

***Examining
the Scriptures
Daily***

2026



es26-E
250519

Examining the Scriptures Daily

2026

Yeartext

**“Happy are those conscious
of their spiritual need.”**

—Matthew 5:3.

Name

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2026

JANUARY

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DECEMBER

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Our Christian Life and Ministry

Bible Reading Schedule for 2026

January

5	Isaiah 17-20	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	Isaiah 21-23	<input type="checkbox"/>
19	Isaiah 24-27	<input type="checkbox"/>
26	Isaiah 28-29	<input type="checkbox"/>

February

2	Isaiah 30-32	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Isaiah 33-35	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Isaiah 36-37	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	Isaiah 38-40	<input type="checkbox"/>

March

2	Isaiah 41-42	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Isaiah 43-44	<input type="checkbox"/>
16	Isaiah 45-47	<input type="checkbox"/>
23	Isaiah 48-49	<input type="checkbox"/>
30	Week of Memorial	

April

6	Isaiah 50-51	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Isaiah 52-53	<input type="checkbox"/>
20	Isaiah 54-55	<input type="checkbox"/>
27	Isaiah 56-57	<input type="checkbox"/>

May

4	Isaiah 58-59	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Isaiah 60-61	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Isaiah 62-64	<input type="checkbox"/>
25	Isaiah 65-66	<input type="checkbox"/>

June

1	Jeremiah 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Jeremiah 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Jeremiah 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Jeremiah 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/>
29	Jeremiah 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/>

July

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|----|----------------|--------------------------|
| 6 | Jeremiah 13-15 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 13 | Jeremiah 16-17 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 20 | Jeremiah 18-19 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 27 | Jeremiah 20-21 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

August

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|----|----------------|--------------------------|
| 3 | Jeremiah 22-23 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 10 | Jeremiah 24-25 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 17 | Jeremiah 26-28 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 24 | Jeremiah 29-30 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 31 | Jeremiah 31 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

September

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|----|----------------|--------------------------|
| 7 | Jeremiah 32-33 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14 | Jeremiah 34-35 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21 | Jeremiah 36-37 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 28 | Jeremiah 38-39 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

October

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| 5 | Jeremiah 40-41 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 12 | Jeremiah 42-44 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 19 | Jeremiah 45-46 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 26 | Jeremiah 47-48 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

November

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|----|------------------|--------------------------|
| 2 | Jeremiah 49-50 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 9 | Jeremiah 51-52 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 16 | Lamentations 1-2 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 23 | Lamentations 3-5 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 30 | Ezekiel 1-2 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

December

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|----|--------------|--------------------------|
| 7 | Ezekiel 3-4 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 14 | Ezekiel 5-6 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 21 | Ezekiel 7-8 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 28 | Ezekiel 9-10 | <input type="checkbox"/> |

How to Use This Booklet

In this booklet, you will find a scripture and comments for each day. Although the text and comments may be read at any time, many find it advantageous to consider them in the morning. Then they can reflect on such thoughts throughout the day. Discussing the text as a family is most beneficial. Bethel families around the world do so at breakfast time.

The citation at the end of each comment identifies the source. For example, the citation “w24.04 2 ¶1, 3” refers to the source described in the table below. Additional information on the subject can be found in the cited article.

w24	Year of <i>Watchtower</i> issue (2024)
04	Month of <i>Watchtower</i> issue (April)
2	Page number(s) where comments are found
¶1, 3	Paragraph number(s) where comments are found

Thursday, January 1

Become full-grown in your understanding.—1 Cor. 14:20.

Few events bring more joy to a married couple than the birth of a healthy baby. Yet, even though parents love their precious newborn, they do not want him to remain an infant permanently. In fact, they would be seriously concerned if he did not grow. Similarly, Jehovah is happy when we take our first steps as followers of Jesus, but He does not want us to remain spiritual toddlers. (1 Cor. 3:1) Instead, he asks us to “become full-grown” Christians. In the Bible, the Greek word translated “full-grown” can also mean “mature,” “perfect,” and “complete.” (1 Cor. 2:6) We become full-grown, or mature, as Christians when we grow out of spiritual infancy and become spiritual men or women. Of course, even when we have reached that goal, we should never stop advancing spiritually.—1 Tim. 4:15. w24.04 2 ¶1, 3

Friday, January 2

My tent will be with them, and I will be their God.—Ezek. 37:27.

What role does Jehovah play in your life? You may answer, ‘Jehovah is my Father, my God, and my Friend.’ There are also other titles, or designations, that you may apply to Jehovah. However, do you also view him as your Host? King David compared Jehovah’s friendship with His loyal worshippers to the relationship between a host and his guests. He asked: “O Jehovah, who may be a guest in your tent? Who may reside in your holy mountain?” (Ps. 15:1) From these inspired words, we learn that we can become Jehovah’s guests—his friends.

Before creation, Jehovah was alone. But at one point, he welcomed his firstborn Son into his figurative tent. Jehovah took great pleasure in his new role as Host. The Bible reveals that Jehovah was “especially fond of” his Son. His first guest, in turn, “rejoiced before [Jehovah] all the time.” —Prov. 8:30. w24.06 2 ¶1-3

Saturday, January 3

Zadok [was] a mighty and courageous young man.—1 Chron. 12:28.

Picture the scene. A crowd of over 340,000 men had gathered to make David king over all of Israel. For three days, the sounds of animated conversation and joyful songs of praise echoed throughout the rocky hills near Hebron. (1 Chron. 12:39) A young man named Zadok would not likely have stood out in that large crowd. However, Jehovah made sure that we would know that Zadok was there. (1 Chron. 12:22, 26-28) Zadok was a priest who worked closely with High Priest Abiathar. Zadok was also a seer who was able to discern the divine will and who was granted extraordinary insight. (2 Sam. 15:27) He was a man of courage. During these last days, Satan is intensifying his attacks on God’s people. (1 Pet. 5:8) We need to be courageous as we wait on Jehovah to put an end to Satan and his wicked system. (Ps. 31:24) In doing so, we can imitate Zadok’s courage. w24.07 2 ¶1-3

Sunday, January 4

Adam's life amounted to 930 years, and then he died.—Gen. 5:5.

When Jehovah created the first man and woman, he wanted them to be happy. He gave them a beautiful home, the gift of marriage, and a fascinating assignment. They were to fill the earth with their descendants, making the whole planet a paradise like the garden of Eden. He gave them only one simple restriction. And he warned them that if they broke that command by deliberately rebelling against him, their sin would lead to death. We know what happened. An invisible spirit, one who had no love for God or for them, entered the picture and tempted them to commit that sin. Adam and Eve gave in to that bad influence. Failing to trust their loving Father, they sinned. As we know, Jehovah's words proved true. From that day onward, they had to face the consequences: they began to grow old, and finally they died.—Gen. 1:28, 29; 2:8, 9, 16-18; 3:1-6, 17-19, 24. w24.08 3 ¶3

Monday, January 5

Become doers of the word and not hearers only.—Jas. 1:22.

Jehovah and his dear Son want us to be happy. Psalm 119:2 says: "Happy are those who observe his reminders, who search for him with all their heart." Jesus gave further assurance, saying: "Happy are those hearing the word of God and keeping it!" (Luke 11:28) As Jehovah's worshippers, we are a happy people when we regularly read God's Word and endeavor to apply what we learn. (Jas. 1:22-25) This

is a key step in our pleasing Jehovah. (Eccl. 12:13) As we put into practice what we read in God's inspired Word, we improve our family life and build strong friendships with fellow believers. Moreover, we avoid many of the problems that come to those who do not follow Jehovah's ways. Indeed, we agree with King David. After mentioning in song the law, orders, and judgments of Jehovah, he concluded: "In keeping them, there is a large reward." —Ps. 19:7-11. w24.09 2 ¶1-3

Tuesday, January 6

He heals the brokenhearted; he binds up their wounds.—Ps. 147:3.

What does Jehovah see when he looks at his servants on earth? He is aware of our joys and our sorrows. (Ps. 37: 18) When he sees that we are serving him to the best of our ability despite coping with painful emotions, how pleased he is! More than that, he is eager to support and comfort us. Psalm 147:3 says that Jehovah 'binds up the wounds' of the brokenhearted. Jehovah is here pictured as tenderly caring for those who have been injured emotionally. What must we do to benefit from Jehovah's care? Consider an illustration. A skilled doctor can do much to help an injured person to heal. To benefit, though, the injured person must carefully follow the doctor's instructions. Jehovah, by means of his Word, speaks to those who are suffering emotionally and gives them loving advice. w24.10 6 ¶1-2

Wednesday, January 7

They were all wiped off the earth.

—Gen. 7:23.

In the past, our publications have considered the question of what happens to those whom Jehovah judges as unrighteous. We have said that for such individuals there is no hope of a future resurrection. Several Bible accounts describe Jehovah's judgments against unrighteous people, such as the unknown numbers who died in the Flood or the seven nations in the Promised Land that Jehovah ordered his people to devote to destruction or the 185,000 Assyrian soldiers slain by an angel of Jehovah in a single night. (Deut. 7:1-3; Isa. 37:36, 37) In these cases, does the Bible give us enough information to determine that Jehovah sentenced all those individuals to eternal destruction, with no hope of a resurrection? No, it does not. We do not know how Jehovah judged each individual; nor do we know whether those who were killed had an opportunity to learn about Jehovah and to repent. w24.05 3 ¶5-7

Thursday, January 8

Keep conquering the evil with the good.—Rom. 12:21.

Jesus told an illustration about a widow who kept asking a judge to give her justice. No doubt that story resonated with many of Jesus' disciples because in his day the common people were often victims of injustice. (Luke 18: 1-5) The story is also meaningful to us because we have all experienced injustice at one time or another. In the world today, prejudice, inequality, and oppression are common, so we

are not surprised when we are treated unfairly. (Eccl. 5:8) What we might not expect, though, is to be misjudged by a brother or a sister; yet, that can happen. Of course, our brothers and sisters are not opposers of the truth. They are simply imperfect. We can learn much from how Jesus reacted to injustices from wicked opposers. If we can be patient with opposers who treat us unjustly, how much more so should we be patient with our fellow believers! w24.11 2 ¶1-2

Friday, January 9

Where will we buy bread for these people to eat?—John 6:5.

Bread was a staple for many in Bible times. (Gen. 14:18; Luke 4:4) In fact, it was so important that the Bible sometimes uses "bread" to mean food in general. (Matt. 6:11; Acts 20:7, study note) Bread was also a central feature in two of Jesus' well-known miracles. (Matt. 16:9, 10) We find one of those accounts in John chapter 6. After Jesus' apostles had finished a preaching tour, Jesus took them along by boat across the Sea of Galilee so that they could rest. (Mark 6:7, 30-32; Luke 9:10) They came to an isolated spot in the area of Bethsaida. Soon, though, thousands of people arrived and crowded around. Jesus did not ignore them. He kindly took time to teach them about the Kingdom and to cure the sick. As it was getting late, the disciples wondered how all those people could get something to eat. Some of them perhaps had limited provisions, but most would need to go into the villages and buy food.—Matt. 14:15. w24.12 2 ¶1-2

Saturday, January 10

The gift God gives is everlasting life by Christ Jesus our Lord.—Rom. 6:23.

Our original parents, Adam and Eve, were perfect and lived in a beautiful paradise. (Gen. 1:27; 2:7-9) They had the prospect of enjoying a rich, endless life. But then everything changed. They lost their Paradise home as well as their prospect of everlasting life. What inheritance could they pass on to their future children? The Bible tells us: “Through one man [Adam] sin entered into the world and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because they had all sinned.” (Rom. 5:12) The inheritance Adam passed on to us is sin, resulting in death. This inherited sin is like a huge debt, one that none of us can pay off. (Ps. 49:8) Jesus likened sins to “debts.” (Matt. 6:12; Luke 11:4) When we sin, it is as if we incur a debt to Jehovah. We have to pay the penalty for the sin. Should this debt be left unpaid, it would be canceled only when we die.—Rom. 6:7. w25.02 2-3 ¶2-3

Sunday, January 11

I have made your name known.

—John 17:26.

We count it a privilege to share the truth about God’s Kingdom with others! That privilege is not open to just anyone. For instance, when Jesus was on earth, he did not allow the wicked spirits to witness about him. (Luke 4:41) Today, before a person shares in the ministry with Jehovah’s people, he must qualify for the privilege. We show how much we appreciate the honor to preach by giving a witness wherever and whenever we can. Like

Jesus, our goal is to plant and water seeds of Kingdom truth in the hearts of people. (Matt. 13:3, 23; 1 Cor. 3:6) In line with Jesus’ example, Jehovah’s organization does everything possible to help others come to know God’s name. The *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* has played a significant role in this by restoring God’s name to its rightful place. This Bible translation is now available in whole or in part in over 270 languages. w24.04 9 ¶8-9

Monday, January 12

Her husband rises up and praises her.
—Prov. 31:28.

Some happily married brothers make it a habit to do something every day to show their wife how much they love her. (1 John 3:18) A husband may show tender affection for his wife in small ways, such as by holding her hand or giving her a warm embrace. He may send her a text message and tell her “I miss you” or ask “How is your day going?” From time to time, he may express his love for her by writing some well-chosen words on a card. When a husband does these things, he honors his wife and strengthens their marriage. A husband who honors his wife builds her up and encourages her. One way he does this is by remembering to show appreciation for all that she does to support him. (Col. 3:15) When a husband sincerely praises his wife, he warms her heart. She will feel secure, loved, and honored. w25.01 11 ¶15; 13 ¶16

Tuesday, January 13

I, Jehovah, am your God, . . . the One guiding you in the way you should walk.—Isa. 48:17.

Psalm 15 ends with the promise: “Whoever does these things will never be shaken.” Here the psalmist reveals the main objective behind God’s requirements. Jehovah wants us to be happy. So he gives us direction that will bring us his blessing and protection. Jehovah’s approved guests can look forward to a bright future. The faithful anointed will have admission into the “many dwelling places” that Jesus prepared for them in heaven. (John 14:2) Those with the earthly hope look forward to what Revelation 21:3 promises. Surely, we all feel highly honored to have received Jehovah’s warm invitation to be his friends, to be everlasting guests in his tent!—Ps. 15:1-5. w24.06 13 ¶19-20

Wednesday, January 14

Give Jehovah the glory due his name.
—Ps. 96:8.

What is glory? In the Bible, the word “glory” can refer to anything that makes someone impressive. Jehovah made an outstanding display of his glory shortly after the nation of Israel was delivered from slavery in Egypt. Picture the scene: Millions of Israelites assemble at the base of Mount Sinai to meet their God. A dark cloud engulfs the mountain. Suddenly, a tremendous earthquake—apparently coupled with volcanic activity—shakes the ground beneath their feet while lightning, thunder, and the deafening sound of a horn fill the air. (Ex. 19:16-18; 24:17; Ps. 68:8) Imagine how

impressed those Israelites were when Jehovah revealed this powerful display of his glory. Today, we give Jehovah glory by telling others about his awesome power and his heartwarming qualities and when we give him credit for things we accomplish in his strength.—Isa. 26:12. w25.01 2 ¶2-3

Thursday, January 15

Jehovah has sent me.—Num. 16:28.

At one point in the Israelites’ journey to the Promised Land, prominent men challenged Moses and the role that Jehovah had assigned him. They said: “The whole assembly [not just Moses] is holy, all of them, and Jehovah is in their midst.” (Num. 16: 1-3) Although it was true that in God’s eyes “the whole assembly” was holy, Jehovah had chosen Moses to take the lead among His people. By criticizing Moses, the rebels were really criticizing Jehovah. They did not focus on what Jehovah wanted; they focused on what they wanted—more power and recognition. God struck down the leaders of the rebellion as well as thousands more who sympathized with them. (Num. 16:30-35, 41, 49) Today we can be sure that Jehovah disapproves of those who disrespect his organizational arrangements. w24.07 11 ¶11

Friday, January 16

The vision is yet for its appointed time.—Hab. 2:3.

We live at a time when most people reject—and even ridicule—the Bible’s warning about the end of this system of things. (2 Pet. 3:3, 4) Though there are many things that we do not know, we need to have strong faith that the end of this system of things will come right on time and that Jehovah will care for us. We must also strengthen our faith in the channel Jehovah is using today to guide us—“the faithful and discreet slave.” (Matt. 24:45) When the great tribulation begins, we may receive specific lifesaving instructions. Now is the time to strengthen our trust and confidence in the direction we receive from those taking the lead in Jehovah’s organization. We cannot expect to follow their direction confidently during the great tribulation if we struggle to follow it now. w24.09 11 ¶11-12

Saturday, January 17

*Prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
—Rom. 12:2.*

Christian parents recognize that faith in God is not something a child inherits. Over time a child may wrestle with such questions as: ‘How do I know that there is a God? Can I really believe what the Bible says?’ In fact, the Bible actually encourages us to use our “power of reason” and to “make sure of all things.” (Rom. 12:1; 1 Thess. 5:21) How, though, can you help your child to strengthen his faith? Encourage your child to prove the truth to himself. When your child asks ques-

tions, take the opportunity to show him how to find the answers by using research tools, such as the *Watch Tower Publications Index* and the *Research Guide for Jehovah’s Witnesses*. In the latter, under the subject “The Bible,” he might look up “Inspired by God” to find evidence that the Bible is not just a good book written by men. Rather, it is “the word of God.”—1 Thess. 2:13. w24.12 14-15 ¶4-5

Sunday, January 18

These things entrust to faithful men, who, in turn, will be adequately qualified to teach others.

—2 Tim. 2:2.

How can elders imitate Jesus? They must train and assist men, including those who may be relatively young, to qualify for greater responsibilities. Elders do not expect those whom they train to be perfect. They should give them loving counsel so that these young brothers can gain experience and see the need to be humble, faithful, and willing to serve others. (1 Tim. 3:1; 1 Pet. 5:5) Jesus gave his disciples the responsibility not only to preach but also to teach. The disciples may have felt unqualified for that assignment. However, Jesus did not doubt that they could do the work, and he told them so. Expressing complete confidence in them, Jesus said: “Just as the Father has sent me, I also am sending you.”—John 20:21. w24.10 16 ¶15; 17 ¶17

Monday, January 19

David . . . , a man agreeable to my heart.—Acts 13:22.

David was a great king. He was also a musician, a poet, a warrior, and a prophet. He experienced many trials. For some years, he lived as a fugitive, fleeing from jealous King Saul. After becoming king, David again had to run for his life when his son Absalom tried to steal his throne. Despite David's difficulties and personal failings, he proved loyal to God to the end of his life. Jehovah described him as "a man agreeable to [His] heart." So David's counsel is worth listening to! (1 Ki. 15:5) Consider, for example, the counsel that David gave to his son and successor, Solomon. The young man had been chosen by Jehovah to continue to promote pure worship and to build a temple to honor God. (1 Chron. 22:5) Solomon would face difficulties. What would David say to him? David told his son that if he obeyed Jehovah, he would succeed in life.—1 Ki. 2:2, 3. w24.11 10 ¶9-11

Tuesday, January 20

Commit your way to Jehovah; rely on him, and he will act in your behalf.
—Ps. 37:5.

A husband who physically or verbally abuses his wife needs to take steps to repair his relationship with Jehovah and with his wife. First, he recognizes that he has a serious problem. Nothing is hidden from Jehovah's sight. (Ps. 44:21; Eccl. 12:14; Heb. 4:13) Second, he stops abusing his wife and changes his behavior. (Prov. 28:13) Third, he apologizes to his wife and to Jehovah and seeks their forgive-

ness. (Acts 3:19) He should also beg Jehovah for both the desire to change and the help to control his thoughts, speech, and actions. (Ps. 51:10-12; 2 Cor. 10:5; Phil. 2:13) Fourth, he acts in harmony with his prayers by learning to hate all forms of violence and abusive speech. (Ps. 97:10) Fifth, he seeks immediate help from loving shepherds in the congregation. (Jas. 5:14-16) Sixth, he develops a plan that will help him to avoid all such behavior in the future. w25.01 11 ¶14

Wednesday, January 21

Why are you delaying? Rise, get baptized.—Acts 22:16.

Do you love Jehovah God, the one who has given you every good gift, even life itself? Do you want to show your love for him? The best way to do so is to dedicate yourself to him and then symbolize your dedication by water baptism. These steps make you part of Jehovah's family. As a result, your Father and Friend will guide you and care for you because you will belong to him. (Ps. 73:24; Isa. 43:1, 2) Dedication and baptism also give you the prospect of enjoying endless life. (1 Pet. 3:21) Is something holding you back from getting baptized? If so, you are not alone. Millions before you have had to make changes in their conduct and in their way of thinking in order to qualify for baptism. They are now serving Jehovah with joy and zeal. w25.03 2 ¶1-2

Thursday, January 22

With you there is true forgiveness.

—Ps. 130:4.

In the Bible, sins are often likened to heavy burdens. King David described his own sins this way: “My errors loom over my head; like a heavy burden, they are too much for me to bear.” (Ps. 38:4) But Jehovah pardons the sins of repentant wrongdoers. (Ps. 25:18; 32:5) The Hebrew expression translated “pardon” basically means to “lift up” or “carry.” We might think of Jehovah as a strong man who figuratively lifts the burden of sin off our shoulders and carries it away. Another word picture shows just how far away Jehovah carries our sins. Psalm 103:12 tells us: “As far off as the sunrise is from the sunset, so far off from us he has put our transgressions.” East is the farthest point from west. The two points never meet. In other words, Jehovah takes our sins as far away from us as we can imagine. What a reassuring way to describe his forgiveness! w25.02 9 ¶5-6

Friday, January 23

When you make gifts of mercy, do

not blow a trumpet ahead of you.

—Matt. 6:2.

After Jesus returned to heaven, the apostle Peter performed a miracle by healing a man who was lame from birth. (Acts 1:8, 9; 3:2, 6-8) Naturally, this amazing event drew a crowd of people. (Acts 3:11) Would Peter bask in the glory of the moment, given that he had come from a background where prominence and position were greatly emphasized? No, Peter humbly directed praise away from himself

and gave the rightful credit to Jehovah and Jesus, saying: “Through [Jesus’] name, and by our faith in his name, this man whom you see and know has been made strong.” (Acts 3: 12-16) We can follow Peter’s example in cultivating humility. We perform tasks for others because we love Jehovah and we love people, not because we love to be admired. If we happily serve Jehovah and our brothers in any way we can, regardless of whether our efforts are noticed, we give evidence of being humble.—Matt. 6:1-4. w25.03 10-11 ¶11-12

Saturday, January 24

Pay constant attention to yourself and to your teaching.—1 Tim. 4:16.

We can increase our enthusiasm for the preaching work by focusing on our love for Jehovah and for our neighbor. (Matt. 22:37-39) Just imagine how happy Jehovah is when he sees us do the work and how happy people will be when they start studying the Bible! Think, too, about the salvation that awaits those who respond to our message. (John 6:40) Are you confined to your home for some reason? If so, focus on what you can do to show love for Jehovah and for your neighbor. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Samuel and Dania were confined to their home. Throughout that difficult time, they regularly did telephone witnessing, wrote letters, and conducted Bible studies over Zoom. Samuel and Dania’s circumstances limited their activity, but they did what they could and found joy in doing so. w24.04 18 ¶15-16

Sunday, January 25

Who can find a capable wife? Her value is far more than that of corals.
—Prov. 31:10.

While marriage is not essential for happiness, many single Christians, whether young or old, look forward to having a marriage mate. Of course, before pursuing a courtship, you should be financially, spiritually, and emotionally ready for marriage. (1 Cor. 7:36) It is also best to know what you are looking for in a mate before beginning a courtship. Otherwise, you could overlook a potential mate or you could pursue a courtship with someone who is not well-suited for you. Of course, any potential mate should be a baptized Christian. (1 Cor. 7:39) But not every baptized person will be a good marriage mate for you. So you could ask yourself: ‘What are my goals in life? What qualities in a marriage mate do I view as essential? Are my expectations reasonable?’ w24.05 20 ¶1; 21 ¶3

Monday, January 26

Become kind to one another.
—Eph. 4:32.

As a courting couple, how can you handle problems and disagreements that you may have from time to time? Would this indicate that your relationship is not working? Not necessarily; all couples have differences. A strong marriage is made up of two people who can work together to overcome their differences. So how you work through problems now may reveal whether your marriage will be successful. As a couple, ask yourselves: ‘Can we discuss matters calmly and respectfully? Do we readily admit our shortcomings and try to improve? Are

we quick to yield, apologize, and forgive?’ (Eph. 4:31) Nevertheless, if you constantly disagree or argue during courtship, the situation will not likely improve after you get married. If you realize that the other person is not right for you, ending the courtship would be the best decision for both of you. w24.05 29 ¶12

Tuesday, January 27

*May Jehovah, my Rock, be praised,
who trains my hands for battle.*
—Ps. 144:1.

We can be a good influence on others if we are firm for what is right and if we make decisions that are solidly based on Bible principles. As we grow in faith and accurate knowledge, we become more steadfast in the truth. We are not indecisive, unsteady, or easily swayed by false teachings and worldly thinking. (Eph. 4:14; Jas. 1:6-8) We are also able to assist those who may be facing trials. (1 Thess. 3:2, 3) Elders are to be moderate in habits, sound in mind, orderly, and reasonable. These men are a stabilizing influence on others by “holding firmly to the faithful word.” (Titus 1:9; 1 Tim. 3:1-3) By their example and their shepherding, elders help publishers to be regular in their meeting attendance, field service, and personal study. When brothers and sisters face unsettling events, elders can do much to keep them focused on Jehovah and his purposes. w24.06 31 ¶16-18

Wednesday, January 28

Repent, for the Kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.—Matt. 4:17.

Throughout his ministry, Jesus taught his listeners about his Father's forgiving nature. Consider the parable of the lost son. That young man chose to pursue a sinful way of life for some time. Yet, he "came to his senses" and returned home. How did the father respond? Jesus said that while the son "was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him . . . , and he ran and embraced him and tenderly kissed him." The son intended to ask if he could become a servant in his father's household, but his father called him "this son of mine" and restored him to his place in the family. The father said: "He was lost and has been found." (Luke 15:11-32) When Jesus lived in heaven before coming to earth, he had surely seen his Father show such compassion toward countless repentant sinners. What a heart-warming and reassuring picture Jesus painted of our merciful Father, Jehovah! w24.08 11 ¶11-12

Thursday, January 29

Be sound in mind.—1 Pet. 4:7.

A Christian who is sound in mind does his best to make good decisions that reflect Jehovah's thinking. Such a Christian knows that nothing in life is more important than his relationship with Jehovah. He has a balanced view of himself, knowing that he does not have all the answers. And he demonstrates his reliance on God by approaching Jehovah often in humble prayer. We realize that we need to keep praying to Jehovah regardless

of any natural abilities we may have. Therefore, especially when we are faced with important decisions, we pray to Jehovah for guidance, trusting that he knows what is best for us. How thankful we are that Jehovah has designed us in a way that we can reflect his qualities. (Gen. 1:26) Of course, we cannot imitate Jehovah perfectly.—Isa. 55:9. w25.03 11 ¶13; 13 ¶17-18

Friday, January 30

[Love] hopes all things, endures all things.—1 Cor. 13:7.

Avoid questioning others' motives. If others do not express appreciation for something we have done, we could ask ourselves: 'Are they truly unappreciative, or did they simply forget to express appreciation?' Perhaps there are other reasons why they did not respond as we may have hoped. Some may feel deep gratitude but have difficulty expressing it. They might be embarrassed to receive help, especially if in the past they were the ones helping others. Whatever the case, Christian love will move us to make allowances for our fellow believers and to keep finding joy in giving. (Eph. 4:2) Be patient. With regard to being generous, wise King Solomon wrote: "Cast your bread on the waters, for after many days you will find it again." (Eccl. 11:1) As these words indicate, some may respond to our generosity long after the fact—"after many days." w24.09 30 ¶18-19

Saturday, January 31

Reprove before all onlookers those who practice sin, as a warning to the rest.
—1 Tim. 5:20.

Sometimes an announcement is made in the congregation that a person has been reprimanded. In such a case, we can continue to associate with him, knowing that he repented and abandoned his wrong course. He is still a part of the congregation and needs the encouragement that comes from associating with fellow believers. (Heb. 10:24, 25) However, the situation is quite different with a person who has been removed from the congregation. We “stop keeping company” with that person, “not even eating with such a man.” (1 Cor. 5:11) Does that mean we would completely ignore him? Not necessarily. Certainly, we would not socialize with him. But Christians can use their Bible-trained conscience in deciding whether to invite a person who was removed from the congregation—perhaps a relative or someone they were close to previously—to attend a congregation meeting. w24.08 30 ¶13-14

Sunday, February 1

It is honorable for a man to refrain from a dispute, but every fool will become embroiled in it.—Prov. 20:3.

Brothers who manifest fine Christian qualities are an asset to the congregation. A reasonable man promotes peace. If you want to be known as being reasonable, listen to others and be open to their viewpoints. In a meeting, would you be willing to support the decision of the majority if no Bible law or principle is violated? Do not in-

sist on doing things your way. Appreciate the value of many advisers. (Gen. 13:8, 9; Prov. 15:22) Instead of being harsh or disagreeable, be gentle and tactful. As a peaceable man, take the initiative to make peace, even in tense situations. (Jas. 3:17, 18) Your kind words can soften the attitude of others, including that of opposers.—Judg. 8:1-3; Prov. 25:15; Matt. 5:23, 24. w24.11 23 ¶13

Monday, February 2

He will send out the angels and will gather his chosen ones together from the four winds, from earth’s extremity to heaven’s extremity.—Mark 13:27.

While Christ died “once for all time,” he is still making sacrifices for us. (Rom. 6:10) How so? He continues to expend time and effort as he puts the ransom benefits to work in our behalf. Consider what he is busy doing. He serves as our King, High Priest, and head of the congregation. (1 Cor. 15:25; Eph. 5:23; Heb. 2:17) He is in charge of the work of gathering the anointed and the great crowd, a task that will be completed before the great tribulation ends. (Matt. 25:32) He also sees to it that his faithful servants are well-fed spiritually during these last days. (Matt. 24:45) And throughout his Millennial Reign, he will continue to serve our interests. Jehovah truly gave his Son for us! w25.01 24 ¶12

Tuesday, February 3

It is as a free gift that they are being declared righteous by his undeserved kindness through the release by the ransom paid by Christ Jesus.

—Rom. 3:24.

When Jehovah forgives, he does so completely and permanently. This allows us to have a good relationship with our heavenly Father. At the same time, we remember that true forgiveness is a gift. It comes from Jehovah's love and undeserved kindness, which he expresses to sinful mankind. It is not a right that humans can demand. How grateful each one of us should be that Jehovah is the God of "true forgiveness"! (Ps. 130:4; Rom. 4:8) However, our being forgiven is dependent on something important. Jesus explained: "If you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." (Matt. 6:14, 15) Obviously, then, it is vital for us to imitate Jehovah's forgiveness.

w25.02 13 ¶18-19

Wednesday, February 4

There is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.—Acts 24:15.

Consider the people of Sodom and Gomorrah. A righteous man named Lot lived in their midst. But do we know that Lot preached to all of them? No. They were certainly wicked, but did they all know any better? Recall that a crowd of men in that city sought to rape Lot's guests. The Bible says that the mob ranged "from boy to old man." (Gen. 19:4; 2 Pet. 2:7) Do we really know that the merciful God, Jehovah, condemned each

one to death with no hope of a resurrection? Jehovah assured Abraham that there were not even ten righteous men in that city. (Gen. 18:32) So they were unrighteous, and Jehovah justly held them accountable for their actions. Can we say for certain, then, that none of them will rise in the "resurrection of . . . the unrighteous"? No, we cannot say for sure! w24.05 2 ¶3; 3 ¶8

Thursday, February 5

Keep on . . . seeking first the Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you.

—Matt. 6:33.

Because of changes in economic conditions, some have been tempted to accept work that requires them to move away from their family, but that has often proved to be an unwise decision. Before taking up a new job, consider not only the possible financial advantages but also the spiritual cost. (Luke 14:28) Ask yourself: 'How might my marriage be affected if I were away from my mate? What impact would this move have on my Christian association and on my ministry?' If you have children, you also need to ask yourself this important question: 'How will I raise my children "in the discipline and admonition of Jehovah" if I am not with them?' (Eph. 6:4) Be guided by God's thinking, not by that of family or friends who do not respect Scriptural principles. w25.03 29 ¶12

Friday, February 6

We should no longer be children.
—Eph. 4:14.

A Christian who remains immature can easily be misled by “trickery” and “deceptive schemes” and be taken in by conspiracy theorists and apostates. He may be prone to being jealous, creating strife, taking offense, or yielding to temptation. (1 Cor. 3:3) The Scriptures compare the process of growing to spiritual maturity to the process of growing to adulthood. (Eph. 4:15) A child lacks insight and needs supervision. To illustrate, a mother might ask her young daughter to hold her hand while crossing the street. As the girl grows older, the mother might allow her to cross the street on her own but will still remind her to look both ways for traffic. When the child becomes an adult, she avoids such hazards on her own. Likewise, when Christians become mature, they reason on Bible principles to get Jehovah's thinking on the matter and then follow through accordingly.
w24.04 3 ¶5-6

Saturday, February 7

O Jehovah, who may be a guest in your tent?—Ps. 15:1.

For some time, God's friendship was limited to those living in the spirit realm, where he dwells. Later, he extended his tent to include humans on earth. In time, among those favored ones were Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Job. Those true worshippers were described as God's friends, or ones who walked “with the true God.” (Gen. 5:24; 6:9; Job 29:4; Isa. 41:8) Throughout the centuries, Je-

hovah continued to invite his friends to be his guests. (Ezek. 37:26, 27) For example, from Ezekiel's prophecy we learn that God truly wants his loyal worshippers to have a warm relationship with him. He promises to make “a covenant of peace with them.” That prophecy points to a time when those who have a heavenly hope and those who have an earthly hope will be united under his figurative tent as “one flock.” (John 10:16) That time is now!
w24.06 2 ¶2, 4; 3 ¶5

Sunday, February 8

We mustered up boldness by means of our God.—1 Thess. 2:2.

As Jehovah's people, we wholeheartedly support God's Kingdom, but we often need courage to do so. (Matt. 6:33) For example, in this wicked world, we need courage to live by Jehovah's standards and to preach the Kingdom good news. And it often takes courage to remain politically neutral in this increasingly divided system of things. (John 18:36) Many among Jehovah's people have suffered financial loss, have been physically abused, or have been imprisoned because of refusing to participate in political or military activity. We gain strength and courage when we consider the examples of those who have courageously supported Jehovah's rulership. Our King, Christ Jesus, firmly resisted pressure to become involved in Satan's political system of things. (Matt. 4:8-11; John 6:14, 15) He always relied on Jehovah for strength.
w24.07 3 ¶4; 4 ¶7

Monday, February 9

She began taking of its fruit and eating it. Afterward, she also gave some to her husband when he was with her, and he began eating it.

—Gen. 3:6.

Jehovah had that sad account recorded for our benefit. It helps us to understand why he hates sin so much. Sin separates us from our Father, and it leads to death. (Isa. 59:2) That is why Satan, the rebel spirit who instigated all this trouble, loves sin and seeks to promote it. He might have thought that he won a great victory in Eden. But he did not understand how loving Jehovah is. God never changed his purpose for the descendants of Adam and Eve. He loves the human family, so he immediately offered hope to all. (Rom. 8:20, 21) Jehovah knew that some of those descendants would choose to love him and would seek his help in fighting against sin. And as their Father and Creator, he would give them a way to be set free from sin and draw close to him. w24.08 3 ¶3-4

Tuesday, February 10

Make sure of the more important things.—Phil. 1:10.

Most of Jehovah's people lead very busy lives. We work secularly to provide for ourselves and for our families. (1 Tim. 5:8) Many Christians look after sick or elderly relatives. And all of us need to care for our own health, which takes time. In addition to these responsibilities, we have assignments in the congregation. A key responsibility is to have a zealous share in the preaching work. Bible reading is one

of “the more important things” for us as Christians, so we need to make it a priority. In speaking of a happy man, the very first psalm says: “His delight is in the law of Jehovah, and he reads His law in an undertone day and night.” (Ps. 1:1, 2) Clearly, that suggests setting time aside for such reading. When is the best time to read the Bible? The answer may be different for each of us. But put simply, it would be a time when you can do so regularly. w24.09 3 ¶5-6

Wednesday, February 11

Each one will carry his own load.

—Gal. 6:5.

