

***Examining
the Scriptures
Daily***

2024

Large-Print Edition



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the Scriptures
Daily***

2024

Large-Print Edition

Yeartext

**“When I am afraid, I put
my trust in you.”**

—Psalm 56:3.

Name

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JANUARY

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Our Christian Life and Ministry Bible Reading Schedule for 2024

January

- 1 Job 32-33
- 8 Job 34-35
- 15 Job 36-37
- 22 Job 38-39
- 29 Job 40-42

February

- 5 Psalms 1-4
- 12 Psalms 5-7
- 19 Psalms 8-10
- 26 Psalms 11-15

March

- 4 Psalms 16-17
- 11 Psalm 18
- 18 Psalms 19-21
- 25 Psalm 22

April

- 1 Psalms 23-25
- 8 Psalms 26-28
- 15 Psalms 29-31
- 22 Psalms 32-33
- 29 Psalms 34-35

May

- 6 Psalms 36-37
- 13 Psalms 38-39
- 20 Psalms 40-41
- 27 Psalms 42-44

June

- 3 Psalms 45-47
- 10 Psalms 48-50
- 17 Psalms 51-53
- 24 Psalms 54-56

July

- 1 Psalms 57-59
- 8 Psalms 60-62
- 15 Psalms 63-65
- 22 Psalms 66-68
- 29 Psalm 69

August

- 5 Psalms 70-72
- 12 Psalms 73-74
- 19 Psalms 75-77
- 26 Psalm 78

September

- 2 Psalms 79-81
- 9 Psalms 82-84
- 16 Psalms 85-87
- 23 Psalms 88-89
- 30 Psalms 90-91

October

- 7 Psalms 92-95
- 14 Psalms 96-99
- 21 Psalms 100-102
- 28 Psalms 103-104

November

- 4 Psalm 105
- 11 Psalm 106
- 18 Psalms 107-108
- 25 Psalms 109-112

December

- 2 Psalms 113-118
- 9 Psalm 119:1-56
- 16 Psalm 119:57-120
- 23 Psalm 119:121-176
- 30 Psalms 120-126

Monday, January 1

I am sending Timothy to you, because he is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord.—1 Cor. 4:17.

What made Timothy a useful servant of Jehovah? His outstanding Christian qualities. (Phil. 2:19-22) From the apostle Paul's description of Timothy, we can see that he was humble, loyal, diligent, and dependable. He cared deeply about the brothers. As a result, Paul loved Timothy and did not hesitate to entrust him with challenging assignments. Similarly, we endear ourselves to Jehovah and are more useful to the congregation when we cultivate qualities that he loves. (Ps. 25:9; 138:6) So prayerfully consider which aspects of your personality need improvement. Select one specific quality that you would like to focus on. Could you cultivate greater empathy? Do you need to be more peaceable and forgiving? You may find it helpful to ask a trusted friend to suggest ways you could improve.—Prov. 27:6. w22.04 23 ¶4-5

Tuesday, January 2

Let each one examine his own actions.—Gal. 6:4.

Jehovah wants us to be happy. We know this because joy is an aspect of the fruitage of his holy spirit. (Gal. 5:22) Since there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving, we feel a deep sense of joy when we are fully engaged in the Christian ministry and are helping our brothers in various ways. (Acts 20:35) As recorded in today's text, the apostle Paul mentions two factors that will help us remain joyful. First, our goal should

be to give Jehovah our best. If we are giving him our very best, we should be happy. (Matt. 22:36-38) Second, we should avoid comparing ourselves with others. Whatever our health, training, or natural ability enables us to accomplish, we should be grateful to Jehovah. On the other hand, if others are more effective in some aspect of the ministry than we are, we should rejoice that they are using their talents to praise Jehovah. w22.04 10 ¶1-2

Wednesday, January 3

Your deliverance is getting near.—Luke 21:28.

The end of false religion will come suddenly, catching the world by surprise. (Rev. 18:8-10) The destruction of Babylon the Great will be world-shaking and may cause hardships, but God's people will have at least two reasons to rejoice. This long-standing enemy of Jehovah God will be gone forever, and our deliverance from this wicked system of things will be at hand! Daniel foretold that "true knowledge" would "become abundant." And indeed it has! We have received insight into prophecies about our time. (Dan. 12:4, 9, 10) The accuracy of these prophecies leaves us in awe of Jehovah and his inspired Word. (Isa. 46:10; 55:11) So continue to fortify your faith by diligently studying the Scriptures and by helping others to develop an approved relationship with Jehovah. He will safeguard all who fully lean on him, and he will give them "continuous peace."—Isa. 26:3. w22.07 6-7 ¶16-17

Thursday, January 4

They gathered them together to the place that is called in Hebrew Armageddon.—Rev. 16:16.

The book of Revelation reveals that God’s heavenly Kingdom has been established and that Satan has been expelled from heaven. (Rev. 12:1-9) That expulsion brings relief to the heavens, but it creates challenges for us. Why? Because Satan’s anger is focused on those who faithfully serve Jehovah here on earth. (Rev. 12:12, 15, 17) How can we remain steadfast in the face of Satan’s attacks? (Rev. 13:10) One thing that will help us is to know what the future holds. For example, in Revelation, the apostle John describes some of the blessings that we will soon enjoy. Among those blessings will be the elimination of God’s enemies. In the very first verse, Revelation tells us that the information we are about to read is being presented “in signs,” that is, in symbolic language.—Rev. 1:1. w22.05 8 ¶1-3

Friday, January 5

In the final part of the days I will bring you against my land so that the nations may know me when I sanctify myself through you before their eyes, O Gog.—Ezek. 38:16.

The firm stand of Jehovah’s faithful servants will provoke the rage of those who oppose Jehovah. As a result, a coalition of nations will attack God’s people all over the earth. This act of mad aggression is described prophetically as the attack of Gog of Magog. (Ezek. 38:14, 15) How will Jehovah react to this vicious attack? He

tells us: “My great rage will flare up.” (Ezek. 38:18, 21-23) Revelation chapter 19 describes what happens next. Jehovah sends forth His Son to defend His people and to defeat their enemies. Jesus will be joined in this counterattack by “the armies in heaven”—the faithful angels together with the 144,000. (Rev. 17:14; 19:11-15) What is the outcome of this war? The total annihilation of all humans and organizations opposing Jehovah! —Rev. 19:19-21. w22.05 17 ¶9-10

Saturday, January 6

I will put enmity between you and the woman.—Gen. 3:15.

Soon after Adam and Eve sinned, Jehovah gave hope to their descendants by means of a remarkable prophecy. What he said is recorded at Genesis 3:15: “I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring. He will crush your head, and you will strike him in the heel.” The prophecy appears in the first book of the Bible. But in one way or another, all the other books of the Bible relate to it. Just as the spine of a printed book binds all the pages together, the words recorded at Genesis 3:15 bind the content of every book of the Bible into one united message, namely, that a Deliverer would be sent to destroy the Devil and all his wicked followers. What a blessing that will be for those who love Jehovah! A study of the Bible will help us see how the prophecy is fulfilled and how we can benefit from it. w22.07 14 ¶1-3

Sunday, January 7

Jehovah himself gives wisdom.

—Prov. 2:6.

Ask Jehovah to give you the wisdom you need to help your children develop love for him. (Jas. 1:5) He is the most qualified Person to give advice. There are a number of reasons why. Consider two. First, Jehovah has the most experience at being a parent. (Ps. 36:9) And second, the wise advice he gives always brings benefits. (Isa. 48:17) By means of his Word and his organization, Jehovah provides an abundance of Bible-based spiritual food that can help you raise your children to love Jehovah. (Matt. 24:45) For example, you can find much practical advice in the article series “Help for the Family,” which appeared in print for a number of years in the *Awake!* magazine and is now available on our website. Also, many videos published on jw.org feature interviews and dramatizations that can help parents apply Jehovah’s counsel as they raise their children.—Prov. 2:4, 5. w22.05 27 ¶4-5

Monday, January 8

If errors were what you watch, O Jah, then who . . . could stand?—Ps. 130:3.

Jehovah is truly the greatest Forgiver in the universe. First, he is always ready to forgive. Second, he knows us through and through. He is perfectly familiar with our makeup, and he is in the ideal position to determine whether we are truly repentant. And third, when Jehovah forgives us, he wipes the slate clean, so to speak. This allows us to have a clean conscience and enjoy his favor. Of course, as long

as we are imperfect, we will continue to sin. However, we can gain comfort from the words found in *Insight on the Scriptures*, Volume 2, page 771: “Since Jehovah mercifully considers the fleshly weakness of his servants, they need not be in a constant state of remorse due to their errors resulting from inherent imperfection. (Ps 103:8-14; 130:3) If they are conscientiously walking in God’s ways, they may be joyful. (Php 4:4-6; 1Jo 3:19-22).” w22.06 7 ¶18-19

Tuesday, January 9

You will be brought before kings and governors for the sake of my name.

—Luke 21:12.

Fear of opposition from governments is not the only weapon Satan uses. For some, fear of how family members will react to the truth is greater than any physical abuse. They love their relatives very much and want them to come to know and love Jehovah. It pains them to hear their relatives speak disrespectfully of the true God and of his worshippers. In some cases, however, relatives who were initially opposed later came into the truth. But suppose our family members cut all ties with us because of our new beliefs? How will we react? We can take comfort from the beautiful truth reflected at Psalm 27:10. When we remember just how much Jehovah loves us, we feel secure in the face of opposition. And we are confident that he will reward us for our endurance. Jehovah will care for our physical, emotional, and spiritual needs far better than anyone else can! w22.06 16-17 ¶11-13

Wednesday, January 10

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

During his ministry, Jesus was falsely accused of being a man who was a drunkard, a glutton, an agent of the Devil, a Sabbath breaker, and even a blasphemer of God. (Matt. 11:19; 26:65; Luke 11:15; John 9:16) Yet, Jesus did not retaliate with angry words. Like Jesus, we should never retaliate even if spoken to harshly. (1 Pet. 2:22, 23) Of course, showing such restraint is not easy. (Jas. 3:2) What can help? Try to look beyond the response of a householder who speaks negatively. A brother named Sam says, “I try to focus on the householder’s need to hear the truth and his potential to change.” Sometimes a householder is angry simply because we came at a bad time. When we are confronted by someone who is upset, we can say a brief prayer, asking Jehovah to help us remain calm and hold back from saying anything unkind or disrespectful. w22.04 6 ¶18-9

Thursday, January 11

Draw close to God.—Jas. 4:8.

An important way to help children draw close to Jehovah is by studying the Bible with them. (2 Tim. 3:14-17) Yet, the Bible reveals another way that young ones can learn about Jehovah. In the book of Proverbs, a father evidently reminds his son never to lose sight of Jehovah’s qualities, which are revealed in creation. (Prov. 3:19-21) Parents, you likely enjoy spending time outdoors with your young ones. Use that time to help

your children see the connection between “the things made” and Jehovah’s marvelous qualities. (Rom. 1:20) Note how Jesus used creation to teach. On one occasion, he asked his disciples to observe the ravens and the lilies. (Luke 12:24, 27-30) He taught his disciples a powerful lesson about their heavenly Father’s generosity and kindness: Jehovah will feed and clothe his faithful servants as he does the ravens and the flowers in the field. w23.03 20-21 ¶1-4

Friday, January 12

Whatever you ask in my name, I will do this, so that the Father may be glorified in connection with the Son.—John 14:13.

We thank Jehovah that we can pray to him through his Son. Jesus is the channel that Jehovah uses to grant our requests. Jehovah listens to and answers prayers that are offered in Jesus’ name and forgives our sins on the basis of Jesus’ ransom sacrifice. (Rom. 5:1) The Scriptures describe Jesus as our “high priest [sitting] at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.” (Heb. 8:1) Jesus is our “helper with the Father.” (1 John 2:1) How thankful we are to Jehovah for providing us with a sympathetic High Priest who understands our weaknesses and who “pleads for us”! (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 4:15) Without Jesus’ sacrifice we would not be able to approach Jehovah in prayer. No doubt you would agree that we can never adequately express our gratitude for the precious gift that Jehovah has given us—the gift of his dear Son! w22.07 23 ¶10-12

Saturday, January 13

The trustworthy person keeps a confidence.—Prov. 11:13.

A trustworthy person strives to keep his promises and tells the truth. (Ps. 15:4) People know that they can depend on him. We want our brothers and sisters to feel that way about us. We cannot force others to trust us. Trust must be earned. It has been said that trust is like money. Earning it is hard; losing it is easy. Jehovah certainly has earned our trust. “Everything he does is trustworthy.” (Ps. 33:4) And he expects us to imitate him. (Eph. 5:1) How thankful we are that Jehovah has drawn us to a brotherhood made up of people who are loving and trustworthy! We all have a responsibility to earn the trust of our brothers and sisters. As we individually work at showing love, humility, discernment, honesty, and self-control, we contribute to a spirit of trust in our congregation. May we imitate our God, Jehovah, and keep proving that we are trustworthy. w22.09 8 ¶1-2; 13 ¶17

Sunday, January 14

Jehovah watches.—Ps. 33:18.

Although we are part of a large family of worshippers, we may occasionally feel alone and may struggle with negative emotions, thinking that we have to deal with these feelings on our own. Jehovah never wants us to feel that way. Consider how he dealt with the prophet Elijah. Jehovah encouraged Elijah to talk. Twice He asked Elijah: “What are you doing here?” (1 Ki. 19:9, 13) Each time, Jehovah listened as Elijah poured out his heart.

He also assured Elijah that he had many fellow worshippers. (1 Ki. 19:11, 12, 18) No doubt, Elijah felt relieved after pouring out his heart to Jehovah and hearing His response. Jehovah gave Elijah several important assignments. He asked him to anoint Hazael as king over Syria, Jehu as king over Israel, and Elisha as prophet. (1 Ki. 19:15, 16) By giving Elijah these assignments, Jehovah helped him to focus on positive things. God also provided him with a close companion, Elisha. w22.08 8 ¶3; 9 ¶5

Monday, January 15

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

Has your congregation ever built or renovated a Kingdom Hall? If so, no doubt you remember your first meeting in the new facility. You were so grateful to Jehovah. In fact, you may have been so choked up with emotion that you could hardly sing the opening song. Our well-built Kingdom Halls bring praise to Jehovah. But we bring even greater praise to him when we engage in another kind of building work. That work involves something more valuable than literal buildings. It involves building up the people who come to those places of worship. The apostle Paul had in mind this type of figurative building program when he wrote the words found in today’s text. The apostle Paul is an excellent example of someone who knew how to build up his fellow believers. He had empathy for them. We can imitate him and thus build up our brothers and sisters today.—1 Cor. 11:1. w22.08 20 ¶1-2

Tuesday, January 16

Walk worthily of Jehovah.

—Col. 1:10.

A Christian who wants to be righteous in God’s eyes will be completely honest in all his business dealings. A righteous man also loves justice—he hates to see someone treated unfairly. And “in order to please [Jehovah] fully,” a person who is truly righteous considers how He will view the decisions he makes. The Bible describes Jehovah as the Source of righteousness. For that reason, he is called “the dwelling place of righteousness.” (Jer. 50:7) As the Creator, Jehovah is the only one who can properly set the standards for what is right and what is wrong. His sense of what is right and what is wrong is far above our own view. (Prov. 14:12; Isa. 55:8, 9) However, because we are made in God’s image, we are able to live by his standards of righteousness. (Gen. 1:27) And we love to do so. Our love for our Father moves us to imitate him to the best of our ability.—Eph. 5:1. w22.08 27 ¶15-6

Wednesday, January 17

Keep perceiving what the will of Jehovah is.—Eph. 5:17.

When we are troubled or discouraged, we might feel the need for some sort of diversion to escape our problems. That is understandable, but we must be careful not to be drawn into doing something that Jehovah hates. (Eph. 5:10-12, 15, 16) In his letter to the Philippians, the apostle Paul urged Christians to continue considering things that are “righteous, . . . chaste, . . . lovable, [and] virtuous.” (Phil. 4:8)

Although Paul was not writing specifically on the subject of entertainment, what he wrote should influence the pastimes that we choose. Try this: Wherever the generic word “things” appears in the verse, substitute it with the word “songs,” “movies,” “novels,” or “video games.” Doing this can help you to discern which ones may be acceptable in God’s view and which ones may not be. We want to bring our life into harmony with Jehovah’s lofty standards.—Ps. 119:1-3. w22.10 9 ¶11-12

Thursday, January 18

He knew what was in man.

—John 2:25.

In their former life, some of the “unrighteous” practiced horrible, vile things. They will therefore need to be taught how to live according to Jehovah’s righteous standards. To meet that need, God’s Kingdom will direct the greatest educational program in all human history. Who will teach the unrighteous? The great crowd and the resurrected righteous ones. In order for the unrighteous to have their names written in the book of life, they will need to develop a relationship with Jehovah and dedicate themselves to him. The progress of all these unrighteous ones will be followed with great interest by Jesus Christ and his fellow judges. (Rev. 20:4) Any who refuse to respond favorably to such help will be removed—even though they may be 100 years of age. (Isa. 65:20) Jehovah and Jesus can read hearts and will see to it that no one will be allowed to cause any ruin in the new world.—Isa. 11:9; 60:18; 65:25. w22.09 17 ¶11-12

Friday, January 19

Let every person be in subjection to the superior authorities.—Rom. 13:1.

In this verse, the term “superior authorities” refers to human rulers who have power and control over others. Christians are subject to these secular authorities. These rulers maintain public order, enforce the law, and at times even come to the defense of Jehovah’s people. (Rev. 12:16) Thus, we are commanded to render them the taxes, tributes, fear, and honor that they demand. (Rom. 13:7) However, those secular governments have authority only because Jehovah allows them to have it. Jesus made that principle clear when he was interrogated by Roman Governor Pontius Pilate. When Pilate referred to the authority he had either to spare Jesus’ life or to have him put to death, Jesus told him: “You would have no authority over me at all unless it had been granted to you from above.” (John 19:11) As was the case with Pilate, the authority of all human rulers and politicians today is limited. w22.10 14 ¶6

Saturday, January 20

The wicked will be no more.
—Ps. 37:10.

King David was inspired to write about what life would be like when a future wise and faithful king would sit on the throne. (Ps. 37:10, 11, 29) We often read Psalm 37:11 to others when discussing the coming Paradise. That is certainly justified because Jesus quoted that text in his Sermon on the Mount, indicating that it will have a future fulfillment. (Matt. 5:5) But David’s words also revealed

what life would be like in King Solomon’s day. When Solomon ruled Israel, God’s people enjoyed special peace and prosperity in a land “flowing with milk and honey.” God had said: “If you continue walking in my statutes . . . , I will put peace in the land, and you will lie down with no one making you afraid.” (Lev. 20:24; 26:3, 6) Those promises came true during Solomon’s reign. (1 Chron. 22:9; 29:26-28) The words found at Psalm 37:10, 11, 29 had an ancient fulfillment and will also be fulfilled in the future. w22.12 10 ¶8

Sunday, January 21

Those who keep firm hold of [wisdom] will be called happy.—Prov. 3:18.

As true Christians, we must follow direction. The Bible offers this practical advice for success: “By wise guidance you will wage your war, and through many advisers there is success.” (Prov. 24:6, *ftn.*) Consider how applying this principle leads to success in our preaching and teaching work. Rather than carry out the ministry in our own way, we try to follow the suggestions we have been given. We receive wise guidance at our Christian meetings, where experienced advisers give Bible-based talks and presentations to train us. In addition, Jehovah’s organization provides useful tools—publications and videos—that can help people to understand the Bible. How grateful we are for the sound advice found in God’s Word! Where would we be without it? Let us be determined always to act on the wisdom that Jehovah provides. —Prov. 3:13-17. w22.10 23 ¶18-19

Monday, January 22

How sweet your sayings are to my palate, more so than honey to my mouth!—Ps. 119:103.

Just as we are nourished physically when we eat food and digest it, we are nourished spiritually when we study God's Word and meditate on it. When it comes to God's Word, Jehovah wants us to absorb it. We can do so by means of prayer, reading, and meditation. First, we pray to prepare our heart to receive God's thoughts. Then, we read a Bible passage. Next, we pause in order to meditate, to think deeply, about what we have read. What will be the outcome? The more we meditate, the more our figurative heart will absorb God's Word. Why is it vital to read the Bible and meditate on it? Doing so gives us the inner strength we need to preach the Kingdom message now and to proclaim the hard-hitting judgment message that we may deliver in the near future. Also, when we meditate on Jehovah's appealing qualities, our relationship with him will grow ever stronger. w22.11 6-7 ¶16-17

Tuesday, January 23

By this all will know that you are my disciples—if you have love among yourselves.—John 13:35.

Jesus indicated that not only his followers but also those outside the Christian congregation would recognize his true followers by the unselfish love they have for one another. And the love that exists among those in the Christian congregation is indeed remarkable. Of course, Jehovah's Witnesses are not perfect. (1 John 1:8)

So the more we get to know those in the congregation, the more likely we are to see some of their flaws. (Rom. 3:23) Sadly, some have allowed the imperfections of others to stumble them. How did Jesus demonstrate love toward his apostles? And how is it possible to imitate Jesus' example today? Witnesses do well to reflect on the answers to those questions. Doing so may help us to display love more fully, especially when dealing with the imperfections of one another.—Eph. 5:2. w23.03 26-27 ¶2-4

Wednesday, January 24

With someone loyal you act in loyalty.—Ps. 18:25.

As we get closer to the end of this system of things, we can expect challenges to come from within the congregation. Those challenges could test our loyalty to Jehovah. So we must keep our senses. If you feel mistreated by a fellow Christian, do not allow yourself to become bitter. If you receive discipline, look beyond the embarrassment, accept the counsel, and make the needed adjustments. And when Jehovah's organization makes changes that affect you personally, wholeheartedly accept them and obey the direction. Maintain your trust in Jehovah and his organization when your loyalty is tested. Stay calm, think clearly, and see matters from Jehovah's perspective. Pray to Jehovah for help. And never isolate yourself from the congregation. Then, come what may, Satan will not be able to separate you from Jehovah or His organization.—Jas. 4:7. w22.11 24-25 ¶14-16

Thursday, January 25

Have love for the whole association of brothers.—1 Pet. 2:17.

Elders help the brothers to be prepared before a disaster strikes. They make sure that all in the congregation know what steps to take to stay safe and to contact the elders. What can you personally do? If a disaster occurs nearby, ask the elders how you can help. Perhaps you can offer temporary accommodations, either for those who are displaced or for construction volunteers. You may be able to deliver food and supplies to publishers in need. If a disaster occurs in a more distant location, you can still help. How? By praying for those affected. (2 Cor. 1:8-11) You may be able to support the relief work financially by donating to the worldwide work. (2 Cor. 8:2-5) If you are able to travel to an affected area to help, ask the elders about volunteering. If you are invited to do so, you will likely receive some training so that you can be used where and when you are most needed. w22.12 24 ¶8; 25 ¶11-12

Friday, January 26

No temptation has come upon you except what is common to men.—1 Cor. 10:13.

Another translation renders today's text this way: "No temptation has overtaken you that is unusual for human beings." That statement was directed to male and female Christians living in Corinth. Some had formerly been adulterers, homosexuals, and drunkards. (1 Cor. 6:9-11) Do you think that after their baptism they never had any improper desires to

contend with? That could not be the case. They were all anointed Christians, true, but they were still imperfect humans. No doubt they had to struggle with improper desires from time to time. That should be encouraging to us. Why? Because it shows that whatever improper desire you are battling, someone else has resisted it. Indeed, you can remain "firm in the faith, knowing that the same kind of sufferings are being experienced by the entire association of your brothers."—1 Pet. 5:9. w23.01 12 ¶15

Saturday, January 27

In the world you will have tribulation, but take courage! I have conquered the world.—John 16:33.

Jesus asked Jehovah to watch over his followers. (John 17:11) Why does this give us courage? Because Jehovah is stronger than any of our enemies. (1 John 4:4) Nothing escapes his notice. We are convinced that if we rely on Jehovah, we can overcome our fears and show courage. Do you sometimes feel embarrassed to identify yourself as one of Jehovah's Witnesses? Are you putting off becoming a publisher or getting baptized because you worry about what others might think of you? Do not let such feelings stop you from doing what you know is right. Pray fervently to Jehovah. Ask him to give you the courage to do his will. As you see how Jehovah answers your prayers, you will become stronger and more courageous.—Isa. 41:10, 13. w23.01 29 ¶12; 30 ¶14

Sunday, January 28

Have you not read?—Matt. 12:3.

Jesus asked the question “Have you not read?” to reveal that the Pharisees had a wrong view of the Scriptures. (Matt. 12:1-7) On that occasion, the Pharisees claimed that Jesus’ disciples had violated the Sabbath. In reply, Jesus cited two Scriptural examples and quoted a verse from Hosea to show that the Pharisees had missed the point of the Sabbath law and had failed to show mercy. Why were these men not molded by their reading of God’s Word? Because they read it with a critical and proud spirit. Their attitude kept them from getting the sense of what they read. (Matt. 23:23; John 5:39, 40) Note also Matthew 19:4-6, where Jesus asked the Pharisees this same question: “Have you not read?” Although they had read the creation account, they overlooked what it taught about God’s view of marriage. We learn from Jesus’ words that we need to read the Bible with the right attitude. Unlike the Pharisees, we must be sincere and teachable. w23.02 12 ¶12-13

Monday, January 29

Thinking ability will keep watch over you.—Prov. 2:11.

Jehovah’s Law to the nation of Israel included guidelines that would help prevent serious accidents from occurring at home and at work. (Ex. 21:28, 29; Deut. 22:8) Fatal accidents had serious consequences for unintentional manslaughter. (Deut. 19:4, 5) The Law required that even those who unintentionally harmed an unborn child be punished. (Ex. 21:22, 23) The Scriptures make it clear that

Jehovah wants us to be safety conscious. We show that we appreciate God’s gift of life by taking safety measures at home and at work. We dispose of sharp objects, toxic chemicals, or medicines in a safe way, and we keep such items out of the reach of young children. We are cautious when handling open flames, hot liquids, and power tools, not leaving them unattended. We do not drive a car while our judgment is impaired by medication, alcohol, or lack of sleep, or allow ourselves to be distracted by using a handheld device while driving. w23.02 21-22 ¶7-9

Tuesday, January 30

*You will see your Grand Instructor.
—Isa. 30:20.*

Jehovah is a patient, kind, understanding Teacher. He looks for the good in his students. (Ps. 130:3) And he never expects more of us than we can do. Remember, he designed your brain, a wonderful gift. (Ps. 139:14) Our Creator wants us to keep learning forever—and to enjoy it. So it is wise to “form a longing” for Bible truths now. (1 Pet. 2:2) Set goals that you can reach, and stick to a schedule of Bible reading and study. (Josh. 1:8) With Jehovah’s blessing, you will come to enjoy reading and learning about him more and more. Knowledge alone is never enough. Its primary value is in how it helps you to learn more about Jehovah and to develop such qualities as love for him and faith in him. (1 Cor. 8:1-3) As you continue learning, keep asking Jehovah to help you gain more faith. (Luke 17:5) He generously answers such prayers. w23.03 10 ¶11, 13

Wednesday, January 31

[Make] the best use of your time.

—Col. 4:5.

Jesus' disciples were not to be idle while they awaited the conclusion of the system of things. Jesus gave them work to do. He commanded them to preach the good news "in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:6-8) What an enormous assignment Jesus' followers received! By devoting themselves to that assignment, they made the best use of their time. In order to pay attention to ourselves, we need to consider how we use our time. "Unexpected events" can affect any one of us. (Eccl. 9:11) Our life can suddenly be cut short. We can make the best use of our time by doing Jehovah's will and strengthening our friendship with him. (John 14:21) We need to "be steadfast, immovable, always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58) Then when the end comes—whether it is the end of our life or the end of this wicked system—we will have no regrets.—Matt. 24:13; Rom. 14:8. w23.02 18 ¶12-14

Thursday, February 1

Love one another just as I have loved you.—John 15:12.

What does today's text mean? As Jesus went on to explain, this is self-sacrificing love—love that moves a Christian even to die for a fellow believer if necessary. God's Word places a lot of emphasis on love. Many people include among their favorite Bible verses the following: "God is love." (1 John 4:8) "You must love your neighbor as yourself." (Matt. 22:39) "Love covers a multitude of sins."

(1 Pet. 4:8) "Love never fails." (1 Cor. 13:8) These verses and others should make it plain to anyone how important it is to cultivate and display this beautiful quality. Genuine love comes from Jehovah—from having his spirit and blessing on a group of worshippers. (1 John 4:7) Is it any wonder, then, that Jesus said that unselfish love would identify his true followers? Just as Jesus foretold, many have recognized his true followers by the genuine love they show among themselves. w23.03 27-28 ¶5-8

Friday, February 2

Your sins are forgiven.—Luke 7:48.

Do you need to be more forgiving of others? You might begin by reading about and meditating on Bible examples of those who freely forgave others and those who did not. Consider Jesus' example. He willingly forgave others. (Luke 7:47) He also looked past their faults and saw their potential. By contrast, the Pharisees in Jesus' day "considered others as nothing." (Luke 18:9) After meditating on these examples, ask yourself: 'What do I see in others? Which of their qualities do I choose to focus on?' If you are struggling to forgive someone, try writing down as many of that individual's good qualities as you can. Then ask yourself: 'How does Jesus view this person? Would he forgive him?' Such a study project could help to readjust our thinking. At first, we may have to work hard to forgive someone who has offended us. But if we keep working at it, in time we will become more willing to forgive. w22.04 23 ¶6

Saturday, February 3

He sent his angel and presented [the revelation] in signs.—Rev. 1:1.

In the book of Revelation, God's enemies are described symbolically. We see a number of wild beasts. For example, there is "a wild beast ascending out of the sea." It has "ten horns and seven heads." (Rev. 13:1) That beast is followed by "another wild beast ascending out of the earth." That beast speaks like a dragon and makes "fire come down out of heaven." (Rev. 13:11-13) Then we see a different beast, "a scarlet-colored wild beast," which is being ridden by a prostitute. These three wild beasts represent long-standing enemies of Jehovah God and his Kingdom. Therefore, it is important that we identify them. (Rev. 17:1, 3) We need to understand what this symbolic language means. The key to understanding it is to allow the Bible to explain itself. Many of the symbols found in Revelation are already explained in other books of the Bible. w22.05 8-9 ¶3-4

Sunday, February 4

You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart.—Matt. 22:37.

Some of Jehovah's servants have a hard time adjusting to the limitations brought on by advancing age or poor health. If you are sometimes discouraged by a limitation, ask yourself, 'What does Jehovah require of me?' Your best—whatever that may be right now. Consider this scenario: A sister in her 80's feels discouraged because she cannot do as much in the ministry as she did when she was in her 40's.

She thinks that even though she is giving her best, it is not pleasing to Jehovah. But is that really the case? Think about it. If this sister gave her best in her 40's and she is still giving her best in her 80's, she has never stopped giving her best. If we do our best, Jehovah will in effect say to us: "Well done!" (Compare Matthew 25:20-23.) We will find it easier to be joyful if we focus on what we can accomplish instead of on what we cannot do. w22.04 10 ¶2; 11 ¶4-6

Monday, February 5

I . . . saw the holy city, New Jerusalem.—Rev. 21:2.

Revelation chapter 21 compares the 144,000 to an extremely beautiful city called "New Jerusalem." This city is based on 12 foundation stones that have written on them "the 12 names of the 12 apostles of the Lamb." (Rev. 21:10-14; Eph. 2:20) This symbolic city looks like no other. It has a main street of pure gold, 12 gates of pearl, walls and foundations adorned with precious stones—and with perfectly balanced measurements. (Rev. 21:15-21) Still, something seems to be missing! Notice what John next tells us: "I did not see a temple in it, for Jehovah God the Almighty is its temple, also the Lamb is. And the city has no need of the sun nor of the moon to shine on it, for the glory of God illuminated it, and its lamp was the Lamb." (Rev. 21:22, 23) Those who make up the New Jerusalem will have direct access to Jehovah.—Heb. 7:27; Rev. 22:3, 4. w22.05 17-18 ¶14-15

Tuesday, February 6

Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely . . . Just as Jehovah freely forgave you, you must also do the same.—Col. 3:13.

Although Jehovah is our Creator, Lawgiver, and Judge, he is also our loving heavenly Father. (Ps. 100:3; Isa. 33:22) When we sin against him and are sincerely repentant, he is not only able but also eager to forgive us. (Ps. 86:5) Through the prophet Isaiah, Jehovah gave this warm assurance: “Though your sins are like scarlet, they will be made as white as snow.” (Isa. 1:18) Because we are imperfect, we all say and do things that offend others. (Jas. 3:2) That does not mean, however, that we cannot enjoy close relationships with them. We can if we learn to be forgiving. (Prov. 17:9; 19:11; Matt. 18:21, 22) When we hurt one another in small ways, Jehovah wants us to forgive. We have good reason to do so. After all, Jehovah freely forgives us “in a large way.”—Isa. 55:7. w22.06 8 ¶1-2

Wednesday, February 7

Be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.—Heb. 6:12.

Although we should avoid comparing ourselves with others, we can benefit by learning from the examples of faithful ones. To illustrate, let us consider Jesus. Even though he was perfect, we can learn from his beautiful qualities and ways. (1 Pet. 2:21) When we do our best to follow his example as closely as we can, we become better servants of Jehovah. In God’s Word, we find many examples of faith-

ful men and women who despite being imperfect are worthy of imitation. Think of King David, whom Jehovah called “a man agreeable to my heart.” (Acts 13:22) Yet, David made some serious mistakes. In spite of that, he is a good example for us. Why? Because he did not try to justify himself. Instead, he accepted the strong counsel he received and was sincerely sorry for what he had done. As a result, Jehovah forgave him.—Ps. 51:3, 4, 10-12. w22.04 13 ¶11-12

Thursday, February 8

A man will give everything that he has for his life.—Job 2:4.

The Bible acknowledges that death is an enemy. (1 Cor. 15:25, 26) We may feel anxious at the thought of death, especially when we or our loved ones are critically ill. Why do we fear death? Because Jehovah created us with the desire to enjoy life forever. (Eccl. 3:11) A balanced fear of death can help us to protect our life. It can motivate us to make good decisions about our diet and exercise routine, to seek the help of physicians and medications when necessary, and to avoid needlessly putting our life in danger. Satan knows that we cherish our life. He claims that we would sacrifice everything we have—even our friendship with Jehovah—just to preserve our present life. (Job 2:5) How wrong Satan is! Still, since he is “the one having the means to cause death,” Satan tries to exploit our natural fear of death in order to make us abandon Jehovah.—Heb. 2:14, 15. w22.06 18 ¶15-16

Friday, February 9

Do not let the sun set while you are still angry.—Eph. 4:26.

While under ban, we may have to limit our association to smaller groups. So it is more important than ever to maintain peaceful relations. Fight Satan, not one another. Overlook your brothers' mistakes, or try to settle any differences quickly. (Prov. 19:11) Take the initiative to help one another. (Titus 3:14) The help that one service group gave to a sister in need had a positive impact on the entire group. They became closer, like a family. (Ps. 133:1) Tens of thousands of our Christian brothers and sisters serve Jehovah despite governmental restrictions. Some of them are imprisoned for their faith. We can pray for them, for their families, and for those risking their own freedom to provide these brothers and sisters with spiritual, physical, and legal support. (Col. 4:3, 18) Never underestimate the power of your prayers!—2 Thess. 3:1, 2; 1 Tim. 2:1, 2. w22.12 26-27 ¶15-16

Saturday, February 10

Do you, . . . the one teaching someone else, not teach yourself?—Rom. 2:21.

Children often imitate their parents. Of course, no parent is perfect. (Rom. 3:23) Even so, wise parents do their very best to set a good example for their children. One father said: "They are like sponges that absorb everything." He adds: "They will tell us when our example isn't consistent with what we try to teach them." So if we want our children to love Jehovah, our own love for him needs to be strong and evident. There are many

ways that parents can teach their children to love Jehovah. A 17-year-old brother named Andrew says: "My parents have always emphasized the importance of prayer. Every night, Dad would pray with me, even if I had already said my own prayer. . . . Now I am very comfortable praying to Jehovah and viewing him as a loving Father." Parents, never underestimate how much your own love for Jehovah can influence your children. w22.05 28 ¶7-8

Sunday, February 11

Baptism . . . is . . . now saving you.—1 Pet. 3:21.

In order to get ready for baptism, one of the first things we must do is sincerely repent of our sins. (Acts 2:37, 38) Genuine repentance leads to genuine change. Have you put away any practices that displease Jehovah, such as living immorally, using tobacco, or using foul or abusive language? (1 Cor. 6:9, 10; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 4:29) Keep trying to make changes. Talk to the person studying the Bible with you, or ask the congregation elders for help and guidance. If you are young and are living at home, keep asking your parents for help to break any bad habits that might prevent you from getting baptized. It is also important to follow a good spiritual routine. That would include attending Christian meetings and participating in them. (Heb. 10:24, 25) And once you qualify to engage in the Christian ministry, make that part of your routine as well. w23.03 10-11 ¶14-16

Monday, February 12

Jehovah God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you are the cursed one."—Gen. 3:14.

