

- Song 23 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “**Look to Jehovah for Courage**”: (10 min.)

Ps 27:1-3—Thinking about how Jehovah is our light will give us courage (w12 7/15 22-23 ¶3-6)

Ps 27:4—Appreciation for true worship fortifies us (w12 7/15 24 ¶7)

Ps 27:10—Jehovah is ready to support his servants when others desert them (w12 7/15 24 ¶9-10)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)

Ps 26:6—How do we, like David, figuratively march around Jehovah’s altar? (w06 5/15 19 ¶11)

Ps 32:8—What is one benefit of receiving insight from Jehovah? (w09 6/1 5 ¶3)

What does this week’s Bible reading teach me about Jehovah?

What points from this week’s Bible reading can I use in the field ministry?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ps 32:1–33:8

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) *kt*—Read a scripture from a mobile device.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) Demonstrate how to offer a Bible study to someone on your magazine route by showing the video *What Happens at a Bible Study?* from *JW Library*.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *jl* lesson 9—Briefly show the student how he can use *JW Library* to prepare for the meetings.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 130
- **Local needs:** (15 min.) As an option, discuss the lessons learned from the *Yearbook*. (*yb16* 112-113; 135-136)
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *ia* chap. 16 ¶16-29, box on p. 142, review on p. 144
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 16 and Prayer

PSALMS 26-33 | Look to Jehovah for Courage

27:1-3

Remembering Jehovah’s saving acts gave David courage

- Jehovah saved young David from a lion
- Jehovah helped David kill a bear to protect the flock
- Jehovah supported David when he killed Goliath

27:4, 7, 11

What can help us to have courage like David?

- Prayer
- Preaching
- Attending meetings
- Personal study and family worship
- Encouraging others
- Remembering how Jehovah helped us in the past



Jehovah, Our Strength

(Isaiah 12:2)

1. Gracious Jehovah, our strength and our might,
You are our Savior, in you we delight.
We are your Witnesses bearing your news,
Whether men hear or they proudly refuse.

(CHORUS)

*Jehovah, our Rock, our strength and our might,
Your name we make known both day and night.
Glorious Jehovah, Almighty in pow'r,
You are our hiding place; You are our Tow'r.*

2. We who now serve you rejoice in your light;
With opened eyes, we now see truth and right.
Searching the Scriptures, we hear your command;
Making our choice, for your Kingdom we stand.

(Chorus)

3. Gladly, O God, we keep doing your will.
Though Satan mocks us, we're trusting you still.
Though he may slay us, oh, help us to be
Firm to the end for your grand Sov'reignty.

(Chorus)

‡ [Mem]

- 12 Who is the man fearing
Jehovah?^a
He will instruct him about
the way he should choose.^b

‡ [Nun]

- 13 He* will experience what is
good,^c
And his descendants[#] will
take possession of the
earth.^d

⊖ [Samekh]

- 14 Close friendship with
Jehovah belongs to those
who fear him,^e
And he makes his covenant
known to them.^f

‡ [Ayin]

- 15 My eyes are always toward
Jehovah,^g
For he will free my feet from
the net.^h

⊖ [Pe]

- 16 Turn your face to me and
show me favor,
For I am alone and helpless.

‡ [Tsade]

- 17 The distresses of my heart
have multiplied;ⁱ
Free me from my anguish.

‡ [Resh]

- 18 See my affliction and my
trouble,^j
And pardon all my sins.^k

- 19 See how numerous my ene-
mies are
And how violent their hatred
is for me.

‡ [Shin]

- 20 Guard my life* and save me.^l
Do not let me be put to
shame, for I have taken ref-
uge in you.

⊖ [Taw]

- 21 May integrity and upright-
ness safeguard me,^m
For my hope is in you.ⁿ

- 22 O God, rescue* Israel out of
all his distresses.

25:13 *Or "His soul." #Lit., "seed."
25:20; 26:9 *Or "my soul." 25:22 *Lit.,
"redeem."

CHAP. 25

a Ps 111:10

b Ps 37:23

c Ps 31:19

d Ps 37:11

e Pr 3:32
Joh 15:15

f Ge 18:17
Ge 22:17
Am 3:7

g Ps 141:8

h Ps 91:3
Ps 124:6-8

i Ps 73:21

j 2Sa 16:12

k Ps 32:5
Ps 51:9

l Ps 17:8
Ps 121:7

m Ps 41:12

n Ps 37:34

Second Col.