Does a mature Christian ever need help from anyone? Yes. Mature ones may need to ask for help at times. Someone who is immature may expect others to tell him what to do or to make a decision that he himself should make. A mature Christian, on the other hand, will draw on the wisdom and the experience of others while recognizing that Jehovah expects him to “carry his own load.” Just as adults differ in physical appearance, mature Christians differ in spiritual qualities, such as wisdom, courage, generosity, and empathy. Further, when two mature Christians face a similar situation, they might come to different conclusions that are both Scripturally acceptable. That is especially true in matters of conscience. Recognizing this, they avoid judging each other over such differences. Instead, they focus on remaining united.—Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 1:10. w24.04 4 ¶7-8

Thursday, February 12

*When anxieties overwhelmed me,
you comforted and soothed me.
—Ps. 94:19.*

What can you do if you have doubts about your worth? Read Bible verses that assure you of your value to Jehovah and meditate on them. If you have failed to reach a goal or are discouraged because you cannot do as much as others, do not judge yourself harshly. Jehovah has reasonable expectations. (Ps. 103:13, 14) If you suffered abuse in the past, do not blame yourself for what the abuser did. You did not deserve such treatment! Remember that Jehovah holds the wrongdoers accountable, not the victims. (1 Pet. 3:12) Never doubt that Jehovah can use you to help others. He has given you the honor of being his fellow worker in the Christian ministry. (1 Cor. 3:9) Your life experiences have likely given you empathy for others and insight into how they may feel. You can do much to help them.

w24.10 7-8 ¶6-7

Friday, February 13

*Will not God cause justice to be done
for his chosen ones who cry out to
him day and night, while he is patient
toward them? I tell you, he will cause
justice to be done to them speedily.*

—Luke 18:7, 8.

Jehovah cares deeply about the way we are treated. “Jehovah loves justice.” (Ps. 37:28) Jesus assures us that Jehovah will “cause justice to be done . . . speedily” when the time is right. And soon he will undo all the harm we have suffered and eliminate all forms of injustice. (Ps. 72:1, 2)

While we await the time when righteousness will prevail, Jehovah helps us to cope with injustice. (2 Pet. 3:13) He teaches us how to avoid doing something unwise when we are treated unfairly. Through his Son, Jehovah provides us with the perfect example of the way we can deal with injustice. And he gives us practical counsel that we can apply when we are treated unjustly. w24.11 2-3 ¶3-4

Saturday, February 14

*Give them something to eat.
—Matt. 14:16.*

Jesus’ request to feed the crowd was a problem because there were about 5,000 men. And including women and children, there may have been 15,000 people to feed. (Matt. 14:21) Andrew spoke up: “Here is a little boy who has five barley loaves and two small fish. But what are these among so many?” (John 6:9) Barley loaves were commonly eaten by the poor and others, and the small fish may have been salted and dried. Still, the amount that the boy had would not be enough to feed so many—or would it? Wanting to be hospitable to the crowd, Jesus directed the people to recline in groups on the grass. (Mark 6:39, 40; John 6:11-13) We read that Jesus gave thanks to his Father for the bread and the fish. It was entirely fitting to thank God, who in reality was the Source of the food. What a good reminder for us to follow Jesus’ example by praying before a meal. Jesus then had the food distributed, and the people ate and were satisfied. w24.12 2-3 ¶3-4

Sunday, February 15

Praise Jehovah your God.

—1 Chron. 29:20.

When Jesus was on earth, he glorified his Father by acknowledging Him as the Source of his miracles. (Mark 5: 18-20) Jesus also brought glory to Jehovah by the way he spoke about his Father and the way he treated others. On one occasion, Jesus was teaching in a synagogue. Among those listening was a woman who had been possessed by a demon for 18 years. The demon had caused her body to be bent double so that she was unable to straighten up. How distressing! Moved by compassion, Jesus approached the woman and addressed her tenderly, saying: “Woman, you are released from your weakness.” He then laid his hands on her, and instantly she stood up straight and “began to glorify God,” her health and dignity fully restored! (Luke 13:10-13) That woman had good reason to give Jehovah glory, and so do we. w25.01
2-3 ¶3-4

Monday, February 16

Forgive us our sins.—Luke 11:4.

Is it possible for us to regain all that Adam and Eve lost? Not on our own merits. (Ps. 49:7-9) Without help, we would have no hope for a future life or a resurrection. In fact, our death would be just like that of animals. (Eccl. 3:19; 2 Pet. 2:12) Our loving Father, Jehovah, has given us a gift that pays for the debt of sin that we have inherited from Adam. Jesus explained it this way: “God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, so that everyone exercising faith

in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16) Additionally, this same gift allows us the possibility of establishing a good relationship with Jehovah. We can benefit from this amazing gift and have our sins, or “debts,” forgiven. w25.02
3 ¶3-6

Tuesday, February 17

[Saul] then got up and was baptized.

—Acts 9:18.

What helped Saul to get baptized? When the glorified Lord Jesus appeared to him, Saul was blinded. (Acts 9:3-9) For three days, he fasted and no doubt meditated on what he had just experienced. Yes, Saul became convinced that Jesus was the Messiah and that his followers practiced the true religion. There are lessons that we can learn from Saul. He could have allowed pride or fear of man to prevent him from getting baptized. But he did not allow that to happen. Saul was willing to become a Christian even though he knew that he would be persecuted. (Acts 9:15, 16; 20:22, 23) After his baptism, he continued relying on Jehovah to help him endure various trials. (2 Cor. 4:7-10) Your getting baptized as one of Jehovah’s Witnesses may lead to tests of faith or trials, but you will have help. You can be confident of the unfailing support of God and of Christ.—Phil. 4:13. w25.03 4 ¶8-9

Wednesday, February 18

The way I am running is not aimlessly.
—1 Cor. 9:26.

Reading the Bible is a commendable goal. But more is needed if we are to benefit fully from reading God's Word. Think of this comparison: Water, often in the form of rain, is essential to life. But if too much rain falls within a short amount of time, the ground may become oversaturated. When that happens, more rain will not be beneficial. The soil needs time to absorb the rain that has fallen and make it available to the vegetation. Likewise, we should avoid reading the Bible in a hurried manner, that is, so quickly that we fail to absorb and remember and use what we read. (Jas. 1:24) Have you found that on occasion you are merely speed-reading the Bible? What should you do? Slow down. Make the effort to think about what you are reading or have just read. You may decide to lengthen your study period to include time for such thinking, or meditation. w24.09 4 ¶7-9

Thursday, February 19

Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you.—Heb. 13:17.

When receiving direction, elders need to read it carefully and then apply it to the best of their ability. They receive guidance not only on how to present meeting parts and how to offer prayers for the congregation but also on how to care for Christ's sheep. Elders who follow organizational direction help those under their care to feel secure and loved. When we receive direction from the elders, we

should follow it willingly. By doing so, we will make it easier for those taking the lead to do their work. The Bible encourages us to be obedient and submissive to those who take the lead. (Heb. 13:7, 17) That can be a challenge at times. Why? Because these men are imperfect. However, if we focus on their negative qualities rather than on their positive traits, we will, in effect, be aiding our enemies. In what way? We will be undermining trust in God's organization. w24.04 10 ¶11-12

Friday, February 20

He will separate people one from another.—Matt. 25:32.

Will all who die during the events of the great tribulation be destroyed forever with no hope of a resurrection? The Scriptures make it clear that outright opposers whom Jehovah and his forces will destroy at Armageddon will not be resurrected. (2 Thess. 1:6-10) But what about others, for example, who may die from natural causes, from accidents, or at the hand of other humans? (Eccl. 9:11; Zech. 14:13) Could some of these people be among the "unrighteous" who will be resurrected in the new world? (Acts 24:15) We simply do not know. But we do know several things about future events. For example, we know that at Armageddon, people will be dealt with on the basis of how they have treated Christ's brothers. (Matt. 25:40) And those judged as sheep will have shown their support for the anointed and for Christ.—Rev. 12:17. w24.05 10-11 ¶9-11

Saturday, February 21

*Jehovah is alive! Praised be my Rock!
Let the God of my salvation be
exalted.—Ps. 18:46.*

“Critical times hard to deal with”—that is how the Bible describes the days we live in. (2 Tim. 3:1) In addition to the challenges that everyone faces in this system of things, Jehovah’s people have to deal with opposition and persecution. What helps us to keep worshipping Jehovah despite these problems? One main thing is that we have come to know Jehovah as “the living God.” (Jer. 10:10; 2 Tim. 1:12) Jehovah is a real Person who sustains us during our trials and looks for opportunities to support us. (2 Chron. 16:9; Ps. 23:4) Viewing him as the living God can help us to face successfully any trial that comes our way. w24.06 20 ¶1-2

Sunday, February 22

*The path of the righteous is like
the bright morning light that grows
brighter and brighter until full
daylight.—Prov. 4:18.*

We must maintain our confidence in Jehovah’s organization. When it becomes clear that an adjustment is needed in our understanding of a certain Bible truth or in the way that the Kingdom work is organized, those taking the lead do not hesitate to make the necessary changes. They do so because, more than anything else, they want to please Jehovah. They also do their best to base their decisions on God’s Word, the standard to which all of Jehovah’s people must adhere. The apostle Paul advised: “Keep holding to the standard of wholesome words.”

(2 Tim. 1:13) “The standard of wholesome words” refers to Christian teachings found in the Bible. (John 17:17) Such teachings form the basis for everything we believe. Jehovah’s organization has taught us to cling to that standard. As long as we do so, we will be blessed. w24.07 11-12 ¶12-13

Monday, February 23

*Jehovah . . . is patient with you
because he does not desire anyone
to be destroyed but desires all to
attain to repentance.—2 Pet. 3:9.*

Having had firsthand experience, the apostle Peter could teach others about repentance and forgiveness. Some time after the festival of Pentecost, Peter gave a discourse to a crowd of unbelieving Jews, explaining to them that they had put the Messiah to death. Yet, he lovingly urged them: “Repent, therefore, and turn around so as to get your sins blotted out, so that seasons of refreshing may come from Jehovah himself.” (Acts 3:14, 15, 17, 19) Peter thus showed that repentance moves a sinner to turn around—to change his wrong way of thinking and acting—and to pursue a new course, one pleasing to God. The apostle also showed that Jehovah would blot out their sins, or cause their sins to disappear. What a beautiful hope for Christians when they commit sins—even serious ones! w24.08 12 ¶14

Tuesday, February 24

Let your way of life be free of the love of money.—Heb. 13:5.

We will be motivated to reject materialism if we have strong faith that the end of the present system of things is imminent. People will, in effect, “throw their silver into the streets” because they will realize that “neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them in the day of Jehovah’s fury.” (Ezek. 7:19) Rather than focus on accumulating as much money as we can, we need to make decisions that help us to live simple yet balanced lives. That includes resisting the temptation to take on unnecessary debt or to get bogged down caring for many material things. We will also carefully avoid becoming overly attached to the possessions we already have. (Matt. 6:19, 24) Our faith may be tested with regard to material things and other matters as we wait for the end of this system to come.
w24.09 11 ¶13-14

Wednesday, February 25

Let the one who thinks he is standing beware that he does not fall.

—1 Cor. 10:12.

Likely, we can rid ourselves completely of some imperfect tendencies. But we might find that other inclinations continue to give us trouble. Consider the case of the apostle Peter. He gave in to fear of man when he denied Jesus three times. (Matt. 26:69-75) Peter seemed to have overcome that fear when he gave a bold witness before the Sanhedrin. (Acts 5:27-29) However, some years later, “fearing those of the circumcised class,” he

temporarily stopped eating with Gentile Christians. (Gal. 2:11, 12) Peter’s fear had returned. Perhaps he was never completely free of it. We might find ourselves in a similar situation. However, we can resist a persistent tendency by following Jesus’ counsel to “keep on the watch.” (Matt. 26:41) Even when you feel strong, continue to avoid situations that can lead to temptation. Keep applying the strategies that brought you success.—2 Pet. 3:14. w24.07 18-19 ¶17-19

Thursday, February 26

He gave gifts in men.—Eph. 4:8.

No human has ever been as generous as Jesus. When on earth, he freely used his miraculous power to help others. (Luke 9:12-17) He gave the greatest gift of all by laying down his life for us. (John 15:13) Since his resurrection, Jesus has continued to be generous. Just as he promised, he has asked Jehovah to pour out holy spirit to teach and comfort us. (John 14:16, 17, ftn.; 16:13) And by means of our congregation meetings, Jesus continues to equip us to make disciples all over the earth. (Matt. 28:18-20) The apostle Paul wrote that after Jesus ascended to heaven, “he gave gifts in men.” (Eph. 4:7, 8) Paul explained that Jesus gave these gifts in order to support the congregation in various ways. (Eph. 1:22, 23; 4:11-13) Of course, these men are imperfect, so they make mistakes. (Jas. 3:2) But our Lord Jesus Christ uses them to help us; they are his gifts to us. w24.10 18 ¶1-2

Friday, February 27

Discernment will safeguard you.

—Prov. 2:11.

David told his son Solomon that he would be successful only as long as he obeyed Jehovah God. Sadly, later in life Solomon turned to other gods. Jehovah withdrew his favor, and Solomon lost the wisdom to govern in righteousness and justice. (1 Ki. 11:9, 10; 12:4) What is the lesson for us? Obedience leads to success. (Ps. 1:1-3) Of course, Jehovah has not promised to give us the riches and the glory of Solomon. But if we obey our God, he will give us wisdom that will enable us to make sound decisions. (Prov. 2:6, 7; Jas. 1:5) His principles can guide us in such practical matters as employment, education, entertainment, and money. Applying godly wisdom will protect us from lasting harm. (Prov. 2:10, 11) We will cultivate strong friendships. And we will have the guidance we need for a happy family life. w24.11 10-11 ¶11-12

Saturday, February 28

Make sure of all things; hold fast to what is fine.—1 Thess. 5:21.

Parents have different opportunities to engage in interesting conversations with their child about the Bible or about faith in God. These opportunities may come up during a visit to a museum. You could draw your child's attention to historical events or artifacts that can strengthen his conviction that the Bible is accurate. Does your child know that God's personal name appears on a 3,000-year-old slab of stone known as the Moabite Stone? A replica of the Moabite

Stone is on display at "The Bible and the Divine Name" exhibit located at the World Headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Warwick, New York. The Moabite Stone reveals that King Mesha of Moab rebelled against Israel. That is in accord with what the Bible says. (2 Ki. 3:4, 5) When your child sees with his own eyes evidence of the Bible's truthfulness and accuracy, his faith will become stronger. w24.12 14 ¶4; 15 ¶6

Sunday, March 1

The one who has died has been acquitted from his sin.—Rom. 6:7.

We read in the Bible of righteous people who became unrighteous. King Solomon is an example. He was thoroughly instructed in God's ways and greatly blessed by Jehovah; yet, he later turned to worshipping false gods. His sins made Jehovah furious and brought consequences that lasted for centuries. True, the Scriptures do say that Solomon "was laid to rest with his forefathers," including such faithful men as King David. (1 Ki. 11:5-9, 43; 2 Ki. 23:13) But was the manner of his burial a guarantee that he would be resurrected? The Bible does not say. Resurrection is a gift from a loving God. He bestows it on those whom he wants to give an opportunity to serve him forever. (Job 14:13, 14; John 6:44) Will Solomon receive such a gift? Jehovah knows the answer; we do not. We do know, though, that Jehovah will do what is right. w24.05 4 ¶9

Monday, March 2

I will be a guest in your tent forever.

—Ps. 61:4.

When we enter into a dedicated relationship with Jehovah, we become guests in his figurative tent. We enjoy an abundance of spiritual food and the companionship of others who have also become Jehovah's guests. His figurative tent is not confined to a particular location. It can be found wherever his obedient worshippers happen to be. (Rev. 21:3) What about faithful ones who have died? Can we reasonably conclude that they are still guests in Jehovah's tent? Yes! Why can we say that? Because such ones are alive in Jehovah's memory. Jesus explained: "That the dead are raised up, even Moses made known in the account about the thornbush, when he calls Jehovah 'the God of Abraham and God of Isaac and God of Jacob.' He is a God, not of the dead, but of the living, for they are all living to him."—Luke 20:37, 38. w24.06 3 ¶6-7

Tuesday, March 3

Jehovah is my strength and my shield.

—Ps. 28:7.

Zadok went to Hebron armed and ready for battle. (1 Chron. 12:38) He was willing to follow David into battle and to defend Israel from its enemies. What Zadok possibly lacked in experience as a warrior, he made up for in courage. Where did a priest like Zadok learn to be so courageous? He was surrounded by men who were strong and courageous. No doubt he benefited from their example. For instance, David's example of courageously "leading Israel on its cam-

paigns" moved all of Israel to support him wholeheartedly. (1 Chron. 11:1, 2) David always relied on Jehovah for help against his enemies. (Ps. 138:3) Zadok had other inspiring examples right by his side—men such as Jehoada and his warrior son Benaiah as well as the 22 other tribal chiefs who rallied to David's side.—1 Chron. 11:22-25; 12:26-28. w24.07 3 ¶5-6

Wednesday, March 4

God in his kindness is trying to lead you to repentance.—Rom. 2:4.

Saul of Tarsus was a vicious persecutor of Christ's beloved followers. Most Christians likely viewed him as a lost cause, beyond any hope of repentance. Yet, the resurrected Jesus was far above such flawed human reasoning. He and his Father saw good qualities in Saul. Jesus said: "This man is a chosen vessel to me." (Acts 9:15) Jesus even used a miracle to lead Saul to repentance. (Acts 7:58-8:3; 9:1-9, 17-20) After becoming a Christian, Saul—later known as the apostle Paul—often expressed his appreciation for the way he had been shown kindness and mercy. (1 Tim. 1:12-15) When Paul heard about a scandalous problem regarding immorality in the Christian congregation in Corinth, how did he handle it? He did so in a way that teaches us a great deal about Jehovah's loving discipline and about the importance of showing mercy. w24.08 13 ¶15-16

Thursday, March 5

For this purpose the Son of God was made manifest, to break up the works of the Devil.—1 John 3:8.

Through the centuries, Jehovah gradually made it clearer and clearer how sinful humans could draw close to him. Abel, the second son of Adam and Eve, was the first human to put faith in Jehovah after the tragedy in Eden. Because Abel loved Jehovah and sought to please Him and draw close to Him, he offered up a sacrifice. Abel was a shepherd, so he took some of his young lambs and slaughtered them, offering them up to Jehovah. How did Jehovah respond? He “looked with favor on Abel and on his offering.” (Gen. 4:4) Jehovah expressed approval of similar sacrifices offered up by people who loved him and trusted in him—such as Noah. (Gen. 8:20, 21) By accepting such sacrifices, Jehovah showed that sinful humans could gain his favor and draw close to him. w24.08 3 ¶5-6

Friday, March 6

My feet had almost strayed; my steps had nearly slipped.—Ps. 73:2.

We may feel deeply hurt and distressed by injustice. (Eccl. 7:7) Faithful servants, such as Job and Habakkuk, felt the same way. (Job 6:2, 3; Hab. 1:1-3) While these feelings are natural, we need to be careful about how we react so that we do not do something foolish and make matters much worse. When those who act unjustly seem to go unpunished, we might question whether it is worthwhile to do what is right. Consider the psalmist who observed that the wick-

ed seemed to prosper at the expense of the righteous. “These are the wicked, who always have it easy,” he said. (Ps. 73:12) He was also so distraught about the injustice he saw that he almost lost confidence in the benefits of serving Jehovah, saying: “When I tried to understand it, it was troubling to me.”—Ps. 73:14, 16. w24.11 3 ¶5-7

Saturday, March 7

Give Jehovah his due, you families of the peoples, give Jehovah his due for his glory and strength.—Ps. 96:7.

We glorify Jehovah because we deeply respect him. We have many reasons to respect him. Jehovah is almighty; he has limitless power. (Ps. 96:4-7) His profound wisdom is clearly evident in the things he has made. He is the Source of our life and the Sustainer of it. (Rev. 4:11) He is loyal. (Rev. 15:4) Everything he does succeeds, and he always keeps his promises. (Josh. 23:14) No wonder the prophet Jeremiah said regarding Jehovah: “Among all the wise ones of the nations and among all their kingdoms, there is no one at all like you”! (Jer. 10:6, 7) Certainly, we have good reasons to respect our heavenly Father. But Jehovah does more than earn our respect—he wins our love. And, most of all, we glorify Jehovah because we dearly love him. w25.01 3 ¶5-6

Sunday, March 8

Remove the wicked person from among yourselves.—1 Cor. 5:13.

God's opposers try to put positive aspects of his organization in a negative light. For instance, we have learned from the Scriptures that Jehovah expects his worshippers to be clean physically, morally, and spiritually. He requires that any who unrepentantly pursue a course of uncleanness be removed from the congregation. (1 Cor. 5:11, 12; 6:9, 10) We adhere to that Scriptural command. But our opposers try to use that against us by accusing us of being intolerant, judgmental, and unloving. We must recognize the source of these attacks. Satan the Devil is behind false stories. He is "the father of the lie." (John 8:44; Gen. 3:1-5) So we should expect that Satan will use his supporters to promote false stories about Jehovah's organization. w24.04 10-11 ¶13-14

Monday, March 9

It will come true.—Ezek. 33:33.

Even after the great tribulation starts, it is possible that some who see the destruction of "Babylon the Great" will recall that Jehovah's Witnesses had long spoken of this event. Might some who see these events have a change of heart? (Rev. 17:5) Such an outcome would be similar to what occurred in Egypt in Moses' day. Recall that "a vast mixed company" joined Israel in the Exodus. Some of these individuals may have started to develop faith when they saw that Moses' warnings about the Ten Plagues came true. (Ex. 12:38) If a similar development should occur following the de-

struction of Babylon the Great, would we be disappointed that people were able to join us shortly before the end comes? Of course not! We want to reflect the personality of our heavenly Father, "a God merciful and compassionate, slow to anger and abundant in loyal love and truth."—Ex. 34:6. w24.05 11 ¶12-13

Tuesday, March 10

Keep holding to the standard of wholesome words.—2 Tim. 1:13.

What could happen if we deviated from "the standard of wholesome words"? Consider an example. In the first century, a rumor was apparently circulating among some Christians that the day of Jehovah had arrived. There may have been a letter—supposedly written by the apostle Paul—that made such an assertion. Without taking the time to check the facts, some Christians in Thessalonica believed the rumor and were even spreading it. They would not have been fooled had they remembered the things Paul had taught them when he was still with them. (2 Thess. 2:1-5) Paul counseled his brothers not to believe everything they heard. And to help them in the future, Paul concluded his second letter to the Thessalonians with the words: "Here is my greeting, Paul's, in my own hand, which is a sign in every letter; this is the way I write."—2 Thess. 3:17. w24.07 12 ¶13-14

Wednesday, March 11

You need endurance.—Heb. 10:36.

Hebrew Christians would have to endure tests of their faith as conditions in Judea deteriorated. Although some Hebrew Christians had faced intense persecution, many had accepted Christianity during a period of relative peace. The apostle Paul mentioned that although they had endured difficult tests of faith, they had not thus far suffered as Jesus did, that is, to the point of death. (Heb. 12:4)

With the spread of Christianity, however, the Jewish opposers were becoming increasingly bitter and fanatical. Just a few years earlier, more than 40 Jews “bound themselves with a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul.” (Acts 22:22; 23:12-14) Despite such a climate of religious fanaticism and hatred, those Christians would still need to meet for worship, preach the good news, and keep themselves strong in the faith. w24.09 12 ¶15

Thursday, March 12

[Jesus] said to his mother: “Woman, see! Your son!”—John 19:26.

John was a beloved apostle of Jesus Christ. (Matt. 10:2) John accompanied Jesus throughout his ministry, witnessed his miracles, and stuck with him during difficult times. He watched as Jesus was executed and saw him after he was resurrected. He also witnessed the spread of Christianity in the first century from a small group of faithful ones until the good news had been “preached in all creation under heaven.” (Col. 1:23) Near the end of his long life, John was privileged

to contribute to God’s inspired Word. He recorded the awe-inspiring “revelation by Jesus Christ.” (Rev. 1:1) John wrote the Gospel bearing his name. He also wrote three inspired letters. He addressed his third letter to a faithful Christian named Gaius, whom John viewed as a beloved spiritual child. (3 John 1) What this faithful older man wrote has encouraged all of Jesus’ followers down to our day. w24.11 12 ¶15-16

Friday, March 13

You husbands, . . . assign them honor.
—1 Pet. 3:7.

A husband who loves his wife values and cherishes her. He views her as a priceless gift from Jehovah. (Prov. 18:22; 31:10) As a result, he treats her kindly and respectfully, even during the more intimate and private aspects of marriage. He will not pressure her to engage in sexual acts that make her feel uncomfortable, that are demeaning, or that bother her conscience. He too will strive to maintain a clean conscience before Jehovah. (Acts 24:16) Husbands, you can be sure that Jehovah sees and appreciates your efforts to honor your wife in all aspects of your life. Be determined to honor her by avoiding dishonorable conduct and by being kind, respectful, and affectionate to her. In doing so, you show her that you love and value her. Honor your wife, and you will protect your most important relationship—your friendship with Jehovah.—Ps. 25:14. w25.01 13 ¶17-18

Saturday, March 14

[He] gave himself for us to set us free . . . and to cleanse for himself a people who are his own special possession, zealous for fine works.

—*Titus 2:14.*

One thing that sets Jehovah's servants apart from imitation Christians is their zeal for the ministry. What can help us to maintain or even increase our zeal for the preaching work? We can learn something about having zeal in our preaching work by considering Jesus' example. During his ministry, he never let up in his zeal. In fact, as time went on, he increased his activity. Like the vinedresser who had spent three years trying to cultivate a fig tree that did not yield any fruit, Jesus spent about three years preaching to the Jews, most of whom did not respond favorably. However, just as the vinedresser refused to give up hope on the fig tree, Jesus did not give up on people or slow down in his ministry. (Luke 13:6-9) Learning from what he taught and imitating what he did will help us to remain zealous today. w25.03 14-15 ¶1-4

Sunday, March 15

The shrewd person acts with knowledge.—Prov. 13:16.

What if you think someone might make a good marriage mate? Should you immediately express interest in that person? The Bible says that a wise person acquires knowledge before acting. So you would be wise to observe someone discreetly for a time before expressing your interest in that person. How could you go about discreetly observing the other person?

At congregation meetings or at social gatherings, you may notice things about this person's spirituality, personality, and conduct. Who are his friends, and what does he talk about? (Luke 6:45) Are his goals compatible with yours? You might speak to his congregation elders or other mature Christians who know him well. (Prov. 20:18) You might ask about the person's reputation and qualities. (Ruth 2:11) As you observe this individual, be sure to avoid making him feel uncomfortable. Respect his feelings, privacy, and personal space. w24.05 22 ¶7-8

Monday, March 16

Finally I confessed my sin to you.

—*Ps. 32:5.*

The elders are not hasty to conclude that a wrongdoer will not repent. While some may repent during the committee's first meeting with them, others may need more time. So the elders may arrange to meet with the sinner more than once. Perhaps after that first meeting, the erring Christian will begin to think seriously about what he has been told. He may approach Jehovah in humble prayer. (Ps. 38:18) Thus, at a subsequent meeting, the sinner may have a different spirit from the one he showed at the first meeting. To help lead the sinner to repentance, the elders show empathy and kindness. They hope and pray that Jehovah will bless their efforts and that the wayward Christian may come to his senses and repent. —2 Tim. 2:25, 26. w24.08 22-23 ¶12-13

Tuesday, March 17

"I do not take any pleasure in the death of anyone," declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. "So turn back and live."—Ezek. 18:32.

Jehovah does not want anyone to be destroyed! He wants sinners to be reconciled to him. (2 Cor. 5:20) That is why throughout history, Jehovah has repeatedly urged his wayward people—as well as wayward individuals—to repent and return to him. Congregation elders are privileged to be fellow workers with Jehovah as they strive to lead wrongdoers to repentance. (Rom. 2:4; 1 Cor. 3:9) Imagine the joy in heaven when sinners repent! Our heavenly Father, Jehovah, personally experiences that joy every time one of his lost sheep returns to the congregation. Our love for Jehovah continues to deepen as we meditate on his compassion, mercy, and undeserved kindness.—Luke 1:78. w24.08 31 ¶16-17

Wednesday, March 18

Jesus, knowing that they were about to come and seize him to make him king, withdrew again to the mountain all alone.—John 6:15.

If Jesus had allowed the people to make him king, he would be participating in the politics of the Jews, who were under Roman rule. Jesus decisively ‘withdrew to the mountain.’ So despite pressure from others, he would not get involved in politics. What a lesson for us! Obviously, others will not ask us to multiply bread or cure the sick miraculously; nor will they try to make us a king or a national ruler. But they may urge us to get

involved in politics by voting for or by voicing support for someone they feel will improve matters. However, Jesus’ example is clear. He refused to get involved with political affairs, even saying later: “My Kingdom is no part of this world.” (John 17:14; 18:36) Christians today do well to mirror Jesus’ thinking and actions. We support, witness about, and pray for that Kingdom.—Matt. 6:10. w24.12 4 ¶5-6

Thursday, March 19

Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. In turn, whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will clearly show myself to him.
—John 14:21.

As you study, look for ways to put what you learn into practice. For example, imitate Jehovah’s justice by treating others impartially. Imitate Jesus’ love for his Father and for others by being willing to suffer for Jehovah’s name and by expending yourself in behalf of your fellow Christians. Also, imitate Jesus by witnessing to others so that they too have the opportunity to accept Jehovah’s priceless gift. The more we understand and appreciate the ransom, the more we will love Jehovah and his Son. In turn, they will respond with increased love for us. (Jas. 4:8) So let us use Jehovah’s provisions to keep learning about the ransom. w25.01 25 ¶16-17

Friday, March 20

You have thrown all my sins behind your back.—Isa. 38:17.

Today's text could be rendered: "You have removed all my sins from your sight." This word picture shows that Jehovah takes the sins of repentant ones and throws them out of view. This statement could also be rendered: "You have made [my sins] as if they had not happened." The Bible further emphasizes this point in another word picture, recorded at Micah 7:18, 19. There Jehovah is spoken of as throwing our sins into the depths of the sea. In ancient times, it would have been impossible for someone to retrieve an object that had been hurled into the depths of the sea. By means of these word pictures, we have learned that when Jehovah forgives us, he relieves us of the burden of our sins. Truly, as David said, "happy are those whose lawless deeds have been pardoned and whose sins have been covered." (Rom. 4:7) That is true forgiveness! w25.02 9 ¶7-8

Saturday, March 21

Exult and be joyful forever in what I am creating.—Isa. 65:18.

There is a paradise on earth today that is full of life and activity. It is teeming with millions of people who enjoy genuine peace. Those who are already in this paradise are determined never to leave it. They also want as many people as possible to join them in this unique setting. What is it? The spiritual paradise! Amazingly, Jehovah has created a serene environment in the midst of a world that Satan has turned into a hate-filled,

wicked, and dangerous place. (1 John 5:19; Rev. 12:12) Our loving God sees the damaging effects of this system of things and provides the security that we need in order to flourish spiritually. His Word describes the spiritual paradise as both a safe "refuge" and a "well-watered garden." (Isa. 4:6; 58:11) With Jehovah's blessing, those inhabiting this paradise are able to thrive during these difficult last days. —Isa. 54:14; 2 Tim. 3:1. w24.04 20 ¶1-2

Sunday, March 22

Let your petitions be made known to God.—Phil. 4:6.

No doubt, you have prayed about finding a mate if that is your desire. Of course, Jehovah does not promise anyone a marriage partner. But he does care about your needs and feelings, and he can help you with the process of finding a mate. So continue sharing your desires and feelings with him. (Ps. 62:8) Pray for patience and wisdom. (Jas. 1:5) Even if you do not find a potential marriage mate right away, Jehovah promises to continue caring for your physical and emotional needs. (Ps. 55:22) A word of caution, though: Do not allow your search for a mate to consume you. (Phil. 1:10) True happiness depends, not on your marital status, but on your relationship with Jehovah. (Matt. 5:3) And while you are single, you may have more freedom to expand your ministry. (1 Cor. 7:32, 33) Make the best use of this time. w24.05 21 ¶4; 22 ¶6

Monday, March 23

Look out not only for your own interests, but also for the interests of others.—Phil. 2:4.

How long should your courtship last? Hasty decisions often bring negative consequences. (Prov. 21:5) So your courtship should be long enough for you to get well-acquainted with the other person. However, you should not prolong the courtship unnecessarily. The Bible also says: “Expectation postponed makes the heart sick.” (Prov. 13:12) What can others do while a couple is courting? We could invite them to join us for a meal, for family worship, or for recreation. (Rom. 12:13) Do they need a chaperone, help with transportation, or a place where they can talk privately? If so, could we offer to help? (Gal. 6:10) If you are asked to chaperone, why not consider it a privilege? Be careful not to leave the couple completely alone, but also discern when they need time and space to talk privately. w24.05 30 ¶13-14

Tuesday, March 24

I gave her time to repent.

—Rev. 2:21.

The elders try to determine the circumstances that led up to a sin. For example, did the Christian slowly become weak because he neglected personal study or the ministry? Have his prayers to Jehovah become infrequent or superficial? Has he been allowing wrong desires to guide him? Has he made unwise choices in his associations or entertainment? How might such choices have affected his heart? Does he recognize how his re-

cent decisions and actions have affected his Father, Jehovah? By asking meaningful questions without being unnecessarily intrusive, the elders kindly draw out the wrongdoer and help him to reason on his course. (Prov. 20:5) In addition, they might use illustrations to help the person to reason and to see the wrongness of his actions. Perhaps during the first meeting, the person will begin to feel real sorrow over the course he has followed. He may even repent. w24.08 22 ¶9-11

Wednesday, March 25

I must also declare the good news of the Kingdom of God to other cities, because for this I was sent.

—Luke 4:43.

Jesus zealously preached “the good news of the Kingdom” because he knew it was the work God wanted him to do. Jesus made the ministry his primary focus in life. Even late into his ministry, he traveled “from city to city and from village to village,” teaching others. (Luke 13:22) He also trained additional disciples to work with him as preachers. (Luke 10:1) Today, too, preaching the good news is the primary work that Jehovah and Jesus want us to do. (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20) We can strengthen our zeal for the ministry by viewing people as Jehovah does. He wants as many as possible to hear the good news and to respond to it. (1 Tim. 2:3, 4) To that end, he trains us to be more effective in sharing this lifesaving message. Even if people do not respond now, they may have an opportunity to do so before the end of the great tribulation. w25.03 15-16 ¶5-7

Thursday, March 26

The one who says a greeting to him is a sharer in his wicked works.

—2 John 11.

Each Christian needs to use his Bible-trained conscience when dealing with someone who has been removed from the congregation. Some may feel comfortable with greeting or welcoming the person if he attends a meeting. However, we would not have an extended conversation or socialize with the individual. Some may wonder, ‘Doesn’t the Bible say that a Christian who says a greeting to such a person becomes a sharer in his wicked works?’ (2 John 9-11) The context of this scripture shows that this direction refers to apostates and others who actively promote wrong conduct. (Rev. 2:20) Therefore, if a person is actively promoting apostate teachings or other wrongdoing, the elders would not arrange to visit him. Of course, there is hope that he will come to his senses. Until that happens, though, we would neither greet such a person nor invite him to attend a congregation meeting.

w24.08 30-31 ¶14-15

Friday, March 27

Their hearts continued dull in understanding.—Mark 6:52.

After Jesus fed a crowd, he had his apostles leave the area to return to Capernaum by boat and he withdrew to the mountain, thus avoiding the crowd’s effort to make him king. (John 6:16-20) While the apostles were sailing, a storm arose, bringing violent wind and waves. Then Jesus came to them, walking on the water. And he invited the apostle Peter to

walk on the water too. (Matt. 14:22-31) Once Jesus was in the boat, the wind abated. The disciples were moved to say: “You really are God’s Son.” (Matt. 14:33) Still, they did not see the connection between this miracle and what happened earlier with the crowd. Mark adds this detail: “[The apostles] were utterly amazed, for they had not grasped the meaning of the loaves.” (Mark 6:50-52) Yes, they failed to grasp the extent of the power that Jehovah had given Jesus to perform miracles. w24.12 5 ¶7

Saturday, March 28

[God’s] will is that all sorts of people should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth.

—1 Tim. 2:4.

We can respond appreciatively to Jehovah’s love by using this Memorial season to show Jehovah how grateful we are for the ransom. In addition to planning to be present for the Memorial, we can invite others to attend. Explain to those whom you invite what will take place at the Memorial. You will find it helpful to show them on jw.org the videos *Why Did Jesus Die?* and *Remember Jesus’ Death*. Elders should be sure to invite inactive ones. Imagine the joy both in heaven and on earth if some of Jehovah’s lost sheep are moved to return to his flock! (Luke 15:4-7) At the Memorial, let us make it a point to greet not only one another but especially those who are new or who have not attended in a long time. We want to make them feel welcome!—Rom. 12:13. w25.01 29 ¶15

Sunday, March 29

God . . . loved us and sent his Son as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins.
—1 John 4:10.

While the ransom helps us to understand that Jehovah is just, it especially helps us to grasp the depth of his love. (John 3:16; 1 John 4:9, 10) The teaching of the ransom reveals that Jehovah wants us not only to have endless life but also to be part of his family. Consider: When Adam sinned, Jehovah expelled him from His family of worshippers. As a result, all of us have been born outside of God's family. But on the basis of the ransom, Jehovah forgives our sins and will eventually bring into his family all mankind who exercise faith and who are obedient. Even now we can have a warm relationship with Jehovah and with our fellow worshippers. Truly, we are recipients of Jehovah's tender love!—Rom. 5:10, 11. w25.01 21 ¶6

Memorial Bible reading:
(Daytime events: Nisan 9)
John 12:12-19; Mark 11:1-11

Monday, March 30

By this the love of God was revealed.
—1 John 4:9.