The characters in the account recorded at Genesis 3:14, 15 include a "serpent" and the "offspring" of the serpent. A literal snake could not have understood what Jehovah said in the garden of Eden. So the object of Jehovah's judgment must have been an intelligent creature. Who? Revelation 12:9 leaves no doubt on this matter. There "the original serpent" is clearly identified as Satan the Devil. When the Bible speaks of offspring in a figurative sense, it is referring to those who think and act like their symbolic father. So the offspring of the serpent is made up of spirit creatures and humans who, like Satan, resist Jehovah God and oppose His people. That would include the angels who abandoned their assignments in heaven in Noah's day as well as wicked humans who behave like their father the Devil.—Gen. 6:1, 2; John 8:44; 1 John 5:19; Jude 6. w22.07 14-15 ¶4-5

Tuesday, February 13

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

The apostle Paul loved his brothers very much. He was no stranger to hardship; thus, he could show compassion and empathy for fellow believers when they were going through trials. One time, Paul ran out of funds and had to find work to support himself and his companions. (Acts 20:34) He was a tentmaker by trade. When he arrived in Corinth, he at first worked with fellow tentmakers Aquila

and Priscilla. But "every sabbath" he would preach to the Jews and the Greeks. Then when Silas and Timothy arrived, "Paul began to be intensely occupied with the word." (Acts 18:2-5) Paul never lost sight of his main purpose in life, to serve Jehovah. Hardworking Paul was in a good position to encourage his brothers and sisters. He reminded them not to allow the pressures of life and the need to provide for the family to cause them to neglect "the more important things"—all aspects of Jehovah's worship. w22.08 20 ¶3

Wednesday, February 14

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

Today it is God's will that the good news of the Kingdom be preached in all the earth. (1 Tim. 2:3, 4) This is Jehovah's work, and it is so important that he has placed it under the direction of his beloved Son. We can be sure that under Jesus' capable oversight, the preaching work will be completed to Jehovah's satisfaction before the end comes. (Matt. 24:14) How can we be sure of that? Shortly before he ascended to heaven, Jesus met with a number of his faithful followers on a mountain in Galilee. He told them: "All authority has been given me in heaven and on the earth." Note his very next statement: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of people of all the nations." (Matt. 28:18, 19) So, among other things, Jesus has been given the authority to direct the preaching work. And that preaching work would continue under Jesus' supervision right down to our day. w22.07 8 ¶1, 3; 9 ¶4

Thursday, February 15

The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who did good things to a resurrection of life.
—John 5:28, 29.

The righteous, who did good things before their death, will receive “a resurrection of life” because their names will already be written in the book of life. This means that the resurrection of “those who did good things” described at John 5:29 is the same as the resurrection of “the righteous” mentioned at Acts 24:15. This understanding is in harmony with the statement made at Romans 6:7, which says: “The one who has died has been acquitted from his sin.” The sins committed by these righteous ones were canceled at death, but their record of faithfulness remains. (Heb. 6:10) Of course, these righteous resurrected ones will need to remain faithful in order for their names to remain in the book of life. w22.09 18 ¶13, 15

Friday, February 16

Everything [Jehovah] does is trustworthy.—Ps. 33:4.

The prophet Daniel set an excellent example of being trustworthy. Although he had been taken into captivity by the Babylonians, he soon earned a reputation as a man who could be trusted. His reputation grew when, with Jehovah’s help, he interpreted the dreams of Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar. (Dan. 4:20-22, 25) Many years later, Daniel again proved to be trustworthy when he accurately interpreted a mysterious message that appeared on the palace wall in Bab-

ylon. (Dan. 5:5, 25-29) Still later, Darius the Mede and his appointed officials also noticed “an extraordinary spirit in” Daniel. They acknowledged that Daniel “was trustworthy and no negligence or corruption could be found in him.” (Dan. 6:3, 4) We do well to ask ourselves: ‘Am I known as someone who can be trusted?’ We bring praise to Jehovah when we are trustworthy. w22.09 8-9 ¶2-4

Saturday, February 17

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

We benefit by adhering to Jehovah’s standards of right and wrong. Can you see why? Imagine what would happen if every bank came up with its own standards for determining the value of currency or if each construction company followed its own standards of measurements. The result would be chaos. And if medical personnel failed to adhere to consistent standards of care, some patients might die. Certainly, reliable standards are a protection. Likewise, God’s standards of right and wrong protect us. Jehovah blesses those who try to live by his standards. He promises: “The righteous will possess the earth, and they will live forever on it.” (Ps. 37:29) Can you imagine how united, peaceful, and happy mankind will be when everyone follows Jehovah’s standards? Jehovah wants you to enjoy that kind of life. Surely, each one of us has good reasons to love righteousness! w22.08 27-28 ¶6-8

Sunday, February 18

Keep your senses in all things.

—2 Tim. 4:5.

When we face adversities, our loyalty to Jehovah and his organization can be tested. How can we overcome such challenges? We need to keep our senses and stay awake, standing firm in the faith. We keep our senses by remaining calm, thinking clearly, and striving to see matters from Jehovah's perspective. When we do that, our thoughts will not be controlled by emotions. Perhaps we feel mistreated by a fellow Christian, perhaps someone in a position of responsibility. Likely, the brother did not intend to hurt you. (Rom. 3:23; Jas. 3:2) Still, his actions may have upset you. You may have even wondered, 'If a brother can act this way, is this really God's organization?' That is exactly how Satan wants us to react. (2 Cor. 2:11) Such negative thinking could cause us to separate ourselves from Jehovah and his organization. So we must be careful not to become embittered. w22.11 20 ¶1, 3; 21 ¶4

Monday, February 19

Hope in Jehovah.—Ps. 27:14.

Jehovah has given us the marvelous hope of everlasting life. Some hope to live forever in heaven as immortal spirit creatures. (1 Cor. 15:50, 53) Most, though, hope to live forever on earth in perfect health and happiness. (Rev. 21:3, 4) Whether we look forward to everlasting life in heaven or on earth, our hope is precious to us. Our hope for the future is guaranteed because it comes from Jehovah. (Rom. 15:13) We know what he has

promised, and we know that he always keeps his word. (Num. 23:19) We are convinced that Jehovah has both the desire and the power to accomplish everything that he says he will do. Our heavenly Father loves us, and he wants us to trust in him. When our hope in Jehovah is strong, we will be able to endure trials and face the future with courage and joy. w22.10 24 ¶1-3

Tuesday, February 20

They are a rebellious people, . . . who are unwilling to hear the law of Jehovah.—Isa. 30:9.

Because the people refused to listen, Isaiah foretold that Jehovah would allow them to suffer calamity. (Isa. 30:5, 17; Jer. 25:8-11) And, indeed, they were taken into captivity by the Babylonians. However, there were some faithful ones among the Jews, and Isaiah told them that one day Jehovah would restore them to favor. (Isa. 30:18, 19) And that is exactly what happened. Jehovah brought an end to their captivity. However, their deliverance would not come right away. The statement "Jehovah is waiting patiently to show you favor" indicated that some time would pass before the faithful ones would be rescued. In fact, the Israelites spent 70 years in exile in Babylon before a remnant was allowed to return to Jerusalem. (Isa. 10:21; Jer. 29:10) Once the people were back in their homeland, the tears of sorrow were replaced by tears of joy. w22.11 9 ¶4

Wednesday, February 21

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

Today, in a number of lands, our brothers and sisters are experiencing what the apostles endured in the first century when they were persecuted for preaching about Jesus. Repeatedly, the judges of the Jewish high court “ordered them to stop speaking on the basis of Jesus’ name.” (Acts 4:18-20; 5:27, 28, 40) But they knew that a higher authority had ‘ordered them to preach to the people and to give a thorough witness’ about the Christ. (Acts 10:42) So their spokesmen, Peter and John, boldly said that they would obey God rather than those judges and declared that they would not stop speaking about Jesus. (Acts 5:29) After being beaten for keeping their integrity, the apostles went out from the Jewish high court, “rejoicing because they had been counted worthy to be dishonored in behalf of [Jesus’] name,” and they kept right on preaching!—Acts 5:41, 42. w22.10 12-13 ¶2-4

Thursday, February 22

Drawing near to God is good for me.
—Ps. 73:28.

Understandably, learning about Jehovah starts with the basics. In his letter to the Hebrews, the apostle Paul referred to basic teachings as “the elementary things.” He was not belittling “the primary doctrine”; he was comparing it to the milk that nourishes a baby. (Heb. 5:12; 6:1) But he also urged all Christians to keep moving beyond those basic teachings and

to learn the deeper truths of God’s Word. Have you developed a hunger for the deeper teachings of the Bible? Are you willing to keep growing, to keep learning about Jehovah and his purposes? For many of us, though, it is a challenge to study. What about you? At school, did you learn to read and study effectively? Did you find study to be enjoyable and rewarding? Or did you conclude that you are not good at learning from books? If so, you are not alone. However, Jehovah can help you. He is perfect and is the best Teacher there is. w23.03 9-10 ¶8-10

Friday, February 23

Accept with mildness the implanting of the word that is able to save you.
—Jas. 1:21.

If we are mild, we will allow God’s Word to take root in our heart. Only if we avoid a critical or proud spirit will the Bible’s lessons about mercy, compassion, and love shape us. The way we treat others can indicate if we are allowing God’s Word to mold us. The Pharisees failed to let God’s Word reach their heart, and as a result, they “condemned the guiltless ones.” (Matt. 12:7) In a similar way, how we view and treat others reveals whether we have let God’s Word mold us. For example, are we inclined to mention the good we see in others, or are we quick to point out their flaws? Are we merciful and ready to forgive, or are we critical and given to holding grudges? Such self-examination can reveal whether we are letting what we read shape our thoughts, feelings, and actions.—1 Tim. 4:12, 15; Heb. 4:12. w23.02 12 ¶13-14

Saturday, February 24

I, Jehovah your God, am grasping your right hand, the One saying to you, "Do not be afraid. I will help you."—Isa. 41:13.

Consider the example of Joseph of Arimathea. He was well-regarded by Jewish society. He was a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish supreme court. However, during Jesus' earthly ministry, Joseph was anything but courageous. John said that he was "a disciple of Jesus but a secret one because of his fear of the Jews." (John 19:38) Although Joseph was interested in the Kingdom message, he hid from others that he had faith in Jesus. No doubt he was afraid that he would lose his prestigious position in the community. Whatever the case, the Bible tells us that after Jesus died, Joseph finally "took courage and went in before Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus." (Mark 15:42, 43) Joseph's support of Jesus was now no longer a secret. Can you relate to Joseph's fear of man? w23.01 30 ¶13-14

Sunday, February 25

Happy are your men, and happy are your servants who stand before you constantly, listening to your wisdom!—1 Ki. 10:8.

News of the peace and prosperity enjoyed by the Israelites under Solomon's rule reached the queen of Sheba. That sovereign from a distant land traveled to Jerusalem to see the situation for herself. (1 Ki. 10:1) After inspecting Solomon's kingdom, she said the words above. But the conditions under Solomon's rule were just a taste of what Jehovah will do for man-

kind under the rule of His Son, Jesus. Jesus is superior to Solomon in every way. Solomon was an imperfect man who made serious errors in judgment that eventually brought hardship on God's people. Jesus, on the other hand, is a perfect Ruler who makes no mistakes. (Luke 1:32; Heb. 4:14, 15) Christ has proved that he will never sin or do anything that would harm his loyal subjects. It truly is an honor to have him as our King. w22.12 11 ¶9-10

Monday, February 26

Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over you.—Heb. 13:17.

What should we do if a contagious disease is spreading where we live? We should obey emergency regulations, such as those regarding washing our hands, social distancing, wearing a mask, and quarantining. Our diligence in these areas shows how deeply we appreciate God's gift of life. During emergencies, inaccurate information may circulate among friends, among neighbors, and in the media. Rather than believe "every word" we hear, we do well to listen to the most reliable governmental and medical sources available. (Prov. 14:15) The Governing Body and the branch offices make every effort to obtain accurate information before giving direction regarding congregation meetings and the preaching work. By being cooperative, we protect ourselves and others from harm. We may also enhance the congregation's reputation in the community.—1 Pet. 2:12. w23.02 23 ¶11-12

Tuesday, February 27

Listen and learn to fear Jehovah your God.—Deut. 31:13.

When the Israelites entered the Promised Land, they settled over a wide area. Israelites living in one area could easily have lost interest in the welfare of fellow Israelites living in other parts of the country. But Jehovah arranged for the Israelites to gather together on various occasions to hear his written Word read and explained. (Deut. 31:10-12; Neh. 8:2, 8, 18) Imagine how a faithful Israelite must have felt as he arrived in Jerusalem and saw perhaps millions of his fellow worshippers from every part of the country! Jehovah thereby helped his people to remain united. Later, when the Christian congregation was formed, it was made up of men and women who spoke many languages and who were from many social and economic backgrounds. But they were united in worship of the true God. Those who became believers could understand God's Word only with the aid of fellow worshippers and by meeting together with them.—Acts 2:42; 8:30, 31. w23.02 3 ¶7

Wednesday, February 28

*This means everlasting life.
—John 17:3.*

Jehovah promises that those who obey him will have “everlasting life.” (Rom. 6:23) When we meditate on what Jehovah is offering us, our love for him certainly grows stronger. Just think: Our heavenly Father loves us so deeply that we will never be separated from him. God's promise of everlasting life helps us to endure our current

trials. Even when our enemies threaten us with death, we will not compromise. Why? In part because we know that if we die faithful to Jehovah, he will raise us from the dead with the prospect of never dying. (John 5:28, 29; 1 Cor. 15:55-58; Heb. 2:15) We know that Jehovah is able to keep us alive forever because he is the Source of life and he lives forever. (Ps. 36:9) The Bible confirms that Jehovah has always existed and will always exist.—Ps. 90:2; 102:12, 24, 27. w22.12 2 ¶1-3

Thursday, February 29

Who will separate us from the love of the Christ? Will tribulation or distress or persecution?—Rom. 8:35.

As Jehovah's people, we are not surprised when we have to face trials. We realize that, as the Bible says, “we must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations.” (Acts 14:22) We also know that some of our problems will not be completely solved until we are living in God's new world, where “death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore.” (Rev. 21:4) Jehovah does not shield us from trials. However, he does help us to endure them. Note what the apostle Paul said to Christians living in Rome. He first listed a number of trials that he and his brothers were facing. Then he wrote: “We are coming off completely victorious through the one who loved us.” (Rom. 8:36, 37) This means that Jehovah can make you successful even while the trial is running its course. w23.01 14 ¶1-2

Friday, March 1

Why do you boast?—1 Cor. 4:7.

The apostle Peter urged his brothers to use whatever gifts and talents they had to build up their fellow believers. Peter wrote: “To the extent that each one has received a gift, use it in ministering to one another as fine stewards of God’s undeserved kindness.” (1 Pet. 4:10) We should not hold back from using our gifts to the fullest for fear that others may become jealous or get discouraged. But we must be careful that we do not boast about them. (1 Cor. 4:6) Let us remember that any natural abilities we may have are gifts from God. We should use those gifts to build up the congregation, not to promote ourselves. (Phil. 2:3) When we use our energy and abilities to do God’s will, we will have cause for rejoicing—not because we are outdoing others or proving ourselves superior to them, but because we are using our gifts to bring praise to Jehovah. *w22.04 11-12 ¶7-9*

Saturday, March 2

Open my eyes so that I may see clearly the wonderful things from your law.—Ps. 119:18.

Jesus loved the Holy Scriptures, and his feelings were prophetically expressed in the words found at Psalm 40:8: “To do your will, O my God, is my delight, and your law is deep within me.” As a result, he was happy and successful in serving Jehovah. We too can enjoy happiness and success if we work on getting God’s Word into our heart. (Ps. 1:1-3) In harmony with Jesus’ words and example, let us sharp-

en our Bible-reading skills. We can improve our understanding of Bible passages by praying, reading at a slow pace, asking questions, and taking brief notes. We can use discernment by carefully analyzing what we read with the help of our Bible-based publications. And we can let God’s Word mold us by maintaining the right attitude as we read. When we apply ourselves in these ways, we will get more out of our Bible reading and draw ever closer to Jehovah.—Ps. 119:17; Jas. 4:8. *w23.02 13 ¶15-16*

Sunday, March 3

The plans of the diligent surely lead to success.—Prov. 21:5.

Choose a specific goal and then take practical steps to reach your goal. How can this be accomplished? Suppose you wanted to improve your ability to teach. You could carefully study the brochure *Apply Yourself to Reading and Teaching*. When you are assigned a part on the midweek meeting, you could ask a qualified brother to listen to your presentation beforehand and provide suggestions for improvement. Earn a reputation not just for being skilled but also for being diligent and dependable. (2 Cor. 8:22) What if the skill you want to develop involves something that you are not naturally good at? Do not give up! Did Timothy become a notable speaker or an outstanding teacher? The Bible does not say. But no doubt Timothy became progressively more effective in carrying out his responsibilities as he followed Paul’s advice.—2 Tim. 3:10. *w22.04 24-25 ¶8-11*

Monday, March 4

I saw a wild beast ascending out of the sea, with ten horns and seven heads.
—Rev. 13:1.

What is the seven-headed wild beast? We notice that this beast has the general appearance of a leopard but the feet of a bear and the mouth of a lion, and it has ten horns. All of these are also features of the four beasts mentioned in Daniel chapter 7. Yet, here in the book of Revelation, these characteristics are combined into one beast, not four separate beasts. This wild beast does not represent just one government or world empire. It is spoken of as ruling “over every tribe and people and tongue and nation.” So it must be greater than any single national government. (Rev. 13:7) This wild beast, then, must represent all the political powers that have dominated humankind down through history. (Eccl. 8:9) Another indication is that the number ten is often used in the Bible to denote completeness. w22.05 9 ¶6

Tuesday, March 5

He will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore.—Rev. 21:4.

Who will benefit from these wonderful provisions? First of all, the great crowd of Armageddon survivors, along with any children who may be born in the new world. But Revelation chapter 20 also promises that the dead will be resurrected. (Rev. 20:11-13) Faithful “righteous” ones who died in the past along with “unrighteous” ones—who did not receive an

adequate opportunity to learn about Jehovah—will all come back to life here on the earth. (Acts 24:15; John 5:28, 29) Does this mean that everyone will be resurrected during the Thousand Year Reign? No. Those who wickedly rejected the opportunity to serve Jehovah before their death will not be raised to life. They had their chance and proved that they were not worthy of life on the Paradise earth. —Matt. 25:46; 2 Thess. 1:9; Rev. 17:8; 20:15. w22.05 18 ¶16-17

Wednesday, March 6

Whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life.—John 6:68.

By means of “the faithful and discreet slave,” Jesus has built up a remarkable organization on earth to promote pure worship. (Matt. 24:45) How do you feel about that organization? In response, perhaps you think of the words of the apostle Peter, who said the words of today’s text to Jesus. Where would any of us be today if we had not come in contact with Jehovah’s organization? Through it, Christ makes sure that we are well-fed spiritually. He also trains us to carry out our ministry effectively. Further, he helps us to put on “the new personality,” so that we are pleasing to Jehovah. (Eph. 4:24) Jesus provides wise direction in times of crisis. The benefits of that direction were evident when the COVID-19 pandemic broke out. While many in the world were uncertain about what course to take, Jesus made sure that we received clear guidance to keep us safe. w22.07 12 ¶13-14

Thursday, March 7

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

Jehovah instructed the ancient Israelites to teach their children about him regularly. (Deut. 6:6, 7) Those parents had many opportunities throughout the day to talk with their children and instill love for Jehovah in their heart. For instance, a young Israelite boy might spend hours helping his father plant the crops or bring in the harvest. His sister might spend much of the day helping her mother with sewing, weaving, and other household chores. As parents and children worked together, they could talk about many important topics. For example, they could discuss Jehovah's quality of goodness and consider how he was helping the family. In many lands, parents and children cannot spend time together throughout the day. The parents may be at work, and the children may be in school. As a result, parents must look for occasions when they can talk with their children.—Eph. 5:15, 16. w22.05 28 ¶10-11

Friday, March 8

Do you not know that unrighteous people will not inherit God's Kingdom?—1 Cor. 6:9.

Serious sins are gross violations of God's law. If a Christian commits such a sin, he must approach Jehovah God in prayer, and he must go to the elders of the congregation. (Ps. 32:5; Jas. 5:14) What role do the elders play? Only Jehovah has the authority to forgive sins fully, which he makes possible on the basis of the ransom sacrifice. Jehovah, however,

has entrusted the elders with the responsibility of determining from the Scriptures whether the sinner can remain in the congregation. (1 Cor. 5:12) Among other things, they will endeavor to answer the following questions: Was the sin intentional? Did the person scheme to do what was wrong? Did he practice the sin over an extended period of time? Most important, is there evidence that he is sincerely repentant? Are there indications that Jehovah has forgiven him?—Acts 3:19. w22.06 9 ¶4

Saturday, March 9

Love truth.—Zech. 8:19.

Jesus urged his followers to pursue righteousness. (Matt. 5:6) This means that one needs to have a strong desire to do what is right, good, and clean in God's eyes. Do you love truth and righteousness? We are sure that you do. You hate lies and all that is wrong and wicked. (Ps. 119:128, 163) Lies reflect the personality of Satan, the ruler of this world. (John 8:44; 12:31) One of Satan's goals is to slander the holy name of Jehovah God. Satan has been spreading lies about our God since the rebellion in Eden. He portrayed Jehovah as a selfish and dishonest Ruler who withholds good from humans. (Gen. 3:1, 4, 5) Satan's lies about Jehovah have continued to poison the minds and hearts of people. When humans choose not to "love truth," Satan can lead them into all kinds of unrighteous and wicked conduct.—Rom. 1:25-31. w23.03 2 ¶3

Sunday, March 10

[Jehovah's] love endures forever.

—Ps. 100:5.

As you work to overcome a bad habit, you may suffer an occasional relapse. Or you may just feel impatient and frustrated because your goal seems far away. What will help you to endure? A vital quality—love for Jehovah. Your love for Jehovah is a beautiful quality, the very best you have. (Prov. 3:3-6) Strong love for God can help you to face life's challenges successfully. The Bible often refers to Jehovah's loyal love for his servants. This is a strong attachment that never quits, never lets go. You are made in God's image. (Gen. 1:26) How can you reflect that kind of love? Start with gratitude. (1 Thess. 5:18) Each day, ask yourself, 'How has Jehovah shown love to me?' Then make sure to thank Jehovah in your prayers, mentioning specific things that he has done for you. See his acts of love as personal, directed to you as an individual. w23.03 12 ¶17-19

Monday, March 11

[Jesus] knew what was in man.

—John 2:25.

Jesus dealt with all 12 apostles in a kind and loving way. The lesson for us? What matters is not only what other people do but also how we react to their mistakes and shortcomings. When we are upset with a fellow believer, we can ask ourselves: 'Why does what he did bother me so much? Does it reveal a negative trait that I need to work on? Could it be that the person who upset me is dealing with a difficulty? Even if I

feel that I am justified for being upset, can I show unselfish love by overlooking the offense?' The more we deal with others in a loving way, the more we prove to be Jesus' true followers. Jesus' example also teaches us to try to understand our fellow believers. (Prov. 20:5) Granted, Jesus could read hearts. We cannot. But we can make allowances for the imperfections of our brothers and sisters. (Eph. 4:1, 2; 1 Pet. 3:8) It is easier to do so if we learn about their background. w23.03 30 ¶14-16

Tuesday, March 12

He is a God, not of the dead, but of the living.—Luke 20:38.

Satan may take advantage of a life-threatening medical situation to try to get us to compromise. Medical doctors or unbelieving family members may pressure us to accept a blood transfusion, which would violate God's law. Or someone may try to persuade us to consider another therapy that goes against Scriptural principles. Although we do not want to die, we know that Jehovah will not stop loving us if our life should end. (Rom. 8:37-39) When Jehovah's friends die, he keeps them in his memory, as if they were still alive. (Luke 20:37) He longs to bring them back to life. (Job 14:15) Jehovah has paid a high price so that we "might . . . have everlasting life." (John 3:16) We know how deeply Jehovah loves us and cares for us. So rather than abandon Jehovah when we are sick or threatened with death, we turn to him for comfort, wisdom, and strength.—Ps. 41:3. w22.06 18 ¶16-17

Wednesday, March 13

True wisdom cries aloud in the street.
—Prov. 1:20.

The Bible states: “The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Most Holy One is understanding.” (Prov. 9:10) So when we have an important decision to make, we should make Jehovah’s thinking —“knowledge of the Most Holy One”—the basis for our decision. We can do that by consulting the Bible and Bible-based publications. When we do, we are showing true wisdom. (Prov. 2: 5-7) Jehovah is the only one who can give us true wisdom. (Rom. 16:27) Why is he the Source of wisdom? First, as the Creator, he has unlimited knowledge and understanding of his creation. (Ps. 104:24) Second, all of Jehovah’s actions reflect wisdom. (Rom. 11:33) Third, Jehovah’s wise counsel always benefits those who apply it. (Prov. 2:10-12) If we are to acquire true wisdom, we must accept these basic truths and allow them to guide us when making decisions and when taking a course of action. w22.10 19 ¶3-4

Thursday, March 14

War broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels battled with the dragon, and the dragon and its angels battled but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them any longer in heaven.—Rev. 12:7, 8.

Satan lost the battle foretold in Revelation chapter 12, and he and the demons were hurled down to the earth. Enraged, Satan began to vent his anger on humankind, resulting in “woe for the earth.” (Rev. 12:9-12) How can these prophecies benefit us? World

events and the noticeable change in people’s attitude would help us discern that Jesus has become King. So rather than become upset when we see people act selfishly and hatefully, we remember that their actions are fulfilling Bible prophecy. The Kingdom is in place! (Ps. 37:1) And we can expect world distress to increase as Armageddon draws ever nearer. (Mark 13:8; 2 Tim. 3:13) Are you not thankful to our loving heavenly Father for helping us to make sense of our turbulent times? w22.07 3-4 ¶7-8

Friday, March 15

A righteous man’s supplication has a powerful effect.—Jas. 5:16.

We can ask Jehovah to help our fellow worshippers to endure sickness, natural disasters, civil war, persecution, or other difficulties. We can also pray for our self-sacrificing brothers and sisters who provide relief for those in need. You may personally know some who are facing such challenges. Why not mention them by name in your personal prayers? We show genuine brotherly love by asking Jehovah to help them to endure. Those who take the lead in the congregation greatly appreciate the prayers of others and benefit from them. That was true of the apostle Paul. He wrote: “Pray also for me, that the words may be given to me when I open my mouth, so that I may be able to speak boldly in making known the sacred secret of the good news.” (Eph. 6:19) Today, too, we have many hardworking brothers who take the lead among us. We show love for them by asking Jehovah to bless their work. w22.07 23-24 ¶14-16

Saturday, March 16

Put on . . . the hope of salvation as a helmet.—1 Thess. 5:8.

A soldier wears a helmet to protect his head. In our spiritual warfare, we need to protect our mind from Satan's attacks. He bombards us with temptations and ideas designed to corrupt our thinking. Just as the helmet protects a soldier's head, our hope protects our thinking so that we can remain faithful to Jehovah. If our hope weakens and we allow fleshly thinking to take hold of our mind, we can lose sight of the goal of everlasting life. Consider the case of some Christians living in ancient Corinth. They lost faith in a key promise of God—the hope of the resurrection. (1 Cor. 15:12) Paul argued that people with no hope of a future life live only for the present. (1 Cor. 15:32) Today many who have no hope in God's promises live for the moment, grasping whatever pleasures are available to them. We, however, put our trust in the future promised by God. w22.10 25-26 ¶8-9

Sunday, March 17

Pray constantly.—1 Thess. 5:17.

Jehovah invites you to pray to him. He sees what you are dealing with, and he assures you that he will listen to your prayers at any time. He finds pleasure in listening to his worshippers. (Prov. 15:8) What can you pray about when you feel alone? Pour your heart out to Jehovah. (Ps. 62:8) Tell him about your concerns and how they make you feel. Ask Jehovah to help you to cope with your feelings and to give you the courage you need

to express yourself. You can even ask him for the wisdom to explain your beliefs tactfully. (Luke 21:14, 15) If you are struggling with negative emotions, ask Jehovah to help you to talk with a mature Christian about it. You can ask Jehovah to help the one you are confiding in to listen to you with understanding. See how he responds to your prayers, and accept the help of others; you will feel less alone. w22.08 10 ¶16

Monday, March 18

These men act in opposition to the decrees of Caesar.—Acts 17:7.

The new congregation in Thessalonica faced severe opposition. A mob of vicious opposers dragged "some of the brothers to the city rulers." (Acts 17:6) Can you imagine how shaken those newly converted Christians must have been? They could have slowed down in their service to Jehovah, but the apostle Paul did not want that to happen. He made sure that the fledgling congregation was well cared for. Paul reminded the Thessalonians: "We sent Timothy, our brother . . . , to make you firm and comfort you regarding your faith, so that no one might be shaken by these tribulations." (1 Thess. 3:2, 3) Timothy had seen how Paul strengthened the brothers in Lystra. Having seen the outcome that Jehovah gave, Timothy could assure his new brothers and sisters that everything would turn out well for them too.—Acts 14:8, 19-22; Heb. 12:2. w22.08 21 ¶4

Tuesday, March 19

We . . . gain life through him.

—1 John 4:9.

In the late 19th century, a group of Bible students led by Charles Taze Russell began an intensive study of the Scriptures. They wanted to know the truth about the value of Jesus' sacrifice and how his death should be commemorated. Today we benefit from their research. How so? Our eyes have been opened to the truth about Jesus' sacrifice and what it accomplishes. (1 John 2:1, 2) We have also learned that the Bible holds out two hopes for humans who please God—immortal life in heaven for some and everlasting life on earth for others. We draw closer to Jehovah as we consider how much he loves us and how much we personally benefit from Jesus' sacrifice. (1 Pet. 3:18) So like our faithful brothers of the past, we invite others to join us in observing the Memorial according to the pattern Jesus set. w23.01 21 ¶¶6-7

Memorial Bible reading:

(Events after sunset: Nisan 9)

Mark 14:3-9

Wednesday, March 20

He died for all so that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for him who died for them and was raised up.—2 Cor. 5:15.

Jesus taught people about the blessings that God's Kingdom would bring. We are thankful for the ransom because it opens the way for us to enjoy a close friendship with Jehovah and Jesus. Those who exercise faith in Jesus also have the hope of living forever and of seeing their dead loved

ones again. (John 5:28, 29; Rom. 6:23) We have not done anything to deserve these blessings; nor can we ever repay God and Christ for what they have done for us. (Rom. 5:8, 20, 21) But we can show them the depth of our gratitude. How? By using our resources to advance the Kingdom work. For example, we can make ourselves available to help with constructing and maintaining buildings for pure worship. w23.01 26 ¶¶3; 28 ¶¶5

Memorial Bible reading:

(Daytime events: Nisan 9)

Mark 11:1-11

Thursday, March 21

I saw . . . the Lamb . . . and with him 144,000.—Rev. 14:1.

Those ruling in God's Kingdom will help to care for billions of people living across the globe. Like Jesus, the 144,000 will serve as kings and priests. (Rev. 5:10) Under the Mosaic Law, the priests were primarily responsible for protecting the people's physical health while making sure that they were spiritually healthy. The Law was "a shadow of the good things to come," so it is reasonable to conclude that Jesus' corulers will assist in the unique role of caring for the physical and spiritual needs of God's people. (Heb. 10:1) We will have to wait and see just how these kings and priests will communicate with subjects of the Kingdom who are on earth. We can be confident that in the Paradise to come, those on earth will receive the guidance they need.—Rev. 21:3, 4. w22.12 11 ¶¶11-13

Memorial Bible reading:

(Daytime events: Nisan 10)

Mark 11:12-19

Friday, March 22

You keep proclaiming the death of the Lord, until he comes.—1 Cor. 11:26.

One reason why we invite others to observe the Memorial with us is that we want those who attend for the first time to learn the truth about what Jehovah and Jesus have done for all of us. (John 3:16) We hope that what they see and hear at the Memorial will move them to learn more and to become servants of Jehovah. We also invite those who are no longer serving Jehovah. We do so to remind them that God still loves them. Many respond to our invitation, and we are overjoyed to see them. Attending the Memorial reminds them of how much they enjoyed serving Jehovah in the past. (Ps. 103:1-4) Whether people respond positively to our invitation or not, we diligently invite others to the Memorial, knowing that Jehovah is interested in individuals.—Luke 15:7; 1 Tim. 2:3, 4. w23.01 20 ¶1; 22-23 ¶9-11

Memorial Bible reading:
(Daytime events: Nisan 11)
Mark 11:20–12:27, 41-44

Saturday, March 23

The eye of Jehovah watches over those fearing him.—Ps. 33:18.

On the night before he died, Jesus made a special request to his heavenly Father. He asked Jehovah to watch over his followers. (John 17:15, 20) Jehovah has always watched over—cared for and protected—his people. However, Jesus knew that his followers would face unprecedented opposition from Satan. Jesus also realized that they would need Jehovah’s help to resist the Devil’s wicked attacks. Satan’s system puts an immense

amount of pressure on true Christians today. We face adversities that can discourage us and even test our loyalty to Jehovah. But we have nothing to fear. Jehovah is watching over us—he sees the challenges we are facing, and he is ever ready to help us deal with them. Yes, Jehovah “watches over those fearing him . . . to rescue them.”—Ps. 33:18-20. w22.08 8 ¶1-2

Memorial Bible reading:
(Daytime events: Nisan 12)
Mark 14:1, 2, 10, 11;
Matthew 26:1-5, 14-16

MEMORIAL DATE

After Sundown

Sunday, March 24

Keep doing this in remembrance of me.—Luke 22:19.

Each year during the Memorial season, we show our appreciation for what Jesus has done by taking time to meditate prayerfully on the meaning of his death. We also encourage as many as possible to join us for this special occasion. And we are determined not to allow anything to prevent us from attending the Memorial. At the Memorial, we learn why mankind needs a ransom and how the death of one man can atone for the sins of many. We are reminded of what the bread and the wine represent and who should partake of them. (Luke 22:19, 20) And we meditate on the blessings that are in store for those who cherish the earthly hope. (Isa. 35:5, 6; 65:17, 21-23) We should not take these truths for granted. w23.01 20 ¶2; 21 ¶4

Memorial Bible reading:
(Daytime events: Nisan 13)
Mark 14:12-16; Matthew 26:17-19
(Events after sunset: Nisan 14)
Mark 14:17-72

Monday, March 25

God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, so that everyone exercising faith in him might . . . have everlasting life.—John 3:16.

By giving his Son as a ransom to cover our sins, God makes it possible for us to gain everlasting life. (Matt. 20:28) The apostle Paul wrote: “Since death came through a man, resurrection of the dead also comes through a man. For just as in Adam all are dying, so also in the Christ all will be made alive.” (1 Cor. 15:21, 22) Jesus taught his followers to pray for God’s Kingdom to come and for God’s will to take place on earth. (Matt. 6:9, 10) Part of God’s purpose is for humans to live forever on the earth. To accomplish that, Jehovah has appointed his Son as King of the Messianic Kingdom. God has been gathering 144,000 people from the earth to work with Jesus in fulfilling God’s will.—Rev. 5:9, 10. w22.12 5 ¶11-12

Memorial Bible reading:
(Daytime events: Nisan 14)
Mark 15:1-47

Tuesday, March 26

The love the Christ has compels us . . . so that those who live should live no longer for themselves.
—2 Cor. 5:14, 15.

When we lose a loved one in death, we miss that person so much! At first, we may feel nothing but pain, especially if our loved one suffered before dying. With time, however, we begin to feel a measure of joy when we think of something he taught us or something he did or said to encourage us or to make us smile. In a similar way,

it saddens us to read about Jesus’ suffering and death. During the Memorial season, we especially take time to reflect on the significance of his ransom sacrifice. (1 Cor. 11:24, 25) However, we find great joy in reflecting on all the things Jesus said and did while he was on earth. We also find it stimulating to think about what he is doing now and what he will do for us in the future. w23.01 26 ¶1-2

Memorial Bible reading:
(Daytime events: Nisan 15)
Matthew 27:62-66
(Events after sunset: Nisan 16)
Mark 16:1

Wednesday, March 27

[Seek] first the Kingdom.—Matt. 6:33.

The disciples were very sad when Jesus died. Not only had they lost their beloved friend but they also felt as though they had lost their hope. (Luke 24:17-21) However, when Jesus appeared to them, he took the time to help them understand his role in fulfilling Bible prophecy. He also gave them an important work to do. (Luke 24:26, 27, 45-48) By the time Jesus ascended to heaven, the sadness of the disciples had turned into great joy. Knowing that their Master was alive and ready to help them accomplish their new commission made them happy. Their joy moved them to praise Jehovah without letup. (Luke 24:52, 53; Acts 5:42) To imitate Jesus’ disciples requires that we put God’s Kingdom first in our life. Although we need endurance to serve Jehovah continually, he promises to bless us richly if we do so.—Prov. 10:22. w23.01 30-31 ¶15-16

Memorial Bible reading:
(Daytime events: Nisan 16)
Mark 16:2-8

Thursday, March 28

To dust you will return.—Gen. 3:19.

We certainly do not want to make the same mistake that Adam and Eve made. We can avoid that outcome if we keep learning about Jehovah, appreciating his qualities, and trying to understand his way of thinking. As we do, our love for Jehovah is sure to grow. Consider Abraham. He truly loved Jehovah. Even when he found it hard to grasp Jehovah's decisions, Abraham did not rebel. Instead, he tried to get to know Jehovah better. For example, when he learned of Jehovah's decision to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham was at first afraid that "the Judge of all the earth" would sweep away the righteous along with the wicked. To Abraham, that seemed unthinkable, so he humbly asked Jehovah a series of questions. Jehovah patiently answered him. Finally, Abraham came to realize that Jehovah examines the heart of every human and that He never punishes the innocent along with the guilty.—Gen. 18:20-32. w22.08 28 ¶9-10

Friday, March 29

The trustworthy person keeps a confidence.—Prov. 11:13.

In 455 B.C.E., after Governor Nehemiah rebuilt the walls of Jerusalem, he looked for dependable men who would take good care of the city. Nehemiah selected, among others, the chief of the Fortress, Hananiah. The Bible describes Hananiah as "a most trustworthy man [who] feared the true God more than many others." (Neh. 7:2) Love for Jehovah and fear

of displeasing him moved Hananiah to take seriously any assignment he was given. Those qualities will also help us to be dependable in our service to God. Note the example of Tychicus, a trusted companion of the apostle Paul. Paul relied on Tychicus, describing him as a "faithful minister." (Eph. 6:21, 22) Paul trusted him not only to deliver letters to the brothers in Ephesus and Colossae but also to encourage and comfort them. Tychicus reminds us of the faithful, reliable men who care for our spiritual needs today.—Col. 4:7-9. w22.09 9-10 ¶5-6

Saturday, March 30

Love covers a multitude of sins.—1 Pet. 4:8.