CHAP. 26

a 2Ki 20:3

b Ps 21:7

c Ps 17:3
Ps 66:10

d Ps 43:3
Ps 86:11

e Jer 15:17

f Ps 139:21

g Ps 1:1

h Ps 50:23
Ps 95:2

i 1Sa 3:3
1Ch 16:1
Ps 27:4

j Ps 63:2

k 1Sa 25:29

l 1Sa 2:9
Pr 10:9

Of David.

- 26 Judge me, O Jehovah, for
I have walked in my in-
tegrity;^a

In Jehovah I have trusted
without wavering.^b

- 2 Examine me, O Jehovah, and
put me to the test;
Refine my innermost
thoughts* and my heart.^c

- 3 For your loyal love is always
in front of me,
And I walk in your truth.^d

- 4 I do not associate* with de-
ceitful men,^e

And I avoid those who hide
what they are.^f

- 5 I hate the company of evil
men,^f

And I refuse to associate*
with the wicked.^g

- 6 I will wash my hands in inno-
cence,

And I will march around your
altar, O Jehovah,

- 7 To cause the sound of
thanksgiving to be heard^h

And to declare all your won-
derful works.

- 8 Jehovah, I love the house
where you dwell,ⁱ

The place where your glory
resides.^j

- 9 Do not sweep me* away with
sinners^k

Nor take my life away with
violent men,[#]

- 10 Whose hands engage in
shameful conduct,

And whose right hand is full
of bribes.

- 11 But as for me, I will walk in
my integrity.

Rescue* me and show me
favor.

- 12 My foot is standing on level
ground;^l

26:2 *Or "my deepest emotions." Lit.,
"my kidneys." 26:4, 5 *Lit., "sit."
26:4 #Or "I do not mingle with hypo-
crites." 26:9 #Or "with men of blood-
shed." 26:11 *Lit., "Redeem."

In the great congregation,*
I will praise Jehovah.^a

Of David.

27 Jehovah is my light^b and
my salvation.

Whom should I fear?^c

Jehovah is the stronghold
of my life.^d

Whom should I dread?

2 When evil men attacked me
to devour my flesh,^e

My adversaries and my en-
emies were the ones who
stumbled and fell.

3 Though an army should set
up camp against me,

My heart will not fear.^f

Though war should break out
against me,

Even then I will remain confi-
dent.

4 One thing I have asked from
Jehovah

—It is what I will look for—
That I may dwell in the house
of Jehovah all the days of
my life,^g

To gaze upon the pleasant-
ness of Jehovah

And to look with apprecia-
tion* upon his temple.^h

5 For he will hide me in his
shelter on the day of ca-
lamity;ⁱ

He will conceal me in the
secret place of his tent;^j

High on a rock he will
place me.^k

6 Now my head is high
above my enemies who
surround me;

I will offer sacrifices at his
tent with joyful shouting;

I will sing praises* to
Jehovah.

7 Hear me, O Jehovah, when
I cry out;^l

Show me favor and
answer me.^m

CHAP. 26

a Ps 111:1

CHAP. 27

b Ps 36:9

Ps 43:3

Ps 119:105

c Ps 23:4

Ro 8:31

Heb 13:6

d Ps 62:6

Isa 12:2

e Ps 22:16

f 2Ch 20:15

2Ch 32:7

Ps 3:6

g Ps 23:6

Ps 65:4

h 1Sa 3:3

1Ch 16:1

Ps 26:8

i Ps 32:7

Ps 57:1

Zep 2:3

j Ps 61:4

k Ps 40:2

l Ps 130:2

m Ps 4:1

Ps 5:2

Second Col.

a Ps 63:1

Ps 105:4

Zep 2:3

b Ps 69:17

Ps 143:7

c Ps 46:1

d Ps 69:8

e Isa 49:15

f Ps 25:4

Ps 86:11

Isa 30:20

Isa 54:13

g Ps 31:8

Ps 41:2

Ps 41:11

h Mt 26:59-61

i Job 33:28-30

j Ps 25:3

Ps 62:5

k Isa 40:31

CHAP. 28

l De 32:4

Isa 26:4

m Job 33:28

8 Speaking for you, my heart
has said:

“Seek to find my face.”

Your face, O Jehovah, I will
seek to find.^a

9 Do not hide your face
from me.^b

Do not turn your servant
away in your anger.

You are my helper;^c

Do not forsake me or leave
me, my God of salvation.