Surely you agree that the ransom is a priceless gift! (2 Cor. 9:15) Because Jesus sacrificed his human life, you can have a close friendship with Jehovah God. You can also have the prospect of everlasting life. How fitting it is that we show gratitude for the ransom and for Jehovah, who was moved by love to provide it! (Rom. 5:8) To help us remain grateful and never take the ransom for granted, Jesus instituted the annual Memorial of his

death. (Luke 22:19, 20) This year, the Memorial will be observed on Thursday, April 2, 2026. No doubt all of us are planning to attend. We will benefit greatly if we take time during the Memorial season to meditate on what Jehovah and his Son have done for us.
w25.01 20 ¶1-2

Memorial Bible reading:
(Daytime events: Nisan 10)
John 12:20-50

Tuesday, March 31

Take my discipline instead of silver, and knowledge rather than the finest gold.—Prov. 8:10.

You can keep learning about the love that Jehovah God and Christ Jesus have for us if you continue to meditate on it. Perhaps during this year's Memorial season, you can carefully read one or more of the Gospels. Do not try to cover too much material at one time. Instead, slow down and look for additional reasons why we should love Jehovah and Jesus. If you have been in the truth for many years, you might wonder if it is possible to discover new insights on such familiar subjects as God's justice, his love, and the ransom. The truth is that there is no end to what we can learn about these and other topics. So take full advantage of the wealth of information that can be found in our publications. w25.01 24-25 ¶13-15

Memorial Bible reading:
(Daytime events: Nisan 11)
Luke 21:1-36

Wednesday, April 1

This is the will of my Father, that everyone who recognizes the Son and exercises faith in him should have everlasting life.—John 6:40.

For us to benefit from Jesus' flesh and blood, we need to exercise faith in the ransom. (Eph. 1:7) Those Jesus referred to as "other sheep" do not and should not partake of the bread and the wine at the annual Lord's Evening Meal. (John 10:16) Nonetheless, they benefit from the flesh and the blood of Jesus Christ. They do so by exercising faith in the redeeming value of his sacrifice. (John 6:53) In contrast, those who should partake show that they have been brought into the new covenant as prospective heirs of the heavenly Kingdom. Consequently, whether we are of the anointed or of the other sheep, we need to exercise faith and thus gain everlasting life.

w24.12 13 ¶14, 16

Memorial Bible reading:

(Daytime events: Nisan 12)

Matthew 26:1-5, 14-16; Luke 22:1-6

MEMORIAL DATE

After Sundown

Thursday, April 2

Have no fear, little flock, for your Father has approved of giving you the Kingdom.—Luke 12:32.

During the Lord's Evening Meal, Jesus offered unleavened bread to his apostles and told them that it represented his body. Then he gave them the wine and said that it stood for the "blood of the covenant." (Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:20; 1 Cor. 11:24) The new covenant is made with "the house of [spiritual] Israel"—who will be "in the

Kingdom of God." (Heb. 8:6, 10; 9:15) During the Lord's Evening Meal, Jesus focused on the "little flock." That small group started with his faithful apostles who were physically present with him in the room. They are the ones who will receive a place in heaven with Jesus. w24.12 11 ¶9-10

Memorial Bible reading:

(Daytime events: Nisan 13)

Matthew 26:17-19; Mark 14:12-16;

Luke 22:7-13

(Events after sunset: Nisan 14)

John 13:1-5; 14:1-3

Friday, April 3

God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, so that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life.—John 3:16.

Jesus was betrayed, arrested, verbally abused, slandered, convicted, and even tortured. Soldiers led him to the site of execution and nailed him to a stake. As he faithfully endured all that agony, there was Someone who felt even more pain. That was Jehovah God. He held back his infinite power and refrained from intervening. Why? In a word, love. Jesus' sacrifice is the ultimate proof of how much Jehovah loves you. He went to great lengths, subjecting himself to the worst pain imaginable in order to rescue you from sin and death. (1 John 4:9, 10) Yes, he wants to help each one of us to fight against sin—and to win! w24.08 6 ¶13-14

Memorial Bible reading:

(Daytime events: Nisan 14)

John 19:1-42

Saturday, April 4

Christ suffered for you.

—1 Pet. 2:21.

We can better understand how much Jehovah loves us if we consider what the ransom cost him. Satan claims that no servant of God will remain loyal to Him when it is hard to do so. To refute that charge, Jehovah allowed Jesus to suffer before he died. (Job 2:1-5) As Jehovah looked on, Jesus was mocked by religious opposers, whipped raw by soldiers, and nailed to a stake. Then Jehovah watched as his dear Son was left to suffer a painful death. (Matt. 27:28-31, 39) Jehovah had the power to stop the process at any given point. (Matt. 27:42, 43) However, if God had stepped in, no ransom would have been paid and we would have been left without hope. So Jehovah permitted his Son to endure suffering until he drew his last breath. w25.01 22 ¶7

Memorial Bible reading:
(Daytime events: Nisan 15)

Matthew 27:62-66

(Events after sunset: Nisan 16)

John 20:1

Sunday, April 5

He was seen by them throughout 40 days.—Acts 1:3.

It is Nisan 16, 33 C.E. Jesus' disciples are numb with grief and paralyzed by fear. Two of them leave Jerusalem and head for Emmaus. A stranger approaches and walks with them. The disciples relate their disappointment about what happened to Jesus. The stranger then begins a life-changing discussion with them. "Starting with Moses and all the Prophets," he explains why the Messiah had to suffer and die. When the three men ar-

rive at Emmaus, the stranger reveals who he is—the resurrected Jesus! (Luke 24:13-35) Jesus appeared to his disciples a number of times throughout his final 40 days on earth. During that time, Jesus' grief-stricken and fearful followers were transformed into a joyful, confident, and courageous army of Kingdom preachers and teachers. w24.10 12 ¶1-3

Memorial Bible reading:
(Daytime events: Nisan 16)
John 20:2-18

Monday, April 6

Build yourselves up on your most holy faith.—Jude 20.

We may grow to physical adulthood naturally over time, but no one grows to spiritual maturity automatically. For instance, the brothers and sisters in Corinth accepted the good news, got baptized, received holy spirit, and benefited from the personal instruction of the apostle Paul. (Acts 18:8-11) Yet, some years after their baptism, many were still immature. (1 Cor. 3:2) To reach maturity, we must first cultivate the desire to become mature. Those who "love inexperience," preferring to remain as spiritual infants, will fail to make progress. (Prov. 1:22) We do not want to be like those who are fully grown physically but continue depending on their parents to make decisions for them. Instead, we want to take responsibility for our own spiritual growth. If you are still working to reach maturity, pray that Jehovah will give you "both the desire and the power to act."—Phil. 2:13. w24.04 4 ¶9-10

Tuesday, April 7

Jehovah . . . does not desire anyone to be destroyed.—2 Pet. 3:9.

When it comes to the way he judges humans, Jehovah kindly reveals to us how he feels. (Ezek. 33:11) Jehovah is not quick to destroy people once and for all. He is profoundly merciful, and he shows mercy whenever possible. What do we know about the people who will not be resurrected? The Bible offers only a few examples. Jesus indicated that Judas Iscariot will not be resurrected. (Mark 14:21; see also John 17:12 and study note.) Judas knowingly and willfully worked in opposition to Jehovah God and His Son. (See Mark 3:29 and study notes.) Similarly, Jesus said that some of the religious leaders who had opposed him would die without a hope of resurrection. (Matt. 23:33; see John 19:11 and study note “the man.”) And the apostle Paul warned that unrepentant apostates would not be resurrected. —Heb. 6:4-8; 10:29. w24.05 4 ¶10-11

Wednesday, April 8

Jehovah protects the faithful.

—Ps. 31:23.

When we remain close to Jehovah, Satan can do us no lasting harm. (1 John 3:8) In the new world, Jehovah will continue to protect his faithful friends not only from spiritual harm but also from death. (Rev. 21:4) It truly is a great honor to be a guest in Jehovah’s tent—to enjoy a personal and ongoing relationship with him. (Ezek. 37:27) How should we conduct ourselves if we want to continue as his guests? If you were invited to someone’s home, you would want to know

what he expects of you. Likewise, we certainly want to know what Jehovah requires of those who want to continue being guests. Our love for Jehovah moves us to do everything in our power “to please him fully.” (Col. 1:10) We should always be in awe of him, never forgetting who he is. Such reverence will help us to avoid conduct that would offend him. We certainly desire “to walk in modesty” with our God.—Mic. 6:8. w24.06 4 ¶8-9

Thursday, April 9

He interceded for the transgressors.
—Isa. 53:12.

Jehovah asked Abraham to offer up his own son Isaac as a sacrifice. Abraham surely found this to be the most painful task imaginable. Nonetheless, he prepared to follow through with it. But God stopped him at the last moment. Still, that example teaches all people of faith a vital truth—Jehovah would be willing to offer his own beloved Son as a sacrifice. Jehovah loves humans that much. (Gen. 22:1-18) Centuries later, the Law given to the nation of Israel called for many sacrifices to atone for the sins of God’s people. (Lev. 4:27-29; 17:11) Such sacrifices pointed to a greater sacrifice, one that would completely save mankind from sin. God’s prophets were inspired to explain that the promised offspring, who turned out to be a special Son of God, would have to suffer and be put to death in order to save mankind—including you—from sin and death!—Isa. 53:1-12. w24.08 4 ¶7-8

Friday, April 10

How I do love your law! I ponder over it all day long.—Ps. 119:97.

When you do your Bible reading, be sure to look for ways to apply what you read. As you go over a portion of God's Word, ask yourself, 'How can I apply this information now or in the near future?' To illustrate, let's say that your Bible reading included 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 18. After reading those two verses, you could stop and think of how often and how deeply you pray. Also, you could reflect on things for which you are grateful. Maybe you determine that you will thank Jehovah for three specific things. With even a few minutes of such focused attention, you will to some extent become a hearer and a doer of God's Word. Think of how you would benefit by repeating this process each day with other portions of the Bible that you read! Yes, you will grow as a doer of God's Word. w24.09 4-5 ¶9-10

Saturday, April 11

Look out for yourselves, so that you do not lose the things we have worked to produce, but that you may obtain a full reward.—2 John 8.

Jehovah created us with a special ability. Although we enjoy receiving, we gain even greater happiness when we give to others. We feel good when we are able to help our fellow believers. And we are happy when they express their appreciation. Yet, whether the receiver expresses appreciation or not, we can be glad that we did the right thing. Never forget that whatever you give, "Jehovah has the means to

give you much more." (2 Chron. 25:9) We simply cannot outgive Jehovah! And there is no greater joy than to be repaid by Jehovah himself. Let us be determined, then, to continue imitating our generous heavenly Father. w24.09 31 ¶20-21

Sunday, April 12

I praise you, O Jehovah my God, with all my heart, and I will glorify your name forever.—Ps. 86:12.

Jehovah is merciful and compassionate. (Ps. 103:13; Isa. 49:15) He is empathetic; when we feel hurt, he feels hurt. (Zech. 2:8) He makes it easy for us to draw close to him as a Friend. (Ps. 25:14; Acts 17:27) And he is humble; "he stoops down to look on heaven and earth, raising the lowly from the dust." (Ps. 113:6, 7) How could anyone not want to glorify our great God? We glorify Jehovah because we want others to know him. Many do not know the truth about Jehovah. Why? Because Satan has blinded their minds by spreading terrible lies about Him. (2 Cor. 4:4) Satan has convinced people that Jehovah is vengeful, uncaring, and the cause of much of the world's suffering. But we know the truth about our God! We have the opportunity to set the record straight and thus bring him glory.—Isa. 43:10. w25.01 3 ¶6-7

Monday, April 13

Satan . . . is misleading the entire inhabited earth.—Rev. 12:9.

In the first century, Satan's supporters told one lie after another about the perfect, miracle-working Son of God. For example, the religious leaders told people that Jesus' power to expel demons was given to him by "the ruler of the demons." (Mark 3:22) When Jesus was on trial, the religious leaders accused him of blasphemy and incited the crowds to call for his death. (Matt. 27:20) Later, as Christ's followers preached the good news, those who opposed them "stirred up and wrongly influenced the people" to persecute those Christians. (Acts 14:2, 19) Regarding Acts 14:2, *The Watchtower* of December 1, 1998, explained: "Not content with rejecting the message themselves, Jewish opposers embarked on a smear campaign, trying to prejudice the Gentile population against Christians." Today, Satan is still "misleading the entire inhabited earth." w24.04 11 ¶15-16

Tuesday, April 14

Will the Judge of all the earth not do what is right?—Gen. 18:25.

A person's eternal future does not depend on when he happens to die. Jehovah is the perfect Judge—he renders just and righteous decisions. (Ps. 33:4, 5) We can be confident that "the Judge of all the earth" will do what is right. It is also reasonable to conclude that a person's eternal future does not depend on where he happens to live. It is unthinkable that Jehovah would automatically label as "goats" millions of people who live in

lands where they never had an opportunity to respond to the Kingdom message. (Matt. 25:46) The righteous Judge of all the earth cares even more about these individuals than we ever could. We do not know how Jehovah will maneuver events during the great tribulation. Perhaps some of these people will have an opportunity to learn about Jehovah, put faith in him, and take their stand on Jehovah's side when he sanctifies himself before all nations.—Ezek. 38:16. w24.05 12 ¶14-15

Wednesday, April 15

Love one another.—John 15:12.

Jehovah's people love to help one another. (2 Cor. 8:4) However, at times, it takes courage to do so. For example, when a war breaks out, the local elders realize that their brothers and sisters need encouragement, support, and perhaps spiritual or physical provisions. Out of love for the sheep, the elders put their own safety at risk in order to provide what is needed. In such circumstances, it is important that we remain united. Cooperate with the direction from your local branch office. (Heb. 13:17) Elders should regularly review local arrangements for disaster preparedness as well as organizational direction on what to do when a disaster is imminent. (1 Cor. 14:33, 40) Be courageous but cautious. (Prov. 22:3) Use common sense. Do not take unnecessary risks. Rely on Jehovah. He can help you to assist your brothers safely. w24.07 4 ¶8; 5 ¶11

Thursday, April 16

In my distress I called on Jehovah, . . . and my cry to him for help reached his ears.—Ps. 18:6.

King David knew Jehovah and relied on Him. When pursued by his enemies, including King Saul, David prayed to Jehovah for help. After God answered his prayer and rescued him, David declared: “Jehovah is alive!” (Ps. 18:46) With these words, David was not merely acknowledging that God exists. One reference work notes that David was expressing confidence in Jehovah “as a living god who constantly acts on behalf of his people.” Yes, David knew from personal experience that his God was alive, and that conviction renewed his determination to serve and praise Jehovah. (Ps. 18:28, 29, 49) Our being convinced that Jehovah is the living God can help us to serve him with zeal. We will have the strength to endure trials and the motivation to continue working hard in his service. We will also be determined to remain close to Jehovah. w24.06 20-21 ¶3-4

Friday, April 17

Let no one lead you astray in any way.—2 Thess. 2:3.

What can we learn from the apostle Paul’s words to the Thessalonians? When we hear something that does not harmonize with what we have learned from the Bible or when we hear a sensational rumor, we need to use discernment. In the former Soviet Union, our enemies once circulated a letter that was allegedly from world headquarters. The letter encouraged some of the brothers to form a sep-

arate, independent organization. The letter itself appeared to be genuine. But faithful brothers were not fooled. They realized that the message the letter contained did not line up with what they had been taught. Today, enemies of the truth sometimes use modern technology in an effort to confuse and divide us. Rather than be “quickly shaken from [our] reason,” we can protect ourselves by considering whether what we hear or read is in harmony with the truths we have already learned.—2 Thess. 2:2; 1 John 4:1. w24.07 12 ¶14-15

Saturday, April 18

If anyone does commit a sin, we have a helper.—1 John 2:1.

The most important decision that any person can make is the decision to dedicate himself to Jehovah and to become part of His family of worshippers. Jehovah desires everyone to do so. Why? He wants them to enjoy a friendship with him and to live forever. (Deut. 30:19, 20; Gal. 6:7, 8) However, Jehovah does not force anyone to serve him. He allows each individual to decide what he will do. What if a baptized Christian breaks God’s law, committing a serious sin? If he does not repent, he must be removed from the congregation. (1 Cor. 5:13) Yet, even then, Jehovah fervently hopes that the wrongdoer will return to Him. In fact, that is an important reason why he provided the ransom—to make forgiveness possible for repentant sinners. Our loving God warmly appeals to wrongdoers, urging them to repent.—Zech. 1:3; Rom. 2:4; Jas. 4:8. w24.08 14 ¶1-2

Sunday, April 19

If your heart becomes wise, then my own heart will rejoice.—Prov. 23:15.

By the time the apostle John wrote his third letter, some individuals were spreading false teachings and causing divisions. However, others continued “walking in the truth.” They obeyed Jehovah and were “walking according to his commandments.” (2 John 4, 6) These faithful Christians brought joy not just to John but also to Jehovah himself. (Prov. 27:11) What is the lesson for us? Faithfulness leads to joy. (1 John 5:3) For example, we have the joy of knowing that we make Jehovah happy. He rejoices to see us reject the temptations of the world and accept the truth. Others in heaven also rejoice. (Luke 15:10) We too can find joy in seeing one another remain faithful. (2 Thess. 1:4) Then when this system passes away, we will have the satisfaction of knowing that we demonstrated our loyalty to Jehovah even in a world dominated by Satan. w24.11 12 ¶17-18

Monday, April 20

Let each one keep seeking, not his own advantage, but that of the other person.—1 Cor. 10:24.

How long should you observe the person before you express your romantic interest? If you approach someone too soon, you could come across as impulsive. (Prov. 29:20) On the other hand, if you take too long, you could come across as indecisive, especially if the other person has perceived your interest. (Eccl. 11:4) Remember, before approaching someone, you do not need to be convinced that you will

marry that person. But you should be convinced that you are ready for marriage and that the other person could be a suitable mate for you. What, though, if you sense that someone is interested in you? If the feeling is not mutual, try to make that clear by your actions. It would be unkind to make the person think that there is a possibility of a relationship when that is not the case.—Eph. 4:25. w24.05 22-23 ¶9-10

Tuesday, April 21

I will come again and will receive you home to myself.—John 14:3.

Only genuine, faithful anointed ones will be received by Jesus into the heavenly Kingdom. Any anointed ones who do not remain spiritually alert will not be gathered with the “chosen ones.” (Matt. 24:31) By extension, all of God’s people, regardless of their hope, should view Jesus’ words as a warning to keep on the watch and remain faithful. We have come to know Jehovah well, so we trust his judgment. We are not concerned if Jehovah has chosen to anoint some faithful ones in more recent years. We recall what Jesus said about the 11th-hour workers in his illustration of the vineyard. (Matt. 20:1-16) Those who were invited to work in the vineyard later in the day received the same wage as those who began working in it earlier. Likewise, no matter when anointed ones are selected, they will receive the heavenly reward if they are judged faithful. w24.09 24 ¶15-17

Wednesday, April 22

Christ suffered for you, leaving a model for you to follow his steps closely.—1 Pet. 2:21.

Jesus set a perfect example of how to cope with injustice. Consider the unjust treatment he experienced, both from family and from outsiders. His unbelieving relatives accused him of being out of his mind, the religious leaders accused him of collaborating with the demons, and Roman soldiers mocked him, physically assaulted him, and eventually killed him. (Mark 3:21, 22; 14:55; 15:16-20, 35-37) Yet, Jesus endured all that injustice and more without retaliating. What can we learn from his example? (1 Pet. 2:21-23) Jesus left us a perfect model to follow when we are dealing with an injustice. He knew when to remain silent and when to speak. (Matt. 26:62-64) He did not reply to every false statement made about him. (Matt. 11:19) When he did speak, he did not insult his persecutors or threaten them. w24.11 4-5 ¶9-10

Thursday, April 23

Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.—1 Tim. 1:15.

Imagine giving someone you love a special gift that is both beautiful and practical. How disappointed you would be if that person simply put it in storage and gave it no further thought! On the other hand, you would surely be pleased if he or she put your gift to good use and expressed appreciation for it. What is the point? Jehovah has given his Son in our behalf. How happy Jehovah must be when we show gratitude

for that precious gift and for his love, which moved him to provide the ransom! (John 3:16; Rom. 5:7, 8) As time passes, however, we could begin to take the gift of the ransom for granted. It would be like putting God's gift in storage. We are happy to have it, but we keep it out of sight. To prevent that from happening, we must regularly renew our gratitude for what God and Christ have done for us. w25.01 26 ¶1-2

Friday, April 24

Ponder over these things; be absorbed in them, so that your advancement may be plainly seen by all people.
—1 Tim. 4:15.

A brother who qualifies as an elder is not a newly converted man. Although you do not have to be baptized for many years, you do need time to become a mature Christian. Before you are appointed as an elder, you must demonstrate that, like Jesus, you are humble and are content to wait on Jehovah for any assignment. (Matt. 20:23; Phil. 2:5-8) You can prove that you are loyal by sticking to Jehovah and his righteous standards and by following the direction given through his organization. The Scriptures clearly state that overseers must be qualified to teach. Does this mean that you must be an excellent public speaker? No. Many well-qualified elders, though not the best public speakers, teach effectively in the ministry and on shepherding calls. w24.11 23-24 ¶14-15

Saturday, April 25

I love your commandments more than gold, even fine gold.—Ps. 119:127.

When you find a passage in the Bible that you do not fully understand, do research. Then throughout the day, meditate on what you have discovered and what it tells you about Jehovah, his Son, and their love for you. (Ps. 119:97, ftn.) Do not be discouraged if you do not find something new or exciting every time you sit down to read or to do research. In a sense, you are like a person who pans for gold. Patiently, prospectors spend hours or days before finding even the smallest nugget of gold. Yet, they persist because every bit of gold is valuable to them. Of how much greater value is every gem of Bible truth! (Prov. 8:10) So be patient and stick to your Bible reading schedule.—Ps. 1:2. w25.01 25 ¶14-15

Sunday, April 26

*Just as Jehovah freely forgave you, you must also do the same.
—Col. 3:13.*

Jehovah expects us to be ready to forgive those who hurt us. (Ps. 86:5; Luke 17:4; Eph. 4:32) We may be deeply hurt because of what someone says or does to us, especially if that person is a close friend or family member. (Ps. 55:12-14) At times, the emotional pain we suffer can be likened to being stabbed. (Prov. 12:18) We may try to suppress or ignore our hurt feelings. But doing so might be like getting stabbed and then leaving the knife in the wound. Similarly, we cannot expect our hurt feelings to get better if we simply ignore

them. When someone offends us, our initial reaction may be to get angry. The Bible acknowledges that we may become wrathful. However, it warns against allowing that emotion to dominate us. (Ps. 4:4; Eph. 4:26) Why? Because anger seldom leads to good results. (Jas. 1:20) Remember, getting angry is a reaction, but remaining angry is a choice. w25.02 15 ¶4-6

Monday, April 27

*Wisdom preserves the life of its owner.
—Eccl. 7:12.*

Jesus illustrated the foolishness of storing up money without being “rich toward God.” (Luke 12:16-21) No one knows what tomorrow will bring. (Prov. 23:4, 5; Jas. 4:13-15) We face a particular challenge as followers of Christ. Jesus said that we must be ready to “give up” all our belongings to be his disciples. (Luke 14:33, ftn.) First-century Christians in Judea accepted such a loss with joy. (Heb. 10:34) In modern times, many brothers have had to sacrifice their financial security because of refusing to give allegiance to a political system. (Rev. 13:16, 17) What has helped them to do that? They have absolute confidence in Jehovah’s promise: “I will never leave you, and I will never abandon you.” (Heb. 13:5) We do our best to plan for our future needs, and if unexpected events befall us, we trust in Jehovah’s support. w25.03 29 ¶13-14

Tuesday, April 28

Now that we have moved beyond the primary doctrine about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying a foundation again.—Heb. 6:1.

Jehovah does not expect us to grow to maturity on our own. Those who serve as shepherds and teachers in the Christian congregation are prepared to help us in becoming “full-grown” in a spiritual sense, “attaining the measure of stature that belongs to the fullness of the Christ.” (Eph. 4:11-13) Jehovah also provides his holy spirit to help us have “the mind of Christ.” (1 Cor. 2:14-16) Further, God inspired the writing of the four Gospels to show us how Jesus thought, spoke, and acted during his earthly ministry. By imitating Jesus’ way of thinking and acting, you can reach your goal of Christian maturity. But in order to advance to maturity, we must also move “beyond the primary doctrine about the Christ,” that is, basic Christian teachings. w24.04 4-5 ¶11-12

Wednesday, April 29

Thinking ability will keep watch over you, and discernment will safeguard you.—Prov. 2:11.

Every day we need to make decisions. Some are relatively easy to make, such as what to have for breakfast or when to go to bed. Other matters are more difficult to decide. They may affect our health, our happiness, our loved ones, or our worship. We want our decisions to benefit us and our family. Above all, we hope that our decisions will please Jehovah. (Rom. 12:1, 2) An important step toward making a good decision is to get the

facts. Why is this important? Imagine that a patient consults a doctor regarding a serious medical problem. Would the doctor make a decision about a course of treatment without first examining the patient or asking him questions? Certainly not. You too will make better decisions if you first consider the facts that have a bearing on the situation at hand. w25.01 14 ¶1-3

Thursday, April 30

Jehovah . . . forgives your sin. You will not die.—2 Sam. 12:13.

What do we know about Jehovah’s mercy? How has he demonstrated that he “does not desire anyone to be destroyed”? (2 Pet. 3:9) Consider his mercy toward some who committed serious sins. King David got involved in a series of gross sins, including adultery and murder. Yet, David repented, so Jehovah mercifully forgave him. (2 Sam. 12:1-12) King Manasseh was profoundly wicked for much of his life. Even in that extreme case, however, Jehovah responded favorably to that man’s repentance and found a basis for extending mercy and forgiveness. (2 Chron. 33:9-16) These examples remind us that Jehovah shows mercy whenever he sees that there is a basis for doing so. He will resurrect such individuals because they realized that they had committed terrible sins and they repented. w24.05 4 ¶12

Friday, May 1

There is no partiality with God.

—Rom. 2:11.

After he had delivered his people from slavery in Egypt, Jehovah appointed priests to serve at the tabernacle. Levites were assigned to share in other duties related to that holy tent. Did those who served at the tabernacle or who were encamped close to it enjoy better care from Jehovah than others? No! Jehovah is not partial. Everyone in the encampment had an equal opportunity to enjoy Jehovah's friendship. For example, Jehovah made sure that the entire nation was able to see the miraculous pillar of cloud and pillar of fire posted above the tabernacle. (Ex. 40:38) When the cloud started to move in a new direction, even those encamped farthest from the tabernacle were able to see that, assemble their belongings, dismantle their family tents, and keep pace with the rest of the nation. (Num. 9:15-23) Similarly today, no matter where we live on earth, we can benefit from Jehovah's loving, watchful care and protection. w24.06
4 ¶10-12

Saturday, May 2

Get up, and let us run away, for none of us will escape from Absalom!

—2 Sam. 15:14.

David's life was in danger. His son Absalom was determined to steal the kingdom from him. (2 Sam. 15:12, 13) David needed to leave Jerusalem at once! As his servants were leaving, David realized that someone needed to stay back to keep him informed of Absalom's plans. So he sent Zadok

and other priests back into the city to serve as informants. (2 Sam. 15:27-29) They had to proceed cautiously. David worked out a plan that involved Zadok and Hushai, loyal friends of David's. (2 Sam. 15:32-37) Following the plan, Hushai won the confidence of Absalom and recommended a military strategy that would give David time to prepare for an attack. Next, Hushai informed Zadok and Abiathar of the plan. (2 Sam. 17:8-16) The two men were then able to send a message to David that played an important role in protecting David's life.
—2 Sam. 17:21, 22. w24.07 4-5 ¶9-10

Sunday, May 3

"Come, now, and let us set matters straight between us," says Jehovah.

—Isa. 1:18.

Some of Jehovah's servants are deeply troubled by regrets over their past actions, either before or even after baptism. But we do well to remember that Jehovah provided the ransom because of his deep love for us. Surely, he wants us to accept his gift. Jehovah assures us that after we have "set matters straight" with him, he no longer holds our sins against us. How loving of Jehovah not to remember our past sins! At the same time, he never forgets the good we have done. (Ps. 103:9, 12; Heb. 6:10) If you are troubled by regrets about the past, do your best to focus on the present and on the future rather than on the past. You cannot change the past. But you can honor Jehovah in your present circumstances and look ahead to the wonderful future that he has promised you. w24.10 8 ¶8-9

Monday, May 4

Clothe yourselves with the new personality.—Col. 3:10.

When you read the Bible and look for ways to apply its guidance, you may at times feel overwhelmed. Think of this scenario: Today your Bible reading includes counsel against showing favoritism. (Jas. 2:1-8) You see that you could improve on how you treat others, so you decide to make some changes. Then tomorrow you read a passage that highlights the importance of controlling your speech. (Jas. 3:1-12) You realize that on occasion your speech has been somewhat negative. So you determine that you will be more positive and upbuilding. Your Bible reading the next day includes a warning against becoming a friend of the world. (Jas. 4:4-12) You notice that you need to be more selective in your choice of entertainment. By the fourth day, you might feel rather overwhelmed by all the things you need to work on. Do not be discouraged. Remember that putting on “the new personality” is an ongoing process. w24.09 5-6 ¶11-12

Tuesday, May 5

Sanctify the Christ as Lord in your hearts, always ready to make a defense before everyone who demands of you a reason for the hope you have, but doing so with a mild temper and deep respect.—1 Pet. 3:15.

Jesus knew that it was Jehovah's view of matters that was most important. He trusted that Jehovah would deal with injustices at the right time. We can imitate Jesus by controlling what we say when we are treated unjustly.

Some injustices are minor, and we can simply overlook them. Or we may remain silent to avoid saying something that could make matters worse. (Eccl. 3:7; Jas. 1:19, 20) At other times, we may need to speak up when we observe unfair treatment or when we need to defend the truth. (Acts 6:1, 2) If we do speak, we should try our best to do so calmly and respectfully. We can also imitate Jesus by entrusting ourselves to “the One who judges righteously.”—1 Pet. 2:23. w24.11 5-6 ¶10-12

Wednesday, May 6

Joy arises among the angels of God over one sinner who repents.
—Luke 15:10.

If a sinner repents, that is a cause for great joy! (Luke 15:7) Who deserves the credit? Do the elders? Recall what the apostle Paul wrote about sinners: “Perhaps God may give them repentance.” (2 Tim. 2:25) A study note on that verse comments: “The credit for such a change in thinking and attitude goes, not to any human, but to Jehovah, who helps the wayward Christian make this vital change. Paul goes on to mention some of the beautiful results of such repentance—it leads the sinner to a more accurate knowledge of the truth, it helps him come back to his proper senses, and it enables him to escape from Satan's snares.”—2Ti 2:26.” When a wrongdoer repents, the committee will arrange for shepherding visits so that the person can continue to receive the help he needs to fight against Satan's snares and to make straight paths for his feet.—Heb. 12:12, 13. w24.08 23 ¶14-15

Thursday, May 7

You are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate from the loaves and were satisfied.
—John 6:26.

A crowd that Jesus had fed were focused on satisfying their physical needs and desires. How so? The following day, they saw that Jesus and his apostles had left. So the crowd boarded some boats that had arrived from Tiberias and headed toward Capernaum to find Jesus. (John 6:22-24) Did they do that mainly to hear more about the Kingdom? No. They were primarily thinking about their physical need for bread. How do we know? Note what happened when the crowd caught up with Jesus near Capernaum. Jesus openly said that their priority was satisfying their temporary physical needs. He acknowledged that they “ate from the loaves and were satisfied” with “food that perishes.” He urged them to work instead for “food that remains for everlasting life.” (John 6:26, 27) Jesus said that his Father would provide such food.
w24.12 5 ¶8-9

Friday, May 8

The heart of the wise one gives his mouth insight and adds persuasiveness to his speech.—Prov. 16:23.

To be more effective as a teacher, brothers, base your public teaching and private counsel on God’s Word. Be a good student of the Bible and of our publications. (Prov. 15:28) As you study, take careful note of the proper application of the Scriptures. And when teaching, try hard to reach the heart of those in your audience. You

can improve as a teacher if you ask for and apply suggestions from experienced elders. (1 Tim. 5:17) Elders need to be able to encourage their brothers and sisters; however, elders must at times counsel or even reprove them. In either case, elders must always be kind. If you are gentle and loving and you base your teaching on God’s Word, you will be effective because you will be imitating the Great Teacher, Jesus.—Matt. 11:28-30; 2 Tim. 2:24. w24.11 24 ¶16

Saturday, May 9

Declare his glory among the nations.
—Ps. 96:3.

We can glorify Jehovah by what we say about him. Jehovah’s people are invited to “sing to Jehovah,” to “praise his name,” to “proclaim the good news of his salvation,” and to “declare his glory among the nations.” (Ps. 96:1-3) All these are ways in which we can glorify our heavenly Father. (Acts 4:29) We can also glorify Jehovah with our valuable things. True worshippers have always honored Jehovah in that way. (Prov. 3:9) For example, the Israelites contributed toward building and maintaining the temple. (2 Ki. 12:4, 5; 1 Chron. 29:3-9) Caring disciples of Christ ministered to him and his apostles “from their belongings.” (Luke 8:1-3) First-century Christians also contributed relief aid for their spiritual brothers and sisters. (Acts 11:27-29) Today we too can glorify Jehovah by means of our voluntary donations. w25.01 4 ¶8; 5 ¶11

Sunday, May 10

Can anyone deny water to prevent these from being baptized?

—Acts 10:47.

What helped Cornelius to get baptized? We read that he “feared God together with all his household.” And Cornelius made supplication to God continually. (Acts 10:2) When Peter declared the good news to Cornelius, he and his family accepted Christ and promptly got baptized. (Acts 10:47, 48) Cornelius was no doubt willing to make whatever adjustments were required of him so that he could worship Jehovah together with his family. (Josh. 24:15; Acts 10:24, 33) Cornelius could have allowed his position to prevent him from becoming a Christian. But he did not allow that to happen. Does accepting the truth require that you make significant changes in your life? If so, Jehovah will be your Helper. He will bless your determination to serve him in harmony with Bible principles. w25.03 5 ¶12-13

Monday, May 11

Reject irreverent false stories.

—1 Tim. 4:7.

If you hear negative stories regarding the organization or the brothers who are taking the lead, remember how God’s enemies treated Jesus and the first-century disciples. Today, Jehovah’s people are being persecuted and maligned exactly as the Bible foretold. (Matt. 5:11, 12) False stories will not mislead us if we recognize their source and take immediate action. What action should we take? Reject false stories. The apostle Paul gave clear instructions on what to do if we are

exposed to false stories. He told Timothy to “command certain ones not to . . . pay attention to false stories” and to “reject irreverent false stories.” (1 Tim. 1:3, 4) We reject false stories because we recognize the source of the information. We hold to the “wholesome words” of truth.—2 Tim. 1:13. w24.04 11 ¶16; 13 ¶17

Tuesday, May 12

By smooth talk and flattering speech they seduce the hearts of unsuspecting ones.—Rom. 16:18.

Remain united with those who are loyal to Jehovah. God wants us to be united in our worship. We will remain united as long as we cling to the truth. Any who deviate from the truth create divisions within the congregation, so God warns us to “avoid them.” Otherwise, we ourselves could be drawn away from the truth. (Rom. 16:17) When we recognize the truth and hold firmly to it, we will stay spiritually safe and healthy. (Eph. 4:15, 16) We will be protected from Satan’s false teachings and propaganda, and we will remain secure in Jehovah’s care during the great tribulation. Keep holding firmly to what is true, “and the God of peace will be with you.”—Phil. 4:8, 9. w24.07 13 ¶16-17

Wednesday, May 13

This man offered one sacrifice for sins for all time.—Heb. 10:12.

Jesus focused special attention on people who felt weighed down by sin and invited them to become his followers. He knew that sin was the root cause of mankind's ills. So he reached out to men and women who were known to be sinners. Using an illustration, he explained: "Healthy people do not need a physician, but those who are ill do." He added: "I came to call, not righteous people, but sinners." (Matt. 9:12, 13) Jesus lived up to those words. He gently forgave the sins of the woman who washed his feet with her tears. (Luke 7:37-50) He taught vital truths to the Samaritan woman at the well, though he knew of her immoral lifestyle. (John 4:7, 17-19, 25, 26) God even empowered Jesus to undo the end result of all sin—death. How? Jesus resurrected people—male and female, children and adults.—Matt. 11:5. w24.08 4 ¶9-10

Thursday, May 14

He will judge the inhabited earth with righteousness and the peoples with his faithfulness.—Ps. 96:13.