Joseph faced severe trials that lasted about 13 years. Joseph could have questioned whether Jehovah really loved him. And he could have wondered if Jehovah had abandoned him in his time of need. But Joseph did not become embittered. Instead, he kept his senses by remaining calm. When he had the chance to retaliate against his brothers, he refrained from doing so and showed love for them and forgave them. (Gen. 45:4, 5) Joseph behaved this way because he was able to think clearly. Rather than focus on his problems, he saw the big picture—Jehovah's purpose. (Gen. 50:19-21) What is the lesson? If you are mistreated, do not become embittered against Jehovah or wonder if he has abandoned you. Instead, meditate on how he is helping you to endure the trial. Additionally, when others mistreat you, try to cover over their imperfections with love. w22.11 21 ¶4

Sunday, March 31

All rulerships will serve and obey them.—Dan. 7:27.

The prophet Daniel saw visions that clearly showed Jehovah's supremacy over all other authorities. Daniel first saw four huge beasts that symbolize past and present world powers—Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome and its modern-day offshoot, Anglo-America. (Dan. 7:1-3, 17) Then Daniel saw Jehovah God sitting enthroned in the heavenly court. (Dan. 7:9, 10) God takes all rulership away from human governments and gives it to others more deserving and more powerful. To whom? To "someone like a son of man," Jesus Christ, and to "the holy ones of the Supreme One," the 144,000 who will rule "forever and ever." (Dan. 7:13, 14, 18) Clearly, Jehovah is "the Supreme One." The event that Daniel saw in vision harmonizes with something he had stated earlier. "The God of heaven," Daniel said, "removes kings and sets up kings."—Dan. 2:19-21. w22.10 14-15 ¶9-11

Monday, April 1

[The] tested quality of your faith produces endurance.—Jas. 1:3.

Ask yourself: 'How do I respond to counsel? Do I quickly acknowledge my mistakes, or do I try to justify myself? Am I quick to blame others?' As you read about faithful men and women in the Bible, consider how they dealt with such matters. In each case, ask yourself: 'How can I be more like this loyal servant of Jehovah?' We can also benefit by observing fellow believers, both young

and old. For instance, can you think of someone in your congregation who is faithfully enduring a trial—perhaps peer pressure, family opposition, or poor health? Do you see in this person commendable traits that you would like to cultivate to a greater degree? By considering his or her good example, you may learn practical ways to endure your own trials. How grateful we are to have such living examples of faith to imitate—truly a cause for rejoicing!—Heb. 13:7. w22.04 13 ¶13-14

Tuesday, April 2

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

When we are facing a difficult situation in our personal life, we appreciate it when a caring elder takes the time to listen to us and provide us comfort. When we need help with a Bible study, we are pleased when an experienced pioneer agrees to sit in on the study and offers suggestions. All these brothers and sisters are happy to help us. We can share that joy if we make ourselves available to serve our brothers. If you want to expand your service in these or similar ways, what will help you to reach your goals? Beware of setting a goal that is too general. For example, you may think, 'I would like to do more in the congregation.' But it may be difficult to know how to achieve such a goal, and you may find it impossible to know when you have achieved it. So choose a clear, specific goal. You might even write down the goal and how you plan to reach it. w22.04 25 ¶12-13

Wednesday, April 3

You must love your neighbor as yourself.—*Jas. 2:8.*

Jehovah is now drawing together “a great crowd” of people and training them as subjects of his Kingdom. (Rev. 7:9, 10) Despite living today in a world divided by fear and war, those making up this group strive to overcome all national, tribal, and personal hatreds. They are already symbolically beating their swords into plowshares. (Mic. 4:3) Instead of participating in wars that cause so much death, they are helping people to find “the real life” by teaching them about the true God and his purposes. (1 Tim. 6:19) Family members may turn against them or they may suffer financially because they support God’s Kingdom, but Jehovah makes sure that they have the things they need. (Matt. 6:25, 30-33; Luke 18:29, 30) Those facts assure us that God’s Kingdom is a reality and that it will continue to fulfill Jehovah’s purpose. w22.12 5 ¶13

Thursday, April 4

Amen! Come, Lord Jesus.
—*Rev. 22:20.*

By the end of the 1,000 years, all those living on earth will have been restored to perfect life. No longer will anyone living be affected by the sin that was originally inherited from Adam. (Rom. 5:12) The curse of Adamic sin will have been completely removed. In that way, those on earth will “come to life” as perfect humans at the end of the 1,000 years. (Rev. 20:5) We know that Jesus resisted Satan’s efforts to make him compromise

his integrity. He remained faithful under test. But will all perfect humans be willing to do so when Satan is given an opportunity to test them? Each one will be able to answer this question for himself when Satan is released from the abyss at the end of the 1,000 years. (Rev. 20:7) Those who prove faithful during this final test will receive everlasting life and finally enjoy true freedom. (Rom. 8:21) Those who rebel will be destroyed forever. —Rev. 20:8-10. w22.05 19 ¶18-19

Friday, April 5

You will strike him in the heel.
—*Gen. 3:15.*

That prophecy was fulfilled when Satan incited the Jews and the Romans to put the Son of God to death. (Luke 23:13, 20-24) Just as a literal heel wound can temporarily cripple someone, Jesus’ death temporarily put him out of action and he lay lifeless in the grave for parts of three days. (Matt. 16:21) If the prophecy of Genesis 3:15 was to be fulfilled, Jesus could not remain in the grave. Why not? Because according to the prophecy, the offspring would crush the serpent’s head. This meant that Jesus would need to recover from his heel wound. And indeed he did! On the third day after his death, Jesus was resurrected as an immortal spirit creature. In God’s due time, Jesus will crush Satan out of existence. (Heb. 2:14) Those who will rule with Christ will share in ridding the earth of all of God’s enemies—the offspring of the serpent.—Rev. 17:14; 20:4, 10. w22.07 16 ¶11-12

Saturday, April 6

The one walking with the wise will become wise.—Prov. 13:20.

Parents, help your children develop wholesome friendships. God’s Word makes it clear that our friendships have an influence on us—either for good or for bad. Do you know your children’s friends? What can you do to help your children make friends with those who love Jehovah? (1 Cor. 15:33) You can help them make wise choices by inviting some who are doing well spiritually to join you in your family activities. (Ps. 119:63) A father named Tony explains: “Over the years, my wife and I have invited to our home brothers and sisters of different ages and backgrounds. They share a meal with us and join in our family worship. This is a great way to get to know those who love and serve Jehovah with joy. . . . Their experiences, zeal, and self-sacrificing spirit have had a tremendous impact on our children and have helped them draw close to Jehovah.” w22.05 29-30 ¶14-15

Sunday, April 7

Whatever things you may bind on earth will be things already bound in heaven.—Matt. 18:18.

When the elders meet with a wrongdoer, their goal is to reach the same decision on earth that has already been reached in heaven. How does this arrangement benefit the congregation? It ensures that unrepentant wrongdoers who might harm Jehovah’s precious sheep are removed. (1 Cor. 5:6, 7, 11-13; Titus 3:10, 11) It may also help a sinner to repent

and benefit from Jehovah’s forgiveness. (Luke 5:32) The elders pray in behalf of a repentant one and ask Jehovah to help him recover spiritually. (Jas. 5:15) Suppose that a person is not repentant when the elders meet with him. In that case, he will be disfellowshipped from the congregation. Yet, if the person later comes to his senses and sincerely repents and turns around, Jehovah is willing to pardon him. (Luke 15:17-24) That is true even if his sins were very serious.—2 Chron. 33:9, 12, 13; 1 Tim. 1:15. w22.06 9 ¶5-6

Monday, April 8

Keep your senses, be watchful! Your adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone.—1 Pet. 5:8.

With Jehovah’s help, Christians earth wide have overcome challenging situations and have been successful in opposing the Devil. (1 Pet. 5:9) You can too. Very soon, Jehovah will direct Jesus and his corulers “to break up the works of the Devil.” (1 John 3:8) After that, God’s people serving him on earth will “fear nothing and have no cause for terror.” (Isa. 54:14; Mic. 4:4) Until then, though, we need to work hard to overcome our fears. We must continue to strengthen our confidence that Jehovah loves and protects his servants. We will be helped to do this by meditating on and talking about how Jehovah has protected his servants in the past. And we can bear in mind how he has helped us personally to face distressing situations. With Jehovah’s help, we can overcome our fears!—Ps. 34:4. w22.06 19 ¶19-20

Tuesday, April 9

It struck the image on its feet of iron and of clay.—Dan. 2:34.

The world power represented by the “feet of iron and of clay” has already appeared. It came into existence during World War I when Britain and the United States forged a special partnership, the Anglo-American alliance. Nebuchadnezzar’s dream image also foretold things about this world power that would distinguish it from the previous kingdoms. Unlike the previous world powers mentioned in the vision, the Anglo-American alliance is symbolized, not by a solid metal like gold or silver, but by a mixture of iron and clay. The clay represents “the offspring of mankind,” or the common people. (Dan. 2:43, fn.) As is plainly evident today, their influence in elections, civil rights campaigns, mass protests, and labor unions weakens the ability of this world power to implement its policies. w22.07 4-5 ¶9-10

Wednesday, April 10

My food is to do the will of him who sent me.—John 4:34.

Are you hesitant about getting baptized? It might help if you ask yourself, ‘Why wait?’ (Acts 8:36) Note that Jesus compared doing his Father’s will to food. Why? Food is good for us. Jesus knew that everything that Jehovah asks us to do is good for us. Jehovah does not want us to do anything that would result in our harm. Does Jehovah’s will for you include getting baptized? Yes. (Acts 2:38) Then you can be confident that obeying the command to get baptized will benefit you. If you would not hes-

itate to enjoy the best meal ever, why hesitate to get baptized? Why wait? Many might answer this way, “I am not ready yet.” The fact is that the decision to dedicate yourself to Jehovah and to get baptized is the most important decision you will ever make. So it does take time, careful thought, and diligent effort to get ready. w23.03 7 ¶18-20

Thursday, April 11

It says, “and to your offspring,” in the sense of one, who is Christ.—Gal. 3:16.

At his anointing, Jesus became the primary part of the offspring of the woman. After Jesus’ death and resurrection, God “crowned him with glory and honor” and gave him “all authority . . . in heaven and on the earth,” including the authority “to break up the works of the Devil.” (Heb. 2:7; Matt. 28:18; 1 John 3:8) But there would be a secondary part of the offspring. The apostle Paul identified this part of the offspring when he told both Jewish and Gentile anointed Christians: “If you belong to Christ, you are really Abraham’s offspring, heirs with reference to a promise.” (Gal. 3:28, 29) When Jehovah anoints a Christian with holy spirit, that person becomes part of the offspring of the woman. So the offspring is made up of Jesus Christ and his 144,000 corulers. (Rev. 14:1) All of these reflect the spirit of their Father, Jehovah God. w22.07 16 ¶8-9

Friday, April 12

I loathe my life; I do not want to go on living.—Job 7:16.

We expect to face trials during these last days. (2 Tim. 3:1) At such times, we may feel distressed and overwhelmed, especially if it seems that we are facing one trial after another or even several trials all at once. Remember, though, that Jehovah is watching over us, and with his help we can face any trial with confidence. Consider how Jehovah helped the faithful man Job. He experienced several distressing trials in a short period of time. In one day, Job learned about violent and shocking events that cost him his livestock, killed his servants and, even worse, took the lives of his beloved children. (Job 1:13-19) Soon after, while still dealing with his immense grief, Job was afflicted with a painful and disfiguring disease. (Job 2:7) Jehovah was watching over Job. Because Jehovah loved Job, He gave him what he needed to endure his trials successfully. w22.08 11 ¶8-10

Saturday, April 13

Those whom Jehovah loves he disciplines.—Heb. 12:6.

Discipline can be emotionally painful. We may feel that it is not justified or that it is too harsh. As a result, we may miss out on something special—seeing the discipline as an expression of Jehovah’s love for us. (Heb. 12:5, 11) So accept discipline, and make the needed adjustments. More than once, Jesus corrected Peter in front of the other apostles. (Mark 8:33; Luke 22:31-34) What a humbling experience! However, Peter remained

loyal to Jesus. He accepted the discipline and learned from his mistakes. Consequently, Jehovah rewarded Peter’s loyalty and assigned him weighty responsibilities in the congregation. (John 21:15-17; Acts 10:24-33; 1 Pet. 1:1) We benefit ourselves and others when we see beyond the embarrassment of the discipline, accept the correction, and make the needed adjustments. When we do so, we become even more useful to Jehovah and to our brothers. w22.11 21-22 ¶6-7

Sunday, April 14

Offer [Isaac] up there as a burnt offering.—Gen. 22:2.

Abraham knew that Jehovah would never do anything unrighteous or unloving. According to the apostle Paul, Abraham reasoned that Jehovah would be able to resurrect his dear son Isaac. (Heb. 11:17-19) After all, Jehovah had promised that Isaac would father a nation, and at that point, Isaac had no children. Abraham loved Jehovah, so he trusted that his Father would act with righteousness. In faith he obeyed, difficult though it was. (Gen. 22:1-12) How can we imitate Abraham? Like him, we need to keep learning about Jehovah. As we do, we will draw closer to him and love him even more. (Ps. 73:28) Our conscience will be trained to reflect God’s thinking. (Heb. 5:14) As a result, when someone tries to tempt us to do something wrong, we will refuse. We will hate the very idea of doing anything that would bring pain to our Father and would damage our relationship with him. w22.08 28-29 ¶11-12

Monday, April 15

Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, but a good word cheers it up.
—Prov. 12:25.

On their return visit to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, the apostle Paul and Barnabas “appointed elders for them in each congregation.” (Acts 14:21-23) No doubt those appointed men proved to be a source of comfort to the congregations, as the elders are today. Elders, be alert to help those who may need “a good word” of encouragement. Paul reminded fellow worshippers that in Jehovah’s strength, “a great cloud of witnesses” had endured hardships. (Heb. 12:1) Paul understood how the life stories of those in the past who successfully endured all kinds of hardships could infuse his brothers and sisters with courage and help them keep focused on the “city of the living God.” (Heb. 12:22) The same is true today. Who has not been strengthened when reading about how Jehovah helped Gideon, Barak, David, Samuel, and many others?—Heb. 11:32-35. w22.08 21-22 ¶5-6

Tuesday, April 16

They were judged individually according to their deeds.—Rev. 20:13.

Based on what “deeds” will resurrected ones be judged? Will it be the deeds they practiced before they died? No! Remember, they were acquitted of their previous sins when they died. Here, then, “their deeds” cannot be deeds from their former life. Rather, these must refer to their deeds in response to their training in the new world. Even such faithful men

as Noah, Samuel, David, and Daniel will have to learn about Jesus Christ and exercise faith in his sacrifice. How much more so will the unrighteous! What will be the final outcome for those who reject this marvelous opportunity? Revelation 20:15 tells us: “Whoever was not found written in the book of life was hurled into the lake of fire.” Yes, they will be completely destroyed forever. How important it is, then, to make sure that our name is written in the book of life and that it remains there! w22.09 19 ¶17-19

Wednesday, April 17

Maintain a clear conscience before God and men.—Acts 24:16.

Many of the choices we make regarding our health and medical treatment are rightly determined by our Bible-trained conscience. (1 Tim. 3:9) When making decisions and discussing them with others, we do well to apply the principle recorded at Philippians 4:5: “Let your reasonableness become known to all men.” When we are reasonable, we do not become overly concerned with our physical health. We love and respect our brothers and sisters, even if the decisions they make are different from ours. (Rom. 14:10-12) We show our gratitude to Jehovah, the Source of life, by safeguarding our life and by giving him our best. (Rev. 4:11) For now, we must deal with sicknesses and calamities. But this is not the life our Creator intended for us. Soon he will give us everlasting life without pain and death. (Rev. 21:4) In the meantime, how good it is to be alive and to serve our loving heavenly Father, Jehovah! w23.02 25 ¶17-18

Thursday, April 18

Your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and the Persians.—Dan. 5:28.

Jehovah has clearly demonstrated his supremacy over “the superior authorities.” (Rom. 13:1) Consider three examples. Pharaoh of Egypt enslaved Jehovah’s people and repeatedly refused to release them. But God set them free and drowned Pharaoh in the Red Sea. (Ex. 14:26-28; Ps. 136:15) King Belshazzar of Babylon held a feast and “exalted [himself] against the Lord of the heavens” and “praised gods of silver and gold” instead of Jehovah. (Dan. 5:22, 23) But God humbled that arrogant man. On “that very night,” Belshazzar was killed and his kingdom was given into the hands of the Medes and the Persians. (Dan. 5:30, 31) King Herod Agrippa I of Palestine had the apostle James killed and then imprisoned the apostle Peter, with the intention of doing away with him. But Jehovah prevented Herod from carrying out his plan. “The angel of Jehovah struck him,” and he died.—Acts 12:1-5, 21-23. w22.10 15 ¶12

Friday, April 19

I will listen to you.—Jer. 29:12.

As we read about how Jehovah cared for those who were loyal to him in the past, our hope will grow ever stronger. Everything in God’s Word was “written for our instruction, so that through our endurance and through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope.” (Rom. 15:4) Meditate on how Jehovah has kept his promises. Consider what God did for Abraham and Sarah. They reached the

age when they could not have children. Yet, God promised them that they would have a child. (Gen. 18:10) How did Abraham react? The Bible says: “He had faith that he would become the father of many nations.” (Rom. 4:18) Even though from a human perspective the situation appeared hopeless, Abraham was confident that Jehovah would fulfill His promise. That faithful man was not disappointed. (Rom. 4:19-21) Such accounts teach us that we can always rely on Jehovah to fulfill his promises. w22.10 27 ¶13-14

Saturday, April 20

You will see your Grand Instructor with your own eyes.—Isa. 30:20.

Those words were fulfilled when the Jews were released from captivity. Jehovah proved to be a Grand Instructor for them, and under his guidance, his people succeeded in restoring pure worship. We are blessed to have Jehovah as our Grand Instructor today. Isaiah describes us as students who are being taught by Jehovah, saying: “You will see your Grand Instructor with your own eyes.” In this illustration, the Instructor is depicted as standing in front of his students. We are privileged to benefit from his instruction today. How does Jehovah instruct us? By means of his organization. How thankful we are for the clear guidance we receive from that source! The instruction given at our meetings as well as through the publications, broadcasts, and many other means helps us during challenging times to endure with joy. w22.11 10 ¶8-9

Sunday, April 21

What will be the sign . . . of the conclusion of the system of things?
—Matt. 24:3.

With regard to the timing of the end of the Jewish system of things and “the conclusion of the system of things” in which we now live, Jesus said: “Concerning that day or the hour nobody knows, neither the angels in heaven nor the Son, but the Father.” Then he warned all his disciples to “keep awake” and to “keep on the watch.” (Mark 13:32-37) Jewish Christians in the first century had to remain watchful; their life depended on it. Jesus told his followers: “When you see Jerusalem surrounded by encamped armies, then know that the desolating of her has drawn near.” At that moment, they were to heed Jesus’ warning and “begin fleeing to the mountains.” (Luke 21:20, 21) Those who paid attention to this warning survived when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem. Today we are living in the time of the end of this wicked system of things. So we too must keep our senses and keep on the watch. w23.02 14 ¶1-2; 16 ¶3

Monday, April 22

Jehovah, the God of truth.—Ps. 31:5.

Jehovah teaches his servants to be honest and righteous. They thus find a measure of dignity and inner peace. (Prov. 13:5, 6) Has he done that for you as you have studied the Bible? You have learned that Jehovah’s ways are best for all humankind and for you personally. (Ps. 77:13) So you want to take your stand for God’s righteousness. (Matt. 6:33) You want to de-

fend truth and help to disprove the slander about our God, Jehovah. How can you do that? You can choose a life course that says, in effect: “I reject Satan’s lies, and I uphold the truth. I want Jehovah as my Sovereign, and I want to do what he says is right.” How do you take such a stand? Approach Jehovah in prayer and dedicate yourself to him and then make that dedication public by getting baptized. Love for what is true and right is a powerful motive for choosing to get baptized. w23.03 3 ¶4-5

Tuesday, April 23

Do not let your hearts be troubled nor let them shrink out of fear.
—John 14:27.

There is a kind of peace that this world knows nothing about. It is “the peace of God,” the calmness that comes from having a precious relationship with our heavenly Father. When we have the peace of God, we feel secure. (Phil. 4:6, 7) We enjoy close friendships with others who love him. And we enjoy a warm, personal relationship with “the God of peace.” (1 Thess. 5:23) When we know, trust, and obey our Father, the peace of God can calm our anxious heart when we are facing a troubling situation. Is it really possible to find the peace of God when we are faced with a crisis, such as a disease outbreak, a disaster, civil unrest, or persecution? Any one of these crises can fill us with fear. Happily, brothers and sisters have followed Jesus’ advice as mentioned in today’s text. With Jehovah’s help, they have been able to find peace while coping with severe trials. w22.12 16 ¶1-2

Wednesday, April 24

Be aglow with the spirit. Slave for Jehovah.—Rom. 12:11.

We cannot control everything that happens in our life. Therefore, it is important that we do not measure our value by the privileges of service that we enjoy or compare our privileges with those that others enjoy. (Gal. 6:4) It is important that we look for ways in which we can be useful. Make yourself available for privileges of service by keeping your life simple and avoiding unnecessary debt. Set intermediate goals that will help you reach your long-term goals. For example, if your long-term goal is to become a regular pioneer, could you serve as a continuous auxiliary pioneer at present? If your goal is to serve as a ministerial servant, could you spend more time in field service? The experience you gain now may open the door to further privileges of service in the future. Be determined to do your best in any assignment you are given. w22.04 26 ¶16-17

Thursday, April 25

I love Jehovah because he hears my voice, my pleas for help.—Ps. 116:1.

Jehovah can help us to cope with the challenges in our life and to find joy in our sacred service. When we approach our God about a matter that concerns us, Jehovah's immediate response may be to give us the strength to cope with the situation. And if our trial does not end as soon as we had hoped, we may need to ask Jehovah repeatedly for the strength to endure it. He invites us to do so. That is implied by these words of Isa-

iah: "Do not give [Jehovah] any rest." (Isa. 62:7) What does that mean? Our prayers to Jehovah should be so persistent that it is as if we were not allowing Jehovah to rest. Isaiah's words remind us of Jesus' illustrations about prayer found at Luke 11:8-10, 13. There Jesus encourages us to "keep on asking" for holy spirit. We can also beg Jehovah to provide the guidance we need in order to make proper decisions. w22.11 8 ¶1; 9 ¶6-7

Friday, April 26

We must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations.—Acts 14:22.

You and your family can prepare now for persecution. Do not try to imagine all the bad things that could happen. Instead, strengthen your friendship with Jehovah and help your children to do the same. If at times you feel anxious, pour out your heart to God. (Ps. 62:7, 8) As a family, discuss all the reasons why you can trust in him. As in the case of a disaster, your personal preparation and your trust in Jehovah will instill in your children courage and peace. The peace of God makes us feel secure. (Phil. 4:6, 7) By means of it, Jehovah calms our heart despite the diseases, disasters, and persecution that can affect us today. He uses hardworking elders to shepherd us. And he gives all of us the privilege of helping one another. The peace that we enjoy now will equip us to face greater trials to come, even the "great tribulation."—Matt. 24:21. w22.12 27 ¶17-18

Saturday, April 27

I came to call, not righteous people, but sinners.—Matt. 9:13.

We should strive to let go of guilt that we may feel because of serious sins committed in the past. Of course, we would never consider the ransom sacrifice to be an excuse to “practice sin willfully.” (Heb. 10:26-31) But we can rest assured that if we truly have repented of a serious sin, have sought the help Jehovah provides, and have changed our conduct, he has forgiven us in a large way. (Isa. 55:7; Acts 3:19) The ransom sacrifice is powerful enough to cover all our sins and will make life in Paradise possible. Life there will never be boring. We will always have interesting people to meet and meaningful work to do. Best of all, each day we will be able to come to know our heavenly Father better and enjoy what he has provided. We will never run out of things to learn about him, and there will be so much to learn about his creation. w22.12 13 ¶17, 19

Sunday, April 28

I will put enmity between you and the woman.—Gen. 3:15.

“The woman” could not have been Eve. The prophecy states that the offspring of the woman would “crush” the serpent’s head. The serpent is the spirit creature Satan, and no imperfect human offspring of Eve’s would have the ability to crush him. Something more was needed. The identity of the woman mentioned at Genesis 3:15 is revealed in the last book of the Bible. (Rev. 12:1, 2, 5, 10) This is no ordinary woman! She has the moon at

her feet and a crown of 12 stars on her head. She gives birth to a most unusual child—the Kingdom of God. The Kingdom is heavenly, so the woman must also be heavenly. She represents the heavenly part of Jehovah’s organization made up of his faithful spirit creatures. (Gal. 4:26) God’s Word also helps us to identify the primary offspring of the woman. This offspring was to be a natural descendant of Abraham.—Gen. 22:15-18. w22.07 15-16 ¶6-8

Monday, April 29

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

Jehovah’s gift, the Bible, is filled with his wisdom. The Bible’s counsel has a positive effect on people. The Bible changes lives. When the first books of the Bible were composed, Moses told God’s people, the Israelites: “This is no empty word for you, but it means your life.” (Deut. 32:47) Those who obeyed the Scriptures could enjoy a successful and happy life. (Ps. 1:2, 3) Time has not drained God’s Word of its power to improve people’s lives. The wise principles found in the Bible are everlasting; they have proved to be beneficial to people living in every time period. As we read that sacred book and meditate on what we learn, the Author uses his powerful holy spirit to help us see how we can apply the Bible’s counsel in our life. (Ps. 119:27; Mal. 3:16; Heb. 4:12) Yes, the Bible’s living Author is eager to help you. What an incentive to read the Bible regularly! w23.02 3 ¶5-6

Tuesday, April 30

He will bring ruin in an extraordinary way.—Dan. 8:24.

Revelation chapter 13 tells us that the seventh head, the Anglo-American World Power, acts as a wild beast with “two horns like a lamb, but it began speaking like a dragon.” This beast “performs great signs, even making fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the sight of mankind.” (Rev. 13:11-15) Revelation chapters 16 and 19 describe this wild beast as “the false prophet.” (Rev. 16:13; 19:20) Daniel mentions something similar, namely, that the Anglo-American World Power would “bring terrible destruction.” (Dan. 8:19, 23, 24, *ftn.*) That is exactly what happened during World War II. The two atomic bombs that played a decisive role in ending that war in the Pacific were the results of a joint effort by British and American scientists. The Anglo-American World Power, in effect, made “fire come down out of heaven to the earth.” w22.05 10 ¶9

Wednesday, May 1

After this I saw . . . a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues.—Rev. 7:9.

After seeing the heavenly group, John sees “a great crowd.” Unlike the 144,000, the great crowd cannot be numbered. What do we learn about them? John is told: “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” (Rev. 7:14) Upon surviving the great tribulation, this “great crowd” will live here on earth

and enjoy amazing blessings. (Ps. 37: 9-11, 27-29; Prov. 2:21, 22; Rev. 7:16, 17) Whether we have been selected to go to heaven or will remain here on earth, do we see ourselves in this description recorded in Revelation chapter 7? We should. What an exciting time that will be for both groups of God’s servants! We will be overjoyed that we chose to support Jehovah’s rulership. w22.05 16 ¶6-7

Thursday, May 2

Jehovah himself gives wisdom.—Prov. 2:6.

If you have ever had to make an important decision, no doubt you prayed for wisdom—and for good reason. (Jas. 1:5) King Solomon wrote: “Wisdom is the most important thing.” (Prov. 4:7) Of course, Solomon was not talking about just any sort of wisdom. He was referring to the wisdom that comes from Jehovah God. But can godly wisdom help us deal with the kinds of problems we face today? Yes, it can. One way that we can become truly wise is by studying and applying the teachings of two men who are widely respected for their wisdom. First, consider Solomon. The Bible says that “God gave Solomon wisdom and discernment in very great measure.” (1 Ki. 4:29) Second, consider Jesus, whose wisdom was unparalleled. (Matt. 12:42) Of Jesus, it was prophesied: “The spirit of Jehovah will settle upon him, the spirit of wisdom and of understanding.” —Isa. 11:2. w22.05 20 ¶1-2

Friday, May 3

Let me tell the next generation about your power.—Ps. 71:18.

We are never too old to set and reach spiritual goals. Consider the example of a 75-year-old sister named Beverley. She had a severe health problem that made it hard for her to walk. But she longed to have a full share in the Memorial campaign. So she set specific goals. When Beverley reached her goals for the campaign, she was very happy. Her efforts motivated others to exert themselves in the ministry. Jehovah values the work of our older brothers and sisters, even if circumstances limit what they can do. (Ps. 71:17) Set goals that are within your reach. Cultivate qualities that will endear you to Jehovah. Learn skills that will allow you to be more useful to our God and his organization. Look for ways to serve your brothers and sisters more fully. Like Timothy, with Jehovah's blessing "your advancement may be plainly seen by all people."—1 Tim. 4:15. w22.04 27 ¶18-19

Saturday, May 4

From infancy you have known the holy writings.—2 Tim. 3:15.

What if, in spite of your best efforts, one of your children says that he does not want to serve Jehovah? Do not conclude that you have failed as a parent. Jehovah has given all of us—including your child—the gift of free will, the ability to choose whether we will serve God or not. Do not give up hope that one day he will return. Remember the illustration of the lost son. (Luke 15:11-19, 22-24) That young man strayed far off the path of

righteousness, but in the end, he returned. Parents, you have been granted a wonderful privilege, namely, to raise a new generation of worshippers of Jehovah. (Ps. 78:4-6) That is no small task, and we commend you most sincerely for your tireless efforts to help your children to love Jehovah and to bring them up in his discipline and admonition. You can be sure that our loving heavenly Father will be pleased.—Eph. 6:4. w22.05 30-31 ¶16-18

Sunday, May 5

All the body is harmoniously joined together.—Eph. 4:16.

To promote peace and unity in the congregation, each one of us needs to give his personal best. Consider the first-century Christians. They had a variety of gifts and assignments. (1 Cor. 12:4, 7-11) But this was not a cause for competition and divisions. Rather, Paul urged each one to supply what was needed "to build up the body of the Christ." Paul wrote to the Ephesians: "When each respective member functions properly, this contributes to the growth of the body as it builds itself up in love." (Eph. 4:1-3, 11, 12) Those who did so promoted peace and unity—traits that we observe in our congregations today. Be determined to avoid comparing yourself with others. Instead, learn from Jesus, and strive to imitate his qualities. Be confident that Jehovah "is not unrighteous so as to forget your work." (Heb. 6:10) He appreciates your whole-souled efforts to please him. w22.04 14 ¶15-16

Monday, May 6

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

What a relief it is to know that we do not need to decide if Jehovah will pardon a sinner! Still, there is something that we do need to decide. What is it? In some cases, an individual has sinned against us—even seriously—but then he may apologize and ask for our forgiveness. In other cases, the person may not. Even so, we can choose to forgive the person in the sense that we can decide to let go of any resentment and anger that we feel toward him. Realistically, this may take time and effort, especially if we have been deeply hurt. *The Watchtower* of September 15, 1994, says: “When you do forgive a sinner, this does not mean that you are condoning the sin. For the Christian, forgiveness means trustfully leaving the matter in Jehovah’s hands. He is the righteous Judge of all the universe, and he will carry out justice at the right time.” w22.06 9 ¶6-7

Tuesday, May 7

Hope in Jehovah.—Ps. 27:14.

Jehovah promised that in our day, he would bring together people out of every nation and tribe and tongue, and he would unite them in pure worship. Today, that remarkable group of people is known as the “great crowd.” (Rev. 7:9, 10) Although consisting of men, women, and children of different backgrounds, that diverse group forms a peaceful, united global brotherhood. (Ps. 133:1; John 10:16) They are always ready to share their hope of a better world with anyone who will listen. (Matt. 28:19, 20; Rev. 14:6, 7; 22:17) If you are part of the

great crowd, no doubt the hope of better things to come is very precious to you. The Devil wants to rob you of your hope. His goal is to make you believe that Jehovah will not keep his promises. If Satan succeeds in robbing us of our hope, we will lose courage, and we may even stop serving Jehovah. w22.06 20-21 ¶2-3

Wednesday, May 8

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, both sure and firm.—Heb. 6:19.

Our firm hope helps us to ride out stormy trials because we are convinced that calmer times lie just ahead. Remember, Jesus warned that we would be persecuted. (John 15:20) So meditating on our promised future reward allows us to keep steady on our Christian course. Consider how hope kept Jesus steadfast despite the cruel death that awaited him. On the day of Pentecost 33 C.E., the apostle Peter quoted a prophecy from the book of Psalms that beautifully expresses Jesus’ calm assurance: “I will reside in hope; because you will not leave me in the Grave, nor will you allow your loyal one to see corruption. . . . You will fill me with great joy in your presence.” (Acts 2:25-28; Ps. 16:8-11) Jesus had the firm hope that God would resurrect him and that he would have the joy of being reunited with his Father in heaven.—Heb. 12:2, 3. w22.10 25 ¶4-5

Thursday, May 9

We all stumble many times.

—*Jas. 3:2.*

On one occasion, two of the apostles, James and John, had their mother ask Jesus to give them prominent positions in the Kingdom. (Matt. 20: 20, 21) James and John were thus displaying the traits of pride and ambition. (Prov. 16:18) James and John were not the only ones who displayed bad traits on that occasion. Note how the other apostles reacted: “When the ten others heard about it, they became indignant at the two brothers.” (Matt. 20:24) We can imagine that sharp words were exchanged among James, John, and the other apostles. How did Jesus deal with the situation? He did not become indignant. He did not say that he was going to look for better apostles, men who had greater humility and who would always treat one another with love. Rather, Jesus patiently reasoned with these sincere men. (Matt. 20:25-28) He continued to deal with them in a loving way. w23.03 28-29 ¶10-13

Friday, May 10

Be wise, my son, and make my heart rejoice, so that I can make a reply to him who taunts me.—Prov. 27:11.

You have accomplished much. You have diligently studied the Bible, perhaps for a number of years. Your studies have convinced you that the Bible is the Word of God. More than that, though, you have come to know and love the Author of that sacred book. Your love for Jehovah has grown to the point that you are now one of his dedicated, baptized servants. How

marvelous! No doubt your faith was tested in a number of ways as you were progressing toward baptism. But as you grow spiritually, you will face new tests. Satan will try to weaken your love for Jehovah and to draw you away from serving Him. (Eph. 4: 14) You must not allow that to happen. What can help you to remain loyal to Jehovah and fulfill your dedication vow? You must continue to make progress—to “press on” to Christian maturity.—Heb. 6:1. w22.08 2 ¶1-2

Saturday, May 11

Honor your father and your mother, just as Jehovah your God has commanded you, so that you may live a long time and you may prosper.
—*Deut. 5:16.*

In the family, each member has a responsibility to keep sensitive, family matters private. For example, a Christian woman may have a habit that her husband finds amusing. Would he talk about it to others and thus cause her embarrassment? Of course not! He loves his wife, and he would never want to do anything to hurt her. (Eph. 5:33) Teenagers want to be treated with a measure of respect. Parents do well to recognize this. They would not humiliate their children by revealing their mistakes to others. (Col. 3:21) Children need to learn to be discreet, not disclosing information to outsiders that could embarrass other members of the family. When each family member does his part to keep personal family matters private, the family bond is strengthened. w22.09 10 ¶9

Sunday, May 12

Listen to this, Job; stop and consider.
—Job 37:14.

Jehovah spoke to Job, reminding him of His infinite wisdom and loving care for His creatures. He spoke of many awe-inspiring animals. (Job 38:1, 2; 39:9, 13, 19, 27; 40:15; 41:1, 2) Jehovah also used a faithful young man named Elihu to strengthen and comfort Job. Elihu assured him that Jehovah always rewards His worshippers for their endurance. But Jehovah also moved Elihu to give Job some loving counsel. Elihu helped Job to focus on the big picture by reminding him of his position in relation to Jehovah, the Creator of the universe. Jehovah also gave Job an assignment; he was to pray for his three companions who had sinned. (Job 42:8-10) How does Jehovah support us today when we experience difficult trials? Jehovah does not speak to us directly, as he did with Job, but He does speak to us through His Word, the Bible. —Rom. 15:4. w22.08 11 ¶10-11

Monday, May 13

It is best not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything over which your brother stumbles.—Rom. 14:21.

The congregation in Rome was made up of both Jewish and Gentile Christians. When the Mosaic Law was done away with, the restrictions it had placed on eating certain foods were no longer in force. (Mark 7:19) From that time on, some Jewish Christians felt free to eat all kinds of foods. Other Jewish Christians, however, could not bring themselves to do so. The congregation became divided over

this issue. The apostle Paul underscored the importance of keeping peace. Paul thus helped his fellow believers to see how damaging such disputes were to individuals and to the congregation as a whole. (Rom. 14:19, 20) He was also willing to change his own behavior to avoid stumbling others. (1 Cor. 9:19-22) We can likewise build others up and maintain peace if we refrain from making issues over matters of personal preference. w22.08 22 ¶7

Tuesday, May 14

Jehovah . . . loves the one who pursues righteousness.—Prov. 15:9.

If we are pursuing a specific goal in Jehovah's service, we keep putting forth effort to reach it. The same is true when we pursue righteousness. And Jehovah will patiently help us to make progress, to improve steadily over time. (Ps. 84:5, 7) Jehovah lovingly reminds us that righteousness is not a burden. (1 John 5:3) On the contrary, it is a protection, something we need every day. Remember the spiritual suit of armor that the apostle Paul described. (Eph. 6:14-18) Which part protected the soldier's heart? It was "the breastplate of righteousness," which represents Jehovah's righteous standards. Just as a breastplate protects the literal heart, so Jehovah's righteous standards can protect your figurative heart, the person you are on the inside. By all means, then, make sure that your suit of armor includes the breastplate of righteousness!—Prov. 4:23. w22.08 29 ¶13-14

Wednesday, May 15

The word of our God endures forever.
—Isa. 40:8.