10 Even if my own father and
mother abandon me,^d

Jehovah himself will take
me in.^e

11 Instruct me in your way,
O Jehovah,^f

Lead me in the path of up-
rightness because of my
foes.

12 Do not hand me over to my
adversaries,^{*g}

For false witnesses have
risen up against me,^h

And they threaten me with
violence.

13 Where would I be if I did not
have faith

That I would see Jehovah’s
goodness in the land of the
living?^{*i}

14 Hope in Jehovah;^j

Be courageous and strong
of heart.^k

Yes, hope in Jehovah.

Of David.

28 To you I keep calling,
O Jehovah my Rock;^l

Do not turn a deaf ear to me.
If you keep silent toward me,

I will become like those
going down to the pit.^{*m}

2 Hear my pleas when I cry
to you for help

27:12 *Or “to the soul of my adver-
saries.” **27:13** *Or possibly, “Surely I
do have faith that I will see Jehovah’s
goodness in the land of the living.”
28:1 *Or “grave.”

26:12 *Lit., “In assemblies.” **27:4** *Or
“to look contemplatively.” *Or “sanc-
tuary.” **27:6** *Or “make music.”

As I lift up my hands
toward the innermost room
of your sanctuary.^a

- 3** Do not drag me away with
the wicked, with those
practicing what is hurtful,^b
Those who are speaking
words of peace with their
fellow man while evil is in
their hearts.^c
- 4** Pay them back for their
deeds,^d
According to their evil prac-
tices.
Repay them for the work of
their hands,
According to what they have
done.^e
- 5** For they pay no attention to
the activities of Jehovah,^f
Nor to the work of his
hands.^g
He will tear them down and
not build them up.
- 6** May Jehovah be praised,
For he has heard my pleas
for help.
- 7** Jehovah is my strength^h and
my shield;ⁱ
In him my heart trusts.^j
I have received his help, and
my heart rejoices,
So I will praise him with my
song.
- 8** Jehovah is a strength for his
people;
He is a stronghold, bringing
grand salvation to his
anointed one.^k
- 9** Save your people, and bless
your inheritance.^l
Shepherd them and carry
them in your arms
forever.^m

A melody of David.

- 29** Give Jehovah his due, you
sons of mighty ones,
Give Jehovah his due for his
glory and strength.ⁿ
- 2** Give Jehovah the glory due
his name.

CHAP. 28

- a Ps 5:7
b Nu 16:25, 26
Ps 26:9
c Ps 62:4
d Ps 59:12
Jer 18:22
e Ps 62:12
2Th 1:6
f Job 34:26, 27
g Isa 5:12
h Isa 12:2
i Ge 15:1
2Sa 22:3
Ps 3:3
j Ps 56:4
k 1Sa 16:13
2Sa 22:3
Ps 20:6
l De 9:29
m Isa 40:11

CHAP. 29

- n 1Ch 16:28, 29

Second Col.

- a 1Sa 7:10
Ps 18:13
b Ps 104:3
c Job 26:11
Job 40:9
d Isa 2:12, 13
e De 3:8, 9
f Ex 19:18
Ps 77:18
g Isa 13:13
Heb 12:26
h Nu 13:26
i Isa 10:17, 18
Eze 20:47
j Job 38:25
k 1Ti 1:17
l Isa 40:29

- m Ps 72:7

CHAP. 30

- n Ps 25:2
Ps 41:11

Bow down to* Jehovah in
holy adornment.[#]

- 3** The voice of Jehovah is
heard over the waters;
The glorious God thunders.^a
Jehovah is over many wa-
ters.^b
- 4** The voice of Jehovah is pow-
erful;^c
The voice of Jehovah is
splendid.
- 5** The voice of Jehovah is
breaking the cedars;
Yes, Jehovah shatters the
cedars of Leb'a-non.^d
- 6** He makes Leb'a-non* skip
like a calf,
And Sir'i-on^e like a young
wild bull.
- 7** The voice of Jehovah strikes
with flames of fire;^f
- 8** The voice of Jehovah makes
the wilderness shudder;^g
Jehovah makes the wilder-
ness of Ka'desh^h shudder.
- 9** The voice of Jehovah makes
the deer shudder and give
birth
And strips bare the forests.ⁱ
And all in his temple say:
"Glory!"
- 10** Jehovah sits enthroned
above the flooding
waters;^{*j}
Jehovah sits enthroned as
King forever.^k
- 11** Jehovah will give strength to
his people.^l
Jehovah will bless his people
with peace.^m
- A melody. A song of inauguration
of the house. Of David.
- 30** I will exalt you,
O Jehovah, for you
have lifted* me up;
You did not let my enemies
rejoice over me.ⁿ

29:2 *Or "Worship." #Or possibly, "be-
cause of the splendor of his holiness."
29:6 *Evidently, the Lebanon moun-
tain range. **29:10** *Or "the heavenly
ocean." **30:1** *Or "drawn."