How will Jehovah glorify his name in the near future? By means of his judgments. Soon he will execute Babylon the Great for bringing reproach on his holy name. (Rev. 17:5, 16; 19:1, 2) Some who witness the destruction of Babylon the Great might join us in true worship. Finally, at Armageddon, Jehovah will destroy Satan's entire system, eliminating all those who oppose him and blaspheme his name but saving all those who love and obey

him and who are proud to give him glory. (Mark 8:38; 2 Thess. 1:6-10) After the final test that follows Christ's Thousand Year Reign, Jehovah will have completely sanctified his name. (Rev. 20:7-10) At that time, "the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea." (Hab. 2:14) How thrilling it will be when everyone alive will be giving Jehovah the glory due his name! w25.01 7 ¶15-16

Friday, May 15

You need to endure as part of your discipline.—Heb. 12:7.

What would help the Hebrew Christians to endure the opposition they faced? The apostle Paul knew that they needed to have the right view of their trials. He thus explained that God may allow tests of faith as part of a Christian's training. Such training can help one to cultivate and refine vital Christian qualities. By focusing on the end result of such trials, those Hebrew Christians would find it easier to endure. (Heb. 12:11) Paul urged the Hebrew Christians to endure trials with greater determination. He was in a good position to write to them about this. As a former persecutor of Christians, he knew what they were up against. He also knew how to endure persecution. After all, he experienced various forms of opposition after becoming a Christian.—2 Cor. 11:23-25. w24.09 12-13 ¶16-17

Saturday, May 16

Keep on the watch.—Matt. 25:13.

With each passing day, our ministry becomes more urgent. Why? Because time is running out. Consider what Jesus foretold about the preaching work in the last days, as recorded at Mark 13:10. According to Matthew's parallel account, Jesus said that the good news would be preached in all the inhabited earth before "the end" comes. (Matt. 24:14) That expression refers to the complete end of Satan's wicked system of things. Jehovah has set the "day and hour" for the events that will soon unfold. (Matt. 24:36; Acts 1:7) Each day brings us one day closer to that time. (Rom. 13:11) Meanwhile, we must keep preaching until the end comes. As we reflect on our ministry, we do well to consider a soul-searching question: Why do we preach the good news? Put simply, love motivates us to preach. What we do in the preaching work reflects our love—our love for the good news, our love for people and, above all, our love for Jehovah and his name. w24.05
14-15 ¶2-3

Sunday, May 17

God saw everything he had made, and look! it was very good.—Gen. 1:31.

Parents, encourage your child to think about the natural world. While you are walking in the countryside or gardening, draw your child's attention to the intriguing patterns that can be seen in nature. Why? These patterns give evidence of intelligence and wise design. Spiral patterns, for instance, have been studied by scientists for many years. Biophysicist Nicola Fameli ex-

plains that when you count the number of spirals found in nature, you discover a certain series of numbers. These make up what is called the Fibonacci sequence. Spiral patterns can be observed in many things, such as the shape of some galaxies, the pattern of nautilus shells, the leaves of plants, and the head of sunflowers. w24.12
16 ¶7

Monday, May 18

He is your life.—Deut. 30:20.

Moses, David, and John lived in time periods and circumstances that were different from ours. But we have much in common with them. They served the true God, and so do we. Like them, we pray to Jehovah, rely on him, and look to him for guidance. And like those men of old, we are confident that Jehovah richly blesses those who obey him. Let us, therefore, heed the parting words of those older men by obeying Jehovah's commandments. Then we will have true success in all that we do. We will have life and "endure a long time," yes, forever! And we will have the joy of pleasing our loving heavenly Father, who fulfills all his promises in ways far beyond anything we can anticipate or even imagine.—Eph. 3:20. w24.11
13 ¶20-21

Tuesday, May 19

God has assigned the respective ones in the congregation.—1 Cor. 12:28.

In the first century, some brothers were appointed as ministerial servants. (1 Tim. 3:8) It seems that they were the ones who performed the “helpful services” that the apostle Paul wrote about. Ministerial servants evidently cared for necessary matters so that the elders could focus on teaching and shepherding. For example, ministerial servants may have helped to make copies of the Scriptures or may have purchased materials needed for copying. Consider some helpful services that ministerial servants perform in your congregation. (1 Pet. 4:10) They may be assigned to care for congregation accounts or territories, to order literature and make it available to the publishers, to operate audio and video equipment, to serve as attendants, or to help maintain the Kingdom Hall. All these services are necessary for the congregation to function properly. —1 Cor. 14:40. w24.10 19 ¶4-5

Wednesday, May 20

For all things I have the strength through the one who gives me power.
—Phil. 4:13.

We will be able to endure any trial, great or small, if we remember that Jehovah is alive and that he is there to sustain us. After all, he is the Almighty, and he can give us the power to endure. We have every reason, therefore, to face our trials with confidence. Our experiencing Jehovah's support during smaller trials convinces us that he will also help us during greater trials. Consider two personal experiences that increased

King David's confidence in Jehovah. When David was a young shepherd, a bear and a lion each carried off one of his father's sheep. On both occasions, David courageously chased after the animals and saved the sheep. Yet, he did not claim the victory for himself. He knew that Jehovah was behind it. (1 Sam. 17:34-37) By meditating on those experiences, David gained confidence that the living God would strengthen him in the future. w24.06 21 ¶5-6

Thursday, May 21

When anyone replies to a matter before he hears the facts, it is foolish and humiliating.—Prov. 18:13.

Suppose you are invited to a social gathering. Should you attend? If you are not acquainted with the host or the arrangements, you will need to ask him such questions as: “Where and when will the gathering be held? How large will it be? Who will supervise it? Who will attend? What activities are planned? Will alcoholic drinks be served?” The answers to these questions will help you to make a wise decision. Next, facts in hand, look carefully at the full picture. For example, what if you learn that individuals who have no regard for Bible principles will attend the gathering or that alcoholic beverages will be served without supervision? Do you see the potential for this gathering to turn into a wild party? (1 Pet. 4:3) When you have seen the whole picture, you will be well on your way to making a good decision. w25.01 15 ¶4-5

Friday, May 22

*Though your sins are like scarlet,
they will be made as white as snow.
—Isa. 1:18.*

Jehovah uses word pictures to help us appreciate how by means of the ransom sacrifice, he wipes out the sins of repentant ones. It is extremely difficult to remove scarlet or crimson stains from a cloth. Yet, by means of this word picture, Jehovah assures us that our sins can be washed clean so thoroughly that they are no longer visible. Sins are also likened to "debts." (Matt. 6:12; Luke 11:4) So every time we sin against Jehovah, it is as if we are going further and further into debt. We owe him a huge amount! But when Jehovah forgives us, it is as if he cancels the debt that would otherwise be charged against our account. He does not demand repayment of sins that have been forgiven. What a refreshing illustration to describe the relief we feel when Jehovah forgives us! w25.02 9-10 ¶9-10

Saturday, May 23

*Children are not expected to save up
for their parents, but the parents for
their children.—2 Cor. 12:14.*

Parents may need to receive some practical help as they grow old, and many children are happy to arrange for that. (1 Tim. 5:4) But Christian parents recognize that their greatest joy comes, not from raising children with a view to getting financial support from them, but from helping their children to become servants of Jehovah. (3 John 4) By your example, teach your children to trust in Jehovah as you help them prepare

to support themselves. From the time they are young, show them the value of hard work. (Prov. 29:21; Eph. 4:28) As they grow, help them to do their best at school. Christian parents do well to research and apply Bible principles to help their children decide how to use education wisely. This will equip their children to support themselves and to have a full share in the Christian ministry. w25.03 30-31 ¶15-16

Sunday, May 24

*Put on the new personality.
—Eph. 4:24.*

Isaiah chapter 65 contains Jehovah's description of what it would be like for those who would dwell in the spiritual paradise. The initial fulfillment of this prophecy was back in 537 B.C.E. At that time, repentant Jews were released from captivity in Babylon and they returned to their homeland. Jehovah blessed his people and helped them to make the devastated city of Jerusalem beautiful again and to restore its temple as the center of true worship in Israel. (Isa. 51:11; Zech. 8:3) A second fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy began in 1919 C.E. when Jehovah's modern-day worshippers were set free from captivity to Babylon the Great. Then the spiritual paradise started to take shape throughout the earth. Zealous Kingdom proclaimers formed many congregations and produced spiritual fruitage. Men and women who once exhibited violent, animalistic tendencies "put on the new personality that was created according to God's will." w24.04 20-21 ¶3-4

Monday, May 25

Each one will carry his own load.

—Gal. 6:5.

In some lands, parents or other adults may be expected to choose a mate for their single relatives. In other lands, family or friends find a potential mate for a single person and then arrange for the man and the woman to meet to see whether they are compatible. If you are asked to arrange a courtship or a marriage, consider the preferences and needs of both parties. Once you identify a prospective mate, find out as much as you can about the individual's personality, qualities and, above all, spirituality. A close relationship with Jehovah is much more important than money, education, or social status. Remember, however, that the single brother and the single sister should make the final decision about whether to get married. w24.05 23 ¶11

Tuesday, May 26

A true friend shows love at all times.

—Prov. 17:17.

We can support courting couples by what we say or do not say. At times, we may need to control ourselves. (Prov. 12:18) For instance, we may be eager to tell others that a couple have begun dating, but the couple may want to share the news themselves. We should not gossip about a courting couple or criticize them about personal matters. (Prov. 20:19; Rom. 14:10; 1 Thess. 4:11) Furthermore, the couple may not appreciate comments or questions implying that they should or will get married. What if a couple decide to end the courtship? We

should avoid prying into the matter or taking sides. (1 Pet. 4:15) A break-up does not necessarily mean that the couple failed. Usually, it simply means that the courtship achieved its purpose—it helped the couple come to a good decision. However, that decision may still have caused them emotional pain. So we can look for ways to support them. w24.05 31 ¶15-16

Wednesday, May 27

If you become discouraged in the day of distress, your strength will be meager.—Prov. 24:10.

Few trials can leave us feeling more discouraged than when a family member or a close friend leaves Jehovah. (Ps. 78:40) The closer our bond is with the person, the more difficult it can be to accept the situation. If you have had such a painful experience, Zadok's example of loyalty can strengthen you. He remained loyal to Jehovah when his close associate Abiathar chose to be disloyal. This came about when King David lay on his deathbed. His son Adonijah tried to seize the throne that Jehovah had promised to Solomon. (1 Chron. 22:9, 10) Abiathar chose to support Adonijah. (1 Ki. 1:5-8) In doing so, Abiathar was being disloyal not only to David and Zadok but also to Jehovah! For decades, Zadok and Abiathar had worked closely together as priests. —2 Sam. 8:17; 15:29; 19:11-14. w24.07 6 ¶14-15

Thursday, May 28

Happy is the man who is always on guard.—Prov. 28:14.

We can be certain that keeping on guard against temptation is worth the effort. Whatever “temporary enjoyment” sin may offer, living by Jehovah’s standards will make us far happier. (Heb. 11:25; Ps. 19:8) That is because we are designed to live according to his ways. (Gen. 1:27) Thus we will enjoy a clean conscience and keep ourselves in line for everlasting life. (1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 1:3; Jude 20, 21) True, “the flesh is weak.” (Matt. 26:41) But this does not mean that we are helpless. Jehovah stands ready to give us the needed power. (2 Cor. 4:7) Note, however, that it is the power beyond what is normal that God provides. The normal power—the effort we put forth from day to day to guard against temptation—is our responsibility to supply. Jehovah will answer our prayers for added strength when we need it. (1 Cor. 10:13) Yes, with Jehovah’s help, we can keep on guard against temptation. w24.07 19 ¶19-21

Friday, May 29

Reprove before all onlookers those who practice sin.—1 Tim. 5:20.

The apostle Paul wrote the words of today’s text to his fellow elder Timothy in connection with how to handle “those who practice sin.” What did he mean? He did not necessarily mean that the whole congregation were the “onlookers.” Rather, he was referring to those few who might already know of the sins. They could be eyewitnesses, or they could be those whom the wrongdoer confided in. The elders

would discreetly make them aware that the matter was handled and that the sinner was corrected. In some instances, the wrongdoing may have become widely known in the congregation or is likely to become known. In such a case, the “onlookers” would include the entire congregation. So an elder would announce to the congregation that the brother or the sister has been reproved. Why? Paul answers: “As a warning to the rest” not to fall into sin. w24.08 23-24 ¶16-17

Saturday, May 30

These are the true sayings of God.
—Rev. 19:9.

We must keep busy in Jehovah’s service right up to the end. Anointed ones must remain watchful in order to be “taken along” by Jesus to their heavenly reward. (Matt. 24:40) With great anticipation, such ones look forward to “being gathered together” to Jesus in heaven. After the war of Armageddon, they will share as Jesus’ bride in the marriage of the Lamb. (2 Thess. 2:1) Though judgment is fast approaching, there is no reason for us to be afraid. If we remain faithful, our loving heavenly Father will give us “the power beyond what is normal” so that we “may succeed . . . in standing before the Son of man.” (2 Cor. 4:7; Luke 21:36) Whether our hope is heavenly or earthly, we will please our Father if we heed the warnings found in Jesus’ parables. Through Jehovah’s undeserved kindness, our names will be “found written down in the book” of life.—Dan. 12:1; Rev. 3:5. w24.09 24-25 ¶19-20

Sunday, May 31

Drawing near to God is good for me.

—Ps. 73:28.

You can find peace of mind with the help of God's Word. How? Contemplate the value of what you have—including treasures in heaven—and compare this to the outcome for those whose only reward is what this world has to offer. They may completely rely on their achievements in this life because they anticipate nothing else in the future. For you, however, Jehovah promises blessings far beyond anything you could ever imagine. (Ps. 145:16) Also, consider this: Can we ever really know how our life would have turned out if we had made different decisions? One thing is certain: Those who make choices based on their love of God and love of neighbor never miss out on anything that is truly good. w24.10 27 ¶12-13

Monday, June 1

For you, O Jehovah, are good and ready to forgive.—Ps. 86:5.

We are already benefiting from Christ's ransom sacrifice. For example, on the basis of the ransom, Jehovah forgives our sins. He is not obligated to forgive us. But he wants to. (Ps. 103:3, 10-13) Some may feel unworthy of Jehovah's forgiveness. Actually, we are all unworthy. The apostle Paul understood that he was “not worthy of being called an apostle.” And yet, he added: “By God's undeserved kindness I am what I am.” (1 Cor. 15:9, 10) When we repent of our sins, Jehovah forgives us. Why? Not because we deserve it, but because he loves us. If you are disturbed

by feelings of unworthiness, remember that Jehovah provided the ransom, not for sinless people, but for repentant sinners.—Luke 5:32; 1 Tim. 1:15. w25.01 26-27 ¶3-4

Tuesday, June 2

A kind man benefits himself, but the cruel person brings trouble on himself.

—Prov. 11:17.

We cannot control what others say or do to us, but we can try to control our response. And often the best response is to forgive. Why? Because we love Jehovah, and he wants us to be forgiving. If we remain angry and do not forgive, we are likely to act foolishly and perhaps suffer physically. (Prov. 14:17, 29, 30) When we let go of resentment, we prevent our heart from becoming damaged by bitterness. We also give ourselves a gift—we can start to move on and enjoy our life once again. How can you overcome hurt feelings? One way is by giving yourself time to heal. After receiving medical care, a person who has been severely injured needs time to heal physically. In a similar way, we may need time to heal emotionally before we are ready to forgive someone from the heart. (Eccl. 3:3; 1 Pet. 1:22) Pray, asking Jehovah to help you to be forgiving. w25.02 16-17 ¶8-11

Wednesday, June 3

Solid food belongs to mature people.

—Heb. 5:14.

Examples of basic teachings include repentance, faith, baptism, and the resurrection. (Heb. 6:1, 2) Such teachings form the foundation of Christianity. For this reason, the apostle Peter spoke of them when preaching to the crowd at Pentecost. (Acts 2:32-35, 38) We must accept these primary teachings to become disciples of Christ. For example, Paul warned that any who deny the teaching of the resurrection reject the entire Christian faith. (1 Cor. 15:12-14) However, we must not be satisfied with just a basic knowledge of the truth. In contrast to the primary doctrine, solid spiritual food includes not only Jehovah's laws but also his principles, which help us to understand his thinking. To benefit from such food, we must study, meditate on, and carefully apply God's Word. As we do so, we train ourselves to make decisions that please Jehovah. w24.04
5 ¶12-13

Thursday, June 4

Men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment.—Matt. 12:41.

God reminded Jonah that the Ninevites did "not even know right from wrong." (Jonah 1:1, 2; 3:10; 4:9-11) Later, Jesus used that example to teach about Jehovah's justice and mercy. In what "judgment" would the Ninevites "rise up"? Jesus taught about a future "resurrection of judgment." (John 5:29) He was referring to his Thousand Year Reign, during which both "the righteous and the unrighteous" will be resurrected. (Acts 24:15) For the unrighteous, this will

be "a resurrection of judgment." That is, Jehovah and Jesus will observe and evaluate their behavior and how they respond to divine teaching. If a resurrected Ninevite refuses to join in pure worship, his judgment will be one of condemnation. (Isa. 65:20) But for all those who choose to worship Jehovah faithfully, their judgment will be favorable. They will have the prospect of living forever!—Dan. 12:2. w24.05 5
¶13-14

Friday, June 5

The Son of man came to seek and to save what was lost.—Luke 19:10.

Jesus provided a perfect, living picture of his Father's mercy. (John 14:9) By word and deed, he showed that his compassionate, merciful Father loves people and wants to help each of them to win the fight against sin. Jesus helped sinful people to want to change their ways and to follow him. (Luke 5:27, 28) Jesus knew what lay ahead of him. More than once, he told his followers that he would be betrayed and executed on a stake. (Matt. 17:22; 20:18, 19) He knew that his sacrifice would take away the sin of the world. Jesus also taught that after offering his life, he would "draw all sorts of men" to himself. (John 12:32) Sinful humans could please Jehovah by accepting Jesus as their Lord and by following in his steps. If they did so, they would finally be "set free from sin." (Rom. 6:14, 18, 22; John 8:32) So Jesus willingly and courageously faced his terrible death.—John 10:17, 18. w24.08 5
¶11-12

Saturday, June 6

In all the nations, the good news has to be preached first.—Mark 13:10.

Think back to how you felt when you first learned the truth from God's Word. You discovered that your heavenly Father loves you, that he wants you to be part of his family of worshippers, that he has promised to end pain and suffering, that you can hope to see your dead loved ones come back to life in a new world—and much more. (Mark 10:29, 30; John 5:28, 29; Rom. 8:38, 39; Rev. 21:3, 4) Those truths warmed your heart. (Luke 24:32) You loved what you were learning, and you could not keep those precious truths to yourself! (Compare Jeremiah 20:9.) When love for Bible truth takes root in our heart, we cannot keep silent. (Luke 6:45) We feel like the first-century disciples of Jesus who said: "We cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard." (Acts 4:20) We love the truth so much that we want to share it with as many as possible. w24.05 15 ¶5; 16 ¶7

Sunday, June 7

Serve Jehovah with rejoicing.

—Ps. 100:2.

As Jehovah's people, we preach to others because we love our heavenly Father and we want to help our neighbors come to know him. But others struggle to find pleasure in the preaching work. Why? Some may be very shy and lack confidence. Some feel uncomfortable going to people's homes uninvited. Some may fear being rejected. Some may have been taught to avoid conflict with others. These brothers and sisters find it hard

to approach strangers with the good news. Do you sometimes struggle to find joy in the ministry because of such feelings? If so, do not be discouraged. Your lack of confidence may indicate that you humbly want to avoid drawing attention to yourself and do not want to be in the middle of controversy. And no one wants to be rejected, especially when he is trying to do good for others. Your heavenly Father is well-aware of the challenges you face and wants to give you the help you need.—Isa. 41:13. w24.04 14 ¶1-2

Monday, June 8

Wisdom is with the modest ones.
—Prov. 11:2.

As you read the Bible, instead of trying to apply everything you read all at once, set a modest number of goals. You might try this approach: Keep a list of the things you need to work on, and then select one or two of these to work on first, leaving the other items to be pursued in time. Where should you start? You may decide to start with a goal that is easier for you to reach. Or you might choose to work on an area that you feel needs the most improvement. Once you have identified your goal, do research in our publications. Pray about your goal, asking Jehovah for "both the desire and the power to act." (Phil. 2:13) Then put into practice what you have learned. Having made progress on your first goal, you will likely feel more motivated to work on another one. In fact, when you improve in one aspect of Christian living or on one Christian quality, you will probably find it easier to do so in other areas. w24.09 6 ¶13-14

Tuesday, June 9

In every respect you demonstrated yourselves to be pure in this matter.
—2 Cor. 7:11.

You may be troubled by some of your past actions that have hurt others. What can help? Do what you can to repair the damage, including offering a sincere apology. Ask Jehovah to come to the aid of those affected by your actions. He can help you and those you have hurt to endure and to regain peace. Learn from past mistakes, and be willing to let Jehovah use you in whatever way he chooses. Note the example of the prophet Jonah. Instead of traveling to Nineveh as God had commanded, Jonah fled in the opposite direction. Jehovah disciplined Jonah, and he learned from his mistake. (Jonah 1:1-4, 15-17; 2:7-10) Jehovah did not give up on Jonah. God gave him another opportunity to go to Nineveh, and this time Jonah promptly obeyed. He did not let regret over his past mistake prevent him from accepting this assignment from Jehovah.—Jonah 3:1-3. w24.10 8-9 ¶10-11

Wednesday, June 10

Repent, therefore, and turn around so as to get your sins blotted out, so that seasons of refreshing may come from Jehovah himself.—Acts 3:19.

Jehovah does not simply cancel our debts, or sins; he blots them out. When a debt is canceled, we might imagine a large X being drawn across the account. However, the numbers beneath that X may still be legible. But to blot something out is different. To understand this word picture,

we need to remember that in ancient times the ink used was a mixture that included carbon, gum, and water. A person could take a wet sponge and wipe the writing away. So when a debt was “blotted out,” it vanished completely. Traces of what was written before were not visible to the naked eye. The record became nonexistent. How it warms our heart to know that Jehovah not only cancels our sins but also blots them out completely!—Ps. 51:9. w25.02 10 ¶11

Thursday, June 11

Do not become upset and turn to doing evil.—Ps. 37:8.

When others misjudge us or mistreat us, we trust that Jehovah knows the truth. That confidence can help us to endure unfair treatment because we know that ultimately Jehovah will correct matters. By leaving things with Jehovah, we prevent anger or resentment from festering in our heart. Those emotions can cause us to overreact, can destroy our joy, and can damage our relationship with Jehovah. Of course, we will never be able to follow Jesus’ example perfectly. At times, we may do or say things that we later regret. (Jas. 3:2) And some injustices may leave us with emotional and physical scars that can be hard to bear. If that is true of you, be assured that Jehovah knows what you are going through. And Jesus, who also suffered unjustly, can sympathize with your feelings. (Heb. 4:15, 16) How happy we are that Jehovah gives us practical counsel that helps us to deal with injustice. w24.11 6 ¶12-13

Friday, June 12

This is the work of God, that you exercise faith in the one whom he sent.—John 6:29.

Exercising faith in Jesus is needed in order to “have everlasting life.” (John 3:16-18, 36; 17:3) Many Jews did not accept Jesus’ teaching about a new “work of God.” They asked him: “What are you performing as a sign, so that we may see it and believe you?” (John 6:30) They mentioned that their ancestors in Moses’ day had received manna, which could be likened to bread. (Neh. 9:15; Ps. 78:24, 25) Clearly, their minds were still centered on being satisfied with literal bread. They even failed to press Jesus for clarification when he next spoke of “the true bread from heaven,” which was like life-giving manna from heaven. (John 6:32) They were so focused on their physical needs that they ignored the spiritual truths that Jesus was trying to share with them. w24.12 5-6 ¶10-11

Saturday, June 13

The one who constructed all things is God.—Heb. 3:4.

As your child learns more in science class at school, he will discover that laws govern the shape of many things. For example, each snowflake is formed according to geometric patterns known as fractals. Fractal patterns are also found in other things in nature. But who made the laws that result in these beautiful patterns? Who is behind the order and careful design we see in nature? The more your child thinks about such questions, the more likely it is that he will

be able to develop a strong belief that God created all things. At some point, you could ask him this question, “If God created us, would it not be reasonable to conclude that he has also given us moral guidance on how to be happy?” You can then point out that such valuable guidance is found in the Bible. w24.12 16 ¶8

Sunday, June 14

Sexual immorality is reported among you, and such immorality as is not even found among the nations—of a man living with his father’s wife.
—1 Cor. 5:1.

Under divine inspiration, the apostle Paul wrote a letter directing that an unrepentant sinner be removed from the congregation. (1 Cor. 5:13) How were faithful Christians to treat him? Paul told them “to stop keeping company” with him. What did that mean? Paul explained that this command included “not even eating with such a man.” (1 Cor. 5:11) Sitting down to a meal with someone can easily lead to having further association with him. Clearly, then, Paul meant that the congregation should not socialize with that man. This would protect the congregation from his corrupting influence. (1 Cor. 5:5-7) Additionally, their avoiding close contact with the man might cause him to realize how far he had strayed from Jehovah’s ways, and he might feel shame and be moved to repent. w24.08 15 ¶4-5

Monday, June 15

God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son.

—John 3:16.

In Israel, Atonement Day was observed annually. On that day, the high priest would offer animal sacrifices on behalf of the people. Of course, animal sacrifices could not completely atone for anyone's sins because animals are inferior to humans. But as long as the repentant Israelites offered the sacrifices that Jehovah required, he was willing to forgive their sins. (Heb. 10:1-4) That arrangement impressed on the minds of the Israelites the seriousness of their sinful state. However, Jehovah had a permanent arrangement in mind for the forgiveness of sins. He arranged for his beloved Son to be "offered once for all time to bear the sins of many." (Heb. 9:28) Jesus gave "his life as a ransom in exchange for many."—Matt. 20:28. w25.02 4 ¶9-10

Tuesday, June 16

Keep on the watch and pray continually, so that you may not enter into temptation.—Matt. 26:41.

"The spirit, of course, is eager, but the flesh is weak." (Matt. 26:41b) With those words, Jesus showed that he understood our imperfect condition. But his words also included a warning: Beware of overconfidence. Earlier that very night, the disciples had confidently expressed their determination to stick by their Master. (Matt. 26:35) Their motives were good. Still, they did not realize how quickly they could weaken under pressure. Thus, Jesus cautioned them with the words

found in today's text. Sadly, the disciples failed to keep on the watch. When Jesus was arrested, did they stick by him or did they give in to the temptation to flee? Caught off guard, the disciples did exactly what they said that they would never do—they abandoned Jesus.—Matt. 26:56. w24.07 14 ¶1-2

Wednesday, June 17

We became reconciled to God through the death of his Son.—Rom. 5:10.

Adam and Eve lost their precious relationship with their Father, Jehovah. Originally, Adam and Eve were part of God's family. (Luke 3:38) But when they disobeyed Jehovah, they were expelled from his family before they started to have children. (Gen. 3:23, 24; 4:1) As their descendants, we therefore need to be reconciled to Jehovah. (Rom. 5:10, 11) In other words, we need to develop a good relationship with him. According to one reference work, the Greek word used here for "reconcile" can mean to "make a friend out of an enemy." Amazingly, Jehovah is the one who took the initiative to make this possible. How? By means of the atonement arrangement, which Jehovah put in place for restoring a good relationship between him and sinful humans. It involves exchanging one thing for another of equal value. In this way, something that is lost or destroyed can be regained or replaced. w25.02 3-4 ¶7-8

Thursday, June 18

Sadness in a godly way produces repentance leading to salvation.

—2 Cor. 7:10.

The apostle Paul noted that the “rebuke given by the majority [was] sufficient for such a man.” (2 Cor. 2: 5-8) In other words, the discipline had served its purpose toward the man who previously had sexual relations with his stepmother. (1 Cor. 5:1) What purpose? To lead him to repentance. (Heb. 12:11) Paul therefore directed the congregation: “Kindly forgive and comfort” the erring brother, and “confirm your love for him.” Note that Paul wanted the congregation to do more than merely allow the man back among Jehovah’s people. Paul wanted them to assure the repentant man by their words, manner, and actions that they truly forgave him and loved him. They would thus make it clear that they welcomed his return to the congregation.
w24.08 15 ¶4; 16-17 ¶6-8

Friday, June 19

You were publicly exposed both to reproaches and to tribulations.

—Heb. 10:33.

The apostle Paul could speak with conviction about what it takes to endure. He reminded Christians that when enduring trials, they needed to rely not on themselves but on Jehovah. Paul could say with courage: “Jehovah is my helper; I will not be afraid.” (Heb. 13:6) Some of our brothers are enduring persecution right now. We can loyally support them by means of our prayers and, at times, in practical ways. The Bible clearly says, however, that “all those

desiring to live with godly devotion in association with Christ Jesus will also be persecuted.” (2 Tim. 3:12) For that reason, all of us need to prepare for what lies ahead. Let us continue to trust fully in Jehovah, confident that he will help us to endure any trial that may come our way. In due time, he will bring relief to all his faithful worshippers.—2 Thess. 1:7, 8. w24.09 13 ¶17-18

Saturday, June 20

Many of the Corinthians who heard began to believe and be baptized.

—Acts 18:8.

What helped the Corinthians to get baptized? (2 Cor. 10:4, 5) God’s Word and his powerful holy spirit helped them to make drastic changes in their life. (Heb. 4:12) Those in Corinth who accepted the good news about Christ were able to abandon such habits and practices as drunkenness, thievery, and homosexuality. (1 Cor. 6:9-11) Note that although some in Corinth had deeply entrenched habits to overcome, they did not conclude that it would be too difficult for them to become Christians. They put forth diligent effort to get on the cramped road leading to everlasting life. (Matt. 7:13, 14) Are you struggling to overcome a bad habit or a wrong practice in order to get baptized? Never give up the fight! Beg Jehovah for his holy spirit to help you to resist craving what is bad. w25.03 6 ¶15-17

Sunday, June 21

If any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep asking God.—Jas. 1:5.

Jehovah promises to give us the wisdom to discern whether a certain path will please him. He gives such wisdom “generously to all and without reproaching.” Once you have prayed for Jehovah’s direction, pay careful attention to his answer. To illustrate: If you got lost while traveling, you might ask a local resident for help. But would you then walk away before he had a chance to reply? Of course not. You would listen carefully to his directions. Similarly, after you ask Jehovah for wisdom, try to discern his answer by finding out which Bible laws and principles apply to your situation. For example, when deciding whether to attend a social gathering, you might consider what the Bible says about wild parties, bad associations, and the need to put Kingdom interests ahead of your personal preferences.—Matt. 6:33; Rom. 13:13; 1 Cor. 15:33. w25.01 16 ¶6-7

Monday, June 22

Look! My servants will eat, but you will go hungry.—Isa. 65:13.

Isaiah’s prophecy draws a vivid contrast between what life is like for those inside the spiritual paradise and what life is like for those outside. Jehovah abundantly satisfies the spiritual needs of his worshippers. We have his holy spirit, his written Word, and ample spiritual food so that we can “eat, . . . drink, . . . [and] rejoice.” (Compare Revelation 22:17.) In sharp contrast, those who are outside the spiritual paradise “go hungry . . . , go

thirsty . . . , [and] suffer shame.” Their spiritual needs are not being satisfied. (Amos 8:11) Jehovah generously supplies His people with what they need, including spiritual food. (Joel 2:21-24) He does so through the Bible and our Bible-based publications, our website, as well as our meetings, assemblies, and conventions. We can partake of spiritual provisions every day, and as a result, we feel healthier and more refreshed. w24.04 21 ¶5-6

Tuesday, June 23

Let your words always be gracious.
—Col. 4:6.

If you would like to begin a courtship with someone, you could arrange to have a conversation with that person, either in a public setting or by telephone. Clearly express your intentions. (1 Cor. 14:9) If needed, give the person time to think about how to respond. (Prov. 15:28) And if the person is not interested in pursuing a relationship, respect his feelings. What if someone expresses interest in you? It likely took courage for that person to approach you, so be kind and respectful. If you need time to consider whether you agree to start a courtship, say so. However, try to provide a response as soon as possible. (Prov. 13:12) If you are not interested, express that fact kindly and clearly. If you are interested, discuss your feelings and expectations regarding courtship. Your expectations may differ from the other person’s. w24.05 23-24 ¶12-13

Wednesday, June 24

I am coming against you in the name of Jehovah of armies.—1 Sam. 17:45.

Likely while he was still a teenager, David visited the army camp of the Israelites. He found that the soldiers were terrified because a giant Philistine named Goliath had come out to “taunt the battle line of Israel.” (1 Sam. 17:10, 11) The soldiers’ fear was a result of their focusing on the giant and the taunts they heard on the battlefield. (1 Sam. 17:24, 25) David, however, viewed the situation from a different perspective. He viewed what was happening as a challenge, not merely against the battle line of Israel but against “the battle line of the living God.” (1 Sam. 17:26) David had Jehovah foremost in mind. David trusted that the God who had helped him when he was a shepherd would help him again in this situation. Certain of God’s backing, David faced Goliath and, of course, he won! —1 Sam. 17:45-51. w24.06 21 ¶7

Thursday, June 25

Do not be afraid, for I am with you. Do not be anxious, for I am your God. I will fortify you, yes, I will help you, I will really hold on to you with my right hand of righteousness.

—Isa. 41:10.

Consider how our life would be if we were not serving Jehovah. Doing so can help us to stick to a faithful course and conclude as did the psalmist: “As for me, drawing near to God is good for me.” (Ps. 73:28) We can face whatever challenges come our way during these last days because we “slave for a living and true God.”

(1 Thess. 1:9) Our God is a real Person who acts in behalf of those who worship him. He proved to be with his servants in the past, and he is with us today. We will soon face the greatest tribulation to occur on earth. But we will not face it alone. May we all “be of good courage and say: ‘Jehovah is my helper; I will not be afraid.’” —Heb. 13:5, 6. w24.06 25 ¶17-18

Friday, June 26

You will . . . see the distinction between a righteous person and a wicked person.—Mal. 3:18.

The Bible names more than 40 men who ruled as kings of Israel. The good kings did some bad things. Consider good King David. Jehovah said: “My servant David . . . walked after me with all his heart, doing only what was right in my eyes.” (1 Ki. 14:8) Yet, that man committed sexual immorality with a married woman and conspired to have her husband killed in battle. (2 Sam. 11:4, 14, 15) On the other hand, many of the unfaithful kings did some good things. Consider Rehoboam. In Jehovah’s eyes, he “did what was bad.” (2 Chron. 12:14) Yet, Rehoboam obeyed God’s order to have ten tribes break away from his kingdom. He also benefited his nation by fortifying its cities. (1 Ki. 12:21-24; 2 Chron. 11:5-12) How did Jehovah determine whether a king was faithful in His eyes? Evidently, He took into consideration his heart condition, his repentance, and his adherence to true worship. w24.07 20 ¶1-3

Saturday, June 27

Go on bringing them up in the discipline and admonition of Jehovah.—Eph. 6:4.

What about baptized minors—those under 18 years of age—who engage in serious wrongdoing? The body of elders will arrange for two elders to meet with the minor and his Christian parents. The elders will find out what steps the parents have already taken to help their child come to repentance. If the minor has a good attitude and the parents are reaching him, the two elders might decide that it is not necessary to take the matter any further. After all, it is the parents' God-given responsibility to provide loving correction to their children. (Deut. 6:6, 7; Prov. 6:20; 22:6; Eph. 6:2-4) The elders will thereafter occasionally check with the parents to make sure that the minor is getting the help he needs. However, what if a baptized minor unrepentantly persists in a wrong course? In that case, a committee of elders will meet with him along with his Christian parents.
w24.08 24 ¶18

Sunday, June 28

There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.—Acts 20:35.

We know from experience that we feel good when we receive a gift. Still, we feel even greater happiness when we are the giver. By creating us the way he did, Jehovah allows us to influence our happiness. We can increase our joy by looking for additional opportunities to give. Is that not a wonderful aspect of how we are made? (Ps. 139:14) The Scriptures assure us that giv-

ing brings happiness, so it is little wonder that the Bible describes Jehovah as "the happy God." (1 Tim. 1:11) He is the original and greatest Giver. Because of him, "we have life and move and exist," as the apostle Paul stated. (Acts 17:28) Indeed, "every good gift and every perfect present" comes from Jehovah. (Jas. 1:17) All of us would probably like to experience even more of the happiness that comes from giving. We can do so by imitating Jehovah's generosity.—Eph. 5:1. w24.09 26 ¶1-4

Monday, June 29

To the extent we have made progress, let us go on walking orderly in this same course.—Phil. 3:16.