God's Word has provided sound guidance to faithful men and women for thousands of years. How has that been possible? Jehovah saw to it that copies were made of the sacred text. Although the copyists were imperfect, they were extremely careful. Regarding the Hebrew Scriptures, for example, one scholar wrote: "It may be safely said that no other work of antiquity has been so accurately transmitted." So we can be confident that the words we read in our Bible today convey the thoughts of its Author, Jehovah. Jehovah is the Source of "every good gift and every perfect present." (Jas. 1:17) The Bible is one of the best gifts that Jehovah has given us. A gift tells us something about the giver—how well he knows us and our needs. The same is true about the Giver of the Bible. When we examine this gift, we learn much about Jehovah. We learn how well he knows us and what we need. w23.02 2-3 ¶3-4

Thursday, May 16

The earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah.—Isa. 11:9.

What a wonderful day it will be when the resurrection starts here on earth during Christ's Thousand Year Reign! All who have lost loved ones long to see them again. That is how Jehovah feels too. (Job 14:15) Imagine what joyous reunions will take place earth wide. "The righteous," whose names are written in the book of life, will return to "a resurrection of life." (Acts 24:15; John 5:29) Perhaps many of

our loved ones will be among those restored to life early on in the earthly resurrection. Additionally, "the unrighteous," such as those who did not have sufficient opportunity to know Jehovah or to serve him faithfully before they died, will be raised to "a resurrection of judgment." All these resurrected ones will need to be instructed. (Isa. 26:9; 61:11) So the greatest educational program in all human history will need to be implemented.—Isa. 11:10. w22.09 20 ¶1-2

Friday, May 17

He is the living God.—Dan. 6:26.

Jehovah has shown his supremacy over entire coalitions of rulers. He fought for Israel, enabling them to conquer large portions of the Promised Land. (Josh. 11:4-6, 20; 12:1, 7, 24) Time and again, Jehovah has proved to be the Supreme One! When King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon boasted about 'his own strength and might and the glory of his majesty' instead of humbly acknowledging Jehovah as the One deserving of praise, God struck him with insanity. After he recovered, Nebuchadnezzar "praised the Most High" and acknowledged that "[Jehovah's] rulership is an everlasting rulership." He added: "There is no one who can hinder him." (Dan. 4:30, 33-35) The psalmist observed: "Happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah, the people he has chosen as his own possession." (Ps. 33:12) What good reason, indeed, we have to keep our integrity to Jehovah! w22.10 15-16 ¶13-15

Saturday, May 18

Your word is truth.—Ps. 119:160.

The many Bible prophecies that have already been fulfilled strengthen our confidence in the reliability of God's promises for the future. We feel as did the psalmist who prayed to Jehovah: "I long for your salvation, for your word is my hope." (Ps. 119:81) Through the pages of the Bible, Jehovah has kindly given us "a future and a hope." (Jer. 29:11) Our hope for the future depends, not on man's efforts, but on Jehovah's promises. May we continue to build our trust in God's Word by being keen students of Bible prophecy. For further proof that we can trust the Bible, consider the good results people experience when they follow its advice. (Ps. 119:66, 138) For example, married couples who were once on the brink of divorce are now happily united. Their children enjoy being raised in the loving atmosphere of a Christian home, where they feel secure and loved.—Eph. 5:22-29. w23.01 5 ¶12-13

Sunday, May 19

Rejoice in the hope.—Rom. 12:12.

Think about how you have already benefited personally from the fulfillment of the promises contained in God's Word. For example, Jesus has promised that his Father will provide you with the necessities of life. (Matt. 6:32, 33) Jesus has also assured you that Jehovah will give you holy spirit when you ask for it. (Luke 11:13) Jehovah has kept those promises. Likely, you can think of other promises that he has kept in your behalf. For instance, he promises to forgive

you, to comfort you, and to feed you spiritually. (Matt. 6:14; 24:45; 2 Cor. 1:3) When you meditate on what God has done for you already, you will strengthen your hope in what he will do for you in the future. We are certain that Jehovah will keep his promises. As the psalmist wrote, "happy is the one . . . whose hope is in Jehovah his God, . . . the One who always remains faithful."—Ps. 146:5, 6. w22.10 27 ¶15; 28 ¶17

Monday, May 20

On you Jehovah will shine.

—Isa. 60:2.

Does the prophecy about the restoration of pure worship apply to us today? Absolutely! In what way? Since 1919 C.E., millions of people have broken free from captivity to Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion. They have been directed to a much better place than Israel's Promised Land. They have been led to a spiritual paradise. (Isa. 51:3; 66:8) Since 1919 C.E., the anointed have enjoyed living in a spiritual paradise. As time has progressed, those with an earthly hope, the "other sheep," have also settled in this spiritual land and have enjoyed Jehovah's abundant blessings. (John 10:16; Isa. 25:6; 65:13) The spiritual paradise they inhabit exists throughout the world. So, today, no matter where we live on earth, we can be part of the spiritual paradise as long as we are actively supporting true worship. w22.11 11-12 ¶12-15

Tuesday, May 21

Are you not from everlasting, O Jehovah? O my God, my Holy One, you do not die.—Hab. 1:12.

Do you find it difficult to grasp the idea that Jehovah has existed “for all eternity”? (Isa. 40:28) That is not unusual. Elihu said of God: “The number of his years is beyond comprehension.” (Job 36:26) But just because we do not understand something does not mean that it is untrue. For example, though we may not understand fully how light works, does this mean that light does not exist? Not at all! Similarly, we humans may never fully comprehend how it is that Jehovah has always existed and will always exist. But this does not mean that God does not live eternally. The Creator is not limited by what we can or cannot understand. (Rom. 11:33-36) And he existed before the material universe—including light sources such as the sun—came to be. Yes, he existed before he “stretched out the heavens.”—Jer. 51:15. w22.12 2-3 ¶3-4

Wednesday, May 22

May my prayer be as incense prepared before you.—Ps. 141:2.

At times, we are invited to offer a prayer on behalf of others. For example, a sister who is conducting a Bible study may ask the sister who has accompanied her to offer a prayer. The visiting sister might not know the student well, so she might prefer to offer the concluding prayer at the study. In that way, she can more easily adapt her prayer to the needs of the student. A brother may be asked to pray at a meeting for field service or at a con-

gregation meeting. Brothers who have that privilege should keep in mind the purpose of the meeting. Prayer is not to be used to counsel the congregation or to make announcements. For most congregation meetings, a total of five minutes is allotted for song and prayer, so the brother who is offering the prayer need not use “many words,” especially at the beginning of a meeting.—Matt. 6:7. w22.07 24 ¶17-18

Thursday, May 23

You are going to hear of wars and reports of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for these things must take place, but the end is not yet.—Matt. 24:6.

Jesus foretold that during the last days, there would be pestilences, or widespread diseases, “in one place after another.” (Luke 21:11) How does knowing that bring us peace? We are not surprised by disease outbreaks. We realize that events are proceeding as Jesus said they would. We thus have reason to follow the advice Jesus gave to those living during the time of the end: “See that you are not alarmed.” A disease outbreak will no doubt disrupt some aspects of your routine, but do not let it interfere with your personal study or meeting attendance. The real-life experiences found in our publications and videos will remind you that your brothers and sisters are keeping their integrity despite similar challenges. w22.12 17 ¶4, 6

Friday, May 24

Bad things happen to everyone.
—Eccl. 9:11, “Holy Bible—Easy-to-Read Version.”

The patriarch Jacob made it obvious that he loved his son Joseph very much. (Gen. 37:3, 4) As a result, Jacob’s older sons became jealous of their brother. When they saw an opportunity, they sold Joseph to a group of Midianite merchants. Those merchants took Joseph hundreds of kilometers away to Egypt, where he was sold once more—this time to Potiphar, chief of Pharaoh’s guards. How quickly Joseph’s life changed, from being his father’s dearly beloved son to being a lowly slave of an Egyptian! (Gen. 39:1) We sometimes encounter hardships that are “common to men”—that is, trials that all humans experience. (1 Cor. 10:13) Or we may suffer simply because we are disciples of Jesus. For example, we might be ridiculed, opposed, or even persecuted because of our faith. (2 Tim. 3:12) Whatever trial you face, Jehovah can make you successful. w23.01 14-15 ¶3-4

Saturday, May 25

Where there is no wood, the fire goes out.—Prov. 26:20.

We may at times feel the need to approach a fellow believer who has offended us. First, though, we do well to ask ourselves such questions as: ‘Do I have enough facts?’ (Prov. 18:13) ‘Could it be that the offense was not intentional?’ (Eccl. 7:20) ‘Have I ever made a similar mistake?’ (Eccl. 7:21, 22) ‘By approaching the person, will I create a bigger issue than the one I am

trying to resolve?’ When we take time to consider such questions, we may conclude that our love for our brother can move us simply to overlook the offense. We individually prove that we are real followers of Jesus when we show unselfish love toward our brothers and sisters despite their imperfections. In the process, we may help others to recognize the true religion and to join us in worshipping Jehovah. Let us be determined to continue demonstrating the love that identifies true Christians. w23.03 31 ¶18-19

Sunday, May 26

God is love.—1 John 4:8.

The Bible gives evidence of its Author’s greatest quality—love. Because Jehovah loves us, he did not overwhelm us with more details than we can handle. (John 21:25) Jehovah also showed love by communicating with us in a style that dignifies us. In the Bible, he does not give us an endless list of rules, micromanaging every aspect of our life. Rather, he appeals to our thinking ability through real-life stories, stirring prophecies, and practical counsel. In these ways, God’s Word moves us to love and obey him from our heart. The Bible reveals that Jehovah is keenly interested in us. How so? His Word is filled with accounts that express human emotion. We can relate to Bible characters because they were people “with feelings like ours.” (Jas. 5:17) More important, by observing how he dealt with people like us, we are able to understand more clearly that “Jehovah is very tender in affection and merciful.”—Jas. 5:11. w23.02 6 ¶13-15

Monday, May 27

Keep your senses, be watchful!

—1 Pet. 5:8.

The last book of the Bible begins with the words: “A revelation by Jesus Christ, which God gave him, to show his slaves the things that must shortly take place.” (Rev. 1:1) So we have a keen interest in current world events and in knowing how they may fulfill Bible prophecy. And we may be eager to discuss such events with one another. When discussing Bible prophecy, however, we should avoid speculating. Why? Because we would not want to say anything that could cause disunity in the congregation. For instance, we may hear world leaders talk about how they can solve a particular conflict and bring peace and security. Instead of speculating that such a statement fulfills the prophecy at 1 Thessalonians 5:3, we need to keep up-to-date with the latest published information. When we base our discussions on material published by Jehovah’s organization, we help the congregation to remain united “in the same line of thought.”—1 Cor. 1:10; 4:6. w23.02 16 ¶4-5

Tuesday, May 28

Ride in the cause of truth and humility and righteousness, and your right hand will accomplish awe-inspiring things.—Ps. 45:4.

Why do you love Jesus Christ? Jesus stands for truth, humility, and righteousness. If you love truth and righteousness, it is understandable that you also love Jesus Christ. Think of how Jesus courageously defended what is true and right. (John 18:37)

How, though, does Jesus promote humility? Jesus promotes humility by his example. For instance, he directs all glory to his Father, never to himself. (Mark 10:17, 18; John 5:19) How do you feel about seeing such humility? Does it not move you to love God’s Son and to follow him? Surely it does. Why is Jesus humble? Because he loves and imitates his Father, who is humble. (Ps. 18:35; Heb. 1:3) Are you not drawn to Jesus, who perfectly reflects Jehovah’s qualities? w23.03 3-4 ¶6-7

Wednesday, May 29

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

The Bible speaks of two groups of people who will be resurrected with the prospect of living forever on earth, “the righteous” and “the unrighteous.” “The righteous” are those who faithfully served Jehovah while they were alive. On the other hand, “the unrighteous” did not. Because both groups are resurrected, can we say that their names are written in the book of life? Before dying, “the righteous” had their names written in the book of life. Were their names taken out of that book when they died? No, because they are still “living” in Jehovah’s memory. Jehovah “is a God, not of the dead, but of the living, for they are all living to him.” (Luke 20:38) This means that when the righteous are restored to life on earth, their names will be found written in the book of life, although “in pencil” at first.—Luke 14:14. w22.09 16 ¶9-10

Thursday, May 30

Jehovah God took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and to take care of it.—Gen. 2:15.

Jehovah wanted the first human to enjoy His creation. When God made Adam, He gave him an unspoiled paradise to explore and assigned him to cultivate and expand that paradise. (Gen. 2:8, 9) Imagine Adam's excitement as he watched seeds germinate and flowers blossom. What a privilege Adam had to care for the garden of Eden! Jehovah also invited Adam to name the different animals. (Gen. 2:19, 20) Jehovah could have chosen each name himself; instead, he delegated the task to Adam. No doubt before deciding what to call them, Adam studied the animals carefully, observing their specific traits and behaviors. Adam must have enjoyed this experience. It surely gave him an opportunity to increase his appreciation for his Father's wisdom, artistry, and creativity. w23.03 15 ¶3

Friday, May 31

It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it alone will stand forever.—Dan. 2:44.

As represented by the feet of an immense image, Anglo-America is the last world power foretold in the Bible. (Dan. 2:31-33) It will not be succeeded by another political power. Rather, it will come to a swift end at Armageddon when God's Kingdom crushes it and all other human governments. (Rev. 16:13, 14, 16; 19:19, 20) How can this prophecy benefit us? Daniel's prophecy provides additional evidence that we are living in the time of

the end. More than 2,500 years ago, Daniel foretold that after Babylon, four other world powers would have a significant impact on God's people. Furthermore, he revealed that the Anglo-American World Power would be the last of these. This gives us comfort and hope that soon God's Kingdom will sweep away every trace of human rule and take full charge of the earth. w22.07 4 ¶9; 5 ¶11-12

Saturday, June 1

My flesh is covered with maggots and clods of dirt; my skin is full of scabs and pus.—Job 7:5.

Job enjoyed a close friendship with Jehovah. He had a large, united family, and he was very wealthy. (Job 1:1-5) But in just one day, Job lost nearly everything. First, he lost his wealth. (Job 1:13-17) Then, all his beloved children died. Imagine the shock, grief, and despair that Job and his wife felt on learning that all ten of their children had been crushed to death. No wonder Job ripped his clothes apart in mourning and collapsed to the ground! (Job 1:18-20) Satan next attacked Job's health and robbed him of his dignity. (Job 2:6-8) At one time, Job had been highly respected in his community. People came to him for guidance. (Job 31:18) Now they avoided him. He was an outcast, rejected by his brothers, his close companions, and even by his own household servants!—Job 19:13, 14, 16. w22.06 21 ¶5-6

Sunday, June 2

Let us by love grow up in all things.

—Eph. 4:15.

After baptism, all of us need to follow the advice the apostle Paul gave to fellow believers in Ephesus. He encouraged them to become “full-grown” Christians. (Eph. 4:13) That is another way of saying, ‘Continue to make progress.’ You already love Jehovah very much. But your love for him can grow deeper. How? The apostle Paul points to one way, as recorded at Philippians 1:9. Paul prayed that the love of the Philippians “abound still more and more.” So we can grow in our love. We can do that by acquiring “accurate knowledge and full discernment.” The more we get to know Jehovah, the more we love him and appreciate his personality and way of doing things. We grow in our eagerness to please him, never wanting to do anything that would disappoint him. We work hard to discern what his will is and how we can cooperate with it. w22.08 2-3 ¶3-4

Monday, June 3

A revelation by Jesus Christ, which God gave him, to show his slaves the things that must shortly take place.

—Rev. 1:1.

What is written in the book of Revelation is not for people in general but for us, God’s dedicated servants. As God’s people, we should not be surprised to discover that we are sharing in the fulfillment of the prophecies found in this fascinating book. The aged apostle John identified the time when these prophecies are to be fulfilled. He said: “By inspiration

I came to be in the Lord’s day.” (Rev. 1:10) When John wrote those words in about 96 C.E., “the Lord’s day” was still far off. (Matt. 25:14, 19; Luke 19:12) But according to Bible prophecy, that day started in 1914 when Jesus was enthroned as King in heaven. From that year onward, the prophecies of Revelation, which involve God’s people, started to undergo fulfillment. Yes, we are now living in “the Lord’s day”!—Rev. 1:3. w22.05 2 ¶2-3

Tuesday, June 4

The wild beast was caught, and along with it the false prophet.—Rev. 19:20.

While still alive, both the wild beast and the false prophet were hurled into the fiery lake that burns with sulfur. So while they are still functioning, these political enemies of God will be destroyed forever. What does this mean for us? As Christians, we must be loyal to God and his Kingdom. (John 18:36) We need to remain neutral with regard to this world’s political affairs. Such neutrality can be extremely difficult, though, because the world’s governments demand our full support, both in word and in deed. Those who succumb to their pressure receive the mark of the wild beast. (Rev. 13:16, 17) Any who receive that mark, however, will incur Jehovah’s disapproval and lose out on everlasting life. (Rev. 14:9, 10; 20:4) How important it is for each one of us to maintain strict neutrality, no matter what pressure is put on us to do otherwise! w22.05 10-11 ¶12-13

Wednesday, June 5

Have you seen a man skillful at his work? He will stand before kings; he will not stand before common men.
—Prov. 22:29.

One goal you can set is to learn a useful skill. If we develop our skills, we will be equipped to take on added responsibilities. Consider the vast number of workers needed to build Bethel facilities, Assembly Halls, and Kingdom Halls. Many of these workers acquired their skills by working alongside brothers who are experienced tradesmen. Today, both brothers and sisters are learning the skills that are needed to help maintain Assembly Halls and Kingdom Halls. In these and other ways, Jehovah God, “the King of eternity,” and Christ Jesus, “the King of . . . kings,” are accomplishing marvelous things by means of capable workers. (1 Tim. 1:17; 6:15) We want to work hard and use our skills to glorify Jehovah, not ourselves.—John 8:54. w22.04 24 ¶7; 25 ¶11

Thursday, June 6

Money is a protection.—Eccl. 7:12.

Solomon was fabulously wealthy, and he lived in luxury. (1 Ki. 10:7, 14, 15) Jesus, on the other hand, had few possessions and no permanent home. (Matt. 8:20) Yet, both men had a balanced view of material things because their wisdom came from the same Source—Jehovah God. Solomon acknowledged that with money, we are able to obtain life’s necessities and perhaps a few wants. Yet, as wealthy as he was, Solomon realized that there are more important things than money. For example, he wrote:

“A good name [or, “a good reputation,” ftn.] is to be chosen rather than great wealth.” (Prov. 22:1) Solomon also observed that people who love money are seldom happy with what they have. (Eccl. 5:10, 12) And he warned against putting all our trust in money, since whatever money we have can quickly disappear.—Prov. 23:4, 5. w22.05 21 ¶4-5

Friday, June 7

Jehovah is waiting patiently to show you favor, and he will rise up to show you mercy. For Jehovah is a God of justice. Happy are all those keeping in expectation of him.—Isa. 30:18.

As we meditate on our current blessings, we strengthen our relationship with Jehovah. And meditating on the blessings that Jehovah has in store for us will keep the hope of serving him forever very real to us. All of this will contribute to our joy in serving Jehovah now. Jehovah “will rise up” in our behalf when he brings an end to this wicked world. We are confident that Jehovah—“a God of justice”—will not allow Satan’s world to exist for one day longer than justice requires. (Isa. 25:9) We wait patiently with Jehovah for that day of deliverance to arrive. In the meantime, we are determined to continue to treasure the privilege of prayer, to study and apply God’s Word, and to meditate on our blessings. As we do, Jehovah will help us to endure with joy in our worship to him. w22.11 13 ¶18-19

Saturday, June 8

Do not forsake the instruction of your mother.—Prov. 1:8.

Although the Bible does not describe Timothy's baptism, it is not hard to imagine the joy that his mother, Eunice, felt that day. (Prov. 23:25) Eunice had successfully met the challenge of teaching her son to love Jehovah and his Son, Jesus Christ. Timothy was raised in a religiously divided household. His father was a Greek, and his mother and grandmother were Jews. (Acts 16:1) Timothy was likely a teenager when Eunice and Lois embraced a different religion—Christianity. Still, the household remained divided. Which path would Timothy take? Christian mothers today likewise love their family. More than anything, they want to help their children to develop a close friendship with Jehovah. And our God highly values their efforts. (Prov. 1:8, 9) Jehovah has guided countless mothers as they helped their children to accept the truth. w22.04 16 ¶1-3

Sunday, June 9

God put it into their hearts to carry out his thought.—Rev. 17:17.

Soon Jehovah will put it into the hearts of the political powers “to carry out his thought.” With what result? Those political powers, the “ten kings,” will turn on false religious organizations and destroy them. (Rev. 17:1, 2, 12, 16) How do we know that the end of Babylon the Great is near? To answer that question, it is helpful to remember that the ancient city of Babylon was partly protected by the waters of the mighty Euphrates River.

The book of Revelation compares the millions of supporters of Babylon the Great to protective “waters.” (Rev. 17:15) But it also reveals that the waters would ‘dry up,’ indicating that the world empire of false religion would lose many of its supporters. (Rev. 16:12) In fulfillment of that prophecy, today a considerable number of people have abandoned false religion and have begun looking elsewhere for answers. w22.07 5-6 ¶14-15

Monday, June 10

The one who does not practice mercy will have his judgment without mercy. Mercy triumphs over judgment.—Jas. 2:13.

Being forgiving shows appreciation. In one parable, Jesus compared Jehovah to a master who canceled an enormous debt that one of his slaves could not repay. Yet, the forgiven slave failed to act mercifully toward a slave who owed him a much smaller amount of money. (Matt. 18:23-35) What was Jesus teaching us? If we truly appreciate Jehovah's great mercy toward us, we will be moved to forgive others. (Ps. 103:9) *The Watchtower* expressed it this way years ago: “No matter how many times we forgive our fellow creatures, it could never equal the extent of God's forgiveness and mercy to us through Christ.” Forgivers will be forgiven. Jehovah shows mercy to those who are merciful. (Matt. 5:7) Jesus made that clear when he taught his disciples how to pray.—Matt. 6:14, 15. w22.06 10 ¶8-9

Tuesday, June 11

By means of your offspring all nations of the earth will obtain a blessing for themselves.—Gen. 22:18.

Jesus came to earth as a man. He has perfectly reflected his Father's personality. (John 14:9) So through him we have come to know and love Jehovah God. We have also benefited from Jesus' teachings and his guidance as he directs the Christian congregation today. He has taught us how to live in a way that will help us to gain Jehovah's approval. And we all can benefit from Jesus' death. When Jesus was resurrected, he offered the value of his blood as a perfect sacrifice that "cleanses us from all sin." (1 John 1:7) He is now a glorious, immortal King. Soon, Jesus will crush the serpent's head. (Gen. 3:15) What a relief it will be for faithful mankind when Satan comes to his end! Until then, do not give up. Our God is trustworthy. He will bring countless blessings to "all nations of the earth." w22.07 18 ¶13; 19 ¶19

Wednesday, June 12

We cannot avoid suffering such things.—1 Thess. 3:3.

We need to be flexible when setting goals. Why? Because we do not have complete control over our circumstances. To illustrate: The apostle Paul had helped to form a new congregation in the city of Thessalonica. But opposers forced Paul to leave that city. (Acts 17:1-5, 10) If Paul had stayed, he would have put his brothers at risk. But Paul did not give up. Instead, he adapted to the changed circumstances. Later, he dis-

patched Timothy to care for the spiritual needs of the new believers in Thessalonica. (1 Thess. 3:1, 2) How happy the Thessalonians must have been. We can learn from Paul's experience in Thessalonica. We may be reaching out for a privilege of service, but circumstances beyond our control are preventing us from receiving it. (Eccl. 9:11) If that is true in your case, be willing to pick a different goal that is within your reach. w22.04 25-26 ¶14-15

Thursday, June 13

Happy is the man who keeps on enduring trial.—Jas. 1:12.

Jehovah comforts us by giving us a hope for the future. Consider just a few thoughts from the Bible that can comfort us when we experience trials. In the Scriptures, Jehovah assures us that nothing—and that includes severe trials—"will be able to separate us from [his] love." (Rom. 8:38, 39) He also assures us that he "is near to all those calling on him" in prayer. (Ps. 145:18) Jehovah tells us that if we rely on him, we can endure any trial and even find a measure of happiness when we suffer. (1 Cor. 10:13; Jas. 1:2) God's Word also reminds us that our trials are temporary and brief when compared to the everlasting reward he offers us. (2 Cor. 4:16-18) Jehovah gives us the sure hope that he will eliminate the root cause of all our trials—Satan the Devil and those who imitate his wicked ways. (Ps. 37:10) Have you memorized some comforting Bible passages to help you endure future trials? w22.08 11 ¶11

Friday, June 14

Continue considering these things.

—Phil. 4:8.

Do you ever worry about whether you can continue living by Jehovah's righteous standards day after day, year after year? Jehovah promises that our righteousness can be "like the waves of the sea." (Isa. 48:18) Imagine that you are standing on the shore of a wide sea, watching the waves roll in endlessly, one after another. In that peaceful setting, would you worry that one day those waves might simply stop? No! You know that they will surely keep on coming. Your righteousness can be just like the waves of the sea! How? When you have a decision to make, first consider what Jehovah would want you to do. Then follow through. No matter how difficult the decision might be, your loving Father will always be there to help you to remain constant and steady and to live your life day after day according to His righteous standards. —Isa. 40:29-31. w22.08 30 ¶15-17

Saturday, June 15

As soon as the 1,000 years have ended, Satan will be released from his prison.—Rev. 20:7.

At the end of the 1,000 years, Satan will be released from his confinement. He will then try to mislead perfect humans. During that test, all perfect humans on earth will have an opportunity to show clearly where they stand on the issue of God's name and sovereignty. (Rev. 20:8-10) Their individual responses to Satan's efforts will determine whether their names should be written permanently in the book

of life. Some, an unspecified number, will prove to be like Adam and Eve, rejecting Jehovah's rulership. What will happen to them? Revelation 20:15 tells us: "Whoever was not found written in the book of life was hurled into the lake of fire." Yes, these rebellious ones will be completely destroyed forever. But the majority of perfect mankind will pass this final test. w22.09 23-24 ¶15-16

Sunday, June 16

Unless you get circumcised according to the custom of Moses, you cannot be saved.—Acts 15:1.

Some in the first-century congregation insisted that Gentile converts be circumcised, perhaps to avoid criticism by outsiders. (Gal. 6:12) The apostle Paul strongly disagreed with that viewpoint, but rather than insist that his way be followed, he humbly referred the matter to the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. (Acts 15:2) As a result, his conduct helped those Christians to maintain joy and peace in the congregation. (Acts 15:30, 31) If a serious dispute does arise, we promote peace by seeking guidance from those whom Jehovah has appointed to care for the congregation. Often, Bible-based direction can be found in our publications or in guidelines provided by the organization. If we focus on following those instructions rather than on promoting our personal views, we will contribute to the peace of the congregation. w22.08 22 ¶8-9

Monday, June 17

A true friend shows love at all times.

—Prov. 17:17.

At one time or another, most of us feel the need to confide in a close friend. Sometimes that may be difficult. We may not be accustomed to revealing our innermost thoughts to anyone, and we would be devastated if we learned later that our friend told others what we said. On the other hand, how we appreciate someone who can keep a confidence! Elders who are known to keep a confidence are “a hiding place from the wind, a place of concealment” for their brothers. (Isa. 32:2) We know that we can talk freely to these men, certain that what we say to them will be kept confidential. We do not pressure them to tell us things that they should keep private. In addition, we appreciate our elders’ wives because they do not try to pry information out of their husbands. Really, it is a blessing that an elder’s wife is not told personal information about her brothers and sisters. w22.09 11 ¶10-11

Tuesday, June 18

I am God. I will be exalted among the nations.—Ps. 46:10.

We can be confident that Jehovah will rescue his loyal servants during the coming “great tribulation.” (Matt. 24:21; Dan. 12:1) He will do this when a coalition of nations, known as Gog of Magog, makes its vicious, worldwide assault on those who are faithful to Jehovah. Even if that coalition includes all 193 members of the United Nations, it will be no match for the Supreme One and his heavenly forces!

Jehovah promises: “I will certainly magnify myself and sanctify myself and make myself known before the eyes of many nations; and they will have to know that I am Jehovah.” (Ezek. 38:14-16, 23) Gog’s assault will trigger Jehovah’s final showdown at Armageddon when He destroys “the kings of the entire inhabited earth.” (Rev. 16:14, 16; 19:19-21) In contrast, “only the upright will reside in the earth, and the one who keeps integrity will remain in it.”—Prov. 2:21, fn. w22.10 16-17 ¶16-17

Wednesday, June 19

[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 cannot read hearts; only “Jehovah examines the motives.” (Prov. 16:2) He loves all kinds of people, from all different backgrounds and cultures. And Jehovah encourages us to “open [our] hearts wide.” (2 Cor. 6:13) We seek to love all in our spiritual family, not to judge them. This also means that we are not to judge those outside the congregation. Would you ever judge a relative who does not share your faith, saying, “That man will never come into the truth”? No, that would be presumptuous, self-righteous. Jehovah is still giving “all people everywhere” an opportunity to repent. (Acts 17:30) Always remember that self-righteousness is a form of unrighteousness. May our love for Jehovah’s standards of righteousness promote joy and inspire others, helping them to draw closer to us and to our God. w22.08 31 ¶20-22

Thursday, June 20

They will certainly know that a prophet was among them.—Ezek. 2:5.

We can expect to face opposition as we carry out our preaching work. That opposition may well increase in the future. (Dan. 11:44; 2 Tim. 3:12; Rev. 16:21) Still, we can be sure that Jehovah will give us the help we need. Why? Jehovah has always helped his servants to accomplish their assignments—no matter how difficult the tasks. Consider the prophet Ezekiel, who preached to the Jewish exiles in Babylon. What kind of people were in Ezekiel’s preaching territory? Jehovah described them as “defiant,” “hardhearted,” and “rebellious.” They were as harmful as thorns and as dangerous as scorpions. No wonder Jehovah told Ezekiel repeatedly: “Do not be afraid!” (Ezek. 2:3-6) Ezekiel was able to carry out his preaching commission because he was (1) sent by Jehovah, (2) empowered by God’s spirit, and (3) nourished by God’s words. w22.11 2 ¶1-2

Friday, June 21

In the day you eat from it you will certainly die.—Gen. 2:17.

Jehovah created living things on earth with a limited life span, except for humans. He gave them the unique prospect of never dying. Jehovah has also created within us a strong desire to keep living. The Bible says regarding humans that God has “put eternity in their heart.” (Eccl. 3:11) That is one reason why we view death as an enemy. (1 Cor. 15:26) If we become seriously ill, do we just accept the condition and give up? No. Usu-

ally, we visit a physician and perhaps take medicine to combat the disease. In fact, we do all we reasonably can to avoid dying. And when someone we love dies, whether that person is young or old, do we not feel deep and lasting emotional pain? (John 11:32, 33) Certainly, our loving Creator would not give us the desire and the capacity to keep living unless his purpose was for humans to keep living. w22.12 3 ¶5; 4 ¶7

Saturday, June 22

The same kind of sufferings are being experienced by the entire association of your brothers in the world.—1 Pet. 5:9.

Many of our fellow worshippers may be ill, fearful, or lonely in these difficult times. Reach out to your brothers and sisters. A disease outbreak may require that we maintain physical distancing even when we are with our fellow worshippers. At a time like that, you might feel as did the apostle John. He wanted to see his friend Gaius face-to-face. (3 John 13, 14) Still, John recognized that for a time, he could not see Gaius. So John did what he could; he wrote Gaius a letter. If it is not always possible for you to visit with your brothers and sisters in person, try to contact them in other ways. When you keep in touch with fellow Christians, you will feel more secure and at peace. Reach out to the elders if you feel especially anxious, and accept their loving encouragement.—Isa. 32:1, 2. w22.12 17-18 ¶6-7

Sunday, June 23

Joseph's master took him and gave him over to the prison, the place where the prisoners of the king were kept under arrest.—Gen. 39:20.

The Bible indicates that for a time Joseph's feet were bound in fetters and his neck was put in irons. (Ps. 105:17, 18) Joseph's situation was going from bad to worse. He went from being a trusted slave to being a lowly prisoner. Have you ever been in a distressing situation that went from bad to worse despite your earnest prayers? That can happen. Jehovah does not shield us from trials in a world that is ruled by Satan. (1 John 5:19) Still, you can be sure of this: Jehovah is fully aware of what you are going through, and he cares about you. (Matt. 10:29-31; 1 Pet. 5:6, 7) Furthermore, he has promised: "I will never leave you, and I will never abandon you." (Heb. 13:5) Jehovah can help you to endure even when your situation seems hopeless. w23.01 16 ¶7-8

Monday, June 24

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

The Scriptures assure us that our God will not abandon us when we make mistakes. The Israelites sinned against Jehovah again and again; yet, when they sincerely repented, God forgave them. First-century Christians were also made aware of God's love. Under inspiration, the apostle Paul urged fellow believers to "forgive and comfort" a man who had pursued a course of serious sin but who had repented. (2 Cor. 2:6, 7; 1 Cor. 5:1-5) How remarkable that Jehovah did not reject

his worshippers just because they had erred! Rather, he lovingly reached out to them, corrected them, and invited them back into his arms. He promises to do the same for all repentant sinners today. (Jas. 4:8-10) The Bible reveals God's wisdom, his justice, and his love. This book proves that Jehovah wants us to come to know him. He wants us to become his friends. w23.02 7 ¶16-17

Tuesday, June 25

You are doing well in paying attention to it.—2 Pet. 1:19.

For good reason, we are interested in seeing how current world events are fulfilling Bible prophecy. For instance, Jesus provided a list of specific events to help us know when the end of Satan's system is drawing near. (Matt. 24:3-14) The apostle Peter encouraged us to pay attention to the fulfillment of prophecy so that our faith will remain strong. (2 Pet. 1:20, 21) He wants us to keep a balanced view when considering Bible prophecy. He urges us to "keep close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah." (2 Pet. 3:11-13) Why? Not because we want to work out the "day and hour" when Jehovah will bring Armageddon, but because we want to use the time we have left to perform "holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion." (Matt. 24:36; Luke 12:40) We want to maintain upright conduct and make sure that our efforts in Jehovah's service reflect our deep love for him. To keep that focus, we must pay attention to ourselves. w23.02 16 ¶4, 6

Wednesday, June 26

I have other sheep . . . I must bring in.
—John 10:16.

There are things that the “other sheep” need to do now to qualify to live in Paradise. We need to show how we feel about Jesus. For instance, we show our affection for him by the way we treat his spirit-anointed brothers. Jesus said that he would judge the sheep on that basis. (Matt. 25:31-40) We can support them in the preaching and disciple-making work. (Matt. 28:18-20) We do not need to wait until we are living in Paradise to become the kind of person that Jehovah wants there. Right now we can work at being honest in our speech and actions and moderate in our habits. And we can be loyal to Jehovah, to our marriage mate, and to fellow Christians. The more closely we conform to God’s standards while living in this wicked world, the easier it will be for us to live by them in Paradise. We can also develop skills and traits to show that we are preparing to live then. w22.12 11-12 ¶14-16

Thursday, June 27

Whoever loves me will be loved by my Father.—John 14:21.

We love Jesus as our King because he is the ideal Ruler. Jehovah himself trained his Son and appointed him to rule. (Isa. 50:4, 5) Think, too, of the self-sacrificing love Jesus has shown. (John 13:1) As your King, Jesus fully deserves your love. He explained that those who truly love him—those whom he calls his friends—show their love by obeying his commands. (John 14:15; 15:14, 15) What an honor it is to be a

friend of Jehovah’s Son! You see Jesus as a perfect, humble reflection of his Father. You have learned that he fed the hungry, comforted the discouraged, and even healed the sick. (Matt. 14:14-21) You have seen how he leads his congregation today. (Matt. 23:10) And you know that he will do far more in the future as King of God’s Kingdom. How can you show that you love him? By following his example. You can begin to do just that by dedicating yourself to Jehovah and getting baptized. w23.03 4 ¶8, 10

Friday, June 28

Lift up your eyes to heaven and see.
Who has created these things?
—Isa. 40:26.

Jehovah filled not only the heavens but also the earth and the sea with a number of amazing creative works that we can learn from. (Ps. 104:24, 25) And just think of the way God made us. He instilled in us an appreciation for natural beauty. He also made it possible for us to enjoy the variety of his creation by means of our five senses—sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. The Bible reveals another important reason why we should examine creation. It teaches us about Jehovah’s qualities. (Rom. 1:20) For instance, consider the designs that are so obviously present in nature. Do they not reveal God’s wisdom? And think about the variety of foods we can enjoy. That is clear proof of his love for mankind. When we perceive Jehovah’s personality from the things he made, we come to know him better and we are moved to draw closer to him. w23.03 16 ¶4-5

Saturday, June 29

The very essence of your word is truth.—Ps. 119:160.

As this world goes from bad to worse, our confidence in the truth will be put to the test. People may try to sow doubts in our mind—doubts about the truthfulness of the Bible or about whether Jehovah has appointed a channel for guiding his worshippers today. But if we are convinced that Jehovah’s Word is always true, we will be able to resist such attacks on our faith. We will be “resolved to obey [Jehovah’s] regulations at all times, down to the last.” (Ps. 119:112) We will “not be ashamed” to tell others about the truth and to encourage them to live in harmony with it. (Ps. 119:46) And we will be able to endure the most difficult situations, including persecution, “with patience and joy.” (Col. 1:11; Ps. 119:143, 157) The truth stabilizes us, giving us a definite purpose and clear direction. It provides us with hope for a better future under the rulership of God’s Kingdom. w23.01 7 ¶16-17

Sunday, June 30

I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, you also love one another.—John 13:34.

On the night before his death, Jesus prayed at length for his disciples, asking his Father to “watch over them because of the wicked one.” (John 17:15) How loving of Jesus! He was about to undergo a difficult trial of his own; yet, he was concerned about the welfare of his apostles. In imitation of Jesus, we do not focus only

on our own needs. Instead, we regularly pray for our brothers and sisters. When we do that, we are obeying Jesus’ command to love one another and we show Jehovah just how much we love our fellow believers. Praying for our brothers and sisters is not a waste of time. God’s Word tells us that “a righteous man’s supplication has a powerful effect.” (Jas. 5:16) Our fellow worshippers need our prayers because they face many trials. w22.07 23-24 ¶13-15

Monday, July 1

Become an example to the faithful ones in speaking.—1 Tim. 4:12.

