rest—by obediently working in harmony with his advancing purpose as it is revealed to us through his organization.*

<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, if we minimized the Bible-based counsel that we receive through the faithful and discreet slave class, choosing to follow an independent course, we would be placing ourselves at odds with God's unfolding purpose. This could endanger our peaceful relationship with Jehovah. In the next article, we will consider a few common situations that can affect God's people and discuss how the decisions we make, whether to obey or to take an independent course, can determine if we have truly entered into God's rest.

## **Digging for Spiritual Gems**

**(Hebrews 4:12)** For the word of God is alive and exerts power and is sharper than any two-edged sword and pierces even to the dividing of soul and spirit, and of joints from the marrow, and is able to discern thoughts and intentions of the heart.

### **w16.09 13**

#### **Questions From Readers**

**What is “the word of God” that Hebrews 4:12 says “is alive and exerts power”?**

■ The context shows that the apostle Paul was referring to the message, or expression of God's purpose, such as we find in the Bible.

Hebrews 4:12 is often cited in our publications to show that the Bible has power to change lives, and it is perfectly proper to make that application. However, it is helpful to view Hebrews 4:12 in its broad context. Paul was urging Hebrew Christians to cooperate with God's purposes. Many of those were set out in the holy writings. Paul used as an example the Israelites who had been saved out of Egypt. They had the prospect of entering the promised land “flowing with milk and honey,” where they could enjoy true rest.—Ex. 3:8; Deut. 12:9, 10.

That was God's expressed purpose. Yet, the Israelites later hardened their hearts and did not exercise faith, so most of them failed to enter

into that rest. (Num. 14:30; Josh. 14:6-10) However, Paul added that there was still “a promise of entering into [God's] rest.” (Heb. 3:16-19; 4:1) That “promise” clearly is *part* of God's expressed purpose. As did the Hebrew Christians, we can read of and cooperate with that purpose. To underscore that this promise is based on the Scriptures, Paul quoted parts of Genesis 2:2 and Psalm 95:11.

Certainly, it should touch us that “a promise of entering into [God's] rest *remains*.” We trust that the Bible-based prospect of entering into God's rest is really possible, and we have taken steps to enter. We have not done that by striving to keep the Mosaic Law or to earn Jehovah's approval by other works. Rather, in faith we have happily cooperated with and continue to cooperate with God's revealed purpose. In addition, as noted above, thousands of people around the globe have begun to study the Bible and to learn of the expressions of God's purpose. Many of them are moved to change their lifestyle, to exercise faith, and to become baptized Christians. The way they are being affected is clear proof that “the word of God is alive and exerts power.” God's expressed purpose, as outlined in the Bible, has already affected our life, and it will continue to exert power in our life.

**(Hebrews 6:17, 18)** In this same way, when God decided to demonstrate more clearly to the heirs of the promise the unchangeableness of his purpose, he guaranteed it with an oath, <sup>18</sup> in order that through two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to the refuge may have strong encouragement to take firm hold of the hope set before us.

### **it-1 1139 ¶2**

#### **Hope**

This hope of everlasting life and incorruption for those who are “partakers of the heavenly call-



ing” (Heb 3:1) is solidly based and is something that can be confidently relied on. It is supported by two things in which it is impossible for God to lie, namely, his promise and his oath, and the hope resides with Christ, who is now immortal in the heavens. Therefore this hope is spoken of as “an anchor for the soul, both sure and firm, and it enters in within the curtain [as the high priest entered the Most Holy on the Day of Atonement], where a forerunner has entered in our behalf, Jesus, who has become a high priest according to the manner of Melchizedek forever.”—Heb 6:17-20.

### **Bible Reading**

**(Hebrews 5:1-14)** For every high priest taken from among men is appointed in their behalf over the things relating to God, so that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. <sup>2</sup> He is able to deal compassionately with the ignorant and erring ones, since he too is confronted with his own weakness, <sup>3</sup> and because of that he must make offerings for his own sins just as he does for those of the people. <sup>4</sup> A man does not take this honor of his own accord, but he receives it only when he is called by God, just as Aaron was. <sup>5</sup> So, too, the Christ did not glorify himself by becoming a high priest, but was glorified by the One who said to him: “You are my son; today I have become your father.” <sup>6</sup> As he also says in another place, “You are a priest forever in the manner of Mel-chiz’e-dek.” <sup>7</sup> During his life on earth, Christ offered up supplications and also petitions, with strong outcries and tears, to the One who was able to save him out of death, and he was favorably heard for his godly fear. <sup>8</sup> Although he was a son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered. <sup>9</sup> And after he had been made perfect, he became responsible for everlasting salvation to all those obeying him, <sup>10</sup> because he

has been designated by God a high priest in the manner of Mel-chiz’e-dek. <sup>11</sup> We have much to say about him, and it is difficult to explain, because you have become dull in your hearing. <sup>12</sup> For although by now you should be teachers, you again need someone to teach you from the beginning the elementary things of the sacred pronouncements of God, and you have gone back to needing milk, not solid food. <sup>13</sup> For everyone who continues to feed on milk is unacquainted with the word of righteousness, for he is a young child. <sup>14</sup> But solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their powers of discernment trained to distinguish both right and wrong.