After reviewing the qualifications to serve as elders, some ministerial servants might feel that they could never qualify. But remember that neither Jehovah nor his organization expects you to display these qualities perfectly. (1 Pet. 2:21) And it is Jehovah's powerful spirit that helps you to develop these qualifications. (Phil. 2:13) Is there a particular quality that you would like to improve on? Pray to Jehovah about it. Research the topic, and ask one of the elders for suggestions on how to improve. Reach out! Ask Jehovah to train and mold you to be even more useful in serving him and the congregation. (Isa. 64:8) May Jehovah richly bless your efforts to qualify to serve as an elder. w24.11 25 ¶17-18

Tuesday, June 30

God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name by ministering and continuing to minister to the holy ones.—Heb. 6:10.

None of us should feel that we are entitled to receive Jehovah's mercy even if we have spent many years in his service. Of course, Jehovah appreciates our record of faithfulness. He gave us his Son as a free gift, not as payment for services rendered. If we were to claim that we have earned mercy or that we are entitled to special consideration, we would, in effect, be saying that Christ died for nothing. (Compare Galatians 2:21.) The apostle Paul knew that he could not earn God's favor. Why, then, did he work so hard in Jehovah's service? Not to prove himself deserving, but to show appreciation for Jehovah's undeserved kindness. (Eph. 3:7) Like Paul, we continue to serve zealously, not to earn Jehovah's mercy, but to show appreciation for it. w25.01 27 ¶5-6

Wednesday, July 1

I have not seen anyone righteous abandoned.—Ps. 37:25.

Some of Jehovah's servants are feeling the effects of old age, struggling with poor health, or living with a disability. That may cause them to feel uncertain of their worth in Jehovah's eyes. They may ask, 'Am I still useful to Jehovah?' The writer of Psalm 71 expressed a similar concern. He prayed: "Do not abandon me when my strength fails." (Ps. 71:9, 18) Nevertheless, the psalmist remained

convinced that if he served his God loyally, Jehovah would guide and support him. As the psalmist learned, Jehovah finds pleasure in those who do their best to serve Him despite their limitations. (Ps. 37:23-25) Older ones, see your situation from Jehovah's viewpoint. He can help you to thrive spiritually even though you may be struggling physically. (Ps. 92:12-15) Rather than focus on what you are no longer able to do, concentrate on what you can do. w24.10 28 ¶14-16

Thursday, July 2

Concerning the eating of food offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world.—1 Cor. 8:4.

Immature Christians often struggle when faced with situations that call for reasoning on Bible principles and applying them. If no Bible law exists, some might feel that they can do whatever they want. Others might ask for a rule when no rule is required. For instance, Christians in Corinth apparently asked the apostle Paul for a rule about whether they could eat food that had been offered to an idol. Rather than tell them what to do, Paul acknowledged the role of the conscience and the fact that each person has a "right to choose." He reasoned on principles that would allow each individual to be at peace with his conscience while not stumbling others. (1 Cor. 8:7-9) Paul was thus helping the Corinthians to grow up spiritually so that they could use their own powers of discernment instead of depending on someone else or simply looking for rules. w24.04 5 ¶14

Friday, July 3

I, Jehovah, am searching the heart . . . to give to each one according to his ways.—Jer. 17:10.

In Jonah's day, the Ninevites had an opportunity to repent. Further, remember what Jesus said about the "resurrection of judgment." It will include "those who practiced vile things." (John 5:29) So it seems that there may be some hope for the people of Sodom and Gomorrah too. It is possible that at least some of those people will be resurrected, and we may have the opportunity to teach them about Jehovah and Jesus Christ. Jehovah has always been the one "searching the heart, examining the innermost thoughts." When it comes to the future resurrection, he will, as always, "give to each one according to his ways." Jehovah will be firm when necessary but merciful whenever possible. So we should not assume that a person has no hope of a resurrection unless we know that to be the case! w24.05 5-6 ¶15-16

Saturday, July 4

*Do not be afraid. I will help you.
—Isa. 41:13.*

Throughout the ages, the message from God has strengthened his servants when they had a difficult task to complete. Take, for example, the prophet Jeremiah. He was hesitant when Jehovah gave him the assignment to preach. Jeremiah said: "I do not know how to speak, for I am just a boy." (Jer. 1:6) How did he overcome his lack of confidence? He drew strength from God's word. He said: "It became like a burning fire shut up in

my bones, and I was tired of holding it in." (Jer. 20:8, 9) Although Jeremiah had a difficult territory, the message he was assigned to proclaim gave him the strength he needed to do the work. Christians draw strength from the message in God's Word. The apostle Paul said that taking in accurate knowledge would motivate his brothers "to walk worthily of Jehovah" as they continued "bearing fruit in every good work."—Col. 1:9, 10. w24.04 14-15 ¶2-4

Sunday, July 5

Zadok the priest . . . anointed Solomon.—1 Ki. 1:39.

Zadok remained loyal to Jehovah despite High Priest Abiathar's choice to support David's son Adonijah, who planned to seize the throne. David never doubted Zadok's loyalty. When Adonijah's scheme was revealed, David turned to Zadok, Nathan, and Benaiah to anoint Solomon as king. (1 Ki. 1:32-34) Being with loyal worshippers of Jehovah, such as Nathan and other supporters of King David, must have strengthened and encouraged Zadok. When Solomon became king, he "appointed Zadok the priest in place of Abiathar." (1 Ki. 2:35) How can you imitate Zadok? If someone close to you chooses to leave Jehovah, make your choice clear. (Josh. 24:15) Jehovah will give you the strength and the courage you need. Rely on him through prayer and by staying close to fellow loyal worshippers. Jehovah treasures your loyalty, and he will reward you for it. —2 Sam. 22:26. w24.07 6-7 ¶16-17

Monday, July 6

Let us not give up in doing what is fine.—Gal. 6:9.

At Psalm 15:2, a friend of God is described as “the one who is walking faultlessly, practicing what is right.” The terms “walking” and “practicing” imply action that is both constant and progressive. But can we really ‘walk faultlessly’? Yes. While no human is perfect, Jehovah will view us as “walking faultlessly” if we do our best to obey him. When we dedicate ourselves to God and get baptized, we are just starting on our journey with God. Note that in Bible times, merely belonging to the nation of Israel would not automatically qualify a person to be a guest of Jehovah. Some called on him but not “in truth and righteousness.” (Isa. 48:1) Sincere Israelites had to learn about Jehovah’s requirements and follow them. Similarly, to enjoy God’s approval today, more is required of us than getting baptized and associating with the Christian congregation. We must keep “practicing what is right.” w24.06 9 ¶4; 10 ¶6

Tuesday, July 7

Become imitators of God.—Eph. 5:1.

What are some ways that Jehovah shows generosity? Consider a few examples. Jehovah gives us material things. We may not always have luxuries, but thanks to Jehovah, most of us have what we need. For example, he makes it possible for us to have food, clothing, and shelter. (Ps. 4:8; Matt. 6:31-33; 1 Tim. 6:6-8) Does Jehovah provide for our physical needs merely out of a sense of obligation?

Not at all! Consider Jesus’ words found at Matthew 6:25, 26. Speaking of birds, Jesus says: “They do not sow seed or reap or gather into storehouses.” However, notice what he next says: “Your heavenly Father feeds them.” Then Jesus asks: “Are you not worth more than they are?” The point? If Jehovah cares for the needs of animals, we can be sure that he will provide for us! Like a caring human father, Jehovah provides for his family out of love.—Ps. 145:16; Matt. 6:32. w24.09 26-27 ¶4-6

Wednesday, July 8

The men who minister in a fine manner are acquiring for themselves a fine standing and great freeness of speech in the faith.—1 Tim. 3:13.

A ministerial servant is a baptized brother who is appointed by holy spirit to help the elders care for many practical matters in the congregation. Ministerial servants are first and foremost spiritual men; they love Jehovah and live by his righteous standards. And they feel a deep love for their Christian brothers and sisters. (Matt. 22:37-39) How can a baptized brother reach out to be a ministerial servant? The Bible outlines the qualifications for those who may be appointed as ministerial servants. (1 Tim. 3:8-10, 12) You can reach out for this privilege by studying these Scriptural qualifications and then working hard to meet them. But first, you need to give careful attention to your motives for reaching out. w24.11 15 ¶4-5

Thursday, July 9

You accepted it not as the word of men but, just as it truthfully is, as the word of God.—1 Thess. 2:13.

Some people claim to have read the Bible dozens of times. But do they truly believe in the Bible? Have they applied it or allowed it to affect the course of their life? Sadly, often the answer is no. What a contrast with Jehovah's people! We strive to demonstrate that it is at work in our life. Still, it is not always easy to read and apply God's Word. We may struggle to find time to read. Or we may tend to read at a very rapid pace and not absorb much of what we read. Or we may feel overwhelmed by all the improvements we need to make. Whatever your challenge may be, it is not insurmountable. With Jehovah's help, you can overcome it. May we be determined to become doers of the Word. Without a doubt, the more we read God's Word and apply it in our life, the happier we will be.—Jas. 1:25. w24.09 7 ¶15-16

Friday, July 10

Keep on asking, and it will be given you.—Luke 11:9.

By means of his holy spirit, Jehovah comforts us when we suffer trauma or loss. If you are coping with a heart-breaking trial, you can pour out your heart to Jehovah in prayer as often and for as long as you want. (Ps. 86:3; 88:1) Ask Jehovah repeatedly for his holy spirit. He will never ignore your requests. Has a distressing ordeal left you weak? Holy spirit can empower you to continue worshipping Jehovah faithfully. (Eph. 3:16) How can you

work in harmony with your requests for holy spirit? Share in activities that will allow God's spirit to operate on you. These include attending meetings and witnessing to others. Fill your mind with Jehovah's thoughts by reading his Word every day. (Phil. 4:8, 9) As you read, take note of Bible characters who experienced trials and meditate on how Jehovah helped them to endure. w24.10 9 ¶12-14

Saturday, July 11

*God loved the world so much.
—John 3:16.*

Like Jehovah and his Son, we love people. (Prov. 8:31) We feel deep compassion for those who are "without God" and who have "no hope." (Eph. 2:12) They are drowning in life's problems, and we have the life vest that they need—the good news of God's Kingdom. Our love and compassion for such ones motivates us to make every effort to reach them with the good news. That precious message can fill their hearts with hope, help them find the best possible life now, and give them the prospect of "the real life"—everlasting life—in God's new world. (1 Tim. 6:19) Our love for people also moves us to warn them about the approaching end of this wicked world. (Ezek. 33:7, 8) We want them to know what will happen during the great tribulation—false religion will be removed and the destruction of the entire wicked system will follow at Armageddon.—Rev. 16:14, 16; 17:16, 17; 19:11, 19, 20. w24.05 16-17 ¶8-9

Sunday, July 12

Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but yield place to the wrath; for it is written: “Vengeance is mine; I will repay,” says Jehovah.”—Rom. 12:19.

When the apostle Paul urged Christians to “yield place to the wrath,” whose wrath was he referring to? According to the context, it is Jehovah’s wrath. We yield place to Jehovah’s wrath by letting him bring about justice in his own time and in his own way. After a brother named John was treated unfairly, he said: “I had to fight the urge to pursue righting the wrong in my own way. Romans 12:19 helped me to wait on Jehovah.” We benefit when we wait on Jehovah to correct a matter. If we do so, we will be spared the burden and frustration of trying to solve the problem ourselves. Jehovah offers to help us. He says, as it were, ‘Leave the injustice to me; I will take care of things.’ If we accept Jehovah’s promise “I will repay,” we can let the matter go, confident that he will handle it in the best possible way. w24.11 6 ¶14-15

Monday, July 13

Give us each day our bread according to our daily needs.—Luke 11:3.

We need to keep material things in their proper place. The apostle Paul highlighted this when writing to Christians living near the end of the Jewish systems of things. He brought up events from Israel’s past, including what happened near Mount Sinai. He warned Christians “not to desire injurious things, as [the Israelites] desired them.” (1 Cor. 10:6, 7, 11) The Israelites let their longing for food turn

even Jehovah’s miraculous provisions into “injurious things.” (Num. 11: 4-6, 31-34) And in conjunction with a golden calf, they ate, drank, and had a good time. (Ex. 32:4-6) Paul cited their experience as a warning for Christians living before the end of the Jewish systems of things in 70 C.E. We now live near the end of a system of things, so we do well to take Paul’s counsel seriously. w24.12 6 ¶13

Tuesday, July 14

*Rejoice with the wife of your youth.
—Prov. 5:18.*

Jehovah is “the happy God,” and he wants us to be happy too. (1 Tim. 1: 11) He has given us many gifts to help us enjoy life. (Jas. 1:17) One of those gifts is marriage. When a man and a woman get married, they vow to love, respect, and cherish each other. Maintaining a close bond can bring them real joy. Sadly, many married couples in today’s world forget the promises they made on their wedding day. As a result, they are not happy. How does Jehovah expect a husband to treat his wife? Jehovah commands husbands to honor their wife. Honor refers to the way we treat someone whom we respect. A husband who honors his wife will treat her in a kind and loving way.—1 Pet. 3:7. w25.01 8 ¶1-2; 9 ¶4-5

Wednesday, July 15

Jehovah is my helper; I will not be afraid.—Heb. 13:6.

No doubt the apostle Paul's letter to the Hebrews helped first-century Christians to prepare for the tribulation that they would face. Paul urged his brothers to gain a deeper knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures. Doing so would equip them to identify and reject teachings that would undermine their faith. He encouraged them to strengthen their faith so that they would promptly follow the direction of Jesus and of those taking the lead in the congregation. And he helped Christians to build endurance by having the right view of trials and seeing the trials as an opportunity to be trained by their loving Father. May we too apply this inspired counsel. We will then be able to endure faithfully down to the end.

—Heb. 3:14. w24.09 13 ¶17, 19

Thursday, July 16

We have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all time.—Heb. 10:10.

According to the Bible, a ransom is the price paid to bring about atonement and reconciliation. From Jehovah's standpoint, it provides the basis to restore what was lost. In what way? Remember, Adam and Eve lost their perfect life along with the prospect of living forever. So the ransom would need to be a price of equal value to what was lost. (1 Tim. 2:6) It could be paid only by an adult man who (1) was perfect; (2) had the potential of living forever on earth; and (3) was willing to give up, or to sacrifice, that life for

us. Consider three reasons why Jesus was able to pay that ransom price. (1) He was perfect—"he committed no sin." (1 Pet. 2:22) (2) Because of that, he had the potential of living forever on earth. (3) He was willing to die and give up that life for us.—Heb. 10:9. w25.02 4-5 ¶11-12

Friday, July 17

*He does not give the spirit sparingly.
—John 3:34.*

Jehovah loves you and wants you to be part of his family. That is true no matter what obstacles to baptism you are facing. Jesus said to a group of his first-century disciples: "If you have faith the size of a mustard grain, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you." (Matt. 17:20) Those present to hear this had been with Jesus for just a few years, so their faith was still growing. But Jesus assured them that if they developed sufficient faith, Jehovah would help them to move mountainlike obstacles. And Jehovah will help you to do the same! If you recognize obstacles that prevent you from getting baptized, take steps to remove them without delay. Dedicate yourself to Jehovah and get baptized. It is the best decision you could ever make!

w25.03 7 ¶18-20

Saturday, July 18

Jehovah is on my side; I will not be afraid.—Ps. 118:6.

We can face trials successfully if we remember that the living God is ready to assist us. We can build our confidence in that fact by considering what he has done in the past. (Isa. 37:17, 33-37) Also, consider reports on our jw.org website that illustrate how Jehovah has supported our brothers and sisters in modern times. Furthermore, recall times when Jehovah has acted in your behalf. Do not worry if you cannot point to some spectacular experience. Why not? The fact is, Jehovah has been involved in your life! He has drawn you into a relationship with him. (John 6:44) Why not ask him to help you to remember moments when he answered your prayers, gave you support at just the right time, or sustained you through a difficult situation? Reflecting on such experiences will strengthen your conviction that Jehovah will continue to act in your behalf. w24.06 21 ¶8

Sunday, July 19

Death spread to all men because they had all sinned.—Rom. 5:12.

We may be determined to let nothing turn us away from Jehovah. Yet, we are imperfect and vulnerable to temptation. (Rom. 7:21-23) Without warning, we could find ourselves in circumstances that make the wrong course seem very appealing. To remain loyal to Jehovah and his Son, we need to follow Jesus' counsel to keep on guard against the temptation to sin. All of us face temptation to sin. But each one of us has areas of vulner-

ability, whether it is to commit a serious sin, to engage in some form of unclean conduct, or to fall prey to worldly thinking. For example, one person may be fighting temptation to commit sexual immorality. Another might be strongly inclined toward unclean practices, such as masturbation or viewing pornography. Still another may be struggling with fear of man, independent thinking, a quick temper, or something else. w24.07 14 ¶3; 15 ¶5

Monday, July 20

Kindly forgive and comfort him, so that he may not be overwhelmed by excessive sadness.—2 Cor. 2:7.

Imagine what could happen if the elders refused to allow a truly repentant man back into the congregation or if after his return, the congregation refused to show him love. He could be swallowed up by "excessive sadness." He could easily feel that his situation was hopeless. He might even give up in his efforts to repair his relationship with God. Even worse, if the other brothers and sisters in the congregation refused to forgive the repentant sinner, they would put their own relationship with Jehovah in jeopardy. Why? Because they would reflect, not Jehovah's forgiving attitude toward repentant wrongdoers, but Satan's harsh and merciless attitude. They would, in effect, become tools that the Devil could use to destroy the man spiritually.—2 Cor. 2:10, 11; Eph. 4:27. w24.08 17 ¶7, 10-11

Tuesday, July 21

When he ascended on high . . . , he gave gifts in men.—Eph. 4:8.

Christ Jesus gave the congregation “gifts in men” who serve in another way. Under his direction, the elders in Jerusalem sent out Paul, Barnabas, and others as traveling overseers. (Acts 11:22) Why? For the same reason that ministerial servants and elders were appointed: to build up the congregations. (Acts 15:40, 41) Circuit overseers are constantly on the move. Some travel hundreds of kilometers between congregations. Each week, a circuit overseer delivers several talks, goes on shepherding calls, and conducts a pioneer meeting, an elders’ meeting, and meetings for field service. He prepares talks and organizes circuit assemblies and conventions. He teaches pioneer schools, arranges for a special meeting with the pioneers in the circuit, and handles other—sometimes urgent—matters assigned to him by the branch office. w24.10 21 ¶12-13

Wednesday, July 22

*I will forgive their error, and I will no longer remember their sin.
—Jer. 31:34.*

The prophet Jeremiah quotes Jehovah as saying the words found in today’s text. When referring to these words, the apostle Paul used a similar expression, saying: “I will no longer call their sins to mind.” (Heb. 8:12) But what does that really mean? In the Bible, the expression “remember” does not always refer to someone recalling something or thinking about it. Rather, it can involve some-

one taking action. The criminal hanging on the stake next to Jesus requested: “Jesus, remember me when you get into your Kingdom.” (Luke 23:42, 43) He was not simply asking Jesus to think about him at that time. Jesus’ response indicated that he would take action to resurrect this criminal. So, then, when Jehovah says that he no longer remembers our sins, he means that he will not take action against us. He will not punish us sometime in the future for sins that he has forgiven. w25.02 10-11 ¶14-15

Thursday, July 23

Knowledge of the Most Holy One is understanding.—Prov. 9:10.

True understanding comes from knowing Jehovah’s qualities, his purpose, and what he loves or hates. Ask yourself, ‘Knowing what I do about Jehovah, what decision can I make that will please him?’ (Eph. 5:17) In order to please Jehovah, we must at times disappoint those who are close to us. For example, some well-meaning parents may insist that their adult daughter marry a man who is financially well-off—or one who can pay them a large dowry—even though he is not spiritually strong. True, they want their daughter to be cared for materially, but who will help her to progress as a spiritual person? How does Jehovah view the matter? We find the answer at Matthew 6:33. There, Christians are urged to keep “seeking first the Kingdom.” Although we honor our parents and respect the people in our community, our main concern is to make Jehovah happy. w25.01 17 ¶9-10

Friday, July 24

The Lord stood near me and infused power into me.—2 Tim. 4:17.

We need Jehovah's help to keep zealously preaching in the face of opposition today. (Rev. 12:17) Why can you be certain that Jehovah will support you? Consider Jesus' prayer recorded in John chapter 17. Jesus asked Jehovah to watch over the apostles, and Jehovah answered that request. The book of Acts reports how he helped the apostles to preach zealously despite persecution. In his prayer, Jesus also asked Jehovah to watch over those who would put faith in the apostles' preaching. That includes you. Jehovah has not stopped answering Jesus' prayer; He will help you just as He helped the apostles. (John 17:11, 15, 20) Even if it turns out to be more difficult to preach the good news with zeal as the end draws close, we will receive all the support we need.—Luke 21:12-15. w25.03 18 ¶13-14

Saturday, July 25

*My servants will shout joyfully.
—Isa. 65:14.*

God's people can "shout joyfully" because their heart overflows with appreciation. The upbuilding truths and comforting promises in God's Word and our solid hope based on Christ's ransom sacrifice give us a "good condition of the heart." Talking about these things makes us truly happy! (Ps. 34:8; 133:1-3) The love and the unity among Jehovah's people are two major characteristics of the spiritual paradise. This "bond of union" gives us an idea of what life will be like in the new world, where Jehovah's ser-

vants will enjoy even greater love and unity than they do today. (Col. 3:14) Anyone who wants to be truly happy and content needs to experience our spiritual paradise. No matter what this world thinks of Jehovah's servants, they have an honorable name, or reputation, with his universal family.—Isa. 65:15. w24.04 21 ¶7-8

Sunday, July 26

*Keep . . . building one another up.
—1 Thess. 5:11.*

How can all of us support single Christians who want to get married? One way is by being careful about what we say. (Eph. 4:29) We could ask ourselves: 'Do I tease those who want to get married? When I see a single brother and a single sister talking, do I assume that they have a romantic interest in each other?' (1 Tim. 5:13) Additionally, we should never make single Christians feel that they are somehow incomplete because they are not married. How much better to look for opportunities to commend single Christians! What if we think that a certain brother and a certain sister would make a good couple? The Bible tells us to consider the feelings of others. (Rom. 15:2) Many single ones do not want others to introduce them to a potential mate, and we should respect their wishes. (2 Thess. 3:11) Others may appreciate some help, but we should not intervene without being asked.—Prov. 3:27. w24.05 24-25 ¶14-15

Monday, July 27

Their rock is not like our Rock.

—Deut. 32:31.

We live in a world where unexpected challenges can disrupt—or even completely change—our lives. How thankful we are that we can turn to Jehovah God for help! When we receive his support, that experience reassures us that “Jehovah is alive!” (Ps. 18:46) However, right after making that declaration, David called God “my Rock.” Why would he liken Jehovah to an inanimate object—a rock? The Bible uses the term “rock” as a word picture to help us grasp qualities that Jehovah possesses. It often appears in passages that praise him as a God who is without equal. The first reference to Jehovah as “the Rock” is found at Deuteronomy 32:4. In prayer, Hannah said that “there is no rock like our God.” (1 Sam. 2:2) Habakkuk called Jehovah “my Rock.” (Hab. 1:12) The writer of Psalm 73 called God “the rock of my heart.” (Ps. 73:26) And even Jehovah referred to himself as a rock.—Isa. 44:8. w24.06 26 ¶1, 3

Tuesday, July 28

Jehoshaphat . . . searched for Jehovah with all his heart.—2 Chron. 22:9.

The kings of Israel who pleased Jehovah worshipped him with a complete heart. Speaking of Josiah, the inspired record says: “There was no king like him prior to him, who returned to Jehovah with all his heart.” (2 Ki. 23:25) What about Solomon, who in his later years did what was bad? “His heart was not complete.” (1 Ki. 11:4) And regarding Abijam, another unfaithful king, the Bible record states:

“His heart was not complete with Jehovah.” (1 Ki. 15:3) The Bible often uses the word “heart” to describe the complete inner person, including one’s desires, thoughts, disposition, attitude, capabilities, motivations, and goals. What does it mean, then, to serve Jehovah with a complete heart? A person with a complete heart does not just go through the motions of worshipping God. Rather, he serves out of love and devotion throughout his life. w24.07 21 ¶4-5

Wednesday, July 29

Wipe away all my errors.—Ps. 51:9.

Jehovah uses a word picture to describe how he blots out sins. He declares: “I will blot out your transgressions as with a cloud and your sins as with a thick cloud.” (Isa. 44:22) When Jehovah forgives, it is as if he were using a thick cloud to hide our transgressions so that they disappear from sight altogether. What does this mean for us? When Jehovah forgives our sins, we should not feel that we will bear the stain of such sins for the rest of our life. By means of the blood of Jesus Christ, our debts are completely canceled. Even the record of those debts is no longer discernible. This is what the true forgiveness that comes from Jehovah means for us when we repent of our sins. Jehovah’s mercy also allows us to have a good relationship with him and helps us to avoid being overcome by feelings of guilt. w25.02 10 ¶11-14

Thursday, July 30

God in his kindness is trying to lead you to repentance.—Rom. 2:4.

Elders who serve on committees have a responsibility before Jehovah to keep the congregation clean. (1 Cor. 5:7) They also want wrongdoers to be moved to repentance if possible. To that end, elders maintain a positive, hopeful outlook. Why? Because they want to imitate Jehovah, who is “very tender in affection and merciful.” (Jas. 5:11) Note how the aged apostle John showed such a spirit. He wrote: “My little children, I am writing you these things so that you may not commit a sin. And yet, if anyone does commit a sin, we have a helper with the Father, Jesus Christ, a righteous one.” (1 John 2:1) Sadly, there are times when a Christian refuses to repent. If so, he must be removed from the congregation. w24.08 25 ¶19-20

Friday, July 31

Stand firm in the faith.—1 Cor. 16:13.

You may have the urge to compare what you do with what others can do. Resist that urge! Why? Because Jehovah does not make such comparisons. (Gal. 6:4) For example, Mary gave Jesus a gift of costly perfumed oil. (John 12:3-5) In contrast, the needy widow contributed to the temple two small coins of very little monetary value. (Luke 21:1-4) Yet, Jesus saw both gifts as expressions of faith. His Father, Jehovah, truly values anything you do that is motivated by your devotion to him and love for him, however small it may seem to you. We all have doubts at times. However, God’s reliable Word of truth, the Bible, can

help us to fight them off. Let confidence replace your concern. Jehovah certainly notices you as an individual. He appreciates your sacrifices and is committed to rewarding you. Jehovah views all his loyal servants as worthy of his love and attention. w24.10 25 ¶3; 29 ¶17-18

Saturday, August 1

There will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world’s beginning until now.—Matt. 24:21.

We pray that as many as possible will respond to the warning message and join us in pure worship now. But what about those who do not heed the warning at this time? It may be Jehovah’s will to save people who have a change of heart when they see the destruction of Babylon the Great. If so, then it is all the more urgent that we keep sounding the warning. What we tell them now may give them something to remember then. (Compare Ezekiel 33:33.) Perhaps they will reflect back on the warning they heard from us and be moved to join us in pure worship before it is too late. Like the jailer in Philippi who had a change of heart only after “a great earthquake occurred,” perhaps some who do not respond now will have a change of heart after the world-shaking destruction of Babylon the Great.—Acts 16:25-34. w24.05 17 ¶9-10

Sunday, August 2

Christ is the end of the Law.

—Rom. 10:4.

We learn a valuable lesson from what the apostle Paul wrote to the Hebrew Christians. Some had not continued to grow spiritually; they had actually “gone back to needing milk, not solid [spiritual] food.” (Heb. 5:12) They had failed to keep up with the truth, which was being progressively revealed through the congregation. (Prov. 4:18) For example, many Jewish believers were still promoting the Mosaic Law even though some 30 years earlier the Law had been done away with on the basis of Christ’s sacrifice. (Titus 1:10) Anyone who has read Paul’s inspired letter to the Hebrews can confirm that this book contains solid spiritual food. It was just what those Christians needed to strengthen their faith in the superiority of the Christian arrangement for worship and to give them the courage to keep preaching.—Heb. 10:19-23. w24.04 6 ¶15

Monday, August 3

There is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.—Acts 24:15.

Ever since Adam and Eve joined Satan and rebelled against Jehovah God, billions of humans have died. What lies ahead for all those people? A limited number, 144,000 in all, of Christ’s faithful followers will receive a resurrection to immortal life in heaven. (Rev. 14:1) And a vast number of faithful men and women who loved Jehovah will be part of the “resurrection of . . . the righteous,”

and they will live forever on earth if they remain righteous during Christ’s Millennial Reign and during the final test. (Dan. 12:13; Heb. 12:1) Also during the Millennium, “the unrighteous”—including those who never served Jehovah or who even “practiced vile things”—will be given an opportunity to change their ways and become faithful. (John 5:29; Luke 23:42, 43) However, some humans were so wicked that he has decided that there will be no resurrection for them at all.—Luke 12:4, 5. w24.05 2 ¶3; 5 ¶15; 6 ¶17

Tuesday, August 4

They honor me with their lips, but their heart is far removed from me.

—Isa. 29:13.

Someone who wants to be approved by Jehovah must be “speaking the truth in his heart.” (Ps. 15:2) This means more than not lying. Jehovah wants us to be honest through and through. (Heb. 13:18) That is important, “for Jehovah detests a devious person, but his close friendship is with the upright.” (Prov. 3:32) Those who ‘speak the truth in their heart’ do not pretend to be obedient in public while breaking God’s laws in secret. They avoid acting deviously. A devious person may begin to doubt the wisdom of some of Jehovah’s regulations. (Jas. 1:5-8) He may disobey Jehovah on matters that seem to him to be of little importance. Then if there appear to be no consequences for his disobedience, he may be emboldened to violate God’s laws further, and his worship would become hypocritical. (Eccl. 8:11) We, however, want to be honest in all things. w24.06 10 ¶7-8

Wednesday, August 5

Stand firm . . . with the belt of truth fastened around your waist.
—Eph. 6:14.

Jehovah's people love the truth found in God's Word. We have built our faith on it. (Rom. 10:17) We have come to believe that Jehovah set up the Christian congregation as "a pillar and support of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15) Satan would like nothing better than to cause us to lose confidence in the Bible or in the direction we receive from God's organization. (Eph. 4:14) Soon the Devil will use powerful propaganda to mislead entire nations into taking sides against Jehovah. (Rev. 16:13, 14) We can also expect Satan to intensify his efforts to mislead Jehovah's people. (Rev. 12:9) Consequently, it is important that we train ourselves to see the difference between truth and falsehood and to be obedient to the truth. (Rom. 6:17; 1 Pet. 1:22) Our survival during the great tribulation will depend on it! w24.07 8 ¶1-3

Thursday, August 6

This commandment that I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it beyond your reach.—Deut. 30:11.

When Jehovah organized the Israelites into a nation, he made a covenant, a formal agreement, with them. If they kept his laws, he would protect and bless them. But if they rebelled against him—for example, by choosing to worship other gods—he would withdraw his blessing, and they would suffer. Yet, even then, they could still regain God's favor. They could "return to Jehovah [their] God and lis-

ten to his voice." (Deut. 30:1-3, 17-20) In other words, they could repent. If they did so, Jehovah would draw close to them and bless them once more. Jehovah's chosen people repeatedly rebelled against him. As a result, they suffered. But Jehovah did not give up on his wayward people. He sent prophets again and again to urge his people to repent and return to him.—2 Ki. 17:13, 14. w24.08 9 ¶4-5

Friday, August 7

Great persecution arose against the congregation that was in Jerusalem.
—Acts 8:1.

Hebrew Christians living in Jerusalem and Judea went through hard times in the years following Jesus' death. Soon after the Christian congregation was formed, intense persecution arose against it. Then some 20 years later, Christ's followers faced serious economic hardships, possibly caused by a famine that had previously afflicted the land. (Acts 11:27-30) However, about 61 C.E., Christians were experiencing a time of relative peace compared with what was to come. During that period, they received an inspired letter from the apostle Paul—a letter that would prove to be very timely. The letter to the Hebrews was timely because the peace that the Christians were experiencing would not last. Paul provided practical counsel that would help those Christians to endure the tribulation that they would soon face. w24.09 8 ¶1-2

Saturday, August 8

They have become a source of great comfort to me.—Col. 4:11.

When we are suffering, our brothers and sisters are truly a living expression of Jehovah's love for us. Fellow believers can comfort us by listening empathetically, or they may support us with their presence. They may share a reassuring Bible verse or say a prayer with us. (Rom. 15:4) At times, a brother or a sister may remind us of Jehovah's thinking and thus help us maintain our balance. Fellow Christians can also give us practical support, such as by providing a meal when we are in distress. To receive support from others, we may need to ask for it. (Prov. 17:17) They may not know how we feel or what we need. (Prov. 14:10) So be willing to share your feelings with mature friends. Let them know what would help you. You might choose to confide in one or two elders with whom you feel at ease. Some sisters have found it comforting to speak with another mature sister.
w24.10 10 ¶15-16

Sunday, August 9

Everyone who recognizes the Son and exercises faith in him [will] have everlasting life.—John 6:40.

Many people watch what they eat and try to exercise regularly in order to stay healthy. Still, they do not expect to live forever. Hoping for that could seem unrealistic and undesirable because of the distress that comes with old age. Nevertheless, Jesus spoke in a positive way about "everlasting life," as indicated at John 3:16 and 5:24. One day, Jesus mirac-

ulously fed bread and fish to a crowd of thousands. That was amazing, but what he said the next day was even more astounding. The crowd had followed him to Capernaum, near the shore of Galilee, where he told them that people could be resurrected and enjoy everlasting life. (John 6:39, 40) Jesus' words indicate that many who have died can be resurrected and that both you and your loved ones can enjoy everlasting life. w24.12 8 ¶1-2

Monday, August 10

You husbands, . . . assign them honor as to a weaker vessel, the feminine one.—1 Pet. 3:7.

A recent report from the World Health Organization indicates that many husbands physically, verbally, or emotionally abuse their wife. A husband who does this might treat his wife respectfully in front of others but then mistreat her at home. What can cause some husbands to be abusive? They may have been raised by a violent father, so they think that abusive behavior is normal. Others are influenced by the culture around them, which may promote the wrong idea that "a real man" must use force to show his wife who is the boss. Other men were not taught to control their emotions, including their anger. Some men have developed a warped view of women and sex because of regularly viewing pornography. Additionally, reports indicate that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified these problems. Of course, none of these factors justify a husband's abusive behavior. w25.01 8 ¶2-3

Tuesday, August 11

Since Christ suffered in the flesh, you too arm yourselves with the same mental disposition.—1 Pet. 4:1.

“You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole strength and with your whole mind.” (Luke 10:27) Jesus acknowledged this as the most important command in the Mosaic Law. Notice that our love for Jehovah involves our heart, which includes our desires, feelings, and emotions. It also involves our whole-souled devotion and our strength—including our energy. However, loving Jehovah also involves our mind, which includes the way we think about matters. Of course, we can never fully understand all of Jehovah’s thinking. But we can better understand God’s thinking by studying “the mind of Christ” because Jesus perfectly reflects the thinking of his Father. —1 Cor. 2:16. w25.03 8 ¶1

Wednesday, August 12

By means of him we have the release by ransom through the blood of that one, yes, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his undeserved kindness.—Eph. 1:7.

As a perfect man, Jesus was the equal of the first man, Adam, before he sinned. (1 Cor. 15:45) So by Jesus’ death, he was able to atone for Adam’s sin, that is, to replace what Adam had lost. (Rom. 5:19) Jesus thus became “the last Adam.” There is no need for another perfect person to come and pay for what Adam lost. Jesus died “once for all time.” (Heb. 7:27; 10:12) What, then, is the differ-

ence between the atonement arrangement and the ransom? The atonement arrangement is the action God takes to restore a good relationship between him and mankind. The ransom is the price paid to make atonement possible for sinful mankind. This price is represented by Jesus’ precious blood poured out in our behalf. —Heb. 9:14. w25.02 5 ¶12-13

Thursday, August 13

God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but along with the temptation he will also make the way out so that you may be able to endure it.
—1 Cor. 10:13.

Seeing Jehovah as a living Person will allow us to view our trials properly. How so? We begin to see our trials as part of a bigger issue between Jehovah and Satan. The Devil claims that when we suffer hardship, we will abandon Jehovah. (Job 1:10, 11; Prov. 27:11) But when we deal with our trials successfully, we show our love for Jehovah and prove the Devil a liar. Are you facing government opposition, economic hardship, negative responses to your preaching, or some other trial? If so, remember that your situation gives you an opportunity to make Jehovah’s heart rejoice. Remember, too, that he will never let you be tested beyond your limits. He will give you the strength to endure. w24.06 22 ¶9

Friday, August 14

Each one is tried by being drawn out and enticed by his own desire.

—Jas. 1:14.