Our ability to speak is a gift from our loving God. However, the gift of speech was misused. Satan the Devil lied to Eve, and that lie led to human sin and imperfection. (Gen. 3:1-4) Adam misused his tongue when he blamed Eve—and even Jehovah—for his own mistakes. (Gen. 3:12) Cain lied to Jehovah after he killed his brother Abel. (Gen. 4:9) Today, it is difficult to find a motion picture that does not contain some bad language. Students hear profanity at school, and adults are exposed to it in the workplace. If not careful, we might get so used to hearing bad language that we begin to use it ourselves. Of course, as Christians, we want to please Jehovah, and that involves more than avoiding obscene speech. We want to use the remarkable gift of speech in a positive way—to praise our God. w22.04 4 ¶1-3

Tuesday, July 2

You cannot slave for God and for Riches.—Matt. 6:24.

Jesus had a balanced view of material things. He enjoyed food and drink. (Luke 19:2, 6, 7) On one occasion, he made wine of the finest quality—the first of his miracles. (John 2:10, 11) And on the day he died, he was wearing an expensive garment. (John 19: 23, 24) But Jesus did not allow material things to become the focus of his life. Jesus taught that if we seek the Kingdom first, Jehovah will make sure that we have what we need. (Matt. 6:31-33) Many have benefited from applying divine wisdom when it comes to money. Consider the example of a single brother named Daniel. He says: “In my teenage years, I decided that I would make spiritual activities the most important thing in my life.” Because he has kept his life simple, Daniel has been able to use his time and skills on many theocratic projects. He adds: “There’s no amount of money that could equal the blessings Jehovah has given me.” w22.05 21-22 ¶6-7

Wednesday, July 3

[Jehovah] called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.—1 Pet. 2:9.

We can show that we love the truth by regularly studying the Bible and Bible-based publications. After all, no matter how long we have been in the truth, we always have more to learn. Study is hard work, but it is well worth the effort. Not all of us love to read and study. But Jehovah invites us to “keep seeking” and to “keep searching” for a deeper understanding of

the truth. (Prov. 2:4-6) When we put forth such effort, we always benefit. Regarding his personal Bible reading, Corey says that he focuses on one verse at a time. He explains: “I’ll read every footnote, look up every cross-reference, and do additional research. . . . I get so much out of my reading with this method!” Whether we use that method or another, we show our appreciation for the truth when we put time and effort into studying it.—Ps. 1:1-3. w22.08 17 ¶13; 18 ¶15-16

Thursday, July 4

I was beside him as a master worker. I was the one he was especially fond of day by day; I rejoiced before him all the time.—Prov. 8:30.

While Jesus was on earth, he used creation to teach his disciples about his Father. Consider one of the lessons he taught. Jehovah extends his love to everyone. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus drew the attention of his disciples to two aspects of creation that many people take for granted: sunshine and rain. Both of these are essential for the preservation of life. Jehovah could have withheld these from undeserving humans. Instead, he lovingly provides the sun and the rain for all. (Matt. 5:43-45) Jesus used this lesson to teach his disciples that Jehovah wants us to show love toward everyone. Whenever we enjoy a stunning sunset or see a refreshing rain shower, we can reflect on Jehovah’s impartial love. His example can move us to show similar love by preaching to all. w23.03 17 ¶9-10

Friday, July 5

I was greatly amazed.—Rev. 17:6.

What amazed the apostle John? A woman riding a scarlet-colored wild beast. She is portrayed as a “great prostitute” and is called “Babylon the Great.” She commits “sexual immorality” with “the kings of the earth.” (Rev. 17:1-5) Who is “Babylon the Great”? This woman cannot represent a political organization because she is spoken of as committing immorality with the world’s political leaders. (Rev. 18:9) In fact, she endeavors to control these rulers, symbolically riding them. Additionally, she cannot represent the greedy commercial elements of Satan’s world. These are portrayed separately as “the merchants of the earth.” (Rev. 18:11, 15, 16) Ancient Babylon was a center of false worship. So, then, Babylon the Great must represent all forms of false worship. In fact, she is the world empire of false religion.—Rev. 17:5, 18. w22.05 11 ¶14-16

Saturday, July 6

Your adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone.—1 Pet. 5:8.

A mother may at times wonder if her children will choose to serve Jehovah. After all, parents know how much pressure their children face in Satan’s world. Additionally, many mothers have the challenge of raising their children without a husband or with a husband who does not worship Jehovah. Challenges are not unique to those living in religiously divided households. Even when both parents are in the truth, it can be dif-

icult to touch the heart of young ones so that they will become faithful servants of Jehovah. In any case, do not be overly anxious. Jehovah will help you. Why not consult other experienced parents for fresh ideas on how to use the tools available for family worship? (Prov. 11:14) Jehovah can also aid you in communicating with your children. Ask him to help you draw out what is on their mind and in their heart.—Prov. 20:5. w22.04 17 ¶4, 7; 18 ¶9

Sunday, July 7

I continue praying, that your love may abound still more and more with accurate knowledge and full discernment.—Phil. 1:9.

We can grow in our love for Jehovah by getting better acquainted with his Son, who perfectly reflects his Father’s personality. (Heb. 1:3) The best way to get to know Jesus is to study the four Gospel accounts. If you have not yet developed the useful habit of reading the Bible every day, why not start now? As you read the accounts about Jesus, take special note of his qualities. He was approachable; he lovingly took small children into his arms. (Mark 10:13-16) He put his disciples at ease; they felt free to speak their mind when in his presence. (Matt. 16:22) In this regard, Jesus imitated his heavenly Father. Jehovah is also very approachable. We can turn to him in prayer. When we pray, we can pour out our heart to him. We are confident that he will not condemn us. He loves us; he cares for us.—1 Pet. 5:7. w22.08 3 ¶4-5

Monday, July 8

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

As our Creator, Jehovah knows everything about us. Just think! He knows every detail about every person on this earth. (Ps. 139:15-17) So he can see all the imperfections that we inherited from our parents. Even more, he is aware of all the experiences that have molded and shaped our personality. What does this intimate knowledge of humankind move Jehovah to do? It moves him to act mercifully toward us. (Ps. 78:39; 103:13, 14) Jehovah has proved that he is eager to forgive. He understands that because of the actions of the first man, Adam, we all came under the curse of sin and death. (Rom. 5:12) There was no way for us to free ourselves or any other person from that curse. (Ps. 49:7-9) However, our loving God showed compassion and arranged for us to be set free. As John 3:16 reveals, Jehovah sent his only-begotten Son to die in our behalf.—Matt. 20:28; Rom. 5:19. w22.06 3 ¶5-6

Tuesday, July 9

*A kind man benefits himself.
—Prov. 11:17.*

That forgivers will be forgiven was made clear by Jehovah in connection with his servant Job. That faithful man had been deeply hurt by the cutting remarks of three men named Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. Jehovah instructed Job to pray in their behalf. After Job did so, Jehovah blessed him. (Job 42:8-10) Harboring resentment is damaging. Jehovah wants us to enjoy the relief that comes from

unburdening ourselves of resentment. (Eph. 4:31, 32) He urges us to “let go of anger and abandon rage.” (Ps. 37:8) There is wisdom in following that advice. Harboring resentment can be harmful to our physical and mental health. (Prov. 14:30) Our harboring such resentment will not affect the offender any more than our drinking poison would harm the one who offended us. Rather, when we forgive others, we are giving ourselves a gift. We find peace of mind and heart, and we are able to move ahead in our service to Jehovah. w22.06 10 ¶9-10

Wednesday, July 10

Put on the breastplate of faith and love and the hope of salvation as a helmet.—1 Thess. 5:8.

Our hope acts as a figurative helmet that protects our thinking and safeguards us from choosing a self-indulgent lifestyle, which would spoil our relationship with Jehovah. (1 Cor. 15:33, 34) Our helmet of hope can also protect us from thinking that there is no point in even trying to please Jehovah. Recall that Job’s false comforter Eliphaz used similar reasoning with Job. Eliphaz said: “What is mortal man that he should be pure?” Further, he said of God: “Look! He has no faith in his holy ones, and even the heavens are not pure in his eyes.” (Job 15:14, 15) What lies! Remember who is behind such thinking—Satan. He knows that if you allow yourself to dwell on such thoughts, your hope will fade. Instead, reject such lies. Never doubt that Jehovah wants you to live forever and that he will help you to reach that goal.—1 Tim. 2:3, 4. w22.10 25-26 ¶8-10

Thursday, July 11

Job did not sin with his lips.

—Job 2:10.

Satan wanted Job to believe that he was suffering because he had lost Jehovah's approval. For instance, Satan used a strong wind to bring down the house where all ten of Job's children had been enjoying a meal together. (Job 1:18, 19) He also caused fire to fall from heaven and destroy not only Job's flocks but also the servants who were caring for them. (Job 1:16) The wind and fire obviously came from a supernatural source; hence, Job concluded that Jehovah God must have been that Source. And as a result, Job believed that he had somehow upset Jehovah. Even so, Job refused to curse his heavenly Father. Job acknowledged that over the years he had received many good things from Jehovah. He therefore reasoned that if he was happy to accept the good, he should also be willing to accept the bad. So he said: "Let the name of Jehovah continue to be praised."—Job 1:20, 21. w22.06 21 ¶7

Friday, July 12

You will be hated by all people on account of my name. But the one who has endured to the end will be saved.

—Mark 13:13.

Jesus gave his disciples a similar warning, recorded at John 17:14. We have certainly seen the fulfillment of that prophecy, especially during the last 100 years. How so? Shortly after Jesus was installed as Messianic King in 1914, Satan was cast out of heaven. He is now confined to the vicinity of the earth, awaiting his de-

struction. (Rev. 12:9, 12) But he is not waiting passively. Satan is desperate and furious, venting his anger on God's people. (Rev. 12:13, 17) For that reason, the world's hatred of God's people has intensified. We have no reason, though, to fear Satan and his followers. Instead, we can have the same conviction as did the apostle Paul, who wrote: "If God is for us, who will be against us?" (Rom. 8:31) We can have complete confidence in Jehovah. w22.07 18 ¶14-15

Saturday, July 13

This good news of the Kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth.

—Matt. 24:14.

Jesus was not worried that there would be a shortage of workers during the conclusion of the system of things. He knew that the prophetic words of the psalmist would be fulfilled: "Your people will offer themselves willingly on the day of your military force." (Ps. 110:3) If you are sharing in the preaching work, you are supporting Jesus and the faithful slave and are helping to fulfill that prophecy. The work is going ahead, but there are challenges. One challenge that Kingdom preachers face is opposition. Apostates, religious leaders, and politicians have given many the wrong impression about our work. If our relatives, acquaintances, and workmates are misled by this propaganda, they may pressure us to stop serving Jehovah and to stop preaching. In some countries, the opposition takes the form of intimidation, threats, arrests, and even imprisonment. w22.07 8 ¶1; 9 ¶5-6

Sunday, July 14

We must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations.

—Acts 14:22.

Jehovah expects us to set aside time to study the Bible regularly and to think deeply about what we read. When we apply what we learn, our faith grows stronger and we draw closer to our heavenly Father. As a result, we are strengthened to endure trials. Jehovah also gives his holy spirit to those who rely on his Word. And that spirit can give us “the power beyond what is normal” to endure any trial. (2 Cor. 4:7-10) With Jehovah’s backing, “the faithful and discreet slave” produces an abundance of articles, videos, and music that can help us to build strong faith and stay alert spiritually. (Matt. 24:45) Jehovah has trained his people to love and to comfort one another during distressing times. (2 Cor. 1:3, 4; 1 Thess. 4:9) Our brothers and sisters are eager to help us remain faithful when we experience difficulties. w22.08 12 ¶12-14

Monday, July 15

[Endeavor] to maintain the oneness of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace.

—Eph. 4:3.

By freely mentioning the good qualities of our brothers and sisters, we give them added reason for drawing close to one another, which builds up the congregation in love. At times, even mature Christians may disagree or argue with each other. That happened to the apostle Paul and his close friend Barnabas. These two men strongly disagreed about whether to take Mark with them on their next

missionary trip. There was “a sharp burst of anger” between them, and they parted ways. (Acts 15:37-39) But Paul, Barnabas, and Mark mended the rift in their relationship. Paul later spoke well of Barnabas and Mark. (1 Cor. 9:6; Col. 4:10) We too need to resolve any differences we might have with others in the congregation and then continue to focus on their good qualities. In that way, we will promote peace and unity. w22.08 23 ¶10-11

Tuesday, July 16

Stop judging that you may not be judged.—Matt. 7:1.

While we try hard to live by Jehovah’s righteous standards, we must avoid judging others and becoming self-righteous. We keep in mind that Jehovah is “the Judge of all the earth.” (Gen. 18:25) Jehovah has not entrusted such judging to us. Consider the example of the righteous man Joseph. He avoided judging others, even those who treated him badly. His own brothers assaulted him, sold him into slavery, and convinced their father that Joseph was dead. Years later, Joseph was reunited with his family. Now a powerful head of state, Joseph could have judged his brothers harshly and sought vengeance. Joseph’s brothers were afraid he might do exactly that, even though they were sincerely sorry for what they had done. But Joseph assured them: “Do not be afraid. Am I in the place of God?” (Gen. 37:18-20, 27, 28, 31-35; 50:15-21) Joseph humbly left the judging to Jehovah. w22.08 30 ¶18-19

Wednesday, July 17

Do not withhold good from those to whom you should give it if it is within your power to help.—Prov. 3:27.

Did you know that you can be used by Jehovah to answer someone's fervent prayer? That is true whether you are an elder, a ministerial servant, a pioneer, or a congregation publisher. It is true whether you are young or old or whether you are a brother or a sister. When someone who loves Jehovah calls out to him for help, our God often uses the elders and other faithful servants to become "a source of great comfort" to that person. (Col. 4:11) What a privilege it is to serve Jehovah and our brothers in that way! We may be able to do so when there is a disease outbreak, a disaster, or persecution. We may want to help others, but that can be challenging if our own family members are suffering. Still, we want to help our brothers, and Jehovah is pleased when we do what we can for them.—Prov.19:17. w22.12 22 ¶1-2

Thursday, July 18

This is my commandment, that you love one another just as I have loved you.—John 15:12.

Love is the foundation of trust. Jesus said that the two greatest commandments are to love Jehovah and to love our neighbor. (Matt. 22:37-39) Our love for Jehovah impels us to imitate his perfect example of trustworthiness. For instance, love for our brothers and sisters moves us to keep their personal matters private. We would never want to reveal something that could cause them harm, embarrass-

ment, or pain. Humility will also help us to be trustworthy. A Christian who is humble does not try to impress others by being the first to reveal a matter. (Phil. 2:3) He does not exaggerate his own importance by suggesting that he is aware of information that he is not allowed to reveal. Humility will also prevent us from spreading speculations about matters that are not discussed in the Bible or in our Bible-based publications. w22.09 12 ¶12-13

Friday, July 19

True knowledge will become abundant.—Dan. 12:4.

An angel told Daniel that the prophetic words in Daniel's book would be understood more fully by God's people, but that "none of the wicked [would] understand." (Dan. 12:10) Now is the time for us to prove that we are not among the wicked ones. (Mal. 3:16-18) Jehovah is gathering those whom he views as "a special property," or a treasured possession. We surely want to be among them. Truly, we are living in exciting times. But far more amazing things are about to happen. Soon we will see the destruction of all wickedness. Following that, we will see the fulfillment of Jehovah's promise to Daniel: "You will stand up for your lot at the end of the days." (Dan. 12:13) Do you long for the day when Daniel, along with your loved ones, will "stand up" again? If so, do your utmost now to be faithful, and you can be sure that your name will remain written in Jehovah's book of life. w22.09 24 ¶17; 25 ¶19-20

Saturday, July 20

I am sending you.—Ezek. 2:3.

Those words must have strengthened Ezekiel. Why? No doubt he recalled that Jehovah had used similar words when He commissioned Moses and Isaiah as His prophets. (Ex. 3:10; Isa. 6:8) Ezekiel also knew how Jehovah had helped those two prophets overcome challenges. So when Jehovah told Ezekiel twice: “I am sending you,” the prophet had good reason for trusting in Jehovah’s support. Further, in the book of Ezekiel, we find this statement numerous times: “The word of Jehovah came to me.” (Ezek. 3:16) Moreover, the statement “The word of Jehovah again came to me” occurs repeatedly. (Ezek. 6:1) Surely, Ezekiel was convinced that he was sent by Jehovah. In addition, being the son of a priest, Ezekiel had likely been taught by his father how throughout history Jehovah assured His prophets of His backing. To Isaac, Jacob, and Jeremiah, Jehovah had spoken the words: “I am with you.”—Gen. 26:24; 28:15; Jer. 1:8. w22.11 2 ¶3

Sunday, July 21

This means everlasting life.
—John 17:3.

Even though Adam and Eve sinned and brought death to their children, Jehovah did not change his mind regarding his purpose. (Isa. 55:11) His purpose is still that faithful humans live forever. Consider the things Jehovah has said and done in order to fulfill his purpose. Jehovah has promised that he will resurrect the dead and make everlasting life available to

them. (Acts 24:15; Titus 1:1, 2) The faithful man Job was certain that Jehovah longs to resurrect those who have died. (Job 14:14, 15) The prophet Daniel was aware that humans have the prospect of being resurrected with the opportunity to live forever. (Ps. 37:29; Dan. 12:2, 13) Jews in Jesus’ day also knew that Jehovah could grant his faithful servants “everlasting life.” (Luke 10:25; 18:18) Jesus repeatedly spoke of this promise, and he himself was resurrected by his Father.—Matt. 19:29; 22:31, 32; Luke 18:30; John 11:25. w22.12 4-5 ¶8-9

Monday, July 22

I trust in you, O Jehovah.
—Ps. 31:14.

Jehovah invites us to be close to him. (Jas. 4:8) He wants to be our God, our Father, and our Friend. He answers our prayers and helps us during difficult times. And he uses his organization to teach us and protect us. We can draw close to Jehovah by praying to him and by reading his Word and meditating on it. As we do, we are filled with love and appreciation for him. We are motivated to give him the obedience and praise that he so richly deserves. (Rev. 4:11) The more we get to know Jehovah, the more we will trust in him and the organization that he has provided to help us. The Devil, however, tries little by little to undermine our trust in Jehovah and his organization. But we can resist his tactics. When our faith is strong and our trust in Jehovah is unshakable, we will not abandon our God and his organization.—Ps. 31:13, 14. w22.11 14 ¶1-3

Tuesday, July 23

They . . . were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God.—Dan. 3:28.

Many true Christians have risked their freedom and even their lives out of love for Jehovah as their Sovereign Ruler. They are integrity-keepers, who have resolve like that of the three Hebrews whose lives were spared in the fiery furnace for remaining faithful to the Supreme One. The psalmist David wrote about the importance of keeping integrity to God: “Jehovah will pass sentence on the peoples. Judge me, O Jehovah, according to my righteousness and according to my integrity.” (Ps. 7:8) Again, David wrote: “May integrity and uprightness safeguard me.” (Ps. 25:21) The best way to live is to remain faithful to Jehovah, maintaining our loyalty to him! Then we will feel the same as did the psalmist who wrote: “Happy are those who keep integrity . . . , who walk in the law of Jehovah.”—Ps. 119:1, fn. w22.10 17 ¶18-19

Wednesday, July 24

His invisible qualities . . . are perceived by the things made.—Rom. 1:20.

Of all the conversations Job had throughout his life, one in particular must have stood out—the conversation he had with Jehovah God. To strengthen Job’s confidence in His wisdom and ability to care for His servants, Jehovah pointed to some extraordinary features of nature. For instance, Job was reminded that God provides for the animals, so He could also take care of Job. (Job 38:39-

41; 39:1, 5, 13-16) By considering examples from creation, Job learned a great deal about the qualities of his God. We too can learn more about our God when we examine his creative works. However, we may not always find it easy to do so. If we live in a city, we may see little evidence of nature in our daily lives. Even if we do live close to nature, we may feel that we have little time to study it, but it is worthwhile to take the time and make the effort to observe creation. w23.03 15 ¶1-2

Thursday, July 25

The shrewd one sees the danger and conceals himself.—Prov. 22:3.

Jesus said that “great earthquakes” and other disasters would occur before the end comes. (Luke 21:11) He also spoke of an “increasing of lawlessness,” which is evident in crime, violence, and terrorist attacks. (Matt. 24:12) Jesus never said that these calamities would impact only those whom Jehovah has abandoned. In fact, many of Jehovah’s faithful servants have been victims of disasters. (Isa. 57:1; 2 Cor. 11:25) Jehovah may not miraculously protect us from all disasters, but he will give us whatever we need to remain calm and at peace. We will find this easier if we have planned in advance how to respond. But does preparing indicate that we lack faith in Jehovah? Not at all. In fact, preparing for a disaster shows that we do have faith in his ability to care for us. How so? God’s Word advises us to prepare for potential disasters. w22.12 18 ¶9-10

Friday, July 26

God has sent me ahead of you for the preservation of life.—Gen. 45:5.

While Joseph was in prison, Jehovah caused the king of Egypt to have two troubling dreams. When the king learned that Joseph had the ability to interpret dreams, he sent for him. With Jehovah's help, Joseph interpreted the dreams and impressed Pharaoh with the practical advice he gave him. Seeing that Jehovah was with the young man, Pharaoh appointed Joseph as the food administrator for all of Egypt. (Gen. 41:38, 41-44) Later, a severe famine arose that affected not only Egypt but also Canaan, the land in which Joseph's family were living. Joseph was now in a position to save his family and thus preserve the line of descent that would lead to the Messiah. Obviously, it was Jehovah who made everything Joseph did succeed. In the end, Jehovah turned the cruel scheme of Joseph's brothers into a means by which He could accomplish His will. w23.01 17 ¶11-12

Saturday, July 27

Pay attention to yourselves.
—Luke 21:34.

A person who pays attention to himself is alert to any dangers that threaten his relationship with Jehovah, and he takes steps to avoid them. In this way, he keeps himself in God's love. (Prov. 22:3; Jude 20, 21) The apostle Paul admonished Christians to pay attention to themselves. For example, he told the Christians in Ephesus: "Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons." (Eph. 5:15, 16) Our spirituali-

ty is under constant threat, so the Bible counsels us to "keep perceiving what the will of Jehovah is" so that we can deal with any type of threat. (Eph. 5:17) To make wise choices, we need to perceive, or sense, "the will of Jehovah." We can do this by regularly studying God's Word and meditating on it. The more we understand Jehovah's will and cultivate "the mind of Christ," the more likely we will walk "as wise persons," even when we do not have specific rules to guide our conduct.—1 Cor. 2:14-16. w23.02 16-17 ¶7-9

Sunday, July 28

Be transformed by making your mind over, so that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.—Rom. 12:2.

How often do you clean your home? Perhaps before you first moved in, you scoured it thoroughly. But what if you neglected it afterward? As you know, dust and dirt can accumulate quickly. To keep your home presentable, you need to clean it regularly. A similar ongoing effort is required when it comes to our thinking and our personality. Of course, before getting baptized we worked hard to make necessary changes in our life in order to "cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit." (2 Cor. 7:1) Now, though, we need to follow the apostle Paul's counsel to "continue to be made new." (Eph. 4:23) The dust and dirt of this world can quickly accumulate in us. To avoid that outcome and to remain presentable to Jehovah, we must regularly examine our thinking, our personality, and our desires. w23.01 8 ¶1-2

Monday, July 29

He saw God's spirit descending like a dove and coming upon him.

—Matt. 3:16.

Imagine what it was like to listen to Jesus teach. How often he referred to the Holy Scriptures from memory! It was at the time of his baptism and his being anointed with holy spirit that Jesus' memory of his prehuman existence was evidently restored to him. In his first recorded words after his baptism and in some of his last words before his death, Jesus quoted from the Scriptures. (Deut. 8:3; Ps. 31:5; Luke 4:4; 23:46) And during the three and a half years between those two events, Jesus often publicly read and quoted from the Scriptures and explained them. (Matt. 5:17, 18, 21, 22, 27, 28; Luke 4:16-20) Years before he began his ministry, Jesus read and heard God's Word repeatedly. At home, he no doubt heard Mary and Joseph quote from the Scriptures. (Deut. 6:6, 7) Also, Jesus attended the synagogue every Sabbath with his family. (Luke 4:16) While there, he must have listened carefully as the Scriptures were read. w23.02 8 ¶1-2

Tuesday, July 30

You must love Jehovah your God.

—Mark 12:30.

There are so many reasons to love Jehovah. For example, you have come to understand that he is “the source of life” and that he is the Giver of “every good gift and every perfect present.” (Ps. 36:9; Jas. 1:17) Every good thing that you enjoy comes from our generous, loving God. The ransom is a wonderful gift that Jehovah has given to us. Why can we say that? Consider

the bond that exists between Jehovah and his Son. Jesus said: “The Father loves me” and “I love the Father.” (John 10:17; 14:31) The bond between them grew stronger over the course of billions of years. (Prov. 8:22, 23, 30) Now think how it must have pained God to allow his Son to suffer and die. Jehovah loves mankind—including you—so much that he was willing to give his beloved Son as a sacrifice to enable you and others to live forever. (John 3:16; Gal. 2:20) There can be no greater reason to love God. w23.03 4-5 ¶11-13

Wednesday, July 31

Hold fast to what you have.

—Rev. 2:25.

We must reject the teachings of apostates. Jesus reproved some in Pergamum for promoting divisions and sects. (Rev. 2:14-16) He commended those in Thyatira who had steered clear of the “deep things of Satan,” and he urged them to “hold fast” to the truth. (Rev. 2:24-26) Weak Christians there who had allowed themselves to be seduced by false teachings needed to repent. What about us today? We must reject any teaching that is opposed to Jehovah's thinking. Apostates may have “an appearance of godliness,” but they prove “false to its power.” (2 Tim. 3:5) It is easier to identify and reject false teachings when we are diligent students of God's Word. (2 Tim. 3:14-17; Jude 3, 4) We need to make sure that our worship is acceptable to Jehovah. If we are doing something that could make our worship unacceptable, we need to take immediate action to make things right. —Rev. 2:5, 16; 3:3, 16. w22.05 4 ¶9; 5 ¶11

Thursday, August 1

A book of remembrance was written before him for those fearing Jehovah and for those meditating on his name.—Mal. 3:16.

Can you think of a reason why Jehovah would record in his “book of remembrance” the names of those whose speech shows that they fear him and meditate on his name? Our speech reveals what is in our heart. Jesus said: “Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.” (Matt. 12:34) Jehovah wants those who love him to enjoy life forever in the new world. The way we speak can determine whether Jehovah will accept our worship. (Jas. 1:26) Some of those who do not love God speak in an aggressive, harsh, and proud way. (2 Tim. 3:1-5) We do not want to be like them. We are eager to please Jehovah with our speech. But could Jehovah be pleased with us if we used gracious and kind speech at our Christian meetings or in the ministry but spoke in a harsh and unloving way to family members behind closed doors?—1 Pet. 3:7. w22.04 5 ¶4-5

Friday, August 2

These will hate the prostitute and will make her devastated and naked, and they will eat up her flesh and completely burn her with fire.—Rev. 17:16.

God puts the thought into the hearts of the ten horns and the wild beast to carry out the destruction of Babylon the Great. Yes, Jehovah will motivate the nations to use the scarlet-colored wild beast, that is, the United Nations, to turn on the world empire of false religion and completely destroy it.

(Rev. 18:21-24) What does this mean for us? We need to maintain “the form of worship that is clean and undefiled from the standpoint of our God.” (Jas. 1:27) Never would we want to allow ourselves to be influenced by the false teachings, the pagan celebrations, the lax moral standards, and the spiritistic practices of Babylon the Great! And we would continually call out to people to “get out of her,” so that they can avoid sharing in her guilt before God.—Rev. 18:4. w22.05 11 ¶17; 14 ¶18

Saturday, August 3

I will mention Jehovah’s acts of loyal love.—Isa. 63:7.

Parents, create opportunities to teach your children about Jehovah and the many good things he has done for you. (Deut. 6:6, 7) This is especially important if due to a religiously divided household, you cannot study regularly with your children at home. A sister named Christine says: “Opportunities to discuss spiritual things were so few that I took advantage of any moment we had.” In addition, speak positively about Jehovah’s organization and about your brothers and sisters. Do not criticize the elders. What you say about them can determine whether your children will turn to them in times of need. Promote peace at home. Regularly express your love for your husband and your children. Speak about your husband in a kind and respectful way, and train your children to do the same. Thus, you create a peaceful atmosphere that is conducive to learning about Jehovah.—Jas. 3:18. w22.04 18 ¶10-11

Sunday, August 4

I know your deeds.—Rev. 3:1.

Jesus' message to those in the congregation in Ephesus indicated that they had shown endurance and that they had continued without letup to serve Jehovah in spite of various challenges. Even so, they had lost the love they had at first. They needed to rekindle that love—otherwise, their worship would not be acceptable. Likewise today, we need to do more than endure. We need to endure for the right reasons. Our God is interested in not only what we do but also why we do it. Our motives are important to him because he expects our worship to be based on our deep love and appreciation for him. (Prov. 16:2; Mark 12:29, 30) We must continue to remain awake and alert. The members of the congregation in Sardis had a different problem. Even though they had been spiritually active in the past, they were becoming lax in their service to God. Jesus told them to “wake up.” (Rev. 3:1-3) Of course, Jehovah will not forget our work.—Heb. 6:10. w22.05 3 ¶6-7

Monday, August 5

There is benefit in every kind of hard work.—Prov. 14:23.

Solomon called the enjoyment that we can derive from our hard work “the gift of God.” (Eccl. 5:18, 19) Solomon knew what he was talking about. He was a worker! He built houses, planted vineyards, and made gardens and pools. He also built cities. (1 Ki. 9:19; Eccl. 2:4-6) That was hard work, and no doubt it gave him a measure of satisfaction. But Solomon did not

rely on those activities alone to bring him happiness. He also engaged in spiritual pursuits. For example, he supervised the construction of a glorious temple for Jehovah's worship—a seven-year building project! (1 Ki. 6:38; 9:1) After sharing in all sorts of activities, both secular and spiritual, Solomon realized that spiritual activities are far more important than secular pursuits. He wrote: “The conclusion of the matter, everything having been heard, is: Fear the true God and keep his commandments.”—Eccl. 12:13. w22.05 22 ¶8

Tuesday, August 6

God . . . by Christ freely forgave you.—Eph. 4:32.

The Bible is filled with examples of individuals whom Jehovah freely forgave. Who comes to your mind? Perhaps you think of King Manasseh. That wicked man sinned against Jehovah in terrible ways. He took the lead in false worship. He killed his own children, offering them as sacrifices to pagan gods. He even went so far as to place a carved image of a false god in Jehovah's sacred temple. Of him, the Bible says: “He did on a grand scale what was bad in Jehovah's eyes, to offend him.” (2 Chron. 33:2-7) Yet, when Manasseh showed heartfelt repentance, Jehovah freely forgave him. (2 Chron. 33:12, 13) Perhaps you also think of King David, who committed serious sins against Jehovah, including adultery and murder. Yet, when David sincerely repented and acknowledged his error, Jehovah forgave him as well. (2 Sam. 12:9, 10, 13, 14) Yes, we can be certain that Jehovah is eager to forgive. w22.06 3 ¶7

Wednesday, August 7

Exercise patience; make your hearts firm.—Jas. 5:8.

It is not always easy to keep our hope strong. We might become impatient while we wait on God. However, Jehovah is eternal, and his view of time is different from ours. (2 Pet. 3:8, 9) He will work out his purpose in the best way possible, but he may not act when we expect him to. What can help us to keep our hope strong as we wait patiently for God to fulfill his promises? (Jas. 5:7) Remain close to Jehovah, the one who guarantees our hope. In fact, the Bible closely links hope to faith that Jehovah exists and that he is “the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him.” (Heb. 11:1, 6) The more real Jehovah is to us, the greater our confidence will be that he will do all that he has promised. To keep our hope strong, we must pray to Jehovah and read his Word. Though we cannot see Jehovah, we can draw close to him. We can speak to him in prayer, confident that he will listen to us.—Jer. 29:11, 12. w22.10 26-27 ¶11-13

Thursday, August 8

Job began to speak and to curse the day of his birth.—Job 3:1.

Imagine the scene. Sitting among the ashes, Job is in constant pain. (Job 2:8) His companions relentlessly attack his character and attempt to destroy his reputation. His trials weigh on him like heavy stones, while his grief over the loss of his children claws at his heart. At first, Job is silent. (Job 2:13) If Job’s companions interpret his silence as a sign that Job is going to turn his back on his

Creator, they are sorely mistaken. At one point, Job—possibly raising his head and looking directly at his false friends—says: “Until I die, I will not renounce my integrity!” (Job 27:5) What helped Job to be so courageous and strong despite all his suffering? Even when he was at his lowest point, he never lost hope that his loving God would eventually bring him relief. He knew that even if he died, Jehovah would resurrect him.—Job 14:13-15. w22.06 22 ¶9

Friday, August 9

You must pray, then, this way: “Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your Kingdom come. Let your will take place.” —Matt. 6:9, 10.

We have been granted a marvelous privilege—that of approaching the Maker of heaven and earth in prayer. Just think: We can pour out our hearts to Jehovah at any time and in any language. We can pray to him from a hospital bed or from a prison cell, confident that our loving Father will listen to us. We do not take this privilege for granted. King David treasured the privilege of prayer. He sang to Jehovah: “May my prayer be as incense prepared before you.” (Ps. 141:1, 2) In David’s time, the sacred incense used in true worship by the priests was prepared with great care. (Ex. 30:34, 35) David’s reference to incense suggests that he wanted to give careful thought to what he was going to say to his heavenly Father. That is our earnest desire too. We want our prayers to please Jehovah. w22.07 20 ¶1-2; 21 ¶4

Saturday, August 10

“Vengeance is mine; I will repay,” says Jehovah.—Rom. 12:19.

Vengeance belongs to Jehovah. Jehovah has not authorized us to seek revenge when someone sins against us. (Rom. 12:20, 21) With our limited and imperfect viewpoint, we are simply not in a position to judge matters correctly, as God can. (Heb. 4:13) And, at times, we allow our emotions to interfere with our good judgment. Jehovah inspired James to write: “Man’s anger does not bring about God’s righteousness.” (Jas. 1:20) We can be certain that Jehovah will do the right thing and make sure that perfect justice will be carried out. Forgiveness shows our confidence in Jehovah’s justice. By leaving matters in Jehovah’s hands, we show that we are confident that Jehovah will undo all the harm that has been caused by sin. In his promised new world, painful emotional wounds “will not be called to mind, nor will they come up into the heart” ever again.—Isa. 65:17. w22.06 10-11 ¶11-12

Sunday, August 11

You will be hated by all the nations on account of my name.—Matt. 24:9.

The very fact that we are experiencing such hatred is proof that we have Jehovah’s approval. (Matt. 5:11, 12) The Devil is behind this opposition. But he is no match for Jesus! With Jesus’ support, the good news is reaching people of all nations. Consider the evidence. As Kingdom preachers, we also face the challenge of overcoming a language barrier. In the revelation that he gave to the apostle John,

Jesus disclosed that in our day the good news would overcome that obstacle. (Rev. 14:6, 7) How so? We are giving as many people as possible a chance to respond to the Kingdom message. Today, people around the world can read Bible-based material on our jw.org website because it contains information in over 1,000 languages! Approval was given to translate the *Enjoy Life Forever!* book—our main study tool for making disciples—into more than 700 languages! w22.07 9 ¶6-7

Monday, August 12

There is success through many advisers.—Prov. 11:14.

Jesus felt compassion for people. The apostle Matthew reports: “On seeing the crowds, he felt pity for them, because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd.” (Matt. 9:36) And how does Jehovah feel? Jesus said: “It is not a desirable thing to my Father who is in heaven for even one of these little ones to perish.” (Matt. 18:14) How heartwarming that is! As we get to know Jesus better, our love for Jehovah grows. You can also learn to be more loving and make progress as a Christian by getting acquainted with mature brothers and sisters in your congregation. Notice how joyful they are. They have no regrets about their decision to serve Jehovah. Ask them to tell you about some of the experiences they have had in Jehovah’s service. When you have an important decision to make, ask them for advice. After all, “there is success through many advisers.” w22.08 3 ¶6-7

Tuesday, August 13

The eyes of Jehovah are on the righteous.—1 Pet. 3:12.

All of us will face some kind of trial. However, we will never have to face a trial on our own. Like a loving father, Jehovah is always watching over us. He is by our side, ready to hear our pleas for help and eager to support us. (Isa. 43:2) We are convinced that we can cope with adversity because he has generously provided us with everything we need to endure. He has given us the gift of prayer, the Bible, an abundance of spiritual food, and a loving brotherhood to help us in times of need. How grateful we are to have a heavenly Father who watches over us! “Our hearts rejoice in him.” (Ps. 33:21) We can show Jehovah that we appreciate his loving care by taking advantage of all his provisions to help us. We also need to do our part to remain under God’s care. In other words, if we continue to do our best to obey Jehovah and do what is right in his eyes, he will watch over us forever! w22.08 13 ¶15-16

Wednesday, August 14

The very essence of your word is truth.—Ps. 119:160.

Many today are suffering from a lack of confidence. They do not know whom they can trust. They wonder whether people they look up to—politicians, scientists and businessmen—really have their best interests at heart. In addition, they do not have high regard for Christendom’s clergy. So it is not surprising that they view with skepticism the book those religious leaders claim to represent—the

Bible. As servants of Jehovah, we are convinced that he is “the God of truth” and that he always wants what is best for us. (Ps. 31:5; Isa. 48:17) We know that we can trust what we read in the Bible. We agree with what one Bible scholar wrote: “There is no hint of falseness or chance of failure in anything God has said. God’s people can trust what he says because they trust the God who has said it.” w23.01 2 ¶1-2

Thursday, August 15

Let us consider one another.
—Heb. 10:24.