- 2 O Jehovah my God, I cried to you for help, and you healed me.^a
- 3 O Jehovah, you have lifted me* up from the Grave.^{#b}
You kept me alive; you spared me from sinking into the pit.^{Ac}
- 4 Sing praises* to Jehovah, you his loyal ones,^d
Give thanks to his holy name,^{#e}
- 5 Because being under his anger is only for a moment,^f
But being in his favor* is for a lifetime.^g
Weeping may come in the evening, but in the morning, there is a joyful cry.^h
- 6 When I was untroubled, I said:
"I will never be shaken."^{*}
- 7 O Jehovah, while I was in your favor,* you made me as strong as a mountain.ⁱ
But when you hid your face, I became terrified.^j
- 8 To you, O Jehovah, I kept calling;^k
And to Jehovah, I kept pleading for favor.
- 9 What profit is there in my death,* in my going down to the pit?^{Δl}
Will the dust praise you?^m
Will it tell of your faithfulness?ⁿ
- 10 Hear, O Jehovah, and show me favor.^o
O Jehovah, become my helper.^p
- 11 You have changed my mourning into dancing;
You have removed my sackcloth, and you clothe me with rejoicing,

30:3 *Or "my soul." #Or "Sheol," that is, the common grave of mankind. See Glossary. 30:3, 9 ΔOr "grave." 30:4 *Or "Make music." #Lit., "memorial." 30:5, 7 *Or "goodwill." 30:6 *Or "will never stagger (totter)." 30:9 *Lit., "blood."

CHAP. 30

a 2Kj 20:5
Ps 6:2
Ps 103:3

b Ps 86:13

c Ps 16:10
Ps 28:1
Isa 38:17
Jon 2:6

d Ps 32:11

e Ex 3:15

f Isa 12:1

g Isa 54:8

h Ps 126:5

i 2Sa 5:12

Ps 89:17

j Ps 10:1

Ps 143:7

k Ps 34:6

Ps 77:1

l Ps 28:1

m Ps 6:5

Ps 115:17

Ec 9:10

n Ps 88:11

Isa 38:18

o Ps 143:1

p Ps 28:7

Second Col.

CHAP. 31

a Ps 18:2

b Ps 22:4, 5

Ro 10:11

c Ps 143:1

d Ps 40:17

Ps 70:1

Ps 71:2

e 2Sa 22:3

Ps 18:2

f 2Sa 22:2

g Ps 25:11

Jer 14:7

h Ps 23:3

i Ps 91:3

Mt 6:13

j Pr 18:10

k Lu 23:46

Ac 7:59

l De 32:4

m Ps 9:13

n Ps 6:7

o Ps 22:14

- 12 So that I* may sing your praise and not keep silent.
O Jehovah my God, I will praise you forever.

To the director. A melody of David.

- 31** In you, O Jehovah, I have taken refuge.^a
May I never be put to shame.^b
Rescue me because of your righteousness.^c
- 2 Incline your ear* to me.
Come quickly to my rescue.^d
Become for me a mountain stronghold,
A fortified place to save me.^e
- 3 For you are my crag and my stronghold;^f
For the sake of your name,^g
you will lead me and guide me.^h
- 4 You will free me from the net that they have secretly laid for me,ⁱ
For you are my fortress.^j
- 5 Into your hand I entrust my spirit.^k
You have redeemed me,
O Jehovah, the God of truth.^{#l}
- 6 I hate those who are devoted to worthless, vain idols,
But as for me, I trust in Jehovah.
- 7 I will rejoice greatly in your loyal love,
For you have seen my affliction;^m
You are aware of my deep distress.^{*}
- 8 You have not handed me over to the enemy,
But you make me stand in a place of safety.^{*}
- 9 Show me favor, O Jehovah, for I am in distress.
Anguish has made my eyes weak,ⁿ my whole body* as well.^o

30:12 *Or "my glory." 31:2 *Or "Bend down and listen." 31:5 *Or "the faithful God." 31:7 *Or "the distressed of my soul." 31:8 *Or "a roomy place." 31:9 *Or "my soul and my belly."