Do you know in which areas you are most easily tempted? It does us no good to fool ourselves by denying our weaknesses or concluding that we are too strong to fall into wrongdoing. (1 John 1:8) After all, Paul indicates that even those “who have spiritual qualifications” might give in to temptation if they do not keep on guard. (Gal. 6:1) We must be honest with ourselves and acknowledge the areas in which we are not strong. (2 Cor. 13:5) Once we have identified those areas in which we are most susceptible to temptation, what should we do? Strengthen our resistance! To illustrate, in Bible times the most vulnerable part of a city wall was its gates. Therefore, the gates were the most heavily guarded. Similarly, we need to give special attention to any areas in which we know that we are especially weak.—1 Cor. 9:27. w24.07 15 ¶5-7

Saturday, August 15

Go on bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the accurate knowledge of God.—Col. 1:10.

Good work, as mentioned in today’s text, includes the preaching of the good news. So when we read God’s Word and meditate on it, our faith in Jehovah is strengthened and the importance of sharing the Kingdom message becomes clear. To get the most out of God’s Word, we should avoid rushing through our reading, study, and meditation. Take your time. If you come across a scripture that you

have trouble understanding, do not skip over it. Instead, use the *Watch Tower Publications Index* or the *Research Guide for Jehovah’s Witnesses* to find an explanation about the verse. If you take your time when studying, you will strengthen your confidence in the truthfulness of God’s Word. (1 Thess. 5:21) The more convinced you are, the more you will enjoy sharing what you have learned with others. w24.04 15 ¶4-5

Sunday, August 16

I wrote to you: to determine whether you would give proof of your obedience in all things.—2 Cor. 2:9.

He is “good and ready to forgive,” said David. (Ps. 86:5) Micah wrote: “Who is a God like you, pardoning error and passing over the transgression?” (Mic. 7:18) And Isaiah stated: “Let the wicked man leave his way and the evil man his thoughts; let him return to Jehovah, who will have mercy on him, to our God, for he will forgive in a large way.” (Isa. 55:7) To imitate Jehovah, the congregation in Corinth was told to welcome back a repentant man and assure him of their love. By following that direction, the congregation showed their “obedience in all things.” True, only months had passed since the man was removed, but the discipline had successfully led him to repentance. So there would be no point in delaying his reinstatement into the congregation. w24.08 17-18 ¶12-13

Monday, August 17

One will be taken along and the other abandoned.—Matt. 24:40.

We live in a climactic time! Soon, Jesus will judge every living person. Jesus described the time leading up to this judgment by giving his disciples a prophetic “sign” of his invisible presence and of “the conclusion of the system of things.” (Matt. 24:3) This prophecy is recorded in Matthew chapters 24 and 25 and in the parallel accounts of Mark chapter 13 and Luke chapter 21. Jesus provided helpful warnings by means of three parables. These are the parables of the sheep and the goats, the discreet and the foolish virgins, and the talents. Each parable helps us to understand how a person’s behavior will affect the way he will be judged. w24.09 20 ¶1-2

Tuesday, August 18

Let everything you do be done with love.—1 Cor. 16:14.

Our greatest example, Jesus Christ, was motivated by love—love for his Father and love for people. That love moved him to work hard and perform humble tasks for others. (Matt. 20:28; John 13:5, 14, 15) Brothers, if you are motivated by love, Jehovah will bless you and will help you to reach your spiritual goals, such as qualifying as a ministerial servant. (1 Pet. 5:5) In the world, people who promote themselves are often admired. Not so in Jehovah’s organization. A brother who is motivated by love, as Jesus was, does not crave power, authority over others, or status. If such an ambitious person were to be appointed in the congregation, he would like-

ly refuse to do some of the humble tasks needed to care for Jehovah’s precious sheep. He might consider such tasks to be beneath him.—John 10:12. w24.11 15 ¶6-7

Wednesday, August 19

The holy spirit has appointed you overseers.—Acts 20:28.

Around the world, we need more brothers to serve as “gifts in men.” (Eph. 4:8) If you are a baptized brother, is it “within your power to help”? (Prov. 3:27) Are you willing to qualify as a ministerial servant? Could you reach out to care for the needs of your brothers as an elder? Are you able to adjust your circumstances to apply for the School for Kingdom Evangelizers? That school will equip you to be used even more fully by Jesus. If you feel unqualified, pray to Jehovah. Ask him for the help of his holy spirit to handle successfully any assignment you are given. (Luke 11:13) The brothers whom Jesus has appointed as “gifts in men” are proof that he has been leading us during these last days. (Matt. 28:20) Are you not grateful that we have a King who is loving, generous, and attentive and who provides qualified brothers to care for our needs? w24.10 23 ¶16-17

Thursday, August 20

The former things will not be called to mind.—Isa. 65:17.

What about all the things that have caused God's people pain and distress? Eventually, those things "will be forgotten [and] concealed from [God's] eyes." (Isa. 65:16) Jehovah will make our troubles go away, and in time the pain of such memories will vanish completely. Even now, it is soothing to our nerves to be at our Christian meetings, where we can relax and put behind us the stresses of this wicked world. We contribute to the calmness of our spiritual environment when we manifest the love, joy, peace, kindness, and mildness that are included in the fruitage of God's spirit. (Gal. 5:22, 23) What a blessing it is for us to be associated with God's organization! Those who remain in the spiritual paradise will see the complete fulfillment of God's promise of "new heavens and a new earth." w24.04 22 ¶9-10

Friday, August 21

It is a snare for a man to cry out rashly, "Holy!" And only later to give consideration to what he vowed.

—Prov. 20:25.

Although courtship can be enjoyable, it is also a serious step that may lead to marriage. On their wedding day, a couple vow before Jehovah to love and respect each other for as long as they both live. Before making any vow, we should consider the matter very carefully. That is certainly true of the marriage vow. Courtship allows a couple to get to know each other and to make a good decision. Some-

times that decision is to get married; sometimes that decision is to end the courtship. If a couple break up, this does not mean that their courtship failed. Instead, the courtship served its purpose—it helped them come to a good decision. Why is it important to have the right view of courtship? When single people have the proper viewpoint, they will not date someone they have no intention of marrying. w24.05 26-27 ¶3-4

Saturday, August 22

Do not become ashamed . . . of the witness about our Lord.—2 Tim. 1:8.

Young Christians may at times lack the confidence to defend their beliefs. They may feel intimidated when the theory of evolution comes up in class. Why? Their teachers may present evolution as an established fact. If you are a parent, how can you help your child to have the confidence to stand firm in his beliefs? Assure him that he does not need to be ashamed because he knows the truth about creation. Why not? The fact is that many scientists also understand that life did not appear spontaneously or by chance. They perceive intelligent and obvious design in the complexity of life. As a result, they do not accept the evolution theory. Your child can fortify his own convictions by reflecting on the reasons that persuaded other brothers and sisters to believe that life was created. w24.12 18 ¶14-15

Sunday, August 23

He became overjoyed in the holy spirit.—Luke 10:21.

Jesus maintained a positive attitude about the preaching work. That helped him to stay enthusiastic about his ministry. For example, late in 30 C.E., Jesus saw that many were ready to respond to his preaching activity, and he likened them to a ripe field ready to be harvested. (John 4:35) About a year later, he told his disciples: “The harvest is great.” (Matt. 9:37, 38) And later he again emphasized: “The harvest is great . . . Beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.” (Luke 10:2) Jesus never lost sight of the potential for people to respond to the good news, and he rejoiced when they did. Jesus taught his disciples to keep a positive view of their message, which would encourage them to maintain their zeal. w25.03 18-19 ¶15-16

Monday, August 24

*My God is my rock of refuge.
—Ps. 94:22.*

Jehovah is a refuge. Just as a huge rock can be a person’s hiding place from a threatening storm, Jehovah safeguards us when we face situations that threaten our well-being. He keeps us safe and prevents us from suffering lasting harm. And he promises even more: He will eventually eliminate whatever threatens our peace and security. (Ezek. 34:25, 26) One way we make Jehovah our rocklike Refuge is by praying to him. When we pray, Jehovah gives us “the peace of God” that safeguards our heart and mind. (Phil. 4:6, 7) Jehovah is always there

for us. We can trust him because he is “the eternal Rock.” (Isa. 26:3, 4) He will always be alive to keep his promises, hear our prayers, and give us the support we need. We can also depend on Jehovah because he is loyal to those who serve him. (2 Sam. 22:26) He will never forget what we do, and he will always reward us.—Heb. 6:10; 11:6. w24.06 27 ¶4-6

Tuesday, August 25

Safeguard your heart, for out of it are the sources of life.—Prov. 4:23.

Unwholesome entertainment can divide our heart. So can bad association and materialistic thinking. If we detect that something is beginning to weaken our love for Jehovah, let us take swift action to remove it. (Matt. 5:29, 30) We must not let our heart become divided. We could fool ourselves into thinking that by increasing our spiritual activities, we need not reject bad influences. To illustrate, imagine yourself outside on a brutally cold and windy day. On arriving home, you turn on the heat. How much good would that do you if you left the door open? The cold air would quickly fill your house. The point? We need to do more than just take in spiritual food that warms our relationship with Jehovah. We must also close the door on unwholesome influences, so that this world’s cold “air,” or ungodly attitude, does not enter our heart and divide it.—Eph. 2:2. w24.07 21 ¶6-7

Wednesday, August 26

Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those who persecute you.
—Matt. 5:44.

We can only begin to imagine the pain Jesus felt as well as the indignity and the injustice that he endured. Yet, he was not conquered by the injustice he suffered. Instead of cursing the soldiers who had nailed him to the stake, he prayed: “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23:34) When we pray for those who mistreat us, it can lessen our feelings of resentment and anger and even change the way we view those who offend us. There is no telling what injustices we may yet face before this system ends. Whatever comes our way, let us never stop praying to Jehovah for help. Also, may we imitate the way Jesus responded to mistreatment and continue to apply Bible principles. If we do, we can be sure of inheriting a blessing from Jehovah.—1 Pet. 3:8, 9. w24.08 26 ¶1-2
7 ¶17, 19

Thursday, August 27

You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness; no one bad may remain with you.—Ps. 5:4.

Jehovah is not a permissive God; he does not condone sin. (Ps. 5:4-6) He requires that we respect his righteous standards, which he has set forth for us in his Word. Of course, Jehovah does not expect perfection from imperfect people. (Ps. 130:3, 4) At the same time, he does not tolerate ‘ungodly men who turn his undeserved kindness into an excuse for brazen conduct.’ (Jude 4) Indeed, the Bible

speaks of the “destruction of the ungodly” at God’s war of Armageddon. (2 Pet. 3:7; Rev. 16:16) However, Jehovah does not want anyone to suffer destruction. The Bible clearly states that he “desires all to attain to repentance.” (2 Pet. 3:9) Christian elders imitate Jehovah as they patiently try to help wrongdoers to change their ways and be restored to Jehovah’s favor. w24.08 26 ¶1-2

Friday, August 28

You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing.
—Ps. 145:16.

Like Jehovah, we too can give materially out of love. For example, are you acquainted with a fellow believer who is in need of food or clothing? Jehovah can use you to give him something to help fill that need. Jehovah’s people are especially known for showing generosity when disaster strikes. For instance, during the COVID-19 pandemic, brothers and sisters shared food, clothing, and other supplies with ones who were in need. Many also made generous contributions to the worldwide work. That helped to fund relief efforts around the globe. They took to heart the words of Hebrews 13:16: “Do not forget to do good and to share what you have with others, for God is well-pleased with such sacrifices.” w24.09 27 ¶6-7

Saturday, August 29

Make sure of the more important things.—Phil. 1:10.

Consider this scenario. You are looking for a job to support your family. Two jobs are available. You review all the facts, taking note of the type of work, the schedule, the travel time, and so on. In both cases, the work itself is Scripturally acceptable. Perhaps you favor one option because you prefer the type of work or because the salary is higher. There are other factors, though, to consider before making a decision. For example, would either job conflict with your congregation meeting schedule? Would either job cut into the time you need to care for your family's emotional and spiritual needs? Asking such questions will help you to put "the more important things"—your worship and your family's needs—ahead of material advantages. Then you can reach a decision that Jehovah will bless. w25.01 17 ¶11-13

Sunday, August 30

*Jehovah is close to the brokenhearted.
—Ps. 34:18.*

Even if others have mistreated you, you can be certain that Jehovah loves you and values you. If you feel "crushed in spirit," remember that Jehovah saw good things in your heart and personally drew you to him. (John 6:44) He is always ready to help you because you are precious to him. We can learn about Jehovah's feelings by considering Jesus' example. During his earthly ministry, Jesus took notice of those who were looked down on by others, and he treated

them with compassion. (Matt. 9:9-12) When a woman hoping to be healed of a grievous sickness touched his garment, Jesus comforted her and commended her for her faith. (Mark 5: 25-34) Jesus perfectly reflects his Father's personality. (John 14:9) So you can be certain that Jehovah values you and takes note of your good qualities, including your faith and your love for him. w24.10 7 ¶4-5

Monday, August 31

*Do collect my tears in your skin bottle.
—Ps. 56:8.*

During his life, David had to endure several troubling situations that made him shed tears. He faced hostility from others and even betrayal by those he trusted. (1 Sam. 19:10, 11; 2 Sam. 15:10-14, 30) At one point, he wrote: "I have grown weary with my sighing; all night long I soak my bed with tears; I flood my couch with weeping." (Ps. 6:6) Despite the adversities that David faced, he was convinced that Jehovah loved him. He wrote: "Jehovah will hear the sound of my weeping." (Ps. 6:8) The words of our text paint a touching portrait of Jehovah's tender care. David felt as if Jehovah were collecting his tears in a bottle or recording them in a book. David was sure that Jehovah noticed and remembered his pain. David was convinced that his loving heavenly Father was aware not only of what he had been through but also of how it had affected him. w24.12 22 ¶11-12

Tuesday, September 1

Keep testing whether you are in the faith.—2 Cor. 13:5.

We must exert ourselves not only to reach maturity but also to maintain it. This requires that we avoid overconfidence. (1 Cor. 10:12) We should “keep testing” ourselves to make sure that we are continuing to make progress. In his letter to the Colossians, the apostle Paul again highlights the need to remain mature. Even though they had become full-grown Christians, Paul warned them against being ensnared by worldly thinking. (Col. 2: 6-10) And Epaphras, who evidently knew those in the congregation well, prayed constantly that they might “finally stand complete,” or mature. (Col. 4:12) The point? Both Paul and Epaphras understood that maintaining maturity requires personal effort and God’s support. They wanted the Colossians to remain mature, or full-grown, Christians despite any challenges they were facing. w24.04 6-7 ¶16-17

Wednesday, September 2

Jehovah is with us. Do not fear them.—Num. 14:9.

When we have cultivated proper fear of Jehovah, we love him so much that we would never do anything to displease him. We are eager to learn the difference between right and wrong, between truth and falsehood, so that we can gain Jehovah’s approval. (Prov. 2:3-6; Heb. 5:14) If we were to fear humans more than we fear God, we could be led away from the truth. Consider the example of the 12 chieftains who spied out the land that Je-

hovah had promised to give to the Israelites. For ten of the spies, their fear of the Canaanites was stronger than their love for Jehovah. They told their fellow Israelites: “We are not able to go up against the people, because they are stronger than we are.” (Num. 13:27-31) From a human standpoint, the Canaanites were stronger. That part was true. But to say that the Israelites would not be able to conquer their enemies left Jehovah out of the picture. w24.07 9 ¶5-6

Thursday, September 3

Will the Judge of all the earth not do what is right?—Gen. 18:25.

Do we have good reason for confidence regarding all of Jehovah’s judgments, both favorable and unfavorable? Yes! As Abraham understood so well, Jehovah is the perfect, all-wise, merciful “Judge of all the earth.” He has trained his Son and delegated all judging to him. (John 5:22) Both Father and Son can read what lies in each human heart. (Matt. 9:4) In every case, they will do “what is right”! Let us be determined to trust that Jehovah knows best. We recognize that we are not qualified to judge—but he is! (Isa. 55:8, 9) So we confidently leave all the judging to him and his Son, the King who perfectly reflects his Father’s justice and mercy.—Isa. 11:3, 4. w24.05 7 ¶18-19

Friday, September 4

Jehovah detests a devious person, but His close friendship is with the upright.—Prov. 3:32.

We can learn about the importance of having a sincere heart from Jesus' first meeting with Nathanael. When Philip brought his friend Nathanael to meet Jesus, something remarkable happened. Although Jesus had never met Nathanael, Jesus said: "See, truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit." (John 1:47) Jesus saw in Nathanael an extraordinary sincerity. Like us, Nathanael was imperfect. But there was nothing artificial or insincere about him. Jesus admired that and commended Nathanael for it. Most of the requirements for pleasing Jehovah listed in Psalm 15 are related to how we treat others. Psalm 15:3 states that a guest in Jehovah's tent "does not slander with his tongue, he does nothing bad to his neighbor, and he does not defame his friends." Misusing our speech in such ways could cause serious harm to others.—Jas. 1:26. w24.06 10 ¶7, 9; 11 ¶10

Saturday, September 5

Lord, even the demons are made subject to us by the use of your name.—Luke 10:17.

If you prepare well for the ministry, you are likely to feel more comfortable when speaking with others. Jesus helped his disciples to prepare before he sent them out into the ministry. (Luke 10:1-11) Because they put into practice what Jesus had taught them, the disciples felt a deep sense of joy in what they were able to accomplish. How might we prepare for the minis-

try? We need to give thought to how we can express the truth effectively in our own words. It is also helpful to anticipate two or three common reactions from those in the territory and have in mind how we will respond in each case. Then when we approach people, we can try to relax, smile, and be friendly. w24.04 16 ¶6-7

Sunday, September 6

You are worthy, Jehovah our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because you created all things.—Rev. 4:11.

The most important reason why we preach the good news is that we love Jehovah God and his holy name. We view our ministry as a way to praise the God we love. We wholeheartedly agree that Jehovah God is worthy to receive glory, honor, and power from his loyal worshippers. We give him glory and honor when we share with others the convincing evidence that he "created all things" and that we owe him our very existence. We give him power—our power—when we use our time, energy, and resources to share in the ministry as fully as our circumstances allow. (Matt. 6:33; Luke 13:24; Col. 3:23) Put simply, we love to speak about the God we love. We also feel compelled to tell others about his name and what it stands for. w24.05 17 ¶11

Monday, September 7

He becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him.—Heb. 11:6.

Jehovah gives us peace and contentment now and will give us everlasting life in the future. We can place our hope in Jehovah, convinced that he has both the desire and the power to reward us. And that conviction moves us to stay busy in our worship, just as faithful servants of God in the past were moved to do. This proved true of Timothy in the first century. (Heb. 6: 10-12) Timothy put his hope in the living God. (1 Tim. 4:10) Therefore, he had good reason to work hard and exert himself. In what ways? The apostle Paul encouraged him to make progress as a teacher and a public speaker. Timothy was also to set a good example for fellow believers, both young and old. And he was assigned some difficult tasks, which included giving firm but loving counsel to those who needed it. (1 Tim. 4:11-16; 2 Tim. 4: 1-5) Timothy could be sure that Jehovah would reward him.—Rom. 2:6, 7. w24.06 22-23 ¶10-11

Tuesday, September 8

*Jehovah kept warning Israel and Judah through all his prophets.
—2 Ki. 17:13.*

Jehovah often used his prophets to warn and correct his people. For example, God said through Jeremiah: “Return, O renegade Israel . . . I will not look down angrily on you, for I am loyal . . . I will not stay resentful forever. Only acknowledge your guilt, for you have rebelled against Jehovah.” (Jer. 3:12, 13) By means of Joel, Jehovah said: “Return to me with

all your hearts.” (Joel 2:12, 13) He had Isaiah declare: “Make yourselves clean; remove your evil deeds from my sight; stop doing bad.” (Isa. 1:16-19) And by means of Ezekiel, Jehovah asked: “Do I take any pleasure at all in the death of a wicked person? . . . Do I not prefer that he turn away from his ways and keep living? I do not take any pleasure in the death of anyone, . . . so turn back and live.” (Ezek. 18:23, 32) Jehovah takes delight in seeing people repent because he wants them to keep living—forever! w24.08 9 ¶5-6

Wednesday, September 9

All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial.—2 Tim. 3:16.

All of God’s people receive the spiritual nourishment, direction, and protection they need. An example of Jehovah’s impartiality is that he makes the Bible accessible to people around the globe today. The Holy Scriptures were originally written in three languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek. Do those who can read the original Bible languages have a closer relationship with Jehovah than those who cannot? No, they do not. (Matt. 11: 25) Jehovah’s approval of us is not dependent on our secular education or on our ability with languages. Rather than offer his wisdom only to the highly educated, Jehovah makes it accessible to people around the earth, whether they are highly educated or not. His inspired Word, the Bible, has been translated into thousands of languages; thus, people the world over can benefit from its teachings and learn how they can become his friends.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17. w24.06 6-7 ¶13-15

Thursday, September 10

The desolating of [Jerusalem] has drawn near.—Luke 21:20.

The destruction of the Jewish system of things, which Jesus had foretold, was approaching. Christians needed to use the time remaining to prepare themselves by building up such qualities as faith and endurance. (Heb. 10: 25; 12:1, 2) We are about to face a tribulation far greater than the one experienced by the Hebrew Christians. (Matt. 24:21; Rev. 16:14, 16) Consider some of the practical counsel that Jehovah provided for those Christians that can benefit us too. The apostle Paul encouraged his fellow believers to dig deeper into God's Word. (Heb. 5:14–6:1) Using the Hebrew Scriptures, Paul reasoned with his brothers on the superiority of the Christian way of worship over Judaism. Paul knew that increased knowledge and a deeper understanding of the truth would equip those Christians to identify and reject false reasonings so that they would not be led astray. w24.09 8-9 ¶2-3; 10 ¶6

Friday, September 11

*For a fact the Lord was raised up.
—Luke 24:34.*

Jesus' disciples needed encouragement. Why? Some had left homes, families, and businesses to follow Jesus full-time. (Matt. 19:27) Others were treated as social outcasts because they had become his disciples. (John 9:22) They made these sacrifices because they believed that Jesus was the promised Messiah. (Matt. 16:16) But when Jesus was executed, their hopes were dashed and they

became downhearted. No doubt Jesus saw his disciples' grief, not as a sign of spiritual weakness, but as an understandable response to a terrible loss. So on the very day that he was resurrected, he began encouraging his friends. For instance, he appeared to Mary Magdalene while she wept at his tomb. (John 20:11, 16) He also appeared to the two disciples who had left for the village of Emmaus. And he appeared to the apostle Peter. w24.10 13 ¶5-6

Saturday, September 12

*[Be] always ready to make a defense before everyone who demands of you a reason for the hope you have.
—1 Pet. 3:15.*

Parents, prepare your child to defend his belief in a Creator. You might find it useful to review together articles on jw.org in the series "Young People Ask—Creation or Evolution?" Then discuss the line of reasoning that your child feels is most persuasive for helping others understand the truth about the Creator. Encourage him to use simple logic and reasoning if some are open to a pleasant discussion. For example, a schoolmate might say: "I believe only what I can see, and I have never seen God." A young Christian could respond: "Imagine that you are walking through a forest far from any human activity and you come upon a functioning well. What would you conclude? If the presence of a well gives clear evidence of intelligent life having made it, how much more so does the existence of the universe!" w24.12 18 ¶16

Sunday, September 13

Is not wisdom found among the aged, and does not understanding come with a long life?—Job 12:12.

All of us need guidance in making life's important decisions. We can obtain much of that guidance from elders and other mature Christians. If they are much older than we are, we should not automatically dismiss their advice as outdated. Jehovah wants us to learn from older ones. They have had more time than we have had to acquire experience, understanding, and wisdom. In Bible times, Jehovah used faithful older ones to encourage and guide his people. Consider, for example, Moses, David, and the apostle John. They lived at different times, and their circumstances differed greatly. As they neared the end of their life, they gave wise advice to younger ones. Each of these faithful older men emphasized the value of being obedient to God. Whether we are young or old, we can benefit by reviewing their counsel.—Rom. 15:4; 2 Tim. 3:16. w24.11 8 ¶1-2

Monday, September 14

Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, you have no life in yourselves.—John 6:53.

Back in Noah's day, God prohibited humans from consuming blood. (Gen. 9:3, 4) Jehovah repeated that restriction in his Law to Israel. Anyone eating blood was to "be put to death." (Lev. 7:27, ftn.) Jesus upheld that Law. (Matt. 5:17-19) So it is unthinkable that he would urge a crowd of Jews to consume his actual flesh or drink the blood in his veins. Jesus

was speaking in a figurative sense, as he had done earlier when he told a Samaritan woman: "The water that I will give . . . will . . . impart everlasting life." (John 4:7, 14) Jesus was not suggesting that the Samaritan woman would get everlasting life simply by drinking certain literal water. Similarly, he was not saying that the crowds he spoke to in Capernaum would live forever if they ate his literal flesh and drank his literal blood. w24.12 9 ¶4-6

Tuesday, September 15

Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, a sacred service with your power of reason.—Rom. 12:1.

Christian husbands need to guard against adopting an improper view of women. Why? One reason is that a person's thoughts often lead to actions. The apostle Paul warned anointed Christians in Rome to "stop being molded by this system of things." (Rom. 12:1, 2) When Paul wrote to the Romans, the congregation had evidently been in existence for some time. Yet, Paul's words imply that some in the congregation were still being influenced by the customs and thinking of the world. That is why he exhorted them to change their thinking and behavior. That counsel certainly applies to Christian husbands today. Sadly, some of them have been influenced by the thinking of the world and have even abused their wife. w25.01 9 ¶4

Wednesday, September 16

Shepherd the flock of God under your care, serving as overseers.

—1 Pet. 5:2.

Elders today are busy men. They are evangelizers. (2 Tim. 4:5) They take a zealous lead in the field ministry, organize the preaching work in the local territory, and train us to preach and teach effectively. They also serve as merciful, impartial judges. When a Christian commits a serious sin, elders strive to help him repair his friendship with Jehovah. At the same time, they are careful to keep the congregation clean. (1 Cor. 5:12, 13; Gal. 6:1) Primarily, elders are known as shepherds. (1 Pet. 5:1-3) They deliver well-prepared Scriptural talks, endeavor to get to know everyone in the congregation, and make shepherding calls. Some elders also assist with Kingdom Hall construction and maintenance, convention organization, and the work of Hospital Liaison Committees and Patient Visitation Groups, in addition to other assignments. Elders work hard for us! w24.10
20 ¶9

Thursday, September 17

Just as in Adam all are dying, so also in the Christ all will be made alive.

—1 Cor. 15:22.

In the Bible, the word “redemption” refers to the releasing, or acquittal, that results because of the payment of the ransom. The apostle Peter expressed it this way: “You know that it was not with corruptible things, with silver or gold, that you were set free [lit., “you were ransomed; you were redeemed”] from your futile way of

life handed down to you by your forefathers. But it was with precious blood, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb, that of Christ.” (1 Pet. 1:18, 19; ftn.) Because of the ransom sacrifice, we can be set free from the oppressive rule of sin and death. (Rom. 5:21) Certainly, we have good reason to feel deeply indebted to Jehovah and Jesus for the redemption that comes from the precious blood, or life, of Jesus. w25.02 5 ¶15-16

Friday, September 18

Happy is the man who is always on guard.—Prov. 28:14.

How can we guard ourselves? Consider what we can learn from the young man discussed in Proverbs chapter 7. He committed sexual immorality with an immoral woman. Verse 22 tells us that the young man went after her “suddenly.” But as the preceding verses show, he had taken several steps before this that gradually led him to sin. What led up to his sin? First, in the evening, he “passed along the street near [the immoral woman’s] corner.” Then, he marched toward her house. (Prov. 7:8, 9) Next, when he saw the woman, he did not turn away. Instead, he accepted her kiss and listened as she spoke of the communion sacrifices she had offered, perhaps in an attempt to make him think that she was not a bad person. (Prov. 7:13, 14, 21) Had the young man avoided the dangers that led up to the sin, he would have guarded himself from the temptations and from the sin. w24.07 16 ¶8-9; 19 ¶19

Saturday, September 19

Kindly forgive and comfort him.

—2 Cor. 2:7.

Jehovah does not tolerate serious wrongdoing among his people. He does not take the view that wrongdoers who are unrepentant should be “mercifully” allowed to continue associating with his faithful worshippers. Jehovah is merciful, but he is not permissive; nor does he lower his standards. (Jude 4) Indeed, to do so would not be merciful at all because it would endanger all in the congregation. (Prov. 13:20; 1 Cor. 15:33) Still, we learn that Jehovah does not want anyone to be destroyed. He wants to save people whenever possible. He shows mercy to people who have a change of heart and want to repair their relationship with him. (Ezek. 33:11; 2 Pet. 3:9) Thus, when the man in Corinth repented and turned away from his sinful course, Jehovah used the apostle Paul to explain to the congregation that the man should be forgiven and welcomed back. w24.08 17 ¶7; 18-19 ¶14-15

Sunday, September 20

To the extent that you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.—Matt. 25:40.

In the parable of the sheep and the goats, Jesus described the judgment of people who have the opportunity to support his anointed brothers. (Matt. 25:31-46) During the “great tribulation,” he will render this judgment right before Armageddon. (Matt. 24:21) Just as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, Jesus will separate those who loyally

support his anointed followers from those who do not. Bible prophecy shows that as Jehovah’s appointed Judge, Jesus will be righteous in his judgment. (Isa. 11:3, 4) He observes the conduct, attitude, and speech of people—including how they treat his anointed brothers. (Matt. 12:36, 37) Jesus will know who gave support to his anointed brothers and their work. One of the primary ways that sheep-like ones support Christ’s brothers is by assisting them in the preaching work. w24.09 20-21 ¶3-4

Monday, September 21

Make sure of all things.

—1 Thess. 5:21.

We can make sure that what we believe is true by comparing it with what the Bible says. For example, consider the case of the young person who wonders whether he has any value in God’s eyes. Should he simply accept that thought as true? No, he should “make sure of all things” by getting Jehovah’s thoughts on the matter. As we read God’s Word, we “hear” Jehovah speaking to us. But to get his thoughts on a specific question requires effort on our part. We need to focus our Bible reading on the topic that concerns us. We can do research on that subject, using the extensive study tools that Jehovah’s organization provides. (Prov. 2:3-6) We can pray that Jehovah will guide our research and help us to find his thoughts on our question. Then we can look for Bible principles and practical information that apply to our situation. w24.10 25 ¶4-5

Tuesday, September 22

[Love] does not look for its own interests.—1 Cor. 13:5.

Jehovah will not bless the efforts of anyone who is driven by pride or selfish ambition. (1 Cor. 10:24, 33; 13:4) At times, even Jesus' closest companions reached out for privileges for the wrong reason. Consider an event involving two of Jesus' apostles—James and John. They asked Jesus to give them special prominence in his Kingdom. Jesus did not commend them for their ambition. Instead, he explained to all 12 apostles: “Whoever wants to become great among you must be your minister, and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of all.” (Mark 10:35-37, 43, 44) Brothers who reach out with the proper motive—that is, to serve others—will be a blessing to the congregation.—1 Thess. 2:8. w24.11 15-16 ¶7-8

Wednesday, September 23

There is accomplishment through many advisers.—Prov. 15:22.

When making decisions, love will motivate us to seek the advantage of “the other person” and to be modest. (1 Cor. 10:23, 24, 32; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10) We will then make a decision that reflects our love and respect for others. If you are making a major decision, think about what it would take to implement it. Jesus taught us to “calculate the expense.” (Luke 14:28) So consider the amount of time, resources, and effort that you would need to invest to make the decision work. In some cases, you might consult your family to determine what

each member would need to do to support the decision. Why is this kind of planning valuable? It may reveal that your decision needs some adjustments or that a different option is more practical. And when you involve your family members and listen to their input, they will more readily work with you to make the decision succeed. w25.01 18-19 ¶14-15

Thursday, September 24

Exult and be joyful.—Isa. 65:18.

Isaiah reveals why we have every reason to “exult and be joyful” in the spiritual paradise. This environment is a creation of Jehovah. (Isa. 65:18, 19) No wonder he is using us to direct people away from the spiritually parched organizations of this old world and into our beautiful spiritual environment! We are excited about the blessings we enjoy because of being in the truth, and we are moved to tell others about them. (Jer. 31:12) We are also grateful for and excited about the hope we have as residents of the spiritual paradise. The Bible promises that we will “build houses and live in them [and] plant vineyards and eat their fruitage.” We will “not toil for nothing” because we will be “blessed by Jehovah.” He promises us a secure, satisfying life with a real purpose. He knows each one’s needs and “[will] satisfy the desire of every living thing.”—Isa. 65:20-24; Ps. 145:16. w24.04 22-23 ¶11-12

Friday, September 25

My strong rock, my refuge, is God.

—Ps. 62:7.

We make Jehovah our Rock when we rely fully on him. We trust that by obeying him even during difficult times, we will benefit. (Isa. 48:17, 18) As we experience his support, our confidence in him will grow. We will then be better prepared to face trials that only Jehovah can get us through. Similar to a massive rock, Jehovah is firm and stable. He is consistent in his personality and unshakable in his purpose. (Mal. 3:6) When faced with the rebellion in Eden, Jehovah did not waver. As the apostle Paul wrote, Jehovah “cannot deny himself.” (2 Tim. 2:13) This means that no matter what happens or what others do, Jehovah will never deviate from his qualities, his purpose, or his standards. With confidence in our stable God, we can look to him for salvation and for help to cope during turbulent times.

—Ps. 62:6, 7. w24.06 27-28 ¶7-8

Saturday, September 26

The secret person of the heart . . . is of great value.—1 Pet. 3:4.

If you are in a courtship, what will help you decide whether to get married or not? Get to know each other well. You likely learned some things about the other person before you began dating. But now you have the opportunity to get to know “the secret person of the heart.” This involves learning more about your prospective mate’s spirituality, personality, and thinking. Over time, you should be able to answer such questions as: ‘Will this person be a good marriage

mate for me?’ (Prov. 31:26, 27, 30; Eph. 5:33; 1 Tim. 5:8) ‘Can we fulfill each other’s emotional needs? Can we live with each other’s shortcomings?’ (Rom. 3:23) As you get to know each other, remember: Compatibility is largely determined, not by how similar you are, but by how adaptable you are to each other’s differences. w24.05 27 ¶5

Sunday, September 27

*I have sinned against Jehovah.
—2 Sam. 12:13.*

King David erred seriously. But when the prophet Nathan confronted him about his sin, David humbly repented. (Ps. 51:3, 4, 17, superscription) King Hezekiah too sinned against Jehovah. (2 Chron. 32:25) But like David, Hezekiah humbly repented. (2 Chron. 32:26) In the final analysis, Jehovah viewed him as a faithful king who “kept doing what was right.” (2 Ki. 18:3) What do we learn? We need to repent of our sins and do all we can to avoid repeating them. What if we receive counsel from congregation elders, even on a seemingly minor matter? We should not feel rejected by Jehovah or by the elders. Even the good kings of Israel were not above receiving counsel and reproof. (Heb. 12:6) When we receive correction, we should (1) respond humbly, (2) make the necessary changes, and (3) move on with our wholehearted service to Jehovah. If we repent of our sins, Jehovah will forgive us.—2 Cor. 7:9, 11. w24.07 21 ¶8; 22 ¶9, 11

Monday, September 28

Remove the wicked person from among yourselves.—1 Cor. 5:13.

A wrongdoer is removed from the congregation when he does not respond to repeated attempts by the elders to lead him to repentance. (2 Ki. 17:12-15) His actions show that he has chosen not to abide by Jehovah's standards. (Deut. 30:19, 20) An announcement is made to inform the congregation that he is no longer one of Jehovah's Witnesses. The purpose of that announcement is not to humiliate the wrongdoer. Rather, it is made so that the congregation can follow the Scriptural admonition to "stop keeping company" with that person, "not even eating with" him. (1 Cor. 5:9-11) That direction is given for good reason. The apostle Paul wrote: "A little leaven ferments the whole batch of dough." (1 Cor. 5:6) Unrepentant wrongdoers can weaken the determination of those who are trying to live by Jehovah's righteous standards. —Prov. 13:20; 1 Cor. 15:33. w24.09 27 ¶3-4

Tuesday, September 29

For all things I have the strength through the one who gives me power.
—Phil. 4:13.

We cannot literally impart strength, or energy, to others. But we can use our power in their behalf. For example, we might run errands or do household chores for an elderly or infirm Christian. Or we could volunteer to help with the cleaning and the maintenance of the Kingdom Hall. Do not forget, too, that words have power. Can you think of someone who

would benefit from sincere commendation? Do you know of anyone in need of comfort? In either case, why not take the initiative to reach out to the individual? You can visit in person, call on the telephone, or perhaps send a card, an email, or a text message. What you say does not have to be eloquent. A few simple words from the heart may be exactly what your fellow believer needs to remain faithful for another day or to feel better about his situation.—Prov. 12:25; Eph. 4:29. w24.09 28 ¶8-10

Wednesday, September 30

If a man is reaching out to be an overseer, he is desirous of a fine work.
—1 Tim. 3:1.