We build up our brothers and sisters when we strengthen their faith in Jehovah. Some are ridiculed by unbelievers. Others are dealing with serious health problems or are struggling to overcome hurt feelings. Still others have been waiting a long time for this system of things to end. These situations can be a test of faith for Christians today. Members of the first-century congregation faced similar challenges. The apostle Paul used the Scriptures to build up the faith of his brothers and sisters. For example, Jewish Christians may have felt at a loss to answer the criticisms of unbelieving family members who claimed that Judaism was superior to Christianity. No doubt Paul’s letter to the Hebrews greatly strengthened those Christians. (Heb. 1:5, 6; 2:2, 3; 9:24, 25) They could use his powerful reasonings to silence their accusers. w22.08 23-24 ¶12-14

Friday, August 16

Blessed is the man who puts his trust in Jehovah.—Jer. 17:7.

People in Satan's world do not know whom they can trust. They are constantly disappointed by the conduct of commercial, political, and religious leaders. That feeling extends to friends, neighbors, and even family members. This should not surprise us. The Bible foretold: "In the last days . . . , men will be . . . disloyal, . . . slanderers, . . . betrayers." In other words, people would reflect the personality of the god of this system of things, who is far from trustworthy. (2 Tim. 3:1-4; 2 Cor. 4:4) As Christians, however, we know that we can put our full trust in Jehovah. We are convinced that he loves us and that he "will never abandon" his friends. (Ps. 9:10) We can also trust in Christ Jesus because he gave his life for us. (1 Pet. 3:18) And we have learned from personal experience that the Bible provides reliable guidance.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17. w22.09 2 ¶1-2

Saturday, August 17

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

True happiness is not simply a light-hearted feeling that comes and goes. It can last throughout a person's life. How so? Jesus explained in his Sermon on the Mount: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need." (Matt. 5:3) Jesus knew that humans are made with an intense desire to know and worship their Creator, Jehovah God. That is our "spiritual need." And since Jehovah is "the happy God," those who worship him can

also be happy. (1 Tim. 1:11) Do we need ideal circumstances in our life to be happy? No. In his sermon, Jesus said that even "those who mourn" can be happy. Jesus said the same about "those who have been persecuted for righteousness' sake." (Matt. 5:4, 10, 11) Jesus was teaching us that happiness results, not from having ideal circumstances in our life, but from satisfying our spiritual need and drawing close to God.—Jas. 4:8. w22.10 6 ¶1-3

Sunday, August 18

The man of true discernment remains silent.—Prov. 11:12.

Discernment will help a Christian to distinguish between "a time to be silent and a time to speak." (Eccl. 3:7) "Speech is silver, but silence is golden" is a common expression in some cultures. In other words, there are times when it is better to keep quiet than to speak. Consider an example. One experienced elder is often asked to help other congregations with their challenging problems. Commenting on this, a fellow elder said, "He is always careful never to share sensitive information about other congregations." The elder's discernment has earned him the respect of the brothers with whom he serves on the body of elders. They are certain that he will not reveal their confidential matters to others. Honesty is another element of trust. We trust an honest person because we know that he will always speak the truth.—Eph. 4:25; Heb. 13:18. w22.09 12 ¶14-15

Monday, August 19

There is no wisdom, nor discernment, nor counsel in opposition to Jehovah.
—Prov. 21:30.

Many turn a deaf ear when true wisdom “cries aloud in the street.” (Prov. 1:20) According to the Bible, there are three groups of people who reject wisdom: “inexperienced ones,” “ridiculers,” and “foolish ones.” (Prov. 1:22-25) The “inexperienced ones” are those who are naive, easily persuaded, or deceived. (Prov. 14:15, fn.) Think, for example, of the millions who are being misled by religious or political leaders. Some are horrified when they learn that they have been fooled by such leaders. But those mentioned at Proverbs 1:22 choose to remain inexperienced because they like it that way. (Jer. 5:31) They do not want to learn what the Bible says or to be held accountable to its standards. We certainly do not want to imitate those who are willfully ignorant!—Prov. 1:32; 27:12. w22.10 19 ¶5-7

Tuesday, August 20

Subject yourselves to every human creation.—1 Pet. 2:13.

God’s organization gives us direction to keep us safe. We are regularly reminded to give the elders our current contact information so that they can reach us during an emergency. We may also receive direction about sheltering in place, evacuation, and obtaining relief supplies or about how and when to assist others. If we fail to obey, we could put in jeopardy our life and the lives of the elders who are keeping watch over us. (Heb. 13:

17) Many brothers and sisters who were displaced by a disaster or civil unrest have done their best to adapt to their new situation and become involved right away in theocratic activities. Like the early Christians who were scattered by persecution, they continue “declaring the good news of the word.” (Acts 8:4) Preaching helps them to focus on the Kingdom rather than on difficult circumstances. As a result, they have maintained their joy and peace. w22.12 19 ¶12-13

Wednesday, August 21

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

Jehovah values us as individuals. Before sending out his apostles to preach, Jesus helped them to overcome their fear of opposition. (Matt. 10:29-31) He did so by talking about one of the most common birds in Israel: the sparrow. Those birds had little value in Jesus’ day. But he told his disciples: “Not one of them will fall to the ground without your Father’s knowledge.” Then he added: “You are worth more than many sparrows.” Jesus thus assured his disciples that Jehovah valued them as individuals, so they had no reason to fear persecution. The disciples surely recalled Jesus’ words when they saw sparrows while preaching in towns and villages. Whenever you see a little bird, remember that Jehovah values you as an individual because you too “are worth more than many sparrows.” With his support, you can face opposition with confidence. w23.03 18 ¶12

Thursday, August 22

You have made Pharaoh and his servants despise us and you have put a sword in their hand to kill us.—Ex. 5:21.

At times, we face hardships—such as family opposition or the loss of our job. When we endure adversity for a long time, we may feel hopeless and downhearted. Satan takes advantage of such opportunities and seeks to get us to doubt Jehovah’s love for us. The Devil wants us to question whether Jehovah or His organization is responsible for our suffering. Something similar happened to some of the Israelites in Egypt. At first they believed that Jehovah had appointed Moses and Aaron to deliver them from slavery. (Ex. 4:29-31) But later when Pharaoh made their lives harder, they blamed Moses and Aaron for their problems. (Ex. 5:19, 20) They blamed God’s loyal servants. How sad! If you have been enduring hardships for a long time, pour out your heart to Jehovah in prayer and look to him for support. w22.11 15 ¶5-6

Friday, August 23

Most truly I say to you, the hour is coming, and it is now, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who have paid attention will live.—John 5:25.

Jehovah is the Life-Giver and has the power to bring people back to life. He empowered the prophet Elijah to resurrect the son of the widow of Zarephath. (1 Ki. 17:21-23) Later, with God’s help, the prophet Elisha restored the life of the son of a Shunamite woman. (2 Ki. 4:18-20, 34-37)

Those and other resurrections prove that Jehovah has the power to bring people back to life. While on earth, Jesus proved that his Father had given him that power. (John 11:23-25, 43, 44) Now Jesus is in heaven and has been given “all authority . . . in heaven and on the earth.” Thus, he is in position to fulfill the promise that “all those in the memorial tombs” will be raised to life with the prospect of remaining alive forever.—Matt. 28:18; John 5:26-29. w22.12 5 ¶10

Saturday, August 24

The house of Israel will refuse to listen to you, for they do not want to listen to me.—Ezek. 3:7.

By rejecting Ezekiel, the people were rejecting Jehovah. The words of today’s text assured Ezekiel that the people’s rejection did not mean that he had failed as a prophet. Jehovah also assured Ezekiel that when the judgments he proclaimed came true, the people would “know that a prophet was among them.” (Ezek. 2:5; 33:33) No doubt those comforting thoughts gave Ezekiel the strength he needed to fulfill his ministry. We too derive strength from knowing that we have been sent by Jehovah. He honors us by calling us his “witnesses.” (Isa. 43:10) What a grand privilege that is! Just as Jehovah urged Ezekiel: “Do not be afraid,” Jehovah urges us: “Do not be in dread.” (Ezek. 2:6) Why is there no reason to fear our opposers? Like Ezekiel, we are sent by Jehovah and have His backing.—Isa. 44:8. w22.11 3-4 ¶4-5

Sunday, August 25

The trustworthy person keeps a confidence.—Prov. 11:13.

Today we deeply appreciate our trustworthy elders and ministerial servants. We are well cared for by these faithful brothers, and we thank Jehovah for them! In what ways, though, can we prove ourselves to be trustworthy? We love our brothers and sisters, and we are interested in their well-being. However, we must be balanced and respect their privacy. Some in the first-century Christian congregation were “gossipers and meddlers in other people’s affairs, talking about things they should not.” (1 Tim. 5:13) We certainly do not want to be like them. But suppose someone shares with us personal information with the understanding that it is not to be repeated. For instance, a sister might tell us about a health problem she is experiencing or some other trial she is facing, asking us to keep the matter to ourselves. We should respect her wishes. w22.09 10 ¶7-8

Monday, August 26

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

The Greek expression translated “making your mind over” can be rendered “renovation of your mind.” Therefore, we cannot simply decorate our life with a few good works. Rather, we must examine the person we are deep inside and make any needed changes so that we can bring our life as close as possible to Jehovah’s standards. We should do this, not once, but continually. When we reach perfection, we will always be able to please Jehovah

in everything we do. In the meantime, we need to keep working hard toward that goal. Notice the connection Paul made between making our mind over and discerning God’s will, as recorded at Romans 12:2. Instead of passively allowing ourselves to be molded by this system of things, we must first examine ourselves to determine how much we are letting God’s thinking—not the world’s—influence our goals and decisions. w23.01 8-9 ¶3-4

Tuesday, August 27

Throw your burden on Jehovah, and he will sustain you. Never will he allow the righteous one to fall.—Ps. 55:22.

Does Jehovah intervene in every situation we encounter? Does he maneuver every event in our life, so that all bad things that happen are for a good reason? No, the Bible does not support that view. (Eccl. 8:9; 9:11) However, we do know this: When we face a trial, Jehovah is aware of it and he hears our cries for help. (Ps. 34:15; Isa. 59:1) More than that, Jehovah can help us to endure hardships successfully. How? One way that Jehovah helps us is by providing comfort and encouragement, often just at the right time. (2 Cor. 1:3, 4) Can you think of a time in your life when Jehovah sustained you by providing comfort and encouragement just when you needed it most? Often, it is only after we look back on a hardship that we see how Jehovah helped us get through it. w23.01 17-18 ¶13-15

Wednesday, August 28

The wild beast that was but is not . . . goes off into destruction.—Rev. 17:11.

This wild beast looks almost the same as the seven-headed wild beast with the exception that it is scarlet-colored. It is called “the image of the wild beast” and is described as “an eighth king.” (Rev. 13:14, 15; 17:3, 8) This “king” is spoken of as coming into existence, then going out of existence, and later reappearing. How well this description fits the United Nations organization, which promotes the interests of the worldwide political system! It existed first as the League of Nations. Then it went out of existence during World War II. It later emerged again in its present-day form. By means of their propaganda, the political beasts stir up opposition to Jehovah and his people. Symbolically, they gather “the kings of the entire inhabited earth” together to the war of Armageddon, which is “the great day of God the Almighty.”—Rev. 16:13, 14, 16. w22.05 10 ¶10-11

Thursday, August 29

How do you read?—Luke 10:26.

When Jesus learned to read the Sacred Writings on his own, he not only came to know the Scriptures well but also loved them and allowed them to influence his actions. For example, recall the incident in the temple when Jesus was just 12 years old. The teachers who were well-versed in the Mosaic Law were in “amazement at [Jesus’] understanding and his answers.” (Luke 2:46, 47, 52) We too can come to know and love God’s Word as we regularly read the Scriptures. We can learn from what Jesus said to those

familiar with the Law, including the scribes, the Pharisees, and the Sadducees. Those religious leaders read the Scriptures often, but they failed to benefit from what they read. Jesus highlighted three ways in which these men were not getting the most out of the Scriptures. His words to them will help us improve in our ability (1) to understand what we read, (2) to find spiritual treasures, and (3) to allow God’s Word to mold us. w23.02 8-9 ¶2-3

Friday, August 30

The shrewd one sees the danger and conceals himself.—Prov. 22:3.

Some dangers that we must avoid include flirting, heavy drinking, overeating, engaging in hurtful speech, as well as viewing violent entertainment, pornography, and similar things. (Ps. 101:3) The Devil is constantly looking for opportunities to damage our friendship with Jehovah. (1 Pet. 5:8) If we are not watchful, Satan can plant in our mind and heart seeds of envy, dishonesty, greed, hatred, haughtiness, and resentment. (Gal. 5:19-21) If we do not take immediate steps to uproot them, they will continue to grow like a poisonous plant and cause trouble. (Jas. 1:14, 15) One subtle danger is bad association. We must remember that we will be strongly influenced by those with whom we choose to spend our time. (1 Cor. 15:33) If we pay attention to ourselves, we will avoid unnecessary association with those who do not live by Jehovah’s standards. (Luke 21:34; 2 Cor. 6:15) We will see the danger and steer clear of it. w23.02 16 ¶7; 17 ¶10-11

Saturday, August 31

*This is what the love of God means,
that we observe his commandments.
—1 John 5:3.*

Your love for Jehovah has grown as you have learned more about him. Surely you want to draw closer to him now and forever. And you can. He kindly encourages you to make his heart rejoice. (Prov. 23:15, 16) You can do that not only by words but also by actions. The way you live your life will show that you truly love Jehovah. That is the best goal in life you could ever choose. How can you demonstrate your love for Jehovah? First, you offer a special prayer in which you dedicate yourself to the only true God. (Ps. 40:8) Then, you make that private dedication public by getting baptized. That becomes a happy milestone, a great turning point. You start out on a new life, not for yourself, but for Jehovah. (Rom. 14:8; 1 Pet. 4:1, 2) That may sound like a big step to take, and it is. But it opens the way for the very best life. w23.03 5-6 ¶14-15

Sunday, September 1

*If any man thinks he is a worshipper of God but does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he is deceiving his own heart, and his worship is futile.
—Jas. 1:26.*

When we use the gift of speech well, we identify ourselves as worshippers of Jehovah. We help those around us to see clearly the difference “between one serving God and one not serving him.” (Mal. 3:18) Consider how this proved to be true for a sister named Kimberly. She was assigned to work

with a classmate on a high-school project. After working together, the classmate noticed that Kimberly was different from other students. She did not criticize people behind their back, she spoke in a positive way, and she did not use profanity. Kimberly’s classmate was intrigued and eventually agreed to a Bible study. How pleased Jehovah is when we speak in a way that attracts people to the truth! We all want to speak in a way that brings honor to Jehovah. w22.04 5-6 ¶15-7

Monday, September 2

Women . . . were ministering to them from their belongings.—Luke 8:3.

Jesus freed Mary Magdalene from the influence of seven demons! Her gratitude moved her to become his follower and to support him in the ministry. (Luke 8:1-3) Although Mary deeply appreciated what Jesus did for her personally, she may not have grasped that his greatest gift was yet to come. He would give his life “so that everyone exercising faith in him” could enjoy everlasting life. (John 3:16) Still, Mary showed her appreciation for Jesus by being loyal. While Jesus was suffering on the torture stake, Mary stood nearby, providing emotional support to him and to others. (John 19:25) After Jesus died, Mary and two other women brought spices to the tomb for his burial. (Mark 16:1, 2) Mary had the joy of meeting the resurrected Jesus and of speaking with him—a privilege that most disciples did not have.—John 20:11-18. w23.01 27 ¶4

Tuesday, September 3

I wish you were cold or else hot.

—Rev. 3:15.

We cannot rely merely on what we have done in the past in Jehovah's service. Though we may have more limitations than before, we need to keep busy in "the work of the Lord," remaining awake and alert right to the end. (1 Cor. 15:58; Matt. 24:13; Mark 13:33) We must be zealous and wholehearted in our worship. Jesus' message to those in Laodicea highlighted yet a different problem. They were "lukewarm" in their worship. Because of their apathy, Jesus told them that they were in a "miserable and pitiful" state. They needed to display fiery zeal for Jehovah and his worship. (Rev. 3:16, 17, 19) What is the lesson for us? If we have lost a measure of our zeal, we must stir up our appreciation for the spiritual riches we have. (Rev. 3:18) Never would we want to allow the pursuit of a comfortable lifestyle to distract us, causing us to relegate spiritual activities to second place. w22.05 3-4 ¶7-8

Wednesday, September 4

A book of remembrance was written before him for those fearing Jehovah.

—Mal. 3:16.

For thousands of years, Jehovah has been writing a special book. This book consists of a list of names, beginning with the name of the first faithful witness, Abel. (Luke 11:50, 51) Down through the centuries, Jehovah has added names to the book, and today it contains millions of names. In the Bible, that book is called "a book of remembrance," "the book of life,"

and "the scroll of life." (Mal. 3:16; Rev. 3:5; 17:8) This special book contains the names of all those who worship Jehovah with fear, or awe, and who treasure his name. They are in line to receive everlasting life. Today we can have our name written in that book if we develop a close, personal relationship with Jehovah based on the ransom sacrifice of his Son, Jesus Christ. (John 3:16, 36) All of us want our name to be found in that book—whether we hope to live in heaven or on the earth. w22.09 14 ¶1-2

Thursday, September 5

The Devil who was misleading them was hurled into the lake of fire and sulfur.—Rev. 20:10.

The book of Revelation describes "a great fiery-colored dragon." (Rev. 12:3) This dragon fights against Jesus and his angels. (Rev. 12:7-9) It attacks God's people, and it gives power to the political beasts. (Rev. 12:17; 13:4) Who is this dragon? It is "the original serpent, the one called Devil and Satan." (Rev. 12:9; 20:2) He is the one behind all the other enemies of Jehovah. What happens to the dragon? Revelation 20:1-3 explains that an angel will hurl Satan into an abyss, which represents a prisonlike confinement. During that confinement, Satan will "not mislead the nations anymore until the 1,000 years [have] ended." Finally, Satan and his demons will be destroyed once and for all, represented by their being hurled into "the lake of fire and sulfur." Just imagine a world without Satan and his demons. What a wonderful time that will be! w22.05 14 ¶19-20

Friday, September 6

Let him do hard work, doing good work with his hands, so that he may have something to share with someone in need.—Eph. 4:28.

Jesus was a hard worker. In his early years on earth, he worked as a carpenter. (Mark 6:3) No doubt his parents appreciated his help as they tried hard to provide for the needs of their large family. And as a carpenter, the perfect man Jesus must have been in high demand! Jesus very likely enjoyed his work. Yet, even while he was applying himself to his secular work, Jesus set aside time for spiritual activities. (John 7:15) Later, as a full-time minister, he advised his listeners: “Work, not for the food that perishes, but for the food that remains for everlasting life.” (John 6:27) And in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said: “Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven.” (Matt. 6:20) Godly wisdom helps us to have a balanced view of our secular work. As Christians, we are taught to do “hard work . . . , good work.” w22.05 22 ¶9-10

Saturday, September 7

*Your mother will rejoice.
—Prov. 23:25.*

Eunice set a good example for Timothy. He could no doubt see that his mother’s actions were motivated by her strong love for Jehovah and that serving Jehovah made his mother happy. Similarly today, many mothers have reached the heart of family members “without a word.” (1 Pet. 3:1, 2) You can do the same. How? Make your relationship with Jehovah your priority. (Deut. 6:5, 6) Like

most mothers, you make many sacrifices. You give up time, money, sleep, and other things to care for your children’s physical needs. But you should never be so busy caring for those needs that you sacrifice your relationship with Jehovah. Regularly set aside time for private prayer, personal study of the Bible, and congregation meetings. By doing so, you will strengthen yourself spiritually and set a good example for your family as well as for others. w22.04 16 ¶1; 19 ¶12-13

Sunday, September 8

Judge your servants by pronouncing the wicked one guilty and bringing what he did on his own head, and by pronouncing the righteous one innocent and rewarding him.—1 Ki. 8:32.

What a relief it is to know that we do not have the burden of deciding how individuals should be judged! As the Supreme Judge, Jehovah will care for this important work. (Rom. 14:10-12) We can have complete confidence that he will always judge in harmony with his perfect standards of right and wrong. (Gen. 18:25) He will never do anything unrighteous! We long for the time when Jehovah will completely undo all the bad effects of human imperfection and sin. At that time, all our physical and emotional wounds will be permanently healed. (Ps. 72:12-14; Rev. 21:3, 4) They will never come to mind again. While we wait for that wonderful time to arrive, how thankful we are that Jehovah has empowered us with the ability to imitate him by being forgiving. w22.06 13 ¶18-19

Monday, September 9

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

A good judge needs to have a thorough understanding of the law. He should have a deep and strong sense of right and wrong. What else does a good judge need? He needs to be able to consider all the relevant facts in a case before he renders judgment. In this respect, Jehovah is uniquely qualified as Judge. Unlike human judges, Jehovah always has a perfect grasp of all the facts of any case that comes before him. (Gen. 18:20, 21; Ps. 90:8) He is not limited by what humans see or hear. He completely understands how a person's actions are influenced by his genetic makeup, upbringing, and environment as well as by his emotional and mental condition. Jehovah also reads the heart. He fully perceives the motivations, intentions, and desires of each person. Nothing can be hidden from Jehovah. (Heb. 4:13) Thus, Jehovah's forgiveness is always based on his complete knowledge of a situation. w22.06 4 ¶8-9

Tuesday, September 10

A man will give everything that he has for his life.—Job 2:4.

We must pay close attention to the tactics used on Job because Satan uses similar methods on us today. Satan claims that we do not really love Jehovah God and that we will turn against Him if it means saving our life. Satan further claims that God does not love us and that He will not notice our efforts to please Him. Being forewarned, we who hope in Jehovah are not fooled by Satan's tactics.

We should view trials as an opportunity to learn about ourselves. The trials that Job faced helped him to identify certain weaknesses and to correct them. For one thing, he learned that he needed to cultivate humility to a greater degree. (Job 42:3) We too can learn a lot about ourselves when we are under trial. Once we identify our weaknesses, we can work on correcting them. w22.06 23 ¶13-14

Wednesday, September 11

“You are my witnesses,” declares Jehovah, “Yes, my servant whom I have chosen.”—Isa. 43:10.

Jehovah assures us of his support. For example, just before Jehovah stated: “You are my witnesses,” he said: “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they will not flood over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame singe you.” (Isa. 43:2) As we carry out our ministry, we sometimes encounter floodlike obstacles and face firelike trials. Even so, with Jehovah's help we keep preaching. (Isa. 41:13) Most people today reject the message. We keep in mind that their rejection does not mean that we have failed as God's Witnesses. We draw comfort and strength from knowing that Jehovah is pleased when we faithfully continue to declare his message. The apostle Paul stated: “Each person will receive his own reward according to his own work.”—1 Cor. 3:8; 4:1, 2. w22.11 4 ¶5-6

Thursday, September 12

Maintain your conduct fine among the nations.—1 Pet. 2:12.

Today, we are seeing Bible prophecies being fulfilled. People “out of all the languages of the nations” are learning to speak the “pure language” of Bible truth. (Zech. 8:23; Zeph. 3:9) Well over 8,000,000 people in 240 lands are associating with Jehovah’s organization, and each year tens of thousands get baptized! More important than numbers, however, are the spiritual qualities, “the new personality,” that these new disciples have cultivated. (Col. 3:8-10) Many stopped being immoral, violent, prejudiced, and nationalistic. The prophecy recorded at Isaiah 2:4 is being fulfilled; they are ‘not learning war anymore.’ As we work hard to put on the new personality, we help draw people to God’s organization and we prove that we are following our overseer Christ Jesus. (John 13:35) None of this happens by accident. Jesus is giving us the help we need. w22.07 9 ¶7-8

Friday, September 13

May my prayer be as incense prepared before you.—Ps. 141:2.

When we pray to Jehovah, we should avoid being overly familiar. Instead, we pray with an attitude of deep respect. Think about the amazing visions that Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and John received. They all depict Jehovah as a majestic King. Isaiah “saw Jehovah sitting on a lofty and elevated throne.” (Isa. 6:1-3) Ezekiel saw Jehovah seated on his celestial chariot, surrounded by “a brilliance . . . like that of a rainbow.” (Ezek.

1:26-28) Daniel saw “the Ancient of Days” clothed in white garments, with flames of fire coming from His throne. (Dan. 7:9, 10) And John saw Jehovah seated on a throne surrounded by something like a beautiful emerald-green rainbow. (Rev. 4:2-4) As we reflect on Jehovah’s incomparable glory, we are reminded of the incredible privilege of approaching him in prayer and the importance of doing so with reverence. w22.07 20 ¶3

Saturday, September 14

[Beware] of the trickery of men.—Eph. 4:14.

Young ones, Satan will try to prevent you from making further spiritual progress. One way he may do that is by raising doubts in your mind about some of the Bible’s teachings. For example, sooner or later you will come across the God-dishonoring theory of evolution. You may have given little or no thought to the subject when you were younger, but now that you are older, perhaps you are confronted with it directly in school. What your teachers say in support of evolution may seem logical and convincing. However, they may have never seriously considered the evidence of the existence of a Creator. Remember the principle found at Proverbs 18:17: “The first to state his case seems right, until the other party comes and cross-examines him.” Instead of blindly accepting ideas that you hear at school as fact, carefully consider the truths found in God’s Word, the Bible and in our publications. w22.08 2 ¶2; 4 ¶8

Sunday, September 15

Observe carefully all that is written in it; for then your way will be successful and then you will act wisely.
—Josh. 1:8.

We want to understand the meaning of what we read in God's Word. Otherwise, our reading may not fully benefit us. For example, consider Jesus' conversation with "a man versed in the Law." (Luke 10:25-29) When the man asked what he needed to do to gain everlasting life, Jesus directed him to God's Word by asking: "What is written in the Law? How do you read?" The man was able to give the right answer by quoting the scriptures about loving God and loving neighbor. (Lev. 19:18; Deut. 6:5) But note what he said next: "Who really is my neighbor?" The man revealed that he did not understand the real meaning of what he had read. As a result, he did not know how to apply those scriptures correctly in his life. We need Jehovah's help to understand the Scriptures. So ask him for his holy spirit in order to concentrate, and then ask for his help to apply what you have read.
w23.02 9 ¶4-5

Monday, September 16

Go on walking in the truth.
—3 John 4.

"How did you come into the truth?" No doubt you have answered that question many times. It is one of the first questions that a fellow believer will ask when we are getting acquainted. We love to hear how our brothers and sisters came to know and love Jehovah, and we enjoy telling them what the truth means to us. (Rom. 1:11) As a result of these conversations, we

are reminded of just how precious the truth is. We also become even more determined to "go on walking in the truth"—that is, to keep living in a way that will bring Jehovah's blessing and approval. We love the truth for many reasons. Most important, we love Jehovah God, the Source of the truth. Through his Word, the Bible, we have come to know him not only as the all-powerful Maker of heaven and earth but also as our loving heavenly Father, who tenderly cares for us.—1 Pet. 5:7.
w22.08 14 ¶1, 3

Tuesday, September 17

Keep the poor in mind.—Gal. 2:10.

The apostle Paul encouraged his brothers and sisters to show love through "fine works." (Heb. 10:24) He helped his brothers and sisters not only by what he said but also by what he did. For example, when fellow believers in Judea faced a famine, Paul helped distribute relief to them. (Acts 11:27-30) In fact, even though Paul was busy preaching and teaching, he always looked for ways to help those who needed material assistance. By so doing, he built up his fellow believers' confidence that Jehovah would care for them. Today, when we volunteer our time, effort, and skills to help with disaster relief, we too build up the faith of our brothers and sisters. The same happens when we regularly donate toward the worldwide work. In these and other ways, we help our brothers and sisters to trust that Jehovah will never abandon them.
w22.08 24 ¶14

Wednesday, September 18

Prophecy was at no time brought by man's will, but men spoke from God as they were moved by holy spirit.

—2 Pet. 1:21.

The Bible contains many prophecies that were fulfilled, some of them hundreds of years after they were recorded. History confirms that these prophecies came true. This does not surprise us because we know that the Author of Bible prophecy is Jehovah. Think of the prophecies regarding the fall of the ancient city of Babylon. In the eighth century B.C.E., the prophet Isaiah was inspired to foretell that the then powerful city of Babylon would be captured. He even gave the name of its conqueror, Cyrus, and foretold precisely how the city would be seized. (Isa. 44:27–45:2) Isaiah also prophesied that Babylon would eventually be destroyed and completely deserted. (Isa. 13:19, 20) Babylon fell to the Medes and the Persians in 539 B.C.E., and the site of this once great city is now a pile of ruins. w23.01 4 ¶10

Thursday, September 19

Keep encouraging one another.

—1 Thess. 5:11.

Jehovah has chosen us to be part of his worldwide family of worshippers. Just think what a privilege that is and what benefits it brings! (Mark 10:29, 30) Around the world, we have brothers and sisters who share our love for Jehovah and who try their best to live by his standards. Our language, culture, and dress may be different from theirs, but we feel close to them, even when meeting them for the first time.

We especially love to be with them to praise and worship our loving heavenly Father, and we need to remain united with them. (Ps. 133:1) At times, they help us to carry our burdens. (Rom. 15:1; Gal. 6:2) They also encourage us to stay active in Jehovah's service and to keep spiritually strong. (Heb. 10:23–25) Think how we would feel if we did not have the protection of the congregation to help us stand firm against our common enemies—Satan the Devil and his wicked world. w22.09 2–3 ¶3–4

Friday, September 20

Whoever controls his lips acts discreetly.—Prov. 10:19.

We may find that our self-control is put to the test when we are using social media. If not careful, we could unintentionally reveal confidential matters to a large audience. And once we broadcast the information electronically, we have no control over how it will be used or how much damage it will cause. Self-control also allows us to remain silent when opposers try to trick us into revealing things that could endanger our brothers and sisters. This might occur when we are being interrogated by the police in a land where our work is banned or restricted. We can apply the principle to “guard [our] mouth with a muzzle” in these and other situations as well. (Ps. 39:1) Whether we are dealing with our family, our friends, our brothers and sisters, or anyone else, we need to be trustworthy. And to be trustworthy, we need self-control. w22.09 13 ¶16

Saturday, September 21

Happy is the man . . . [whose] delight is in the law of Jehovah, and he reads His law in an undertone day and night.—Ps. 1:1, 2.

To be truly happy, we must take in spiritual food. And we need it. That is why Jesus said: “Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every word that comes from Jehovah’s mouth.” (Matt. 4:4) Therefore, we should not let a day go by without taking in some spiritual food from God’s precious Word, the Bible. In the Bible, Jehovah has lovingly given us vital information on how to live a happy life. We learn what his purpose is for our life. We learn how we can draw close to him and gain his forgiveness for our sins. And we learn about the wonderful hope that he promises for the future. (Jer. 29:11) These truths that we gain from a study of the Bible fill our heart with joy! Whenever you feel discouraged by life’s problems, spend more time reading Jehovah’s Word and meditating on it. w22.10 7 ¶4-6

Sunday, September 22

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

With good reason, the Bible encourages us not to remain inexperienced. We acquire the right kind of experience by applying Bible principles in our life. Little by little, we learn firsthand how those principles help us to avoid problems and make wise decisions. We do well to check our progress in this regard. If we have been studying the Bible and attending meetings for some time, we might ask ourselves why we have still not taken

steps to make a dedication to Jehovah and get baptized. If we are baptized, are we making progress as a preacher and teacher of the good news? Do our decisions show that we are guided by Bible principles? Are we displaying Christian qualities in our dealings with others? If we see room for improvement, let us pay attention to Jehovah’s reminders, which ‘make the inexperienced one wise.’—Ps. 19:7. w22.10 20 ¶8

Monday, September 23

They would go where the spirit inclined them to go.—Ezek. 1:20.

Ezekiel saw how powerful God’s spirit is. In vision, he witnessed holy spirit at work on the mighty spirit creatures and on the gigantic wheels of a celestial chariot. (Ezek. 1:21) What was Ezekiel’s reaction? He recorded what happened. “When I saw it, I fell facedown.” Overcome with awe, Ezekiel dropped to the ground. (Ezek. 1:28) Later, whenever Ezekiel reflected on that impressive vision, it must have strengthened his conviction that with the help of God’s spirit, he could accomplish his ministry. Jehovah commanded Ezekiel: “Son of man, stand up on your feet that I may speak with you.” That command gave Ezekiel the inner strength, or the “spirit,” that he needed to get up from the ground. (Ezek. 2:1, 2) Later and throughout his ministry, Ezekiel was guided by God’s “hand”—that is, God’s holy spirit.—Ezek. 3:22; 8:1; 33:22; 37:1; 40:1. w22.11 4 ¶7-8

Tuesday, September 24

Your own ears will hear a word behind you.—Isa. 30:21.

The prophet Isaiah here describes Jehovah as an attentive instructor who is walking behind his students, pointing to the way ahead and giving them guidance. Today we hear God's voice from behind us. How? God's inspired words were recorded in the Bible long ago, a time far behind us. So when we read the Bible, it is as if we were hearing God's voice coming from behind us. (Isa. 51:4) How can we benefit to the full from the guidance Jehovah provides? Note that Isaiah makes two statements. First, "this is the way." Second, "walk in it." It is not enough to know "the way." We also need to "walk in it." By means of Jehovah's Word, as it is explained by his organization, we learn what Jehovah requires of us. We also learn how to apply what we learn. To endure with joy in our service to Jehovah, we need to take both steps. Only then can we be assured of Jehovah's blessing. w22.11 11 ¶10-11

Wednesday, September 25

After my going away oppressive wolves will enter in among you.—Acts 20:29.

Soon after most of Jesus' apostles died, imitation Christians worked their way into the congregation. (Matt. 13:24-27, 37-39) They spoke "twisted things to draw away the disciples after themselves." (Acts 20:30) One of the "twisted things" that imitation Christians eventually began teaching was that Jesus did not offer his body "once for all time to bear the sins of many,"

as the Bible says, but that his sacrifice must be repeated over and over again. (Heb. 9:27, 28) Today many sincere people believe this false teaching. They gather together in churches regularly—sometimes daily—to observe what has come to be called "the Sacrifice of the Mass." Other religious organizations observe the death of Jesus less often, but most of their members have only a vague notion about what Jesus' sacrifice has accomplished. w23.01 21 ¶5

Thursday, September 26

Do not forget to do good and to share what you have with others.—Heb. 13:16.

During Jesus' Thousand Year Reign, the dead will be raised and obedient mankind will be brought to perfection. Those whom Jehovah judges to be righteous "will possess the earth, and they will live forever on it." (Ps. 37:10, 11, 29) Happily, "the last enemy, death," will be "brought to nothing." (1 Cor. 15:26) Our hope of living forever is solidly based on God's Word. That hope can help us to remain loyal during these difficult last days. But to please Jehovah, we must be motivated by more than just a desire to stay alive. Our primary reason for remaining loyal to Jehovah and Jesus is that we love them deeply. (2 Cor. 5:14, 15) That love motivates us to imitate them and to share with others the hope we have. (Rom. 10:13-15) As we learn to be unselfish and generous, we become the type of people whom Jehovah wants as his friends forever. w22.12 6-7 ¶15-16

Friday, September 27

All those desiring to live with godly devotion in association with Christ Jesus will also be persecuted.

—2 Tim. 3:12.

Persecution can rob us of many things that normally bring peace. We may become anxious, fearing what will happen next. These feelings are normal. Still, we must be careful. Jesus indicated that persecution could cause his followers to stumble. (John 16:1, 2) While Jesus did tell us to expect persecution, he also assured us that we can remain faithful. (John 15:20; 16:33) When our work is banned or greatly restricted, we may receive instructions from the branch office and the elders. These are meant to protect us, to make sure that we keep receiving spiritual food, and to help us continue preaching to the extent possible. Do your best to obey the direction you receive. (Jas. 3:17) Also, never reveal information about our brothers and sisters to those who are not entitled to it.—Ecl. 3:7. w22.12 20-21 ¶14-16

Saturday, September 28

Show the same industriousness.

—Heb. 6:11.

Today, Jesus continues to direct his disciples as they preach about God's Kingdom in all the earth. He has done his part. Through Jehovah's organization, Jesus trains us how to preach and he provides us with the tools we need to spread the good news. (Matt. 28:18-20) We do our part by being industrious in our preaching and teaching work and by keeping watchful as we wait on Jehovah to bring an end

to this system of things. By applying the counsel found at Hebrews 6:11, 12, we will hold fast to our hope "down to the end." Jehovah has a fixed day and hour when he will bring an end to Satan's system. When that day comes, Jehovah will without fail fulfill the prophecies that he had recorded in his Word. Meanwhile, it may at times seem that the end of this system has been delayed. However, Jehovah's day "will not be late!" (Hab. 2:3) So may we be determined to "keep on the lookout for Jehovah," showing "a waiting attitude for the God of [our] salvation."—Mic. 7:7. w23.02 19 ¶15-16

Sunday, September 29

None can compare to you.—Ps. 40:5.

A mountain climber's goal is to reach the summit. However, there are numerous points along the route where he can stop and take in the view. In a similar way, regularly take time to stop and think about how Jehovah is making you successful even while you are enduring a hardship. At the end of each day, ask yourself: 'In what way did I see Jehovah's blessing today? Although the trial is still running its course, how is Jehovah helping me to endure?' See if you can identify at least one blessing from Jehovah that has made you successful. True, you might be praying for your trial to end. (Phil. 4:6) But we should also be aware of the blessings we have right now. After all, Jehovah promises to strengthen us and to help us to endure. So never lose appreciation for the fact that Jehovah is supporting you. Then you will see how Jehovah is helping you to succeed, even during times of trial.—Gen. 41:51, 52. w23.01 19 ¶17-18

Monday, September 30

Keep close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah.—2 Pet. 3:12.

Ask yourself: ‘Does my way of life show that I understand how close we are to the end of this system of things? Do my decisions regarding education and employment show that serving Jehovah is the most important thing in my life? Do I have faith that Jehovah will provide for me and my family?’ Think how pleased Jehovah is when he sees us bringing our life into harmony with his will. (Matt. 6:25-27, 33; Phil. 4:12, 13) We need to examine our thinking regularly and follow through by making any necessary adjustments. Paul told the Corinthians: “Keep testing whether you are in the faith; keep proving what you yourselves are.” (2 Cor. 13:5) So we need to keep making our mind over by reading God’s Word, learning to think as he thinks, and then doing whatever is necessary to bring ourselves in line with Jehovah’s will.—1 Cor. 2:14-16. w23.01 9 ¶5-6

Tuesday, October 1

In the midst of the congregation I will praise you.—Ps. 22:22.

We can all contribute to the success of our congregation meetings by raising our voices in song and by giving well-prepared comments. Some find it a challenge to sing or to give a comment in public. Do you? If so, consider what others have done to overcome their fears. As to song, some have found it helps to sing wholeheartedly. When we sing our Kingdom songs, our primary focus should be on our desire to praise Jehovah. So prepare for

the songs at home, just as you would prepare for other parts on the meeting and try to identify how the lyrics tie in with the subject being discussed. Also, focus more on the words and less on your singing ability. Commenting can be a real challenge for some. What will help? Try to do so regularly. Remember, it is OK if your answer is short, simple, and to the point. Jehovah greatly appreciates our determination to praise him at congregation meetings. w22.04 7-8 ¶12-15

Wednesday, October 2

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

The word “helper” refers to a person who runs to the aid of someone crying for help. Picture Jehovah hurrying to rescue someone in distress. You will surely agree that this description highlights Jehovah’s willingness—yes, eagerness—to be our Helper. With Jehovah on our side, we can endure our trials with joy. What are some ways in which Jehovah helps us? To answer, let us turn to the book of Isaiah. Why? Many of the prophecies Isaiah was inspired to write apply to God’s servants today. Further, Isaiah often describes Jehovah in terms that we can easily understand. Take as an example Isaiah chapter 30. There, in language that creates vivid pictures in our mind, Isaiah describes how Jehovah helps us as his people (1) by listening attentively and responding to our prayers, (2) by providing us with guidance, and (3) by giving us blessings now and in the future. w22.11 8 ¶2-3

Thursday, October 3

Do not be afraid of the things you are about to suffer. . . . Prove yourself faithful even to death, and I will give you the crown of life.—Rev. 2:10.

In Jesus' messages to the congregations in Smyrna and Philadelphia, he told Christians there not to be afraid to suffer persecution, since their faithfulness would be rewarded. (Rev. 3:10) We must expect persecution and be willing to endure it. (Matt. 24:9, 13; 2 Cor. 12:10) The book of Revelation informs us that God's people would be persecuted in our day—"the Lord's day." (Rev. 1:10) Revelation chapter 12 mentions that war breaks out in heaven immediately following the birth of God's Kingdom. Michael—the glorified Jesus Christ—and his armies fight against Satan and the demons. (Rev. 12:7, 8) As a result, those enemies of God are defeated and cast down to the vicinity of the earth, bringing untold suffering to the earth and its inhabitants.—Rev. 12:9, 12. w22.05 5 ¶12-13

Friday, October 4

With Jehovah our God there is no injustice.—2 Chron. 19:7.

Jehovah's judgments are always just and fair. He is completely impartial. His forgiveness is never determined by someone's appearance, wealth, prominence, or abilities. (1 Sam. 16:7; Jas. 2:1-4) No one can pressure or bribe Jehovah. His decisions are never colored by frustration or sentiment. (Ex. 34:7) Without a doubt, Jehovah's understanding and his penetrating insight make him the most qualified Judge. (Deut. 32:4) The

writers of the Hebrew Scriptures recognized that Jehovah's forgiveness is unique. In some cases, they used a Hebrew word that one reference work says "is reserved especially to mark the pardon extended to the sinner by God, and is never used to denote that inferior kind and measure of forgiveness which is exercised by one man towards another." Only Jehovah has the power to pardon a repentant sinner completely. w22.06 4 ¶10-11

Saturday, October 5

Train a boy in the way he should go; even when he grows old he will not depart from it.—Prov. 22:6.

If you are raising your children without a mate or in a religiously divided household, be assured that your faithful example strengthens and motivates those around you. What if it seems that your child is not responding to your efforts? Remember that training a child takes time. When you plant a seedling, you may at times wonder if it will ever grow into a plant that produces fruit. Although you cannot control the outcome, you continue to water it in order to give it the best opportunity to grow. (Mark 4:26-29) Likewise, as a mother, you may sometimes wonder if you are reaching the heart of your young ones. You cannot control the outcome. But if you continue to do all that you can to train them, you give them the best possible opportunity to grow spiritually. w22.04 19-20 ¶16-17

Sunday, October 6

Pride is before a crash, and a haughty spirit before stumbling.—Prov. 16:18.

When he was a faithful worshipper of Jehovah, Solomon had a balanced view of himself. As a young man, he modestly acknowledged his limitations and asked for Jehovah's guidance. (1 Ki. 3:7-9) Early in his reign, Solomon was also aware of the danger of becoming prideful. Sadly, Solomon later failed to apply his own advice. Some time into his kingship, he proudly began to ignore God's requirements. For example, one of the laws stated that a Hebrew king should not "take many wives for himself, so that his heart may not go astray." (Deut. 17:17) Solomon disregarded that law and acquired 700 wives and 300 concubines! (1 Ki. 11:1-3) Perhaps Solomon felt that he had "everything under control." In time, Solomon suffered the consequences of his drawing away from Jehovah.—1 Ki. 11:9-13. w22.05 23 ¶12

Monday, October 7

*"My righteous one will live by reason of faith," and "if he shrinks back, I have no pleasure in him."
—Heb. 10:38.*

People today have an important decision to make. Will they support Jehovah God as the rightful Ruler of the universe, or will they stand behind his vicious enemy, Satan the Devil? There is no middle ground. Whatever decision they make will affect their everlasting future. (Matt. 25:31-33, 46) During "the great tribulation," they will be marked either for survival or for destruction. (Rev. 7:14; 14:9-11;

Ezek. 9:4, 6) If you have chosen to support Jehovah's rulership, you have made a wise decision. Now you are eager to help others make the right choice. Blessings will come to those who loyally support Jehovah's rulership. We do well to consider such vital truths. Doing so will strengthen our resolve to keep on serving Jehovah. In addition, we can use what we have learned to help others make the right decision and stick to it. w22.05 15 ¶1-2

Tuesday, October 8

*Happy are you when people . . .
lyingly say every sort of wicked
thing against you.—Matt. 5:11.*

We need to listen to Jehovah, not our enemies. Job paid close attention when Jehovah spoke to him. God reasoned with Job, in effect saying: 'I am aware of everything that has happened to you. Do you think that I cannot take care of you?' Job responded humbly and with deep appreciation for Jehovah's goodness. "My ears have heard about you," he said, "but now I do see you with my eyes." (Job 42:5) Job was likely still sitting among the ashes, his body riddled with sores, when he said those words. Even so, Jehovah confirmed His love for Job and assured him of His approval. (Job 42:7, 8) Today, too, people may insult us and treat us as if we were worthless. They may attempt to destroy our reputation as individuals or as an organization. From Job's account, we learn that Jehovah has confidence that we will remain loyal to him when we face trials. w22.06 24 ¶15-16

Wednesday, October 9

The marriage of the Lamb has arrived.
—Rev. 19:7.

Although there will be a great shout of joy in heaven when Babylon the Great is destroyed, there is something else that will bring greater joy. (Rev. 19:1-3) It is, in fact, the climax of the book of Revelation—"the marriage of the Lamb." All the 144,000 will be in heaven just before the war of Armageddon is fought. However, that will not be the time for the marriage of the Lamb. (Rev. 21:1, 2) The marriage of the Lamb takes place after the war of Armageddon has been fought and all of God's enemies have been removed. (Ps. 45:3, 4, 13-17) What does the marriage of the Lamb really mean for those involved? Well, just as a marriage joins a man and a woman together, so this symbolic marriage unites the King, Jesus Christ, with his "bride," the 144,000. That climactic event inaugurates the new government that will rule the earth for 1,000 years.—Rev. 20:6. w22.05 17 ¶11-13

Thursday, October 10

Happy is that slave if his master . . . finds him doing so!—Matt. 24:46.

Jesus foretold that during the time of the end, he would appoint a "faithful and discreet slave" to provide spiritual food. (Matt. 24:45) This has proved to be the case. Our overseer has used a small group of anointed men to provide God's people and interested ones with spiritual "food at the proper time." These men do not view themselves as masters over the faith of others. (2 Cor. 1:24) Instead, they recognize that Jesus Christ is the "leader

and commander" of his people. (Isa. 55:4) Since 1919 the faithful slave has prepared a variety of publications that have given newly interested ones their first taste of nourishing spiritual food. In 1921 the slave prepared the book *The Harp of God* to help interested ones to learn basic Bible teachings. As times changed, additional publications were provided. Which publication helped you to come to know and love our heavenly Father? w22.07 10 ¶9-10

Friday, October 11

You will keep me in your presence forever.—Ps. 41:12.

Jehovah is the most generous Person. No matter what you give him, he will always give you back far more. (Mark 10:29, 30) He will give you the most interesting, rewarding, and fulfilling life possible, even now in this dying old world. And that is just the beginning. You can go on serving your beloved Father forever. The love between you and your Father will continue to grow, and you will actually live as long as he lives, for all eternity. When you take the steps of dedication and baptism, you have the privilege of giving something truly precious to your Father. He has given you every good thing, every happy moment, that you have ever enjoyed. In response, you can give the Owner of heaven and earth something that he does not already have—your willing, devoted service. (Job 1:8; 41:11; Prov. 27:11) What better use could you ever make of your life? w23.03 6 ¶16-17

Saturday, October 12

How can a young man keep his path clean? By keeping on guard according to your word.—Ps. 119:9.

During adolescence, sexual feelings can become intense, and you may face strong pressure to commit sexual immorality. Satan wants you to give in to your desires. What can help you remain morally clean? (1 Thess. 4: 3, 4) In your personal prayers, share your feelings with Jehovah. Tell him how you really feel, and ask him to strengthen you. (Matt. 6:13) Remember that Jehovah wants to help you, not to condemn you. (Ps. 103:13, 14) Do not try to handle your problems on your own. Talk with your parents about your struggle. It is not easy to talk about such personal matters, but it is important to do so. By reading the Bible and meditating on its principles, you will find it easier to make decisions that please Jehovah. You will notice that you do not need a rule for every situation because you will understand Jehovah's thinking on matters. w22.08 5 ¶10-12

Sunday, October 13

If anyone does not provide for those who are his own, . . . he has disowned the faith.—1 Tim. 5:8.

A Christian family head takes seriously the responsibility to care materially for his family. If you are a family head, you may be worried about putting food on the table and paying the rent or the mortgage on your home. You may also be afraid that if you lost your job, you would not be able to find another one. Or you may have hesitated to make an adjustment in

your secular work that would affect your lifestyle. Satan has had a lot of success in exploiting such fears. Satan tries to make us believe that Jehovah does not care about us personally and that we are on our own when it comes to providing for our family. As a result, we might conclude that we need to do whatever it takes to hold on to our present employment, even if it means ignoring Scriptural principles. w22.06 15 ¶5-6

Monday, October 14

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, both sure and firm.—Heb. 6:19.

We know that our God is “merciful and compassionate, slow to anger and abundant in loyal love and truth.” (Ex. 34:6) Jehovah loves justice. (Isa. 61:8) It hurts him to see us suffer, and he is ready—yes, eager—to bring all suffering to an end at the appointed time. (Jer. 29:11) How marvelous! No wonder we love Jehovah so much! What is another reason why we love the truth? The truth brings great benefits to us. Consider an example. Bible truth includes our hope for the future. Just as an anchor steadies a boat, our Bible-based hope can stabilize us when we face trials in life. In today's text, the apostle Paul was discussing the heavenly hope that anointed Christians cherish. But his words also apply to Christians who look forward to living forever on a paradise earth. (John 3: 16) Certainly, learning about the hope of everlasting life has given our life meaning. w22.08 14-15 ¶3-5

Tuesday, October 15

Do not let the sun set while you are still angry.—Eph. 4:26.

Love is the basis for trust. First Corinthians chapter 13 describes many aspects of love that can help us to build or rebuild our trust in others. (1 Cor. 13:4-8) For example, verse 4 says that “love is patient and kind.” Jehovah is patient with us even when we sin against him. Certainly, then, we can be patient with our brothers if they say or do things that irritate or hurt us. Verse 5 adds: “[Love] does not become provoked. It does not keep account of the injury.” We would not want to make a mental record of our brothers’ offenses for future reference. Ecclesiastes 7:9 notes that we should “not be quick to take offense.” Try to see your brothers and sisters as Jehovah sees them. God loves them and does not keep track of their sins. Neither should we. (Ps. 130:3) Instead of focusing on their faults, look for their fine qualities.—Matt. 7:1-5. w22.09 3-4 ¶6-7

Wednesday, October 16

There will occur a time of distress.
—Dan. 12:1.

The book of Daniel reveals the sequence of exciting events that will occur during the time of the end. For example, Daniel 12:1 reveals that Michael, who is Jesus Christ, is “standing in behalf of [God’s] people.” That part of the prophecy began to be fulfilled in 1914 when Jesus was appointed as King of God’s heavenly Kingdom. However, Daniel was also told that Jesus would “stand up” during “a time of distress such as has not

occurred since there came to be a nation until that time.” This “time of distress” is the “great tribulation” mentioned at Matthew 24:21. Jesus stands up, or acts to defend God’s people, at the end of this time of distress, that is, at Armageddon. The book of Revelation refers to these ones as “a great crowd who come out of the great tribulation.”—Rev. 7:9, 14. w22.09 21 ¶4-5

Thursday, October 17

*Whoever has sinned against me,
I will wipe him out of my book.*
—Ex. 32:33.

Names that are presently in the book of life can be wiped out, or erased, as if Jehovah had initially written the names in pencil. (Rev. 3:5, fn.) We must make sure that our name remains in that book until it is written permanently in ink, as it were. One group who has names written in the book of life is made up of those who have been selected to rule with Jesus in heaven. According to the apostle Paul’s words to his “fellow workers” in Philippi, the names of the anointed ones, who have been invited to rule with Jesus, are now in the book of life. (Phil. 4:3) But in order to keep their names in that figurative book, they must remain faithful. Then when they receive their final sealing, whether before they die or before the outbreak of the great tribulation, their names will be written permanently in this book.—Rev. 7:3. w22.09 14 ¶3; 15 ¶5-6

Friday, October 18

Happy are those hearing the word of God and keeping it!—Luke 11:28.

Have you ever had this experience? Someone cooks one of your favorite meals. But either because you are too hurried or are too preoccupied mentally, you gulp it down without really tasting each morsel. After you finish eating, you realize how quickly you ate and you wish you had slowed down and enjoyed each bite. Well, have you ever read the Bible in such haste that you failed to savor its message? Take the time to enjoy reading God's Word; visualize the scenes, imagine the sounds of the voices, and think about what you have read. The whole experience will add to your happiness. Jesus appointed "the faithful and discreet slave" to provide spiritual food at the proper time, and we are very well-fed spiritually. (Matt. 24:45) The inspired Scriptures are the primary ingredient in everything the faithful slave produces.—1 Thess. 2:13. w22.10 7-8 ¶6-8

Saturday, October 19

We have had our full share of ridicule from the self-assured.—Ps. 123:4.

The Bible warned that in the last days, there would be no shortage of ridiculers. (2 Pet. 3:3, 4) They are motivated by "their own desires for ungodly things." (Jude 7, 17, 18) How can we safeguard ourselves from following the course of ridiculers? One way is to avoid associating with those who show a critical attitude. (Ps. 1:1) This means that we do not listen to or read anything from apostates. We realize that if we are not careful, we

could easily develop a critical spirit and begin to doubt Jehovah and the direction we receive through his organization. To avoid such a course, we can ask ourselves: 'Do I usually have something negative to say when we receive new direction or explanations? Am I inclined to find fault with those taking the lead?' When we are quick to correct such tendencies in ourselves, Jehovah will be pleased with us.—Prov. 3:34, 35. w22.10 20 ¶9-10

Sunday, October 20

The house of Israel will refuse to listen to you.—Ezek. 3:7.

God's spirit strengthened Ezekiel for the task of preaching to the "hard-headed and hardhearted" people in his territory. Jehovah told Ezekiel: "I have made your face exactly as hard as their faces and your forehead exactly as hard as their foreheads. I have made your forehead like a diamond, harder than flint. Do not be afraid of them or be terrified by their faces." (Ezek. 3:8, 9) In effect, Jehovah told Ezekiel: 'Do not let the people's stubbornness discourage you. I will fortify you.' Thereafter, God's spirit carried Ezekiel along in his preaching territory. "The hand of Jehovah rested strongly on me," wrote Ezekiel. It took the prophet a week to absorb the message that he had to deliver. (Ezek. 3:14, 15) Then Jehovah directed him to a valley plain where "spirit entered into [him]." (Ezek. 3:23, 24) Ezekiel was ready to begin his ministry. w22.11 4-5 ¶8-9

Monday, October 21

How long, O Jehovah, must I cry for help, but you do not hear? . . . Why do you tolerate oppression?—Hab. 1:2, 3.

The prophet Habakkuk faced many hardships. At one point, he seems to have doubted whether Jehovah cared about him. So he poured out his feelings to Jehovah in prayer. Jehovah responded to the heartfelt prayer of his loyal servant. (Hab. 2:2, 3) After meditating on Jehovah's saving acts, Habakkuk was filled with renewed joy. He became convinced that Jehovah cared for him and would help him endure any trial. (Hab. 3:17-19) What is the lesson for us? When you face hardships, pray to Jehovah and tell him how you feel. Then look to him for support. When you do, you can be confident that Jehovah will give you the strength you need to endure. And when you feel his support, your faith in him will grow stronger. If you stick to your spiritual routine, you will not allow hardships or doubts to separate you from Jehovah.—1 Tim. 6:6-8. w22.11 15 ¶6-7

Tuesday, October 22

Truly I tell you today, you will be with me in Paradise.—Luke 23:43.

Jesus and the two criminals beside him were suffering as they felt their life draining away. (Luke 23:32, 33) Both of the criminals had been speaking abusively of Jesus. (Matt. 27:44; Mark 15:32) But one of them had a change of heart. He said: "Jesus, remember me when you get into your Kingdom." Jesus replied with the words of today's text. (Luke 23:39-42) Jesus' words to the criminal should move us to think

about what life in Paradise will be like. Actually, we can learn something about Paradise from the peaceful rule of King Solomon. And we can expect that Jesus, the one greater than Solomon, will work along with his corulers to bring wonderful conditions to the earth. (Matt. 12:42) Understandably, the "other sheep" should be interested in what they need to do to qualify to live forever in Paradise.—John 10:16. w22.12 8 ¶1; 9 ¶4

Wednesday, October 23

He will surely show you favor at the sound of your cry for help.—Isa. 30:19.

Isaiah assures us that Jehovah will listen attentively when we cry out to Him and will respond quickly to our supplications. Isaiah adds: "He will answer you as soon as he hears it." These reassuring words remind us that our Father is willing—yes, eager—to come to the aid of those who reach out to him. Knowing this helps us to endure with joy. Jehovah gives attention to the prayer of each one of us. Why can we say that? In the first part of Isaiah chapter 30, the pronoun "you" is used in the plural form because Jehovah is addressing his people as a group. However, in verse 19 "you" is addressed to individuals. Isaiah writes: "You will by no means weep"; "he will surely show you favor"; "he will answer you." As a loving Father, Jehovah views us as individuals and gives our prayers his personal attention.—Ps. 116:1; Isa. 57:15. w22.11 9 ¶5-6

Thursday, October 24

Prove yourselves cautious as serpents and yet innocent as doves.—Matt. 10:16.

Preaching and teaching despite opposition brings us joy and peace. In the first century when the Jewish authorities commanded the apostles to stop preaching, those faithful men chose to obey God. They kept preaching, and that work made them happy. (Acts 5:27-29, 41, 42) Of course, when our work is restricted, we must be discreet while preaching. But if we do our best, we will have the peace that comes from pleasing Jehovah and from sharing a lifesaving message. Be confident that even during the most difficult times, we can have peace. At such times, we must remember that the peace we need is the peace that only Jehovah can give. Rely on him when you face a disease outbreak, a disaster, or persecution. Stick close to his organization. Look ahead to the marvelous future that awaits you. As you do, “the God of peace will be with you.”—Phil. 4:9. w22.12 21 ¶17-18

Friday, October 25

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

That involves action on our part. Among other things, we must work hard to overcome such personality traits as malicious bitterness, anger, and wrath. (Eph. 4:31, 32) Why might that be challenging? Because some negative personality traits are deep-rooted. For example, the Bible says that some people are “prone to anger” and “disposed to rage.” (Prov. 29:22)

Controlling ingrained traits will likely require continual effort even after baptism. (Rom. 7:21-23) Pray to Jehovah about the trait that you are struggling with, confident that he will hear you and help you. (1 John 5:14, 15) While Jehovah will not miraculously eliminate the trait, he can strengthen you so that you do not give in to it. (1 Pet. 5:10) Meanwhile, work in harmony with your prayers by not feeding inclinations of the old personality. And do not let your mind dwell on improper desires.—Phil. 4:8; Col. 3:2. w23.01 10 ¶7, 9-10

Saturday, October 26

Whoever loves God must also love his brother.—1 John 4:21.

One way we demonstrate our love is by having a zealous share in the preaching work. We speak to everyone we meet. We do not discriminate against anyone because of his race, tribe, financial position, or social background. In this way, we are working in harmony with Jehovah’s purpose “that all sorts of people should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth.” (1 Tim. 2:4) We also prove our love for God and Christ by showing love for our brothers and sisters. We take a personal interest in them and support them during their trials. We comfort them when they have lost a loved one, visit them when they are sick, and do our best to encourage them when they are disheartened. (2 Cor. 1:3-7; 1 Thess. 5:11, 14) We keep praying for them, remembering that “a righteous man’s supplication has a powerful effect.”—Jas. 5:16. w23.01 28-29 ¶7-8

Sunday, October 27

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

Just as a construction worker improves his skills over time, we too can become more effective in building one another up. We can help others gain strength to endure trials by sharing with them examples of those who endured in the past. (Heb. 11:32-35; 12:1) We can promote peace by mentioning the good we see in others, preserve peace when it is threatened, and restore peace when differences arise. (Eph. 4:3) And we can continue to build up the faith of our brothers and sisters by sharing with them important Bible truths, by providing practical help, and by supporting any who have become weak spiritually. We can experience happiness and contentment when we help with the spiritual building work in the congregation. Unlike physical buildings that will eventually decay, the results of our work can last an eternity! w22.08 22 ¶6; 25 ¶17-18

Monday, October 28

Jehovah himself gives wisdom; from his mouth come knowledge and discernment.—Prov. 2:6.

Jesus identified an important quality that we need if we are to understand what we read in God’s Word—discernment. (Matt. 24:15) What is discernment? It is the ability to grasp how one idea relates to another and how it differs from another and to see what is not immediately obvious. In addition, as Jesus indicated, we need discernment to identify events that fulfill Bible prophecy. We also need this qual-

ity so that we can benefit fully from everything we read in the Bible. Jehovah gives his servants discernment. So turn to him in prayer, and ask him to help you develop this quality. How can you work in harmony with your prayer? Carefully analyze what you read, and note how it relates to other things you know. Look for the meaning of a Bible passage, and see ways in which you can apply it in your life. (Heb. 5:14) As you read with discernment, your understanding of the Scriptures will grow. w23.02 10 ¶7-8

Tuesday, October 29

By him we have life and move and exist.—Acts 17:28.

Imagine that a friend gave you a very old but priceless painting—a masterpiece. It has some discoloration, stains, and cracks. Despite the imperfections, the painting is valued at millions of dollars. Surely you would appreciate and protect that piece of art. Similarly, Jehovah has given us a valuable gift, the gift of life. In fact, Jehovah shows how much he values our life by giving his Son as a ransom for us. (John 3:16) Jehovah is the Source of life. (Ps. 36:9) The apostle Paul acknowledged this truth when he said: “By him we have life and move and exist.” (Acts 17:25, 28) So we can appropriately refer to our life as a gift from God. He lovingly provides us with what we need to stay alive. (Acts 14:15-17) But Jehovah does not preserve our lives miraculously. Rather, he expects us to care for our physical and spiritual health to the best of our ability.—2 Cor. 7:1. w23.02 20 ¶1-2

Wednesday, October 30

Write in a book all the words that I speak to you.—Jer. 30:2.

How grateful we are to Jehovah God for the Bible! Through its pages, he provides us with wise counsel that can help us to cope successfully with the problems we face today. He also gives us a wonderful hope for the future. More important, Jehovah has used the Bible to reveal many aspects of his personality. As we meditate on his beautiful qualities, our hearts are deeply touched and we are moved to draw close to our God by developing a warm friendship with him. (Ps. 25:14) Jehovah wants people to know him. In the past, he revealed himself by such means as dreams, visions, and even angels. (Num. 12:6; Acts 10:3, 4) But how could these dreams, visions, or messages from angels be studied unless they were written down? For good reason, Jehovah had men “write in a book” what he wanted us to know. Because “the way of the true God is perfect,” we can be confident that this method of communicating with us is excellent and beneficial.—Ps. 18:30. w23.02 2 ¶1-2

Thursday, October 31

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

Set worthwhile goals. Choose goals that will strengthen and refine you. (Eph. 3:16) For example, you may decide to improve your routine of personal study and Bible reading. (Ps. 1:2, 3) Or you may see the need to give attention to the frequency and the quality of your prayers. Perhaps you need to exercise greater self-control

in your choice of entertainment and your use of time. (Eph. 5:15, 16) You grow as a Christian when you help other people. For example, you can make it your goal to help the elderly and the infirm in your congregation. Perhaps you can run errands for them or assist them with their use of electronic devices. You also show love to those outside the congregation by sharing the good news of the Kingdom with them. (Matt. 9:36, 37) If at all possible, make it your goal to share in some aspect of the full-time ministry. w22.08 6 ¶16-17

Friday, November 1

Let a rotten word not come out of your mouth, but only what is good for building up.—Eph. 4:29.

Profanity has no place on a Christian’s lips. But there are subtle forms of abusive speech that we also need to be on guard against. For example, we need to be careful not to make unfavorable comparisons when talking about people of other cultures, tribes, or nationalities. Further, we never want to hurt others with cutting remarks. Speak in a way that builds others up. Be quick to commend rather than to criticize or complain. The Israelites had much to be thankful for, yet they routinely complained. A complaining spirit can be contagious. You will recall that a negative report from ten spies caused “all the Israelites . . . to murmur against Moses.” (Num. 13:31–14:4) On the other hand, commendation can be a powerful force for good. So look for opportunities to offer sincere commendation. w22.04 8 ¶16-17

Saturday, November 2

I have been entrusted to your care from birth; from my mother's womb, you have been my God.—Ps. 22:10.

Since Bible times, Jehovah has helped countless young ones to become his friends. He can also help your children to grow spiritually if that is their desire. (1 Cor. 3:6, 7) Even if your children seem to stray, Jehovah will keep a loving eye on them. (Ps. 11:4) When they show the slightest sign of being “rightly disposed,” he will be there, reaching out to them. (Acts 13:48; 2 Chron. 16:9) He may help you say the right thing at the right time—when your children need to hear it the most. (Prov. 15:23) Or he may move a caring brother or sister in the congregation to take a special interest in them. Even after your children become adults, Jehovah may bring back to their mind something that you taught them in the past. (John 14:26) You give Jehovah much to bless when you continue to train your children by word and by example. w22.04 21 ¶18

Sunday, November 3

The dragon became enraged.
—Rev. 12:17.

Since Satan no longer has access to the heavenly realm, he focuses his anger on the remnant of anointed ones, who are the earthly representatives of God's Kingdom and who “have the work of bearing witness concerning Jesus.” (2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 6:19, 20) In 1918, eight prominent brothers were convicted on false charges, and each was sentenced to a long term of imprisonment. It appeared as if the work of these anointed ones had been

“killed.” (Rev. 11:3, 7-11) But early in 1919, those anointed brothers were released from prison, and later the charges were dropped. The brothers immediately got back to work—Kingdom work. But that did not stop Satan's attacks on God's people. Since that time, Satan has directed “a river” of persecution against all of God's people. (Rev. 12:15) Truly, “this is where it calls for endurance and faith” on the part of each one of us.—Rev. 13:10. w22.05 5-6 ¶14-16

Monday, November 4

I heard the number of those who were sealed, 144,000.—Rev. 7:4.

In a vision, the apostle John sees two groups who support Jehovah's rulership and receive the blessings of everlasting life. The first group numbers 144,000. They are taken from the earth to form a government, or Kingdom, with Jesus in heaven. Along with him, they rule over the earth. (Rev. 5:9, 10; 14:3, 4) In the vision, John sees them standing with Jesus on heavenly Mount Zion. (Rev. 14:1) Down through the centuries, thousands have been selected to be part of the 144,000. (Luke 12:32; Rom. 8:17) John, however, is told that only a remnant, or a small number, would be alive on earth during the last days. (Rev. 12:17) Then sometime during the great tribulation, this remnant will be taken to heaven to join the rest of the 144,000, who have already died faithful. There they will become co-rulers with Jesus in God's Kingdom.—Matt. 24:31; Rev. 5:9, 10. w22.05 16 ¶4-5

Tuesday, November 5

Pay attention to my commandments!

—Isa. 48:18.

Jesus taught his followers to have a proper view of themselves. Jesus assured them: “The hairs of your head are all numbered.” (Matt. 10:30) That statement is very comforting to us, especially if we tend to have a negative view of ourselves. It means that our heavenly Father is deeply interested in us—that we have value in his eyes. We would never want to call into question Jehovah’s judgment by concluding that we are unworthy of being his worshippers and of receiving life in his new world. Some 15 years ago, *The Watchtower* recommended that we develop this balanced view of ourselves: “Certainly, we would not want to think too highly of ourselves to the point of becoming conceited; nor would we want to go to the other extreme and think nothing of ourselves. Rather, our aim should be to cultivate a reasonable view of ourselves, realizing our strengths and our limitations.” w22.05 24-25 ¶14-16

Wednesday, November 6

I make request . . . that they may all be one.—John 17:20, 21.

How are we personally involved in contributing to this unity? By being peacemakers. (Matt. 5:9; Rom. 12:18) Each time we take the initiative to promote peaceful relations with others in the congregation, we add to the beauty of the spiritual paradise. We keep in mind that Jehovah has drawn each of the inhabitants of the spiritual paradise to pure worship. (John 6:44) Imagine how happy Jehovah must

be when he sees us working hard to strengthen the peace and unity among those whom he views as precious—his servants! (Isa. 26:3; Hag. 2:7) How can we benefit to the full from the blessings that we receive as God’s servants? We can think deeply about what we study in God’s Word. Such study and meditation will help us to cultivate Christian qualities that move us to show “brotherly love” and “tender affection for one another” in the congregation.—Rom. 12:10. w22.11 12-13 ¶16-18

Thursday, November 7

I will forgive their error, and I will no longer remember their sin.

—Jer. 31:34.

When we accept the fact that Jehovah has forgiven us, we enjoy “seasons of refreshing,” including peace of mind and a clean conscience. Such forgiveness cannot come from men but must come from “Jehovah himself.” (Acts 3:19) When Jehovah forgives us, he restores his relationship with us so completely that it is as though we had never sinned. Once Jehovah forgives us, he will never accuse us or punish us again for that sin. (Isa. 43:25) Jehovah puts our sins “as far off as the sunrise is from the sunset.” (Ps. 103:12) When we reflect on how great Jehovah’s forgiveness is, we are filled with gratitude and awe. (Ps. 130:4) Jehovah’s decision to forgive is not based on whether the sin was great or small. Jehovah uses his knowledge as our Creator, Lawgiver, and Judge when deciding whether he will extend forgiveness. w22.06 5 ¶12-14

Friday, November 8

Whoever approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him.—Heb. 11:6.

Jehovah has given a beautiful hope to all those who love him. Soon he will bring an end to sickness, sorrow, and death. (Rev. 21:3, 4) He will help “the meek” who are hoping in him to transform the earth into a paradise. (Ps. 37:9-11) And he will make it possible for each one of us to have a warm, personal relationship with him that will be even more wonderful than what we enjoy now. What a marvelous hope that is! But what basis do we have for believing that God’s promises will come true? Jehovah never breaks a promise. We thus have good reason to “hope in Jehovah.” (Ps. 27:14) We show this by waiting patiently and joyfully for our God to bring his purpose to completion. (Isa. 55:10, 11) May we remain loyal to Jehovah, certain that he will reward “those earnestly seeking him.” w22.06 20 ¶1; 25 ¶18

Saturday, November 9

Your Father knows what you need even before you ask him.—Matt. 6:8.

We can be sure that as family Head, Jehovah will respect the principle he had recorded at 1 Timothy 5:8. When we are convinced that Jehovah loves us and that he loves our family, we have no trouble believing that we will have the things we need. (Matt. 6:31-33) Jehovah wants to provide for us, and what a loving, generous Provider he is! When he created the earth, he did more than just give us the basic things we would need to survive.

He lovingly filled the earth with things that would give us immense pleasure. (Gen. 2:9) Even if at times we have just enough to get by, we do well to focus on the fact that we are getting by. Jehovah has not failed to provide for us. (Matt. 6:11) We need to keep in mind that any material sacrifice we make now is nothing in comparison to what our loving God will give us, both now and in the future.—Isa. 65:21, 22. w22.06 15 ¶7-8

Sunday, November 10

Solid food belongs to mature people.—Heb. 5:14.

Newly interested people are not the only ones who need solid spiritual food. All of us do. The apostle Paul wrote that applying such spiritual sustenance would help us “to distinguish both right and wrong.” In these difficult times when morals are at an all-time low, it can be a real challenge to adhere to Jehovah’s standards. But Jesus sees to it that we obtain the strength we need through appetizing spiritual food. The source of this food is God’s inspired Word, the Bible. Like Jesus, we have given God’s name the prominence that it deserves. (John 17:6, 26) For example, in 1931 we adopted the Scriptural name Jehovah’s Witnesses, thus attaching ourselves in a very personal way to our heavenly Father. (Isa. 43:10-12) In addition, the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* has restored God’s name to its rightful place in his Word. w22.07 11 ¶11-12

Monday, November 11

Your word is a lamp to my foot, and a light for my path.—Ps. 119:105.

Bible truth also includes the good news about God’s Kingdom. Jesus compared the truth about that Kingdom to a hidden treasure. As recorded at Matthew 13:44, Jesus said: “The Kingdom of the heavens is like a treasure, hidden in the field, that a man found and hid; and because of his joy, he goes and sells everything he has and buys that field.” Notice that the man was not looking for the treasure. But when he found it, he made major sacrifices to obtain it. In fact, he sold everything he had. Why? He knew how valuable that treasure was. We know that nothing this world has to offer can compare to the joy we have in serving Jehovah now, with the prospect of everlasting life in the future under Kingdom rule. The privilege we have of enjoying a close personal relationship with Jehovah is worth any sacrifice we have to make. Our greatest joy is “to please him fully.”—Col. 1:10. w22.08 15 ¶8-9; 17 ¶12

Tuesday, November 12

*How could I commit this great badness and actually sin against God?
—Gen. 39:9.*

How did Joseph know that his God would consider adultery as an act of “great badness”? The Mosaic Law, which included the clear command “You must not commit adultery,” would not be written down for another two hundred years. (Ex. 20:14) Still, Joseph knew Jehovah well enough to perceive how He would feel about immoral conduct. For example, Joseph surely knew that Jehovah designed

marriage to be between one man and one woman. And he would have heard how Jehovah on two occasions intervened to protect the honor of his great-grandmother Sarah when she was in danger of being violated. (Gen. 2:24; 12:14-20; 20:2-7) As Joseph reasoned on such matters, he discerned what was right and what was wrong in God’s eyes. Because Joseph loved his God, he also loved Jehovah’s standards of righteousness, and he was determined to uphold them. w22.08 26 ¶1-2

Wednesday, November 13

Many of those asleep in the dust of the earth will wake up, some to everlasting life.—Dan. 12:2.

This prophecy is not referring to a symbolic resurrection, a spiritual revival of God’s servants that occurs during the last days, as we previously understood. Rather, these words refer to the resurrection of the dead that takes place in the coming new world. Why can we draw that conclusion? The expression “the dust” is also used at Job 17:16 as a parallel of the expression “the Grave.” This fact indicates that Daniel 12:2 is referring to the literal resurrection that will occur after the last days have ended and after the battle of Armageddon. What does Daniel 12:2 mean, though, when it says that some will be resurrected to “everlasting life”? It means that those who are resurrected and come to know, or continue to know, and obey Jehovah and Jesus during the 1,000 years will ultimately receive everlasting life.—John 17:3. w22.09 21 ¶6-7

Thursday, November 14

[Love] believes all things.

—1 Cor. 13:7.

That statement does not mean that Jehovah expects us to trust others blindly; rather, he expects us to trust them because they have shown themselves to be trustworthy. Trust, like respect, needs to be earned, and that takes time. How can you develop trust in your brothers? Get to know them well. Speak with them at congregation meetings. Arrange to work with them in the ministry. Be patient with them, giving them the opportunity to demonstrate that they are trustworthy. At first, you may want to be selective in what personal matters you reveal to someone you are just getting to know. As your relationship strengthens, you may feel more comfortable opening up about your feelings. (Luke 16:10) But what can you do if a brother betrays your trust? Do not be quick to give up on him. Instead, give the matter time. And do not allow the actions of a few to discourage you from trusting your brothers. w22.09 4 ¶7-8

Friday, November 15

The eyes of Jehovah are roving about through all the earth.—2 Chron. 16:9.