If you have been serving for a time as a ministerial servant, you may be well on your way to qualifying to serve as an elder. Can you reach out for that "fine work"? What does the work of an elder involve? He takes the lead in preaching, works hard in shepherding and teaching, and builds up the congregation by word and example. For good reason, the Bible calls hardworking elders "gifts in men." (Eph. 4:8) How can you qualify to serve as an elder? Qualifying as an elder is not the same as qualifying for a secular job. Often in the secular world, if you have the basic work skills that an employer is looking for, you can get the job. By contrast, if you wish to be appointed as an elder, you need more than preaching and teaching skills. You need to meet the Scriptural qualifications for elders listed at 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9. w24.11 20 ¶1-3

Thursday, October 1

I will keep on the lookout for Jehovah.
—Mic. 7:7

We often receive theocratic direction—from our local elders, the circuit overseer, the branch office, or the Governing Body—that guides us in our worship. But what if on occasion we cannot understand the reason for the direction we receive? We may see only the negative effects that the direction could have on us. We may even begin to focus on the imperfections of the brothers who gave the direction. When we walk by faith, we trust that Jehovah is in control and that he knows our circumstances. As a result, we are quick to obey, and we do so with a positive attitude. (Heb. 13:17) We recognize that our obedience contributes to the unity of our congregation. (Eph. 4:2, 3) We trust that even though the brothers taking the lead are imperfect, Jehovah will bless our obedience. (1 Sam. 15:22) In due time, he will correct anything that truly needs to be corrected. w25.03
23-24 ¶13-14

Friday, October 2

God . . . is a Revealer of secrets.
—Dan. 2:28.

We are living in exciting times! Each day, Bible prophecy is being fulfilled before our eyes. For example, we see “the king of the north” and “the king of the south” engaged in a struggle for world dominance. (Dan. 11:40, ftn.) We see the good news of God’s Kingdom being preached on an unprecedented scale, with millions responding favorably. (Isa. 60:22; Matt. 24:14) And we are receiving an abundance

of spiritual food “at the proper time.” (Matt. 24:45-47) Jehovah continues to help us to have a clearer understanding of the major events that lie just ahead. (Prov. 4:18) We can be certain that by the time the great tribulation starts, we will know all we need to know in order to endure faithfully and even prosper during that challenging period. However, we must recognize that there are some things that we just do not know about the near future. w24.05 8 ¶1-2

Saturday, October 3

He does not slander with his tongue.
—Ps. 15:3.

The psalmist specifically mentions slander. What is slander? Generally, it is a false statement that can ruin someone’s reputation. Psalm 15:3 also reminds us that Jehovah’s guests do nothing bad to their neighbors and do not defame their friends. (Ps. 15:1) What might that involve? We could unintentionally defame someone by spreading negative information. For example: (1) a sister discontinues her full-time service, (2) a married couple no longer serve at Bethel, or (3) a brother is no longer serving as an elder or a ministerial servant. Would it be proper to speculate on the reasons why these adjustments were made and to share that opinion with others? There may well be reasons for the change that we are unaware of. Furthermore, a guest in Jehovah’s tent “does nothing bad to his neighbor, and he does not defame his friends.” w24.06 11 ¶11-13

Sunday, October 4

I keep Jehovah before me constantly. Because he is at my right hand, I will never be shaken.—Ps. 16:8.

To strengthen our fear of Jehovah, we need to focus on pleasing him in every decision we make. As you read Bible accounts, ask yourself, ‘If I had been in that situation, what decision would I have made?’ For example, picture yourself listening as the ten Israelite chieftains gave their negative report after they spied out the land that Jehovah had promised to give to the Israelites. Would you have believed the report and given in to the fear of man, or would your love for Jehovah and your desire to please him have won out? An entire generation of Israelites failed to recognize the truth that Joshua and Caleb spoke. As a result, they lost the opportunity to enter the Promised Land.—Num. 14:10, 22, 23.
w24.07 10 ¶7

Monday, October 5

Jehovah is the examiner of hearts.
—Prov. 17:3.

Gomer, the wife of the prophet Hosea, left Hosea for other men. Was she beyond help? Jehovah, who can read hearts, told Hosea: “Go once again, love the woman who is loved by another man and is committing adultery, just as Jehovah loves the people of Israel while they turn to other gods.” (Hos. 3:1; Prov. 16:2) Note that Hosea’s wife was still involved in a course of serious sin. Yet, Jehovah told Hosea to reach out to her and offer forgiveness and reconciliation. Similarly, Jehovah had not given up on his obstinate people. Even

though they were caught up in terrible sins, he still loved them and continued to reach out and help them to repent and change their ways. This example suggests that Jehovah, “the examiner of hearts,” will reach out to an individual who is still involved in serious sin and try to lead that one to repentance. w24.08 10 ¶7

Tuesday, October 6

The Law has a shadow of the good things to come.—Heb. 10:1.

Early Christians of a Jewish background faced a big challenge. At one time, the Jews had been Jehovah’s chosen people. Jerusalem was the earthly seat of God’s Kingdom, and the temple was the center of pure worship. All faithful Jews followed the Mosaic Law as explained by their religious leaders. Those teachings governed their diet, their view of circumcision, and even their association with Gentiles. However, Jehovah no longer accepted the Jewish sacrifices after Jesus’ death. That presented a challenge for Jewish Christians who were used to following the Law. (Heb. 10:1, 4, 10) Even mature Christians, such as the apostle Peter, struggled to adapt to some of these changes. (Acts 10:9-14; Gal. 2:11-14) Because of their new beliefs, those Christians became a target of the Jewish religious leaders.
w24.09 9 ¶4

Wednesday, October 7

Remember those who are taking the lead among you, who have spoken the word of God to you.—Heb. 13:7.

Whenever Jehovah gives his people an assignment, he expects them to carry it out in an organized way. (1 Cor. 14:33) For example, it is God's will for the good news to be preached in all the inhabited earth. (Matt. 24:14) Jehovah has put Jesus in charge of that work. Jesus has seen to it that it is carried out in an organized fashion. In the first century, as congregations were established in various places, elders were appointed to give direction and take the lead. (Acts 14:23) In Jerusalem a central body of elders, consisting of the apostles and older men, made certain decisions that all the congregations were expected to comply with. (Acts 15:2; 16:4) As a result of their obedience to the instructions they received, "the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number." —Acts 16:5. w24.04 8 ¶1

Thursday, October 8

Mary Magdalene came and brought the news to the disciples: "I have seen the Lord!"—John 20:18.

Early on the morning of Nisan 16, a number of loyal women went to the place where Jesus had been lying lifeless. (Luke 24:1, 10) Let us focus on the experience of one of the women, Mary Magdalene. When Mary arrived at the tomb, she found it empty. She ran to tell Peter and John and then followed them as they raced to the tomb. After confirming that the tomb was empty, the men returned home.

But not Mary. She stayed there, weeping. Little did she know that Jesus was watching. He observed this faithful woman's tears and was deeply moved. So he appeared to Mary and then did something simple that greatly encouraged her. He spoke to her and gave her an important assignment—to share the news of his resurrection with his brothers.—John 20:17, 18. w24.10 13 ¶7

Friday, October 9

I will multiply my signs and my miracles in the land of Egypt.
—Ex. 7:3.

Moses served as a prophet, a judge, a commander, and a historian. He led the nation of Israel out of slavery in Egypt and personally witnessed many of Jehovah's miracles. Jehovah used him to write the first five books of the Bible, Psalm 90, and possibly Psalm 91. He also likely wrote the book of Job. Shortly before he died, at the age of 120, Moses called together all the Israelites to remind them of the things they had seen and experienced. They had witnessed the many signs and miracles performed by Jehovah as well as His judgments against Egypt. (Ex. 7:4) They had walked through the parted waters of the Red Sea and had seen the destruction of Pharaoh's army. (Ex. 14:29-31) In the wilderness, they had experienced Jehovah's protection and care. (Deut. 8:3, 4) Now, poised to enter the Promised Land, Moses grasped this last opportunity to encourage the people. w24.11 8-9 ¶3-4

Saturday, October 10

If anyone eats of this bread he will live forever . . . The bread that I will give is my flesh in behalf of the life of the world.—John 6:51.

What Jesus said to his apostles during the Lord's Evening Meal stands in contrast with what he said to the crowd in Galilee, where he was speaking in a way that was broader in scope. When Jesus was in Galilee in 32 C.E., he was mainly addressing Jews who wanted bread from him. However, he called their attention to something much more beneficial than literal food. He identified a provision by which they could gain everlasting life. And Jesus said that those who died could be resurrected on the last day and live forever. He was not referring to a chosen few, a limited number, as he did later during the Lord's Evening Meal. Rather, in Galilee he focused on a blessing that would be available to all people. w24.12 11 ¶10-11

Sunday, October 11

Husbands, keep on loving your wives.
—Col. 3:19.

Jehovah hates anyone who is violent. (Ps. 11:5) He specifically condemns husbands who abuse their wife. (Mal. 2:16) If a husband does not treat his wife well, his relationship with God will be affected. Jehovah may not even listen to his prayers. (1 Pet. 3:7) Some husbands abuse their wife with angry words and hurtful speech. But Jehovah hates “anger, wrath, screaming, and abusive speech.” (Eph. 4:31, 32) A husband who speaks harshly to his wife damages not only his marriage but also his friendship with God.

(Jas. 1:26) The same can be said of a husband who views pornography. He too damages his relationship with Jehovah. He also degrades his wife. Jehovah expects a husband to remain loyal to his wife not only in actions but also in thoughts. Jesus said that a man who looks at another woman in a passionate way has already committed adultery “in his heart.”—Matt. 5: 28, 29. w25.01 9 ¶6-8

Monday, October 12

A man is declared righteous . . . only through faith in Jesus Christ.
—Gal. 2:16.

Being declared righteous means that the charges against us have been dropped and that our record has been expunged, or wiped clean. By doing this, Jehovah does not violate his own standards of justice. He does not declare us righteous on our own merit; nor does he condone our sins. But because of our faith in the atonement arrangement and the ransom price that was paid, Jehovah has a basis for canceling our debts. (Rom. 3: 24) What does this mean for each of us? Those who have been selected to rule with Jesus in heaven have already been declared righteous as children of God. (Titus 3:7; 1 John 3:1) Their sins have been forgiven. They no longer have, as it were, a criminal record, and thus they qualify to be in the Kingdom. (Rom. 8:1, 2, 30) Those who have an earthly hope have been declared righteous as friends of God, and their sins are forgiven.—Jas. 2:21-23. w25.02 5 ¶17; 7 ¶18

Tuesday, October 13

You think, not God's thoughts, but those of men.—Matt. 16:23.

Consider one occasion when the apostle Peter did not reflect Jehovah's thinking on matters. Jesus had told his apostles that he would have to go to Jerusalem, be handed over to the religious leaders there, endure torture, and then be put to death. (Matt. 16:21) Peter may have found it hard to accept that Jehovah would allow Jesus—the hope of Israel and the promised Messiah—to be put to death. (Matt. 16:16) So Peter took Jesus aside and said: "Be kind to yourself, Lord; you will not have this happen to you at all." (Matt. 16:22) Because Peter did not reflect Jehovah's thinking on the matter, he was not thinking in agreement with Jesus. Peter may have had good intentions, but Jesus rejected Peter's advice. There is a lesson for us. Leading a self-sparing life was not Jehovah's will for Jesus. On that occasion, Peter learned a valuable lesson about making God's thoughts his thoughts. w25.03 9 ¶5-6

Wednesday, October 14

Jehovah is close to the brokenhearted; he saves those who are crushed in spirit.—Ps. 34:18.

Are you coping with emotional distress caused by disappointment or by betrayal from someone you trusted? Regardless of how a person has treated you, your heavenly Father loves you. When coping with betrayal, we can be comforted by David's reassuring words found in today's text. One reference work says that those "crushed in spirit" may refer to "those

who have nothing good to look forward to." How does Jehovah respond to those who feel that way because of bitter disappointment? Like a loving parent who holds and comforts a child in distress, Jehovah "is close to" us—ever compassionate and ready to help us if we feel crushed by betrayal or loss. He is eager to comfort and soothe our broken heart and pained spirit. And he gives us many things to look forward to that help us endure our present trials.—Isa. 65:17. w24.12 23 ¶13-14

Thursday, October 15

From Jehovah you will receive the . . . reward.—Col. 3:24.

Today, elders can be certain that Jehovah sees and values their fine work. In addition to shepherding, teaching, and preaching, many elders support construction projects and disaster relief efforts. Others serve on Patient Visitation Groups or Hospital Liaison Committees. Elders who make themselves available for such work see the congregation as Jehovah's arrangement. They are whole-souled in their assignments and have full trust that God will reward them for what they do. (Col. 3:23, 24) Not all can be elders. But all of us have something to offer Jehovah. Our God appreciates it when we do our best to serve him. He notices our contributions to the worldwide work, no matter how modest. And he rejoices when we overlook an offense and extend forgiveness. Trust that Jehovah values what you can do. He loves you for it, and he will reward you.—Luke 21:1-4. w24.06 23 ¶12-13

Friday, October 16

Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways. Do not stray onto her paths.
—Prov. 7:25.

Solomon's account illustrates what can happen to any worshipper of Jehovah. He might fall into serious sin and later feel that everything occurred suddenly. Or he might say, "It just happened." And yet, if he thinks about what actually occurred, he will likely discover that he took some unwise steps that led to his transgression. Those steps might have involved bad association, unwholesome entertainment, or frequenting questionable places—whether in person or online. Perhaps he had also stopped praying, reading the Bible, attending meetings, or sharing in the ministry. Like the young man discussed in Proverbs, he may not have committed the sin so suddenly after all. What is the lesson for us? We need to avoid not only the sin itself but also the steps that lead to sin. Solomon makes that very point after relating the account.—Matt. 5: 29, 30. w24.07 16 ¶10-11

Saturday, October 17

We have this treasure in earthen vessels.—2 Cor. 4:7.

What is this treasure? It is the life-saving work of preaching the Kingdom message. (2 Cor. 4:1) What are the earthen vessels? They represent God's servants, who take the good news to others. In Paul's day, merchants used clay jars to transport valuable goods, such as food, wine, and money. Similarly, Jehovah entrusts us with the valuable message of the good news. With Jehovah's backing, we can have

the strength needed to deliver our message faithfully. At times, we may experience fear of man or fear of rejection. How can we overcome that challenge? Consider the prayer of the apostles when they were ordered not to preach. Rather than give in to fear, they asked Jehovah to help them keep speaking with boldness. Jehovah immediately answered their prayer. (Acts 4:18, 29, 31) If fear of man affects you sometimes, ask Jehovah to help you conquer your fear of man with your love for people. w24.04 16 ¶8-9

Sunday, October 18

Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified.—Matt. 6:9.

Our love for Jehovah moves us to sanctify his name. We want to have a part in clearing his name of the reproach that Satan has brought on it by his malicious lies. (Gen. 3:1-5; Job 2:4; John 8:44) In our ministry, we are eager to stand up for our God, telling the truth about him to all who will listen. We want everyone to know that his greatest quality is love, that his way of ruling is righteous and just, and that his Kingdom will soon end all suffering and bring peace and happiness to the human family. (Ps. 37:10, 11, 29; 1 John 4:8) When we defend Jehovah's reputation in our ministry, we sanctify his name. We also have the satisfaction of knowing that we are living up to our name. w24.05 18 ¶12

Monday, October 19

When you spread a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind; and you will be happy, because they have nothing with which to repay you. For you will be repaid in the resurrection of the righteous ones.

—Luke 14:13, 14.

Brothers, you demonstrate that you are “hospitable” when you do good things for others, including those outside your circle of close friends. (1 Pet. 4:9) One reference work describes a hospitable man this way: “The door of his house—and of his heart—must be open to strangers.” Ask yourself, ‘What is my reputation when it comes to welcoming visitors?’ (Heb. 13:2, 16) A hospitable man shares what he can with visitors, including lowly ones of little means and hardworking servants, such as circuit overseers and visiting speakers.—Gen. 18:2-8; Prov. 3:27; Acts 16:15; Rom. 12:13. w24.11 21 ¶6

Tuesday, October 20

The virgins who were ready went in with him to the marriage feast.

—Matt. 25:10.

In the parable of the virgins, Jesus spoke of ten virgins who went out to meet a bridegroom. (Matt. 25:1-4) They all hoped to accompany the bridegroom to his marriage feast. Jesus described five of them as “discreet” and the other five as “foolish.” The discreet virgins were prepared to wait for the bridegroom as long as needed, even if he arrived late at night. Thus, they brought oil lamps to provide light in the dark. They even brought extra oil in case the bride-

groom should delay. So they were prepared to keep their lamps burning. (Matt. 25:6-10) When the bridegroom arrived, the discreet virgins went in with him to the wedding feast. In like manner, anointed Christians who have proved ready by remaining vigilant and faithful until the coming of Christ will be judged worthy of joining the Bridegroom, Jesus, in his heavenly Kingdom.—Rev. 7:1-3. w24.09 21 ¶6

Wednesday, October 21

I saw . . . a great crowd . . . out of all nations.—Rev. 7:9.

We are moved to keep zealously preaching by considering what is being accomplished worldwide today. Each year, millions of interested ones attend the Memorial and study the Bible with us. Hundreds of thousands get baptized and join us in the preaching work. We do not know how many may yet respond to our preaching work, but we do know that Jehovah is gathering a great crowd who will survive the coming great tribulation. (Rev. 7:9, 14) The Master of the harvest continues to see potential in the field, so we have good reason to keep preaching. (Luke 10:2) Jesus’ disciples have always been identified by their zealous preaching. When people witnessed the outspokenness of the apostles, “they began to realize that they had been with Jesus.” (Acts 4:13) As people observe us in the ministry, may they see that we too have been influenced by Jesus’ zealous example. w25.03 18 ¶15; 19 ¶17-18

Thursday, October 22

O Jehovah, what is man that you should notice him?—Ps. 144:3.

From the Bible, we learn that Jehovah notices those who seem unimportant to others. For example, Jehovah sent the prophet Samuel to the house of Jesse to anoint one of his sons as the future king of Israel. Jesse called seven of his eight sons to meet Samuel but did not include David, the youngest. Yet, it was David whom Jehovah chose. (1 Sam. 16:6, 7, 10-12) Jehovah saw who David really was on the inside—a young man who valued spiritual things. Think about how Jehovah has already shown that he notices you. He offers to give you advice tailored to fit your needs. (Ps. 32:8) How can he do that unless he knows you well? (Ps. 139:1) When you apply Jehovah's advice and see how it helps you, you will become convinced that Jehovah is interested in you. (1 Chron. 28:9; Acts 17:26, 27) Jehovah takes note of your efforts. He sees your inner qualities and is moved to reach out to you.—Jer. 17:10. w24.10 25-26 ¶7-9

Friday, October 23

He was moved with pity for them, because they were as sheep without a shepherd.—Mark 6:34.

No doubt you love Jehovah and want to serve others. How can you strengthen your desire to serve? Why not think about the joys that can come from serving your brothers and sisters? Jesus said: “There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.” (Acts 20:35) He lived by this principle. He found real joy in serving others. Con-

sider an example found at Mark 6:31-34. On this occasion, Jesus and his apostles were tired. They were on their way to an isolated place to get some rest. But a crowd got there ahead of them, hoping to be taught by Jesus. He could have said no. After all, he and his companions “had no leisure time even to eat a meal.” Or Jesus could have sent the people away after sharing only one or two truths. But because he was motivated by love, he “started to teach them” until “the hour had grown late.”—Mark 6:35. w24.11 16 ¶9-10

Saturday, October 24

Your activity will be rewarded.
—2 Chron. 15:7.

Parents, encourage your child to look for opportunities to share Bible truth with others. (Rom. 10:10) You might compare his efforts to talk about his faith with the efforts needed to play a musical instrument. At first, a learner practices tunes that are simple to play. In time, playing music becomes easier. Similarly, a young Christian might at first use a simple approach when sharing his faith with others. For example, he might ask a schoolmate: “Did you know that engineers often copy designs from nature? Let me show you a fascinating video.” After sharing a video from the series *Was It Designed?* he might say: “If a scientist gets credit for a design that already exists in nature, who deserves credit for the original?” Such a simple approach might be enough to stimulate a young person’s interest and leave him open to learning more. w24.12 19 ¶17-18

Sunday, October 25

Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin.

—Rom. 5:12.

To set us free from sin and death, Jehovah arranged for Jesus to provide the ransom. But how could the sacrifice of one perfect human redeem millions of people? The apostle Paul explains: “Just as through the disobedience of the one man [Adam] many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one person [Jesus] many will be made righteous.” (Rom. 5:19; 1 Tim. 2:6) In other words, it took one disobedient perfect man to cause us to become enslaved to sin and death. Therefore, it took one obedient perfect man to set us free. Couldn’t Jehovah have simply decided to allow righthearted members of Adam’s offspring to live forever? To imperfect humans, that would seem to be the kind and reasonable thing to do. But it does not take into account Jehovah’s perfect justice. Because Jehovah is just, he would never choose to ignore Adam’s glaring act of disobedience. w25.01 21 ¶3-4

Monday, October 26

We are walking by faith, not by sight.

—2 Cor. 5:7.

At one point, the apostle Paul knew that he would soon be put to death, but he had every reason to feel satisfied with his life. Looking back, he could say: “I have run the race to the finish, I have observed the faith.” (2 Tim. 4:6-8) Paul had made wise decisions in his Christian ministry, and he felt sure that Jehovah

was happy with him. We too want to make good decisions and have God’s approval. How can we do so? Paul said about himself and other faithful Christians: “We are walking by faith, not by sight.” In the Bible, “walking” sometimes refers to the way a person chooses to live his life. When a person walks by faith, he makes decisions based on his trust in Jehovah God. His actions show that he is convinced that God will reward him, that he will benefit from following Jehovah’s advice found in His Word.—Ps. 119:66; Heb. 11:6. w25.03 20 ¶1-2

Tuesday, October 27

Be transformed by making your mind over.—Rom. 12:2.

With the help of God’s spirit, many who formerly had beastly personalities have made remarkable changes in their life. (Isa. 65:25) They have tamed their former undesirable traits. (Eph. 4:22-24) Granted, God’s people are still imperfect, so we will continue to make mistakes. However, Jehovah has united “all sorts of people” in an unbreakable bond of love and peace. (Titus 2:11) This is a miracle that only the almighty God could perform! His words always come true. (Isa. 55:10, 11) The spiritual paradise is already a reality. Jehovah has created a brotherhood that is truly unique. Among his people, we can find relative peace and enjoy a safe oasis in a violent world. (Ps. 72:7) For these reasons, we want to help as many as possible to join us in our Christian brotherhood. We can do this by focusing on making disciples.—Matt. 28:19, 20. w24.04 23 ¶13, 15

Wednesday, October 28

We do have the mind of Christ.

—1 Cor. 2:16.

Jesus loved Jehovah with his whole mind. He knew God's will for him and was determined to act in harmony with it, even though doing so would mean suffering for the sake of what was right. Being focused on doing his Father's will, Jesus allowed nothing to distract him from that goal. Peter and his fellow apostles were privileged to spend time with Jesus and to learn firsthand how he thought. When Peter wrote his first inspired letter, he encouraged Christians to arm themselves with the same mental disposition as that of Christ. (1 Pet. 4:1) Peter used a military expression when he wrote: "Arm yourselves." So if Christians imitate Jesus' mental disposition, or way of thinking, they will be equipped with a powerful weapon in their war against sinful tendencies and against a world ruled by Satan.—2 Cor. 10:3-5; Eph. 6:12. w25.03 8-9 ¶1-3

Thursday, October 29

The thoughts of a man's heart are like deep waters, but the discerning man draws them out.—Prov. 20:5.

What should you learn about the other person during courtship? Before you become too emotionally involved, you may want to discuss some important matters, such as the other person's goals. How can you get to know what the other person is like deep inside? One of the best ways is to talk openly and honestly, to ask questions and really listen. (Jas. 1:19) To that end, you may find it helpful

to engage in activities that lend themselves to conversation, such as eating together, taking walks together in public areas, and preaching together. You can also learn about each other when you spend time with friends and family. Additionally, plan activities that will show you how the other person acts in different circumstances and with different people. w24.05 27-28 ¶6-7

Friday, October 30

Become imitators of God, as beloved children.—Eph. 5:1.

In the days ahead, we will encounter trials that will require us to lean on Jehovah as never before. Bible accounts and experiences of modern-day Witnesses will help us discern how God has displayed rocklike qualities to support his servants. Think deeply about those accounts. Doing so can help you to make Jehovah your Rock. Also, you will be better equipped to build up the congregation. For example, Jesus gave Simon the name Cephas (translated "Peter"), which means "A Piece of Rock." (John 1:42) This indicated that he would become a source of comfort and stability in the congregation. Congregation elders are described as "the shadow of a massive crag." That illustrates how they protect those in the congregation. (Isa. 32:2) Of course, the congregation benefits when all—brothers and sisters—imitate Jehovah's rocklike qualities. w24.06 28 ¶10-11

Saturday, October 31

Jehovah . . . requires exclusive devotion.—Deut. 4:24.

The kings of Israel whom Jehovah considered faithful adhered to true worship. The majority of the kings whom Jehovah judged as unfaithful abandoned his Law in favor of false worship. (1 Ki. 21:25, 26; 2 Chron. 12:1) Why was the issue of worship so important to Jehovah? For one thing, the kings were responsible for guiding God's people in true worship. Also, false worship inevitably leads to other serious sins and injustices. (Hos. 4: 1, 2) Furthermore, the kings and their subjects were dedicated to Jehovah. Thus, the Bible likens their involvement in false worship to adultery. (Jer. 3:8, 9) A person who commits literal adultery sins against his or her mate in a most personal way. Similarly, a dedicated servant of Jehovah who engages in false worship sins against Him in a direct and personal manner.—Deut. 4:23. w24.07 22-23 ¶12-15

Sunday, November 1

I will not stay resentful forever.

—*Jer. 3:12.*

The elders strive to reflect Jehovah's compassion as they deal with someone who has been removed from the congregation. For example, Jehovah did not wait for his wayward people in ancient Israel to take the first step. Rather, he took the initiative to reach out to them even before they showed any signs of repentance. Jehovah illustrated his compassion by telling the prophet Hosea to offer reconciliation to his wife, who was still sin-

ning. (Hos. 3:1; Mal. 3:7) In imitation of Jehovah, Christian elders genuinely want the wrongdoer to return, and they do not make it difficult for him to do so. In Jesus' parable of the lost son, the father "ran and embraced [his son] and tenderly kissed him." (Luke 15:20) Notice that the father did not wait for his son to beg for forgiveness. Rather, he took the initiative, as any loving father would. w24.08 28 ¶7-8

Monday, November 2

If any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep asking God, for he gives generously to all and without finding fault.—Jas. 1:5; ftn.

As the words in today's text indicate, Jehovah does not hoard his wisdom. He generously shares it with others. Notice, too, that when Jehovah gives wisdom, he does so "without reproaching," or "without finding fault." He never makes us feel bad for admitting that we need his guidance. Actually, he urges us to seek it. (Prov. 2:1-6) What about us? Can we imitate Jehovah by sharing our wisdom? (Ps. 32:8) Jehovah's people have many opportunities to share what they have learned. For instance, we often train new ones in the ministry. Elders patiently help ministerial servants and baptized brothers to learn how to handle their assignments in the congregation. And those with experience in construction and maintenance help train less experienced ones to do work on theocratic facilities. w24.09 28-29 ¶11-12

Tuesday, November 3

You became so beloved to us.

—1 Thess. 2:8.

Brothers, to qualify as an elder, you must “be irreprehensible,” that is, have a good reputation in the congregation because your conduct is above reproach. (1 Tim. 3:2) In addition, you should have a fine testimony from outsiders. Unbelievers may criticize your Christian beliefs, but they should have no valid reason to question your honesty or conduct. (Dan. 6:4, 5) Ask yourself, ‘Do I have a good reputation both inside and outside the congregation?’ If you are “a lover of goodness,” you look for the good in others and commend them for their fine qualities. (Titus 1:8) You are also happy to do good for others, even going beyond what is required. Why is this quality so important for elders? Because they use much of their valuable time to shepherd the congregation and care for assignments. (1 Pet. 5: 1-3) Even so, the joy that comes from serving others far outweighs any sacrifice.—Acts 20:35. w24.11 20-21 ¶3-5

Wednesday, November 4

There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.—Acts 20:35.

Ministerial servants perform vital work in the congregations. The apostle Paul obviously appreciated these loyal men. For instance, when writing to Christians in Philippi, he specifically greeted the ministerial servants along with the elders. (Phil. 1:1) Whether young or old, many baptized brothers find great joy in being ministerial servants. For example, Devan was 18 when he was appointed. On the other hand, a broth-

er named Luis was appointed in his early 50’s. He summed up the feeling of many when he said, “I feel so privileged to do the work of a ministerial servant, especially when I think of all the love the congregation has shown me!” If you are a baptized brother and you are not yet a ministerial servant, could you make that your goal? w24.11 14 ¶1-3

Thursday, November 5

I beg you, O Jehovah, remember . . . how . . . I have done what was good in your eyes.—2 Ki. 20:3.

At the age of 39, King Hezekiah of Judah learned that he had a terminal illness. The prophet Isaiah delivered Jehovah’s message that Hezekiah would die from his sickness. (2 Ki. 20:1) There seemed to be no hope for Hezekiah. Devastated by the news, Hezekiah wept profusely. He prayed to Jehovah fervently. Jehovah was touched by Hezekiah’s tearful plea and kindly said to him: “I have heard your prayer. I have seen your tears. Here I am healing you.” Through Isaiah, Jehovah mercifully promised to extend his life and to rescue Jerusalem out of the hands of the Assyrians. (2 Ki. 20: 4-6) Are you facing a health situation that appears to be hopeless? Turn to Jehovah in prayer, even in tears. The Bible assures us that “the Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort” will comfort us in all our trials.—2 Cor. 1:3, 4. w24.12 24 ¶15-17

Friday, November 6

I have hope toward God, which hope these men also look forward to, that there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.—Acts 24:15.

What a joy it will be to welcome resurrected ones back to life! Imagine, too, how you will enjoy learning more about Jehovah by examining his numerous works of creation. (Ps. 104: 24; Isa. 11:9) Best of all, how thrilling it will be to worship Jehovah without the slightest feeling of guilt! Would you trade these future blessings for “the temporary enjoyment of sin”? (Heb. 11:25) Certainly not! These blessings are worth any sacrifice we must make now. Remember, the Paradise earth will not always be a future hope. It will eventually become the present reality. None of this would be possible if Jehovah had not loved us enough to provide the gift of his Son!

w25.01 29 ¶12

Saturday, November 7

Is the hand of Jehovah too short?
—Num. 11:23.

Among those mentioned in the book of Hebrews as examples of faith, Moses is noteworthy. (Heb. 3:2-5; 11:23-25) Moses’ faith was not misplaced, for God miraculously provided food and water to sustain the people in the barren wilderness. (Ex. 15:22-25; Ps. 78:23-25) Despite Moses’ strong faith, however, about a year after Israel’s miraculous deliverance, he questioned Jehovah’s ability to give meat to His people. Moses could not imagine how Jehovah could provide enough meat to satisfy the millions who were camping

in the desolate wilderness. In answer, Jehovah asked Moses: “Is the hand of Jehovah too short?” (Num. 11:21-23) In effect, Jehovah was asking Moses, ‘Do you really think that I cannot do what I say I will?’ w25.03 26 ¶1-2

Sunday, November 8

[God] did not refrain from punishing an ancient world.—2 Pet. 2:5.

Should we view the account of the Flood as a prophetic type? The answer is no. Why? Because there is no direct Scriptural support for doing so. Jesus did compare the days of Noah to the time of his presence, but he did not imply that the Flood was a prophetic type, with each person and each event having a corresponding antitype; nor did he say that the closing of the door of the ark had any prophetic significance. (Matt. 24:37-39) What was Noah’s reaction when he heard Jehovah’s warning message? He proved that he had faith by building the ark. (Heb. 11:7; 1 Pet. 3:20) Similarly, people who hear the good news about God’s Kingdom must act on what they hear. (Acts 3:17-20) Peter called Noah “a preacher of righteousness.” Today we are involved in a global preaching work, and we endeavor to have a zealous share in it. Still, try as we might, we cannot possibly reach everyone on earth with the good news before the end comes.

w24.05 9-10 ¶3-5

Monday, November 9

He honors those fearing Jehovah.

—Ps. 15:4.

We should look for ways to show kindness and respect to Jehovah's friends. (Rom. 12:10) How? One way, based on Psalm 15:4, is that a guest in Jehovah's tent "does not go back on his promise, even when it is bad for him." Breaking our promises could surely hurt others. (Matt. 5:37) For example, Jehovah expects his guests to live up to their marriage vow. He is also pleased when parents make earnest efforts to fulfill promises they make to their children. Our love for God and for neighbor will compel us to keep our word to the best of our ability. Another way to honor God's friends is by being hospitable and generous. (Rom. 12:13) Leisure time spent with our brothers and sisters helps us to strengthen bonds of friendship with them and with Jehovah. Moreover, by showing hospitality, we imitate Jehovah. w24.06 12 ¶15-16

Tuesday, November 10

What is mortal man that you keep him in mind?—Ps. 8:4.

Jehovah reveals the truth to those who are humble. (Matt. 11:25) We humbly accepted help to learn the truth. (Acts 8:30, 31) Still, we must be careful not to become proud. Being prideful could lead us to consider our personal opinions to be just as valid as Scriptural principles and direction from Jehovah's organization. To maintain our humility, we need to remember our littleness when compared to Jehovah's greatness. (Ps. 8:3, 4) We can also pray to develop a

humble, teachable spirit. Jehovah will help us put his thoughts, which he provides through his Word and his organization, ahead of our own. In your Bible reading, look for points about how Jehovah loves humility and hates pride, arrogance, and haughtiness. And take extra care to remain humble if you receive a privilege of service that gives you a measure of prominence. w24.07 10 ¶8-9

Wednesday, November 11

The little one will become a thousand and the small one a mighty nation. I myself, Jehovah, will speed it up in its own time.—Isa. 60:22.

Since 1919, Jesus has used a small group of anointed men to organize the preaching work and supply spiritual food to his followers. (Luke 12:42) Jehovah is obviously blessing the work of that group. (Isa. 65:13, 14) If we were not organized, we would not be able to accomplish the work Jesus has assigned us to do. (Matt. 28:19, 20) Suppose, for example, that there were no territory assignments; everyone could preach wherever he wanted. Some territories might be worked over and over by a number of different publishers, while other territories might be neglected entirely. Can you think of other ways we benefit by being organized? What Jesus did on earth set the pattern for how he keeps us organized today. w24.04 8-9 ¶2-4

Thursday, November 12

If you turn to doing good, will you not be restored to favor? But if you do not turn to doing good, sin is crouching at the door, and its craving is to dominate you.—Gen. 4:7.

Cain was Adam and Eve's first son. He inherited sinful tendencies from his parents. Additionally, the Bible says of him: "His own works were wicked." (1 John 3:12) Perhaps that explains why Jehovah "did not look with any favor on Cain and on his offering" when he offered up a sacrifice. Instead of changing his ways, "Cain grew hot with anger and was dejected." What did Jehovah do next? He spoke to Cain. (Gen. 4:3-7) Note that Jehovah reasoned kindly with Cain, offering him hope and warning him against the danger of sin. Sadly, Cain refused to listen. He did not let Jehovah lead him to repentance. After that negative response, did Jehovah stop trying to lead other sinners to repentance? Far from it! w24.08 10 ¶8

Friday, November 13

Choose life so that you may live.

—Deut. 30:19.

The nation of Israel had prospects for a wonderful future. With Jehovah's blessing, the Israelites could live for a long time in the land that he had promised them. And what a beautiful, fruitful land it was! Moses described it for them: "Great and fine cities that you did not build, houses full of all sorts of good things that you did not work for, hewn cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant." (Deut. 6:10, 11) Moses also gave the Israelites a

warning. In order to continue living in their bountiful land, they had to obey Jehovah's commandments. Moses urged them to "choose life" by listening to Jehovah and by "sticking to him." (Deut. 30:20) However, the Israelites rejected Jehovah. So in time God allowed the Assyrians and later the Babylonians to conquer them and take them into exile.—2 Ki. 17:6-8, 13, 14; 2 Chron. 36:15-17, 20. w24.11 9 ¶5-6

Saturday, November 14

No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him.

—John 6:44.

Many nominal Christians feel that they will be saved if they merely "believe on [Jesus]" and view him as their personal savior. (John 6:29, King James Version) Yet, some in a crowd who initially believed in Jesus abandoned him. Why? Most in the crowd whom Jesus fed were happy to follow him as long as he provided what they wanted. They were interested in miraculous cures, free food, or teachings that matched their expectations. However, Jesus showed that more would be required of his true disciples. He did not come to earth simply to satisfy people's fleshly desires. They had to respond to his invitation to "come to" him by accepting and obeying everything he taught.—John 5:40. w24.12 12 ¶12-13

Sunday, November 15

Husbands, continue loving your wives, just as the Christ also loved the congregation.—Eph. 5:25.