An elder named Miqueas felt that he had been harshly treated by some brothers in positions of responsibility. Still, he kept his senses and worked hard to control his feelings. He prayed frequently, asking Jehovah to give him holy spirit and strength to endure. He also looked up information in our publications that could help him. What is the lesson? If you feel mistreated by a brother or a sister,

remain calm and try to control any negative feelings that you may have. You may not know what circumstances could have caused the person to speak or act that way. So talk to Jehovah in prayer, and ask him to help you see matters from the other person's standpoint. Give your fellow worshipper the benefit of the doubt and try to overlook the offense. (Prov. 19:11) Remember, Jehovah is aware of your situation and he will give you the strength you need to endure.—Eccl. 5:8. w22.11 21 ¶5

Saturday, November 16

I avoid those who hide what they are.

—Ps. 26:4.

Choose friends who love Jehovah. Your choice of friends will greatly affect your growth as a Christian. (Prov. 13:20) Julien, who now serves as an elder, says: “When I was younger, I made good friends while sharing in the ministry. These friends were zealous, and they helped me see how enjoyable the ministry can be. . . . I also realized that I had been missing out on good company and interesting friendships by limiting my friends to those my own age.” What if you realize that someone in the congregation is not good association for you? Paul knew that some individuals in the first-century Christian congregation did not have a spiritual outlook, so he warned Timothy to keep clear of them. (2 Tim. 2:20-22) Our friendship with Jehovah is precious. We should not allow anyone to weaken the bond that we have worked so hard to forge with our heavenly Father. w22.08 5-6 ¶13-15

Sunday, November 17

Stay away from the foolish man.

—Prov. 14:7.

Unlike those who hate godly counsel, we cultivate love for God's ways, including his moral standards. We can strengthen that love by comparing the results of obedience with those of disobedience. Observe the kinds of problems people bring on themselves because they foolishly reject Jehovah's wise counsel. Then consider how much better your life is because you obey God. (Ps. 32:8, 10) Jehovah makes wisdom available to all, but he does not force anyone to accept it. He does, however, describe the results that come to those who do not listen to wisdom. (Prov. 1:29-32) They will "bear the consequences of their way." In time, their lifestyle will bring them nothing but distress, trouble, and eventual destruction. On the other hand, those who listen to Jehovah's wise counsel and apply what it says are promised: "The one listening to me will dwell in security and be undisturbed by the dread of calamity." —Prov. 1:33. w22.10 21 ¶11-13

Monday, November 18

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

To fear Jehovah means that we respect him so much that we avoid doing anything that displeases him. (Prov. 16:6) Thus, we continually strive to conform to God's standards of right and wrong as explained in the pages of the Bible. (2 Cor. 7:1) We will be happy if we do the things that Jehovah loves and reject the things that he hates. (Ps. 37:27; 97:10; Rom. 12:9)

A person may know that Jehovah has the authority to decide what is right and what is wrong, but he must also accept God's standards for himself. (Rom. 12:2) We show by our conduct that we truly believe that following Jehovah's standards is the best way to live. (Prov. 12:28) David felt that way, for he said of Jehovah: "You make known to me the path of life. In your presence is abundant joy; there is happiness at your right hand forever." —Ps. 16:11. w22.10 8 ¶9-10

Tuesday, November 19

The Son cannot do a single thing of his own initiative, but only what he sees the Father doing.—John 5:19.

Jesus maintained a balanced and humble view of himself. In his pre-human existence, Jesus built up a marvelous record in Jehovah's service. By means of Jesus, "all other things were created in the heavens and on the earth." (Col. 1:16) At his baptism, Jesus evidently recalled things he had accomplished when he was with his Father. (Matt. 3:16; John 17:5) But that knowledge did not cause Jesus to become prideful. On the contrary, he never exalted himself above anyone. He told his disciples that he had come to the earth, "not to be ministered to, but to minister and to give his life as a ransom in exchange for many." (Matt. 20:28) He also admitted modestly that he could not do a single thing of his own initiative. What humility Jesus displayed! Jesus provided an excellent example for us to follow. w22.05 24 ¶13

Wednesday, November 20

Return to Jehovah.—Isa. 55:7.

When deciding if He will extend forgiveness, Jehovah considers whether the sinner knew that what he was doing was wrong. Jesus made this clear at Luke 12:47, 48. A person who willfully schemes to do something wicked and knows full well that he is doing something that is offensive to Jehovah sins in a serious way. Such a person is in danger of not being forgiven. (Mark 3:29; John 9:41) Is there any hope in that case? Yes! Jehovah also considers whether the sinner is sincerely repentant. To repent means “to change one’s mind, attitude, or purpose.” It includes the idea that a person feels regret and deep sadness about the bad things he has done or about not doing the right things he should have done. A repentant person is grieved not only by the wrongs he has committed but also by the poor spiritual condition that led to those wrongs. w22.06 5-6 ¶15-17

Thursday, November 21

All those desiring to live with godly devotion in association with Christ Jesus will also be persecuted.
—2 Tim. 3:12.

Our enemies spread lies or misinformation about responsible brothers in Jehovah’s organization. (Ps. 31:13) Some brothers have been arrested and charged as criminals. The first-century Christians faced a similar situation when the apostle Paul was wrongfully accused and arrested. Some stopped supporting the apostle Paul when he was imprisoned in Rome. (2 Tim. 1:8, 15; 2:8, 9) Imag-

ine how Paul must have felt. He had endured many hardships and had even risked his life for them. (Acts 20:18-21; 2 Cor. 1:8) May we never become like those who abandoned Paul! So we should not be surprised that Satan targets responsible brothers in his attacks. His intent is that such attacks will break their integrity and intimidate us. (1 Pet. 5:8) Continue to support your brothers and loyally stick to them.—2 Tim. 1:16-18. w22.11 16-17 ¶8-11

Friday, November 22

Do you not fear God at all?
—Luke 23:40.

The repentant criminal that hung beside Jesus before he died was likely a Jew. The Jews worshipped one God, but people from the nations believed in many gods. (Ex. 20:2, 3; 1 Cor. 8:5, 6) Had that criminal been a man of the nations, the question asked in today’s text might have been, “Do you not fear the gods at all?” Furthermore, Jesus was sent, not to people of the nations, but to “the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” (Matt. 15:24) God had revealed to the Israelites that he would raise the dead. The repentant criminal may have known about this, and as his words suggest, he assumed that Jehovah would resurrect Jesus to rule in God’s Kingdom. The man apparently hoped that God would also resurrect him. As a Jew, the repentant criminal would have known about Adam and Eve. So the criminal could well have realized that the Paradise that Jesus mentioned at Luke 23:43 would be a beautiful garden here on earth.—Gen. 2:15. w22.12 8-9 ¶2-3

Saturday, November 23

With one purpose all of these were persisting in prayer.—Acts 1:14.

We can carry out the preaching work only with the help of God's spirit. Why? Because Satan wages war against us in order to stop our preaching activities. (Rev. 12:17) From a human standpoint, we seem totally out-matched by Satan. But by means of our witnessing work, we are conquering him! (Rev. 12:9-11) In what way? When we share in the ministry, we show that we are not intimidated by Satan's threats. Each time we preach, Satan suffers a defeat. So we can conclude that we are empowered by holy spirit and that we have Jehovah's approval. (Matt. 5:10-12; 1 Pet. 4:14) God's spirit can make us equal to any challenge we might encounter in our ministry. (2 Cor. 4:7-9) What, then, can we do to make sure that we keep receiving God's spirit? We need to pray for it persistently, confident that Jehovah will hear our prayers. w22.11 5 ¶10-11

Sunday, November 24

We urge you, brothers, to warn the disorderly, speak consolingly to those who are depressed, support the weak, be patient toward all.—1 Thess. 5:14.

We show love for our brothers and sisters by working hard to keep peace with them. We strive to imitate Jehovah's example of forgiveness. If Jehovah was willing to let his Son die for our sins, should we not readily forgive our brothers and sisters when they sin against us? We would not want to be like the wicked slave referred to in one of Jesus' parables. Even after his mas-

ter had canceled his enormous debt, that slave failed to forgive a fellow slave's relatively small debt. (Matt. 18:23-35) If you have had a misunderstanding with someone in the congregation, could you take the first step to make peace before attending the Memorial? (Matt. 5:23, 24) Doing so would reflect your deep love for Jehovah and Jesus. w23.01 29 ¶8-9

Monday, November 25

The one showing favor to the lowly is lending to Jehovah.—Prov. 19:17.

One way that you can learn what your brothers and sisters need is by drawing them out with tactful questions. (Prov. 20:5) Do they have enough food, medicine, and other supplies? Are they at risk of losing their job or even their home? Do they need assistance with applying for government aid? Jehovah invites all of us to encourage and help others. (Gal. 6:10) Even a small expression of our love can have a powerful effect on someone who is ill. A child could send a card or a drawing to encourage a brother. A young adult might be able to run an errand or shop for a sister. What about preparing a meal for someone who is ill? Some Witnesses have sent a thank-you note to the elders, who are often busier than ever during a disease outbreak. How good it is when we do our part to "keep encouraging one another and building one another up"!—1 Thess. 5:11. w22.12 22 ¶2; 23 ¶5-6

Tuesday, November 26

You are very much mistaken.

—Mark 12:27.

The Sadducees were thoroughly familiar with the first five books of the Hebrew Scriptures, but they overlooked important truths contained in those inspired books. For example, consider how Jesus responded when the Sadducees challenged him about the resurrection. He asked them: “Have you not read in the book of Moses, in the account about the thornbush, that God said to him: ‘I am the God of Abraham and God of Isaac and God of Jacob’?” (Mark 12:18, 26) Although the Sadducees had surely read that passage many times, Jesus’ question revealed that they had overlooked an important Scriptural truth—the teaching of the resurrection. (Luke 20:38) What lesson is there for us? When we read, we want to be alert to all that a verse or a Bible account can teach us. We want to perceive not only basic teachings but also deeper truths and principles that lie hidden beneath the surface. w23.02 11 ¶9-10

Wednesday, November 27

We have . . . a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us.—Heb. 12:1.

All the witnesses referred to in today’s text went through severe trials; yet, they built an outstanding record of faithfulness to Jehovah. (Heb. 11:36-40) Were their endurance and hard work wasted? Most definitely not! Even though during their lifetime they never saw the fulfillment of all of God’s promises, they continued to hope in Jehovah. And because they were certain that they had gained

Jehovah’s approval, they were confident that they would see the promises come true. (Heb. 11:4, 5) Their example can strengthen our resolve to continue hoping in Jehovah. Today we live in a world that is going from bad to worse. (2 Tim. 3:13) Satan has not finished putting God’s people to the test. Regardless of the challenges that lie ahead, may we be determined to work hard for Jehovah, confident that “we have rested our hope on a living God.”—1 Tim. 4:10. w22.06 25 ¶17-18

Thursday, November 28

What profit is there in my death . . . ? Will the dust praise you?—Ps. 30:9.

One reason why we should try to stay healthy is that we can serve Jehovah to the best of our ability. (Mark 12:30) So we avoid choosing to do things that we know will harm our health. (Rom. 12:1) Granted, there is only so much that we can do to stay in good health. But we do what we can because we want to show our heavenly Father that we appreciate the gift of life. Sickness and old age may prevent us from doing many of the things we once did. As a result, we may feel frustrated and sad. But never should we give up and neglect our health. Why not? Because no matter how old or how sick we are, we can still praise Jehovah, as did King David. How touching it is to realize that our God treasures us despite our being imperfect! (Matt. 10:29-31) Even if we were to die, he would long to resurrect us. (Job 14:14, 15) While we are alive, we want to do what we can to protect our health and life. w23.02 20-21 ¶3-5

Friday, November 29

Whoever blasphemes against the holy spirit has no forgiveness forever.

—Mark 3:29.

Will the names of the great crowd of other sheep still be in the book of life after they survive Armageddon? Yes. (Rev. 7:14) Jesus said that these sheeplike ones will depart “into everlasting life.” (Matt. 25:46) But those Armageddon survivors will not immediately receive everlasting life. During the Thousand Year Reign, Jesus “will shepherd them and will guide them to springs of waters of life.” Those who respond positively to Christ’s guidance and are finally judged faithful to Jehovah will have their names recorded permanently in the book of life. (Rev. 7:16, 17) However, the goats will be destroyed at Armageddon. Jesus says that they “will depart into everlasting cutting-off.” (Matt. 25:46) Under inspiration, the apostle Paul tells us that “these very ones will undergo the judicial punishment of everlasting destruction.”—2 Thess. 1:9; 2 Pet. 2:9. w22.09 16 ¶7-8

Saturday, November 30

There is an appointed time for everything.—Eccl. 3:1.

Jehovah’s creation can provide families with a means to relax and have fun, thus strengthening family ties. Through his handiwork, Jehovah has given us wonderful settings to enjoy wholesome activities. Many families like being together at a nature reserve, in the countryside, in the mountains, or at the beach. In God’s new world, parents and children will enjoy Jehovah’s creation as never be-

fore. Unlike today, we will have no reason to fear animals; nor will they fear us. (Isa. 11:6-9) We will have endless time to enjoy what Jehovah has made. (Ps. 22:26) But parents, do not wait until then to help your children to begin enjoying creation. As you use creation to teach your children about Jehovah, they will likely come to agree with what King David said: “O Jehovah, there are no works like yours.”—Ps. 86:8. w23.03 25 ¶16-17

Sunday, December 1

What prevents me from getting baptized?—Acts 8:36.

Was the court official from Ethiopia truly ready for baptism? Consider: The Ethiopian man “had gone to Jerusalem to worship.” (Acts 8:27) He must therefore have been a Jewish proselyte; he had converted to Judaism. No doubt he had learned about Jehovah from the sacred writings of the Hebrew Scriptures. Still, he was eager to learn more. In fact, when Philip met that official on the road, he found him poring over a scroll of the prophet Isaiah’s writings. (Acts 8:28) He wanted to keep learning. He had traveled all the way from Ethiopia in order to worship Jehovah at the temple in Jerusalem. The Ethiopian learned from Philip some vital new truths, including the identity of the Messiah. (Acts 8:34, 35) His love for Jehovah and His Son grew. He was moved to make the life-changing decision to get baptized as a follower of Jesus Christ. Seeing that the man was ready, Philip baptized him. w23.03 8-9 ¶3-6

Monday, December 2

Let your words always be gracious.

—Col. 4:6.

We cannot please Jehovah if we are untruthful. (Prov. 6:16, 17) Although many people today consider lying to be a normal part of speech, we stick to Jehovah's view on the matter. (Ps. 15:1, 2) Of course, we avoid telling outright lies, but we also avoid deliberately giving the wrong impression to others. We should also avoid spreading harmful gossip. (Prov. 25:23; 2 Thess. 3:11) If you see that a conversation is turning into harmful gossip, steer the discussion toward something positive. Since we live in a world where bad speech is rampant, we must work hard to ensure that our speech pleases Jehovah. He will bless our sincere efforts to use our speech in a positive way in the ministry, at the meetings, and in our daily conversations. When the influence of this ungodly system of things finally comes to an end, it will be much easier to honor Jehovah with our speech. —Jude 15. w22.04 9 ¶18-20

Tuesday, December 3

We love, because he first loved us.

—1 John 4:19.

When we consider how much Jehovah and Jesus love us, we are moved to love them in return. (1 John 4:10) We love them even more when we realize that Jesus died for us personally. The apostle Paul acknowledged this and expressed his appreciation when he wrote to the Galatians, saying: "The Son of God . . . loved me and handed himself over for me." (Gal. 2:20) On the basis of the ransom, Jehovah has

drawn you to him so that you can be his friend. (John 6:44) Does it not warm your heart to know that Jehovah has seen something good in you and that he paid the highest price so that you can be counted as his friend? Does it not strengthen your love for Jehovah and Jesus? We do well to ask ourselves, 'What will that love compel me to do?' Our love for God and Christ moves us to show love to others.—2 Cor. 5:14, 15; 6:1, 2. w23.01 28 ¶6-7

Wednesday, December 4

I will change the language of the peoples to a pure language.—Zeph. 3:9.

The Bible plays a vital role in Jehovah's purpose to have his worshippers "serve him shoulder to shoulder." Jehovah had many parts of the Scriptures written in such a way that they would be understood only by humble readers. (Luke 10:21) People everywhere read the Bible. But only the humble truly understand and apply what it says. (2 Cor. 3:15, 16) We discern Jehovah's wisdom in the Bible. Jehovah uses the Scriptures not only to teach us as a group but also to instruct and comfort us as individuals. All of us can sense Jehovah's personal interest in us as we read his Word. (Isa. 30:21) How often have you turned to the Scriptures and read a verse that seemed written just for you? Yet, the Bible appeals to millions of people. How can it contain such up-to-date information that is tailored to your personal needs? This is possible only because the Bible is the work of a uniquely wise Author.—2 Tim. 3:16, 17. w23.02 4-5 ¶8-10

Thursday, December 5

Ponder over these things; be absorbed in them, so that your advancement may be plainly seen by all people.

—1 Tim. 4:15.

As true Christians, we love Jehovah very much. We want our service to him to be of the best possible quality. If we are going to reach our full potential, though, we need to set spiritual goals, such as cultivating Christian qualities, learning useful skills, and looking for ways to serve others. Why should we be interested in making spiritual progress? Primarily, we want to please our loving heavenly Father. Jehovah is happy when he sees us use our talents and abilities to the full in his service. In addition, we want to make spiritual progress so that we can be more helpful to our brothers and sisters. (1 Thess. 4:9, 10) No matter how long we have been in the truth, we all can make spiritual progress. w22.04 22 ¶1-2

Friday, December 6

They will eat up her flesh and completely burn her with fire.—Rev. 17:16.

The political elements of this world will soon turn on Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion. This action will mark the beginning of the great tribulation. Will this result in a flood of new ones deciding to turn to the worship of Jehovah? No. To the contrary, Revelation chapter 6 shows that at that critical time, people who are not serving Jehovah will seek protection from the political and commercial systems of this world, which are compared to mountains. Since those people will not take a stand in

favor of God's Kingdom, Jehovah will consider them to be opposers. (Luke 11:23; Rev. 6:15-17) Truly, Jehovah's faithful servants will stand out as different during that desperate time of tribulation. They will still be the only group of people on earth serving Jehovah God and refusing to give their support to "the wild beast."—Rev. 13:14-17. w22.05 16-17 ¶8-9

Saturday, December 7

He had everlasting good news to declare to those who dwell on the earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people.—Rev. 14:6.

The "good news of the Kingdom" is not the only message that God's people are to declare. (Matt. 24:14) They also need to support the work of the angels who are described in Revelation chapters 8 through 10. These angels announce a series of woes for those who reject God's Kingdom. Thus, Jehovah's Witnesses have been declaring a judgment message, likened to "hail and fire," revealing God's judgments on the various elements of Satan's wicked world. (Rev. 8:7, 13) People need to know that the end is near so that they can make drastic changes in their lives and survive Jehovah's day of anger. (Zeph. 2: 2, 3) But this message is not popular. Declaring it calls for courage on our part. During the great tribulation, the final judgment message will become more hard-hitting.—Rev. 16:21. w22.05 7 ¶18-19

Sunday, December 8

You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind.

—Matt. 22:37.

Consider a Christian couple who are about to become parents. Over the years, they may have heard a number of talks on the subject of raising children. But now those principles will take on new meaning for them. They are going to have a child of their own to bring up. What an awesome responsibility! Certainly, new circumstances can change our perspective on well-known Bible principles. This is one reason why Jehovah's worshippers read the Scriptures and, as Israel's kings were told to do, meditate on them "all the days" of their life. (Deut. 17:19) Parents, you have one of the greatest privileges a Christian can have, namely, to teach your children about Jehovah. But you want to do more than merely impart information about our God. You want to help your children to love him dearly. w22.05 26 ¶2-3

Monday, December 9

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

It is not enough for us to feel sorry about a sinful course or a sin that we have committed. We must also be ready to take action. Conversion is an important factor that Jehovah considers when deciding to extend forgiveness. Conversion means "a turning around." In other words, a person must change course by leaving his bad way and pursuing the way of Jehovah. (Isa. 55:7) The individual must trans-

form his mind so that he is guided by the thinking of Jehovah. (Rom. 12:2; Eph. 4:23) He must be determined to leave behind his former bad ways of thinking and acting. (Col. 3:7-9) Of course, it is our faith in the sacrifice of Christ that provides the real basis for Jehovah to forgive us and cleanse us from sin. Jehovah will extend the value of that sacrifice to us when he sees that we are making a sincere effort to change our course of conduct. —1 John 1:7. w22.06 6 ¶16-17

Tuesday, December 10

Do not be afraid of the things you are about to suffer.—Rev. 2:10.

Humans have a bad record of harming one another. (Eccl. 8:9) For example, people abuse their authority, criminals commit violent acts, bullies at school insult and threaten their classmates, and some people even treat their family members brutally. No wonder humans fear other humans! How does Satan try to take advantage of our fear of man? Satan uses fear of man to try to force us to make compromises and to stop us from preaching. Under the influence of Satan, governments have banned our work and persecuted us. (Luke 21:12) Various elements of Satan's world spread misleading information and vicious lies about Jehovah's Witnesses. People who believe these lies may mock us or even attack us physically. (Matt. 10:36) Are we surprised at Satan's tactics? Not at all. He was already using them in the first century.—Acts 5:27, 28, 40. w22.06 16 ¶10-11

Wednesday, December 11

Those bringing the many to righteousness [will shine] like the stars, forever and ever.—Dan. 12:3.

Who will be among “the many” brought to righteousness? These will include those who are resurrected and also those who survive Armageddon together with any children who may be born in the new world. By the end of the 1,000 years, all living on earth will be perfect. We must remember that being perfect does not in itself mean that a person will automatically gain everlasting life. Think of Adam and Eve. They were perfect, but they needed to demonstrate their obedience to Jehovah God before they would be granted everlasting life. And, sadly, they failed to obey him. (Rom. 5:12) Since all will have gained perfection by the end of the 1,000 years, will all those perfect people fully support Jehovah’s rule forever? Or will some prove to be like Adam and Eve—who despite being perfect became unfaithful? These questions will need to be answered. w22.09 22-23 ¶12-14

Thursday, December 12

The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.—Rev. 11:15.

When you look at world conditions, do you find it difficult to maintain a positive outlook? Family ties are fraying. People in general are becoming more and more violent, selfish, and aggressive. Many find it difficult to trust those in authority. But these very conditions can give you confidence. Why? Because people are act-

ing exactly as was foretold in a remarkable prophecy about “the last days.” (2 Tim. 3:1-5) The fulfillment of this prophecy, which is impossible for any sincere person to deny, provides evidence that Christ Jesus has begun ruling as King of God’s Kingdom. But this is only one of many prophecies concerning the Kingdom. All these prophecies fit together like the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle to provide a clear picture of where we are in Jehovah’s timetable of events. w22.07 2 ¶1-2

Friday, December 13

Wisdom is proved righteous by its works.—Matt. 11:19.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, we received clear direction about how to hold congregation meetings and engage in the preaching work. Almost overnight, we began attending Christian meetings, assemblies, and conventions by means of videoconferencing tools. We also began witnessing almost entirely by letter and telephone. Jehovah blessed our efforts. Many branches reported notable increases in the number of publishers. In fact, many have had encouraging experiences during that time. Some may have felt that the organization was being overly cautious with regard to the pandemic. But time and time again, it became evident that the direction we received was well-founded. And as we meditate on the loving way in which Jesus is leading his people, we are assured that no matter what tomorrow may bring, Jehovah and his beloved Son will be with us.—Heb. 13:5, 6. w22.07 13 ¶15-16

Saturday, December 14

Pray constantly. Give thanks for everything. This is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.—1 Thess. 5:17, 18.

In addition to praising Jehovah in our prayers, we are moved to thank him for the marvelous things he provides. For instance, we can thank him for the magnificent colors seen in flowers, the endless variety of delicious food, and the refreshing company of dear friends. Our loving Father gives us this and much more, just to make us happy. (Ps. 104:12-15, 24) Even more important, we thank Jehovah for the abundant spiritual food he provides and for the marvelous hope we have for the future. It can be so easy to forget to thank Jehovah for all that he does for us. What can help you to remember? You could make a list of specific requests you have made and periodically check it to see how Jehovah has answered them. Then say a prayer to thank him for his help.—Col. 3:15. w22.07 22 ¶8-9

Sunday, December 15

His delight is in the law of Jehovah, and he reads His law in an undertone day and night.—Ps. 1:2.

We know that it is not enough simply to study the truth. To benefit fully, we must live the truth, that is, apply what we learn in our life. Only then will the truth bring us real happiness. (Jas. 1:25) How can we make sure that we are living the truth? One brother suggests making a personal examination to identify areas where we are doing well and areas where we want to make improvement. The apostle Paul put it this way: “To the extent we have made

progress, let us go on walking orderly in this same course.” (Phil. 3:16) Just think of the benefits that come from doing our best to “go on walking in the truth”! Not only do we improve the quality of our own life but we also bring joy to Jehovah and to our fellow believers. (Prov. 27:11; 3 John 4) Really, could we have any greater reasons to love the truth and to live the truth? w22.08 18-19 ¶16-18

Monday, December 16

*Shepherd the flock of God.
—1 Pet. 5:2.*

How can elders show that they love Jehovah and Jesus? An important way is by caring for the needs of Jesus' sheep. (1 Pet. 5:1, 2) Jesus made that point clear to the apostle Peter. After denying Jesus three times, Peter was likely desperate to prove that he loved Jesus. Following his resurrection, Jesus asked Peter: “Simon son of John, do you love me?” We can be sure that Peter would have done anything to prove his love for his Master. Jesus told Peter: “Shepherd my little sheep.” (John 21:15-17) And for the rest of his life, Peter tenderly cared for the Lord's sheep, proving that he had love for Jesus. Elders, how can you demonstrate that the importance of Jesus' words to Peter is not lost on you? You can show how much you love Jehovah and Jesus by regularly engaging in the shepherding work and by making a special effort to help inactive ones return to Jehovah.—Ezek. 34:11, 12. w23.01 29 ¶10-11

Tuesday, December 17

God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear.—1 Cor. 10:13.

Avoid the pitfall of thinking that no one else can understand the particular challenge that you are facing. Thinking that way could lead you to conclude that your situation is hopeless and that you are powerless to resist improper desires. The Bible says otherwise. It states: “Along with the temptation he will also make the way out so that you may be able to endure it.” Therefore, even when an improper desire is strong, we can successfully endure it. With Jehovah’s help, we can keep from acting on it. Always remember this: As an imperfect human, you may not be able to keep improper desires from surfacing. But when they do, you can reject them decisively, as Joseph did when he quickly ran away from Potiphar’s wife. (Gen. 39:12) You do not need to act on improper desires! w23.01 12-13 ¶16-17

Wednesday, December 18

There is no partiality with God.—Rom. 2:11.

Justice is an attribute of Jehovah. (Deut. 32:4) Justice is closely linked with impartiality, and Jehovah is impartial. (Acts 10:34, 35) His impartiality is reflected in the languages that were used to write the Bible. Jehovah promised that in the time of the end, “the true knowledge” found in the Bible would “become abundant.” Many would understand it. (Dan. 12:4) One way that such knowledge has become abundant is through the translating, publishing, and distributing of Bibles

and Bible literature. Jehovah’s people have so far translated God’s Word, in whole or in part, into over 240 languages, and anyone can obtain a copy without charge. As a result, people of all nations are responding to the “good news of the Kingdom” before the end comes. (Matt. 24:14) Our God of justice wants to give as many people as possible the opportunity to get to know him by reading his Word. That is because he loves us all very much. w23.02 5 ¶11-12

Thursday, December 19

Stop being molded by this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over.—Rom. 12:2.

Do you love righteousness? No doubt you do. But we all are imperfect, and if we are not careful, the world’s view of righteousness can easily affect us. (Isa. 5:20) When people think of a righteous person, many may think of someone who is smug, judgmental, or self-righteous. But God does not like those qualities at all. When Jesus was on earth, he strongly criticized the religious leaders of his day for setting up their own standards of righteousness. (Eccl. 7:16; Luke 16:15) Genuine righteousness is not in any way like self-righteousness. Righteousness is a beautiful quality. Simply put, it means doing what is right in the eyes of Jehovah God. In the Bible, the words for “righteousness” convey the idea of living by the highest of standards—Jehovah’s standards. w22.08 27 ¶3-5

Friday, December 20

I have called you friends.

—John 15:15.

Jesus trusted his disciples despite their failings. (John 15:16) When James and John asked Jesus for a special position in the Kingdom, Jesus did not question their motives for serving Jehovah or remove them as apostles. (Mark 10:35-40) Later, all of Jesus' disciples abandoned him on the night he was arrested. (Matt. 26:56) Jesus, however, never lost faith in them. He was well-aware of their imperfections; yet, he "loved them to the end." (John 13:1) The resurrected Jesus even assigned his 11 faithful apostles the weighty responsibility to take the lead in the disciple-making work and to care for his precious sheep. (Matt. 28:19, 20; John 21:15-17) His confidence in these imperfect men was not misplaced. All of them served faithfully until the end of their earthly course. Certainly, Jesus set a fine example in trusting imperfect humans. w22.09 6 ¶12

Saturday, December 21

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

When we are convinced that Jehovah loves us—that he is on our side—we can defeat Satan's efforts to make us afraid. For example, the writer of Psalm 118 faced some very distressing situations. He had many enemies, including some in high places (verses 9, 10). At times, he was under great pressure (verse 13). And he had received strong discipline from Jehovah (verse 18). Still, that psalmist was moved to sing: "I will not be afraid."

He knew that although Jehovah had disciplined him, his heavenly Father loved him. The psalmist was convinced that no matter what situation he faced, his loving God would always be ready to help him. (Ps. 118:29) We need to be convinced that Jehovah loves us personally. Our having that conviction will help us to overcome three common fears, namely, (1) fear of not being able to provide for our family, (2) fear of man, and (3) fear of death. w22.06 15 ¶3-4

Sunday, December 22

Happy is the man who keeps on enduring trial, because on becoming approved he will receive the crown of life.—Jas. 1:12.

We must make sure that the worship of Jehovah comes first in our life. As our Creator, Jehovah richly deserves our worship. (Rev. 4:11; 14:6, 7) Thus, we need to give priority to worshipping him in the way that he approves, "with spirit and truth." (John 4:23, 24) We want God's holy spirit to guide our worship so that it is in harmony with the truths that are found in his Word. Our worship must come first even if we live in a land where our work is restricted or banned. Right now, over 100 of our brothers and sisters are imprisoned simply because they are Jehovah's Witnesses. Even so, they happily do whatever they can to pray, study, and tell others about our God and his Kingdom. When we are reproached or persecuted, we can be happy knowing that Jehovah is with us and that he will reward us. —1 Pet. 4:14. w22.10 9 ¶13

Monday, December 23

Wisdom is a protection.—Eccl. 7:12.

Throughout the book of Proverbs, Jehovah provides timeless advice that will improve our life if we apply it. Consider just two examples of such wise counsel. First, be content with what you have. Proverbs 23:4, 5 gives this advice: “Do not wear yourself out to gain wealth. . . . For it will surely sprout wings like an eagle and fly off into the sky.” Yet, both rich and poor today are obsessed with making money. This often causes them to behave in a way that harms their reputation, their relationships, and even their health. (Prov. 28:20; 1 Tim. 6:9, 10) Second, think before you speak. If not careful, we can cause great harm with our words. Proverbs 12:18 states: “Thoughtless speech is like the stabs of a sword, but the tongue of the wise is a healing.” We preserve good relationships when we avoid gossiping about the faults of others.—Prov. 20:19. w22.10 21 ¶14; 22 ¶16-17

Tuesday, December 24

Eat this scroll, and go, speak to the house of Israel.—Ezek. 3:1.

Ezekiel needed to absorb fully the message he was to deliver. It had to become part of him, as it were, affecting his inmost feelings. Then something surprising happened. Ezekiel discovered that the scroll “was as sweet as honey.” (Ezek. 3:3) Why? For Ezekiel, the honor of representing Jehovah was a sweet, or a pleasant, experience. (Ps. 19:8-11) He was grateful that Jehovah had approved of him to serve as his prophet. Later, Jehovah told Ezekiel: “Take to heart and

listen to all my words that I speak to you.” (Ezek. 3:10) With those instructions, Jehovah told Ezekiel to store in his memory the words written in the scroll and to meditate on them. Doing so nourished Ezekiel personally. It also provided him with a powerful message to deliver to the people. (Ezek. 3:11) With God’s message in his heart and on his lips, Ezekiel was ready to take on his assignment and fulfill it. w22.11 6 ¶12-14

Wednesday, December 25

To obey is better than a sacrifice.—1 Sam. 15:22.

If organizational changes test your loyalty, what should you do? Fully support the organizational changes. During their travels in the wilderness, the Kohathites carried the ark of the covenant before all the people. (Num. 3:29, 31; 10:33; Josh. 3:2-4) What a privilege! However, things changed for them when the Israelites settled in the Promised Land. The Ark no longer needed to be moved regularly. So the Kohathites were assigned other duties. (1 Chron. 6:31-33; 26:1, 24) There is no record that the Kohathites complained or demanded a more prominent role because of their rich heritage. What lesson can we learn? Wholeheartedly support changes that Jehovah’s organization makes, including any that affect your assignment. Find joy in whatever assignment you are given. Remember that your assignment does not reflect your worth as a person. Jehovah values your obedience far more than any assignment. w22.11 23 ¶10-11

Thursday, December 26

He did not become ashamed of my prison chains.—2 Tim. 1:16.

Onesiphorus searched for the apostle Paul, and when he found him, he looked for practical ways to support him. In doing so, Onesiphorus risked his own life. What is the lesson for us? We must not let fear of man intimidate us or prevent us from supporting our brothers who are being persecuted. Instead, let us defend them and come to their aid. (Prov. 17:17) They need our love and support. Consider how our brothers and sisters in Russia have come to the aid of their dear fellow believers who are imprisoned. When some are put on trial, many brothers and sisters come to the court to support them. What is the lesson for us? When responsible brothers are defamed, arrested, or persecuted, do not become intimidated. Pray for them, care for their family members, and look for other practical ways to show your support.—Acts 12:5; 2 Cor. 1:10, 11. w22.11 17 ¶11-12

Friday, December 27

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

Providing spiritual and emotional help is part of the work done by Christian elders. (1 Pet. 5:2) In the face of a disaster, elders should first make sure that each brother and sister is safe and has food, clothing, and shelter. But for many months thereafter, survivors will likely need spiritual and emotional support. (John 21:15) “It takes time to recover,” says Harold, who serves on a Branch Committee and who has met with many broth-

ers and sisters affected by disasters. “They may begin to get over their losses, but memories of a lost loved one, a treasured heirloom, or a narrow escape can persist. These memories may trigger feelings of grief all over again. That is not a lack of faith but a normal human reaction.” Elders take to heart the counsel to “weep with those who weep.”—Rom. 12:15. w22.12 22 ¶1; 24-25 ¶10-11

Saturday, December 28

Keep walking by spirit and you will carry out no fleshly desire at all.—Gal. 5:16.

To help us win the fight to do what is right, Jehovah generously provides his holy spirit. When we study God’s Word, we are placing ourselves under the influence of that spirit. We also receive holy spirit when we attend our meetings. At those Christian gatherings, we can spend time with brothers and sisters who, like us, are trying hard to do what is right, and that is encouraging. (Heb. 10:24, 25; 13:7) And when we approach Jehovah in earnest prayer and beg him for help with some weakness, he will give us his holy spirit to strengthen us to keep fighting. While these activities will probably not make wrong desires disappear, they will help us resist the urge to act on those desires. Once we have established a wholesome routine of spiritual activities, it is essential that we maintain that routine and keep cultivating proper desires. w23.01 11 ¶13-14

Sunday, December 29

I will not let myself be controlled by anything.—1 Cor. 6:12.

Although the Bible is not a health-care book or a dietary manual, it does reveal Jehovah's thinking in these areas. For example, he exhorts us to "ward off harmful things" that could damage our body. (Eccl. 11:10) Gluttony and drunkenness, both life-threatening, are condemned in the Bible. (Prov. 23:20) Jehovah expects us to exercise self-control when deciding what and how much to eat and drink. (1 Cor. 9:25) We can make decisions that show deep appreciation for God's gift of life by using our thinking ability. (Ps. 119:99, 100; Prov. 2:11) For instance, we show good judgment in what we eat. If we like a certain food but know that it makes us sick, common sense moves us to avoid eating it. We also prove that we are sound in mind when we get sufficient sleep, exercise regularly, maintain a good routine of personal hygiene, and keep our home clean. w23.02 21 ¶6-7

Monday, December 30

How do you read?—Luke 10:26.

How can you find spiritual treasures when reading the Bible? Consider what 2 Timothy 3:16, 17 states. Note that "all Scripture is . . . beneficial" for (1) teaching, (2) reproving, (3) setting things straight, and (4) disciplining. You can obtain those four benefits even from Bible books that you do not use often. Analyze the account to see what it teaches you about Jehovah, about his purpose, or about godly principles. Consider how it is helpful for reproving. Do this by noting how the verses help you to identify and re-

ject wrong tendencies or attitudes and to remain on a faithful course. Examine how the passage can be used to set straight, or correct, a wrong viewpoint, perhaps one you have encountered in the ministry. And look for any discipline the verses provide that can train you to reflect Jehovah's thinking. When you keep these four benefits in mind, you will find spiritual treasures that can enrich your Bible reading. w23.02 11 ¶11

Tuesday, December 31

His kingdom will not be destroyed.
—Dan. 7:14.

A prophecy in the book of Daniel foretold that Jesus would receive his Kingdom at the end of a prophetic period of seven times. Is it possible to know when that joyous event occurred? (Dan. 4:10-17) The "seven times" represent a period of 2,520 years. That time period began in 607 B.C.E. when the Babylonians removed the last king from Jehovah's throne in Jerusalem. It ended in 1914 C.E. when Jehovah enthroned Jesus—"the one who has the legal right"—as King of God's Kingdom. (Ezek. 21:25-27) How can this prophecy benefit us? Knowing about the "seven times" reassures us that Jehovah fulfills his promises right on time. Just as he set a definite time for the establishment of his Kingdom, he will also see to it that all the other prophecies will be fulfilled according to his timetable. Yes, Jehovah's day "will not be late!"—Hab. 2:3. w22.07 3 ¶3-5