What can help a husband to overcome abusive and demeaning behavior? He can strive to imitate Jesus. The way he treated his disciples is a model for how a husband should treat his wife. Consider what husbands can learn from the way Jesus treated his apostles and from the way he spoke to them. Jesus treated his apostles in a kind and dignified way. He was never harsh or domineering. Jesus did not feel the need to prove his authority over them through displays of power. Instead, he humbly served them. (John 13:12-17) He told his disciples: “Learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for yourselves.” (Matt. 11:28-30) Note that Jesus was mild-tempered. A mild person is not weak. Rather, he has the inner strength to show restraint. When provoked, he remains calm and in control of his emotions. w25.01 10 ¶10-11

Monday, November 16

Commit to Jehovah whatever you do.
—Prov. 16:3.

As the present system of things draws closer to its end, we can expect economic conditions to worsen. Political turmoil, armed conflicts, natural disasters, or new pandemics might lead to unexpected expenses or to the loss of our job, our possessions, or our home. What can help us to make decisions that show our trust in Jehovah's hand? A primary and effective

step is to take your concerns to Jehovah. Ask him for the wisdom you need to make good decisions and for a calm heart to avoid “being in anxious suspense” about your situation. (Luke 12:29-31) Petition him to help you cultivate contentment with life's necessities. (1 Tim. 6:7, 8) Do research in our publications on how to deal successfully with financial problems. Many have benefited from material available on jw.org that deals with economic problems. w25.03 28-29 ¶10-11

Tuesday, November 17

God has shown me that I should call no man defiled or unclean.
—Acts 10:28.

The time had arrived for uncircumcised Gentiles to become part of God's people. The apostle Peter was assigned to preach to the Gentile Cornelius, who would be among the first of this new group of worshippers. Jews had very little to do with Gentiles, so it is not surprising that Peter needed help to prepare for his assignment. When Peter discerned God's will in this matter, he adjusted his viewpoint. As a result, when he was sent for, he went “without objection.” (Acts 10:28, 29) He preached to Cornelius and his household, and they got baptized. (Acts 10:21-23, 34, 35, 44-48) Years later, Peter encouraged fellow Christians to “think in agreement.” (1 Pet. 3:8, ftn.) As Jehovah's people, we can think in agreement by reflecting Jehovah's thinking as it is expressed in his Word. w25.03 9-10 ¶7-8

Wednesday, November 18

Do not be led astray by various and strange teachings.—Heb. 13:9.

The attitudes and opinions of the world are becoming ever more distant from God's perfect view of matters. (Prov. 17:15) We, therefore, must strengthen our ability to identify and reject ideas that opposers use in an attempt to discourage us or even to lead us astray. We do well to take to heart the counsel that the apostle Paul gave the Hebrew Christians, to press on to spiritual maturity. That includes acquiring a deep knowledge of the truth and adopting Jehovah's way of thinking. This process continues even after dedication and baptism. No matter how long we have been in the truth, all of us must regularly read and study God's Word. (Ps. 1:2) A good routine of personal study will help us to strengthen a quality that Paul emphasized in his letter to the Hebrews: faith.—Heb. 11:1, 6. w24.09 10 ¶7-8

Thursday, November 19

Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you.—Jas. 4:8.

If Jehovah is real to us, we will find it easier to stay faithful to him. That was true of Joseph. He firmly refused to commit immorality. God was real to him, and he didn't want to displease Him. (Gen. 39:9) For Jehovah to be real to us, we need to make time to pray to him and to study his Word. Our friendship with him will thus grow. When, like Joseph, we have a close friendship with Jehovah, we will not want to do anything that displeases Him. Those who forget that Jehovah is the living God can easily draw

away from him. Consider what happened to the Israelites when they were in the wilderness. They were aware that Jehovah existed, but they began to doubt that he would provide for them. (Ex. 17:2, 7) Thereafter, they rebelled against God. Surely, we want to avoid following their disobedient course, which stands as a warning example for us.—Heb. 3:12. w24.06 24 ¶14-15

Friday, November 20

The eyes of Jehovah are on the righteous, and his ears listen to their cry for help.—Ps. 34:15.

We are living deep in the last days, and we expect that causes of tears will only increase. Jehovah sees the tears we shed and is deeply moved by them. Our tears are truly precious to him. So when we face distressing situations, we certainly want to pour out our heart to Jehovah in prayer. May we never isolate ourselves from our loving brothers and sisters in the congregation. And may we continue to find comfort in the soothing words recorded in the Bible. We can be sure that if we keep enduring faithfully, Jehovah will reward us. That includes the wonderful promise that in time he will wipe out every tear of sorrow, betrayal, and despair from our eyes. (Rev. 21:4) Then we will shed only tears of joy. w24.12 20 ¶3; 25 ¶19

Saturday, November 21

“You are my witnesses,” declares Jehovah.—Isa. 43:12.

Jehovah has appointed us to be his Witnesses, and he promises to help us be courageous. (Isa. 43:10, 11) Consider just four of the ways he does that. First, Jesus is with us whenever we preach the good news. (Matt. 28:18-20) Second, Jehovah has appointed angels to help us. (Rev. 14:6) Third, Jehovah has given us his holy spirit as a helper to bring back to our minds the things we have learned. (John 14:25, 26) Fourth, Jehovah has provided brothers and sisters to accompany us. With Jehovah’s backing and the support of our loving brotherhood, we have everything we need to be successful. But if you feel discouraged when you find few people at home, ask yourself: ‘Where are the people from my territory right now?’ (Acts 16:13) ‘Are they at work or out shopping?’ If that is the case, could you find more people by doing street witnessing? w24.04 17 ¶10-11

Sunday, November 22

If any man does not know how to preside over his own household, how will he care for the congregation of God?—1 Tim. 3:5.

If you are a husband and want to qualify as an elder, the reputation of your family will affect your qualifications. Thus, you need to be “presiding over [your] own household in a fine manner.” You need to have a reputation for being a loving and responsible family head. This includes taking the lead in all aspects of our worship. If you are a father, you must

have your minor “children in subjection with all seriousness.” (1 Tim. 3:4) You need to teach and train them lovingly. Of course, like all children, they will enjoy laughing and playing. But because of your good training, they will be obedient, respectful, and well-behaved. Also, you must do your best to help your children to develop a good relationship with Jehovah, to live by Bible principles, and to progress to baptism. w24.11 22 ¶10-11

Monday, November 23

No one has love greater than this, that someone should surrender his life in behalf of his friends.—John 15:13.

The more we engage in Jehovah’s service, the more we will experience his support and, as a result, our confidence in him will grow stronger. (1 Cor. 3:9) Remember, though, Jehovah does not look at how much you give in comparison with what others give; he sees what is in your heart. He is pleased when he observes your heartfelt gratitude for his precious gift, the ransom. (1 Sam. 16:7; Mark 12:41-44) It is only because of the ransom that we have forgiveness of our sins, a friendship with Jehovah, and the prospect of everlasting life. May we always show our gratitude for Jehovah’s love, which moved him to make these blessings available to us. (1 John 4:19) May we also demonstrate our appreciation for Jesus, who loved us so much that he gave his human life in our behalf! w25.01 31 ¶16-18

Tuesday, November 24

I was troubled all day long.

—Ps. 73:14.

Consider how the writer of Psalm 73 felt. He saw others enjoying what looked like a healthy, prosperous, and stress-free life. (Ps. 73:3-5, 12) As he observed them and their apparent success, he felt that his efforts to serve Jehovah were pointless. He was “troubled all day long” by this discouraging thought. (Ps. 73:13, 14) How did he deal with his troubled feelings? The psalmist went to the peaceful setting of Jehovah’s sanctuary. (Ps. 73:16-18) There, he was able to think clearly. He discerned that even though the life of some might seem easy, their long-term future was precarious. With this insight, he found peace of mind, knowing that pursuing spiritual things was the very best decision. As a result, he renewed his determination to continue serving Jehovah.—Ps. 73:23-28. w24.10 27 ¶11-12

Wednesday, November 25

May people know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth.

—Ps. 83:18.

Jehovah has called us to be his “witnesses.” (Isa. 43:10-12) Some years ago, a letter from the Governing Body stated: “The greatest honor that any of us could enjoy is that of being called one of Jehovah’s Witnesses.” Why is that so? Consider an illustration. If you needed someone to be a character witness for you in a court case, you would choose someone you know and trust, someone whose reputation would make his testimony

trustworthy. By choosing us to be his Witnesses, Jehovah shows that he knows us well and that he trusts us to testify that he is the only true God. We feel so honored to be his Witnesses that we seize every opportunity to make his name known and to combat the many lies that have been told about him. By doing so, we live up to the name that we are so proud to bear, Jehovah’s Witnesses!—Rom. 10:13-15. w24.05 18 ¶13

Thursday, November 26

He cured all who were suffering.

—Matt. 8:16.

Serving others brought Jesus great joy. On one occasion when Jesus ministered to a crowd, he did more than teach them. He also cared for their physical needs. He miraculously provided food and then had his disciples distribute it. (Mark 6:41) By doing so, he taught his disciples how to serve others. He also showed them that practical services are important. Imagine the joy the apostles had in sharing with Jesus in this miraculous distribution of food until “all ate and were satisfied”! (Mark 6:42) Of course, this was not the only time that Jesus put the welfare of others ahead of his own. He used his entire earthly life to serve people. (Matt. 4:23) Jesus found joy and satisfaction in teaching others and in humbly caring for their needs. w24.11 16 ¶10-11

Friday, November 27

In the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here.—2 Tim. 3:1.

As conditions in “the last days” get worse, we will no doubt have more opportunities to render aid to one another. We can also provide an emotional and spiritual haven for our brothers. One way we can do that is by making them feel welcome at the Kingdom Hall. So when our brothers and sisters attend meetings, we want to do all we can to make them feel loved, refreshed, and secure. Elders can become a refuge to those in the congregation who endure literal or figurative storms. During disasters and medical emergencies, elders take the initiative to arrange practical assistance. They also offer spiritual help. Brothers and sisters will be inclined to approach an elder if he is known to be gentle, empathetic, and willing to listen. Such qualities help others feel cared for; thus, it is easier for them to apply any Bible-based guidance an elder may provide.—1 Thess. 2:7, 8, 11. w24.06 29 ¶12-13

Saturday, November 28

*He did not even spare his own Son.
—Rom. 8:32.*

Let us not think that because God is almighty, he does not have feelings! We are made in his image, created with the ability to feel, so it stands to reason that Jehovah has feelings. The Bible describes him as feeling “hurt” and “grieved.” (Ps. 78:40, 41) Jehovah must have felt grieved as he observed his Son being cruelly tortured to death by ungodly men! The ransom teaches us that no one loves us as

much as Jehovah does—not even our dearest relative or best friend. (Rom. 8:32, 38, 39) No doubt Jehovah loves us more than we love ourselves. Do you want to live forever? Not as much as Jehovah wants you to. Do you want to have your sins forgiven? Not as much as Jehovah wants to forgive them. All he asks is that we accept his gracious gift by exercising faith and being obedient. The ransom is truly a profound expression of God’s love.—Eccl. 3:11. w25.01 22-23 ¶8-9

Sunday, November 29

Keep on making sure of what is acceptable to the Lord.—Eph. 5:10.

We all make some decisions based on what we perceive with our physical senses. But our physical senses can sometimes deceive us. Even when they do not, if we walk only by sight, we may end up ignoring God’s will or counsel. (Eccl. 11:9; Matt. 24:37-39) When we walk by faith, however, we will more likely make decisions that are “acceptable to the Lord.” Following God’s advice will give us inner peace and make us truly happy. (Ps. 16:8, 9; Isa. 48:17, 18) And if we continue walking by faith, we will have an everlasting future. (2 Cor. 4:18) How can we tell if we are walking by faith or by sight? Basically, it comes down to this: What factors guide our decisions? Are we guided only by the things we can see? Or are we guided by our trust in and advice from Jehovah? w25.03 20-21 ¶3-4

Monday, November 30

Be peaceable with one another.

—1 Thess. 5:13.

Each of us has an important role to play in making the spiritual paradise attractive to others. We can fulfill this role if we imitate Jehovah. He does not drag people into his organization against their will. Instead, he gently “draws” people to himself. (John 6:44; Jer. 31:3) Good-hearted people who learn about Jehovah’s loving qualities and appealing personality are irresistibly drawn to him. How can we, by our good qualities and fine conduct, attract people to the spiritual paradise? One way is by treating our fellow worshippers with love and kindness. When new ones attend our congregation meetings, we want them to come to the same conclusion as did the unbelievers who likely attended the meetings in ancient Corinth. They declared: “God is really among you.” (1 Cor. 14:24, 25; Zech. 8:23) Thus, we must continue to heed the counsel in today’s text. w24.04 23-24 ¶16-17

Tuesday, December 1

He opened up their minds fully to grasp the meaning of the Scriptures.

—Luke 24:45.

Jesus’ disciples accepted God’s Word and tried hard to apply it in their life. (John 17:6) Still, Jesus’ dying as a criminal on a torture stake confused them. Jesus realized that their doubts stemmed, not from a bad heart, but from a lack of understanding. (Luke 9: 44, 45; John 20:9) So he taught them to reason on the Scriptures. Consider how he did that when he appeared to the two disciples on the

road to Emmaus. Jesus did not immediately tell the men who he was. Instead, he asked questions. Why? Perhaps he wanted them to express what was on their mind and in their heart. And they did. They told him that they had expected Jesus to deliver Israel from Roman oppression. (Luke 24:18-27) Jesus used the Scriptures to help the men to understand what had happened. Later that evening, Jesus spent time assuring the other disciples of these truths.—Luke 24:33-48. w24.10 14 ¶9-10

Wednesday, December 2

I do nothing of my own initiative; but just as the Father taught me, I speak these things.—John 8:28.

Jesus learned from his heavenly Father what to do and what to say. Following the example of Jesus, Jehovah’s organization bases its moral teachings and its direction on God’s Word. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) We regularly receive reminders to read and apply God’s Word. We benefit greatly when we study the Bible with the help of our Christian publications. For instance, we are able to compare Bible teachings with the direction we receive from the organization. When we see that the guidance we receive is based on the Scriptures, our confidence in Jehovah’s organization grows. (Rom. 12:2) Jesus preached “the good news of the Kingdom of God.” (Luke 4:43, 44) Also, Jesus commanded his disciples to preach about the Kingdom. (Luke 9:1, 2; 10:8, 9) Today all who are associated with Jehovah’s organization preach the Kingdom message no matter where they live. w24.04 9 ¶5-7

Thursday, December 3

We will do all that you have commanded, and we will go wherever you send us.—Josh. 1:16.

Maintain confidence in theocratic direction. In ancient Israel, Jehovah used Moses and then Joshua to convey instructions to His people. (Josh. 1:17) The Israelites were blessed when they viewed these men as representatives of Jehovah God. Centuries later when the Christian congregation was first formed, the 12 apostles gave direction. (Acts 8:14, 15) Then that group was expanded to include other elders in Jerusalem. By following the guidance received from those faithful men, “the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number day by day.” (Acts 16:4, 5) In modern times, we too are blessed when we follow theocratic direction from Jehovah’s organization. w24.07 10 ¶10

Friday, December 4

I have found David the son of Jesse a man agreeable to my heart.

—Acts 13:22.

Jehovah dearly loved King David. He even called him “a man agreeable to my heart.” But David became involved in gross sins, including adultery and murder. According to the Mosaic Law, David deserved to die. (Lev. 20:10; Num. 35:31) Yet, Jehovah kindly stepped in. He sent his prophet Nathan to visit the king, even though David had not yet shown any sign of repentance. Nathan used an illustration designed to touch David’s heart. Deeply moved, David repented. (2 Sam. 12:1-14) He wrote a heart-

felt psalm that reveals his repentant spirit. (Ps. 51, superscription) That psalm has comforted countless sinners and motivated them to repent. Are we not glad that Jehovah lovingly led his beloved servant David to repentance? w24.08 10 ¶9

Saturday, December 5

Prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.
—Rom. 12:2.

Many would agree that being a parent is a full-time job. If you are a parent with a young child, we commend you for working hard to build strong faith in him. (Deut. 6:6, 7) As your child grows up, he may begin asking serious questions about our Bible-based beliefs, including the Bible’s moral standards. At first, you may be worried about your child’s questions. You might even view such questions as a step backward regarding his faith. In reality, however, growing children need to ask questions in order to form their own convictions. (1 Cor. 13:11) So there is no reason to be fearful. You may view all sincere questions your child raises about our beliefs as opportunities to help him to develop his thinking ability. w24.12 14 ¶1-2

Sunday, December 6

We are . . . the sort who have faith for the preserving of our lives.

—Heb. 10:39.

The Hebrew Christians would need strong faith to survive the approaching tribulation in Judea. (Heb. 10: 37, 38) Jesus had warned his followers that when they saw Jerusalem surrounded by encamped armies, they should flee to the mountains. His counsel applied to all Christians, whether they lived in that city or in the open countryside. (Luke 21:20-24) People back then who were threatened by an invading army would normally seek protection in a walled city like Jerusalem. Fleeing to the mountains would have seemed illogical and would have taken great faith. The Hebrew Christians would also need to trust those whom Jesus was using to direct the congregation. Those taking the lead likely gave specific instructions to help all in the congregation to follow Jesus' direction at the right time and in an orderly manner.

—Heb. 13:17. w24.09 10 ¶9-10

Monday, December 7

He gave gifts in men.—Eph. 4:8.

While on earth, Jesus perfectly cared for the work his Father had given him to do. (John 17:4) But Jesus did not have the attitude, ‘If you want something done right, you must do it yourself.’ He trained others to do the work. Jesus entrusted his disciples with the responsibility of caring for Jehovah’s precious sheep and taking the lead in the preaching and teaching work. Jesus gave his disciples frank but loving counsel. Some

of them had the tendency to doubt, so he counseled them. (Luke 24:25-27; John 20:27) He drove home the need for them to put greater emphasis on the shepherding work than on their secular careers. (John 21:15) He reminded them not to become unduly concerned about what privileges others might receive. (John 21:20-22) And he corrected some wrong ideas they had about the Kingdom and helped them focus on getting the good news preached.—Acts 1:6-8. w24.10 15-16 ¶13-14

Tuesday, December 8

The righteous will possess the earth, and they will live forever on it.

—Ps. 37:29.

Obedience leads to life. Like the Israelites who were on the threshold of the Promised Land, we are on the verge of entering God’s promised new world, where we will see the earth transformed into a paradise. (Isa. 35:1; Luke 23:43) The Devil and his demons will be gone. (Rev. 20:2, 3) No longer will false religion lead people away from Jehovah. (Rev. 17:16) No longer will human governments oppress those under their care. (Rev. 19: 19, 20) Paradise will have no place for rebels. (Ps. 37:10, 11) People everywhere will obey Jehovah’s righteous laws, which promote unity and peace. Thus, they will love and trust one another. (Isa. 11:9) What a wonderful prospect! What is more, if we obey Jehovah, we can continue to live on a paradise earth not just for hundreds of years but for all eternity.—John 3: 16. w24.11 9 ¶7

Wednesday, December 9

This good news of the Kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations.

—Matt. 24:14.

The prophecy in today's text is being fulfilled in our day as never before. The Kingdom message is published in more than 1,000 languages, and by means of the jw.org website, it is available to the majority of the world's population. However, Jesus also told his disciples that they would not "complete the circuit of the cities," or preach to everyone, before he would come. (Matt. 10:23; 25:31-33) Jesus' words will prove to be true in our day as well. Millions of people today live in areas where the preaching work is severely restricted. In addition, hundreds of babies are born every minute. We do our best to reach people from "every nation and tribe and tongue" with the good news. (Rev. 14:6) But the fact is that we will not be able to share the good news with each individual on earth before the end comes. w24.05 10 ¶6-7

Thursday, December 10

They are no longer two, but one flesh.
—Matt. 19:6.

Jesus used his words to comfort and refresh others. He did not speak harshly to his followers. (Luke 8:47, 48) What an excellent example for Christian husbands! Jesus instructed husbands to remain loyal to their wife. He quoted his Father, who said that a husband should "stick to his wife." (Matt. 19:4-6) The Greek verb used in that passage for "stick to" literally means "to glue." Therefore, the

marital bond between a husband and a wife should be so strong that it is as if they were glued together. Their bond cannot be broken without damaging both of them. A husband who develops such a bond with his wife will reject all forms of pornography. He will immediately turn away from "looking at what is worthless." (Ps. 119:37) In effect, he makes a contract with his eyes not to look passionately at any woman other than his wife.

—Job 31:1. w25.01 10 ¶12-13

Friday, December 11

Our God . . . will forgive in a large way.—Isa. 55:7.

The forgiveness humans extend can be complicated. The way Jehovah forgives us imperfect humans is very different from the way we forgive one another. The forgiveness Jehovah extends is unique. The psalmist said of Jehovah: "With you there is true forgiveness, so that you may be held in awe." (Ps. 130:4) Yes, Jehovah's forgiveness is "true forgiveness." He sets the ultimate standard of what forgiveness really means. In some cases, Bible writers used a Hebrew word for forgiveness that is never used to describe human forgiveness. When Jehovah forgives someone, that person's sin is wiped out. The damaged relationship is entirely restored. Jehovah's forgiveness is amazingly complete and generous. w25.02 8 ¶1-3

Saturday, December 12

He ordered us to preach to the people and to give a thorough witness.

—Acts 10:42.

Our success in the ministry does not depend on the results we obtain. Why? Because we have done what Jehovah and his Son want us to do—we have given a witness. Even when we do not find anyone to speak with or when our message is rejected, we can have joy because we know that we are pleasing our heavenly Father. (Prov. 27:11) We can also rejoice when another publisher finds an interested person in the territory. *The Watchtower* has likened our work to searching for a lost child. Many are involved in looking for him, covering one area after another. When the child is found, everyone—not just the individual who found him—has reason to rejoice. Similarly, the disciple-making work is a team effort. All are needed to cover the territory, and all rejoice when a new one starts attending meetings.

w24.04 18 ¶13-14

Sunday, December 13

All those who were rightly disposed for everlasting life became believers.

—Acts 13:48.

What exciting prospects lie ahead of us! With Jehovah's blessing, we hope to see many more accept the truth before the great tribulation begins. Also, we are thrilled at the possibility that even during the great tribulation, we may see still more people turn away from Satan's dying world and join us in praising Jehovah! Meanwhile, we have work to do. We have the privilege of sharing in a never-to-be-

repeated proclamation—the preaching of the good news of God's Kingdom throughout the earth. At the same time, we must keep sounding the warning. People need to know that the end of this wicked system of things is rapidly approaching. Motivated by love—love for the good news, love for people and, above all, love for Jehovah God and his name—we will keep preaching with eagerness, urgency, and zeal until Jehovah says, "It is enough!" w24.05 19 ¶14-16

Monday, December 14

Clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because God opposes the haughty ones, but he gives undeserved kindness to the humble ones.

—1 Pet. 5:5.

On the night before he was put to death, Jesus taught Peter and the other apostles an important lesson in humility. Much to the astonishment of his apostles, he did something that a servant would normally do. Jesus took off his outer garments, wrapped a towel around his waist, put water into the basin, and started washing their feet. (John 13:4, 5) It may have taken some time to wash the feet of all 12 apostles—including Judas, who was going to betray him. Yet, Jesus humbly completed the task. Then Jesus patiently explained: "Do you understand what I have done to you? You address me as 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are correct, for I am such. Therefore, if I, the Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also should wash the feet of one another."

—John 13:12-14. w25.03 10 ¶9-11

Tuesday, December 15

You guide me with your advice, and afterward you will lead me to glory.
—Ps. 73:24.

The world makes it challenging for us to remain close to Jehovah. Many reject the idea that God exists. Often, those who ignore what God requires seem to prosper. When we see that happen, our faith can be tested. While we would not deny that God exists, we could begin to wonder whether he will act in our behalf. The writer of Psalm 73 found himself wondering about this. He saw those around him ignoring God's laws and still enjoying life. As a result, he began to question whether it was worth serving God. (Ps. 73:11-13) What eventually helped the psalmist to correct his view? He meditated on what would happen to those who forget Jehovah. (Ps. 73:18, 19, 27) He also considered the benefits that come from serving God. We too can reflect on the blessings that Jehovah has given us. w24.06 25 ¶16-17

Wednesday, December 16

Let your way of life be free of the love of money.—Heb. 13:5.

In Bible times, some took advantage of their poor brothers by charging them interest on the money lent to them. Also, some judges accepted bribes and then judged innocent victims unfairly. Such practices are detestable to Jehovah. (Ezek. 22:12) It is good for us to evaluate our personal attitude toward money. Ask yourself: 'Do I often find myself thinking about money and what it can buy? If I borrow money, am I slow to repay it, concluding that the person who

lent it to me does not need it? Does having money make me feel important but make it hard to be generous? Do I judge my brothers and sisters as materialistic simply because they have money? Do I cultivate friendship with the rich and show little interest in the poor?' We can protect our friendship with God by keeping our life free of the love of money. If we do so, Jehovah will never leave us! w24.06 12-13 ¶17-18

Thursday, December 17

I refuse to walk on any evil path, so that I may keep your word.
—Ps. 119:101.

To guard ourselves against temptation, we need to cultivate right desires. If we learn to "hate what is bad and love what is good," we will strengthen our resolve to do what is right. (Amos 5:15) Proper desires will also fortify us to remain firm if we find ourselves in a tempting situation. We should be absorbed as much as possible in spiritual activities. When we are at Christian meetings or in the ministry, we build our desire to please Jehovah. (Matt. 28:19, 20; Heb. 10:24, 25) By reading and studying God's Word and meditating on it, we strengthen our love for what is good and our hatred for what is bad. (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2, 3; 119:97) Remember, Jesus told his disciples: "Pray continually, so that you may not enter into temptation." (Matt. 26:41) Thus, we take advantage of Jehovah's help and strengthen our determination to please him.—Jas. 4:8. w24.07 17-18 ¶14-16

Friday, December 18

I will give you insight and instruct you in the way you should go. I will give you advice with my eye upon you.

—Ps. 32:8.

Those who provide training do well to imitate the manner in which Jehovah shares his wisdom. Recall that Jehovah gives wisdom generously. Likewise, we freely share our knowledge and experience with those who are learning. We do not withhold some of our knowledge out of fear that the learner may eventually replace us. Nor do we take the view: ‘No one trained me! Let him learn on his own.’ Such an attitude has no place among Jehovah’s people. Rather, we gladly impart not only our knowledge “but also our very selves” to those we train. (1 Thess. 2:8) We hope that they, “in turn, will be adequately qualified to teach others.” (2 Tim. 2:1, 2) In that sense, we can be part of an ongoing cycle of generosity that results in a cycle of happiness. w24.09 29 ¶12-13

Saturday, December 19

Individually we are members belonging to one another.—Rom. 12:5.

If you feel that you do not have any outstanding ability, do not be discouraged. No doubt you have qualities that can make you useful in the congregation. You might benefit from prayerfully reading Paul’s reasoning found at 1 Corinthians 12:12-30. Paul’s words make it clear that you, like every other servant of Jehovah, have a necessary and valuable role to play in the congregation. Do whatever you can to be useful to Je-

ovah and to your brothers. Be assured that the elders will take your abilities into consideration with regard to any assignments they may give you. (Rom. 12:4-8) All Christians should draw close to Jehovah, experience the joy of giving, and set a good example in Christian living. w24.11 17 ¶12-13

Sunday, December 20

She began to pray to Jehovah and to weep uncontrollably.—1 Sam. 1:10.

Hannah faced several problems that caused her to shed tears of sorrow. One of these difficulties was that she was in a bigamous marriage, and her husband’s other wife, Peninnah, despised her. As if that were not bad enough, Hannah was childless, while Peninnah had several children. (1 Sam. 1:1, 2) Peninnah relentlessly taunted Hannah about her barrenness. Hannah was so upset that “she would weep and not eat,” and she became “extremely bitter” at heart. (1 Sam. 1:6, 7, 10) How did Hannah find comfort? One thing that helped her was that she went to the center of true worship, the tabernacle. There, she begged Jehovah: “Look upon the affliction of your servant and remember me.” (1 Sam. 1:11) Jehovah saw her distress, heard her cry, and later blessed her by allowing her to conceive.—1 Sam. 1:19, 20; 2:21. w24.12 21 ¶5-7

Monday, December 21

I was especially fond of the sons of men.—Prov. 8:31.

The ransom teaches us that Jesus cares deeply for people, especially for his disciples. (John 13:1) For example, Jesus knew that some aspects of his earthly ministry would be very challenging, in particular his painful death. Yet, in carrying out his assignment on earth, he did not simply go through the motions. Instead, Jesus put his whole heart into preaching, teaching, and ministering to others. Even on the day of his death, Jesus took time to wash the feet of his apostles and give them many parting words of comfort and instruction. (John 13:12-15) Then while he was on the stake, Jesus took a few moments to give hope to a dying criminal and to arrange for his own mother's care. (Luke 23:42, 43; John 19:26, 27) Thus Jesus' deep love was expressed not only through his death but also through his entire life course on earth. w25.01 23 ¶11

Tuesday, December 22

He bore the punishment for our peace, and because of his wounds we were healed.—Isa. 53:5.

The Bible uses a word picture to help us understand the freedom that comes from true forgiveness. Because of our sinful nature and inclination, we are likened to "slaves of sin." But thanks to Jehovah's forgiveness, we are like slaves who have been "set free from sin." (Rom. 6:17, 18; Rev. 1:5) Yes, Jehovah's forgiveness gives us the exhilarating feeling of being set free from slavery. Because of the ran-

som sacrifice that Jehovah provided through his Son, we are figuratively spoken of as being healed. (1 Pet. 2:24) The ransom makes possible the full repair of our relationship with Jehovah, which has been damaged by spiritual sickness. Just as a person who has been healed of a serious illness feels intense joy, we too rejoice when we are healed spiritually and regain Jehovah's favor as a result of his forgiveness. w25.02 11 ¶16; 13 ¶17

Wednesday, December 23

If you keep on doing these things, you will by no means ever fail.

—2 Pet. 1:10.

In the parable of the talents, Jesus spoke of two slaves who were faithful to their master and one who was not. (Matt. 25:14-30) The two faithful slaves represent faithful anointed Christians. The Master, Jesus, invites them to "enter into the joy of [their] master." They receive their heavenly reward, the first resurrection. (Matt. 25:21, 23; Rev. 20:5b) On the other hand, the bad example of the sluggish slave provides a warning for anointed ones. How so? They must prove to be industrious and diligent. In the parable of the talents, as in the parable of the virgins, Jesus was not predicting that the anointed would become sluggish. Rather, he was explaining what would happen if ever they did lose their zeal. They would fail to make their "calling and choosing sure for [themselves]," and they would not be permitted to enter into the heavenly Kingdom. w24.09 22 ¶10; 23 ¶12-13

Thursday, December 24

Make sure of the more important things.—Phil. 1:10.

All of us want to be able to provide for our own needs and for those of our family. (Eccl. 7:12; 1 Tim. 5:8) When deciding whether to accept a job, we understandably will consider how much money we will earn. However, a person might be walking primarily by sight if that is the only factor he takes into account. If we are walking by faith, we will also consider how the job could affect our friendship with Jehovah. We could ask ourselves: ‘Would the job require me to engage in practices that Jehovah hates?’ (Prov. 6:16–19) ‘Would it interfere with my worship and perhaps keep me away from my family for long periods of time?’ If the answer to such questions is yes, it would be wise not to accept the job, even if work is hard to find. Because we walk by faith, we make decisions that show our conviction that Jehovah will somehow care for our needs.
—Matt. 6:33; Heb. 13:5. w25.03 21 ¶5–6

Friday, December 25

[Be] kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving one another.—Eph. 4:32.

We should always try to see our Christian brothers and sisters as Jehovah sees them. We do so by focusing on their positive qualities and not on their imperfections, which will eventually disappear. We can resolve any differences between us in a spirit of love. Then the spiritual paradise will attract people who want to be treated in a similar way. May we be forever grateful for the paradise that Je-

hovah has created for us. Anyone who wants to be refreshed, content, calm, and safe must come into the spiritual paradise and never leave it! Beware, though, because Satan is trying his best to lure us away from it. (1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12:9) We must not allow him to succeed. Let us vigorously protect the beauty, purity, and peace of the spiritual paradise. w24.04 24–25 ¶18–19

Saturday, December 26

[Seek] first the Kingdom.
—Matt. 6:33.

Parents, you can instill in your children zeal for Jehovah’s worship. Teach your children by word and example that spiritual matters—such as studying the Bible, attending meetings, and participating in the field ministry—take priority over all other activities. Otherwise your children might conclude that being one of Jehovah’s Witnesses is nothing more than belonging to the “family religion.” As a result, they might put true worship in second place or even leave it entirely. Is someone who has stopped serving Jehovah beyond hope? No, because he can repent and resume true worship. To do so, he may need to swallow his pride and accept help from congregation elders. (Jas. 5:14) No effort he makes is too great if it results in his being restored to Jehovah’s favor!
w24.07 24–25 ¶18–19

Sunday, December 27

Flee from sexual immorality!

—1 Cor. 6:18.

How can you keep your courtship honorable? As your feelings grow, you will naturally feel more attracted to each other. What can help you to keep yourselves morally clean? Avoid immoral conversations, being alone together, and heavy drinking. (Eph. 5:3) These things can arouse passion and weaken your resolve to do what is right. Why not regularly discuss together what measures you can take to keep your courtship honorable? (Prov. 22:3) Some displays of affection may be appropriate as your relationship progresses. However, if your passions are aroused, you will likely find it hard to think objectively about the other person. (Song of Sol. 1:2; 2:6) Displays of affection can also easily escalate and lead to misconduct. (Prov. 6:27) Therefore, early in your relationship, discuss what limits you will set, in harmony with Bible principles.—1 Thess. 4:3-7. w24.05 29 ¶10-11

Monday, December 28

Let your word “Yes” mean yes, your “No,” no.—Matt. 5:37.

We want others to be able to count on us, especially during difficult times. (Prov. 17:17) How can we develop a reputation for being reliable? We can strive to display godly qualities consistently, such as by keeping our promises and by doing our best to be punctual. Reliable elders are a benefit to the congregation. How? Publishers feel supported when they can readily contact elders, such as their

field service group overseer. Publishers also feel well cared for when they know that the elders are willing to help them. And as elders base their counsel on the Bible and the publications of the faithful slave rather than on their own opinions, fellow worshippers trust them. Brothers and sisters have further reason to have confidence in an elder who keeps private matters confidential and who follows through by doing what he says he will do. w24.06 30 ¶14-15

Tuesday, December 29

You will give them continuous peace, because it is in you that they trust.

—Isa. 26:3.

Today we cannot expect Jehovah to remove all our problems, but we can count on him to sustain us. (Ps. 41:3) By means of his holy spirit, Jehovah gives us strength, wisdom, and inner peace to cope. (Prov. 18:14; Phil. 4:13) He also sustains us through our Bible-based hope of seeing all forms of illness eliminated. (Isa. 33:24) Jehovah has preserved soothing words that can lift our spirits when we face distressing situations. (Rom. 15:4) When a sister in West Africa was diagnosed with cancer, she often wept. She relates: “One scripture that I particularly find comforting is Isaiah 26:3. . . . That verse reassures me that Jehovah can give us the kind of inner peace that helps us control how we react to the trials.” Is there a scripture that you have found especially soothing when you are facing situations that seem extremely trying, maybe even hopeless? w24.12 24 ¶17-18

Wednesday, December 30

While he was still a long way off, his father caught sight of him and was moved with pity, and he ran and embraced him and tenderly kissed him.—Luke 15:20.

The elders strive to show a forgiving attitude toward those who have strayed. They want these lost sheep to “come back home.” (Luke 15:22-24, 32) There is joy in heaven when a sinner returns, and there is joy on earth as well! (Luke 15:7) It is clear that Jehovah does not condone unrepentant wrongdoing. However, he does not turn his back on wrongdoers. He wants them to return. Jehovah’s feelings toward repentant wrongdoers are expressed at Hosea 14:4: “I will heal their unfaithfulness. I will love them of my own free will, because my anger has turned away.” What a strong incentive for elders to respond to any signs of repentance. And what a strong incentive for those who have left Jehovah to return without delay.
w24.08 28 ¶8-9

Thursday, December 31

Show yourselves thankful.

—Col. 3:15.

Realistically, some may not always show or express appreciation. On occasion, we may give of our time, energy, or resources but thereafter wonder if the recipient even cared about what we did. If that happens, how can we avoid losing our joy or becoming bitter? Remember, our happiness in giving does not depend on the response. (Acts 20:35) We can choose to enjoy giving even if others do not seem appreciative. How? Focus on imitating Jehovah. He gives good things to people whether they appreciate it or not. (Matt. 5:43-48) Jehovah promises that when we likewise give “without hoping for anything back,” our “reward will be great.” (Luke 6:35) “Anything” might include an expression of appreciation. Whether we receive it or not, Jehovah will repay us for the good we do to help others, for our being ‘cheerful givers.’—Prov. 19:17; 2 Cor. 9:7. w24.09 29 ¶14-16