- 10** My life is consumed with grief^a
And my years with groaning.^b
My strength is waning because of my error;
My bones grow weak.^c
- 11** I am scorned by all my adversaries,^d
Especially my neighbors.
And I am dreaded by my acquaintances;
When they see me in public,
they flee from me.^e
- 12** I am put out of their heart*
and forgotten, as if I were dead;
I am like a broken jar.
- 13** I have heard many evil rumors;
Terror surrounds me.^f
When they gather together
as one against me,
They scheme to take away
my life.^g
- 14** But I trust in you,
O Jehovah.^h
I declare: "You are my God."ⁱ
- 15** My days* are in your hand.
Rescue me from the hand of
my enemies and from those
persecuting me.^j
- 16** Make your face shine upon
your servant.^k
Save me by your loyal love.
- 17** O Jehovah, may I not be put
to shame when I call on
you.^l
May the wicked be put to
shame;^m
May they be silenced in the
Grave.ⁿ
- 18** May lying lips become
speechless,^o
Lips that speak arrogantly
against the righteous, with
haughtiness and contempt.

31:12 *Or "mind." **31:13** *Or "soul."
31:15 *Lit., "times." **31:17** *Or "Sheol,"
that is, the common grave of mankind.
See Glossary.

CHAP. 31

- a Pr 15:13
b Ps 71:9
c Ps 32:3
Ps 102:3, 5
d Ps 22:6
Ps 42:10
Ps 102:8
e Ps 38:11
f Jer 20:10
g Ps 57:4
h Ps 56:4
i Ps 43:5
j Ps 142:6
k Nu 6:25
l Ps 25:2
Isa 50:7
m Ne 6:16
Isa 41:11
Jer 20:11
n 1Sa 2:9
o Ps 12:3
Ps 63:11

Second Col.

- a Ps 73:1
Isa 63:7
b Isa 64:4
1Co 2:9
c Ps 126:2
Isa 26:12
d Ps 27:5
Ps 32:7
e Ps 64:2, 3
f Ps 17:7
g 1Sa 23:7
h Jon 2:4
i 2Ch 33:13
Ps 6:9
Pr 15:29
Heb 5:7
j De 10:12
k 1Sa 2:9
Ps 145:20
l 2Sa 22:28
Isa 2:11
Jas 4:6
m Isa 35:4
n Ps 62:1
La 3:20, 21
Mic 7:7

CHAP. 32

- o Isa 1:18
Ac 3:19
p Ro 4:7, 8
q Pr 28:13

- 19** How abundant your goodness is!^a
You have stored it up for
those who fear you,^b
And you have shown it before
all men, in behalf of
those taking refuge in you.^c
- 20** You will conceal them in the
secret place of your presence^d
From the schemes of men;
You will hide them in your
shelter
From malicious attacks.^e
- 21** May Jehovah be praised,
For in a wonderful way, he
has shown his loyal love to
me^f in a besieged city.^g
- 22** As for me, I panicked and
said:
"I will perish from before
you."^h
But you heard my pleas for
help when I cried out to
you.ⁱ
- 23** Love Jehovah, all you who
are loyal to him!^j
Jehovah protects the faithful,^k
But he repays exceedingly
anyone showing haughtiness.^l
- 24** Be courageous, and may
your heart be strong,^m
All you who are waiting for
Jehovah.ⁿ
Of David. Mas'kil.*
- 32** Happy is the one whose
transgression is pardoned,
whose sin is covered.^o
- 2** Happy is the man whom
Jehovah does not charge
with guilt,^p
In whose spirit there is no
deceit.
- 3** When I kept silent, my bones
wasted away because of
my groaning all day long.^q

31:20 *Lit., "From the quarreling of
tongues." **32:Sup** *See Glossary.
32:1 *Or "forgiven."

- 4 For day and night your hand* was heavy upon me.^a
My strength evaporated[#] like water in the dry summer heat. (*Selah*)
- 5 Finally I confessed my sin to you;
I did not cover my error.^b
I said: "I will confess my transgressions to Jehovah."^c
And you pardoned the error of my sins.^d (*Selah*)
- 6 This is why every loyal one will pray to you^e
While you may yet be found.^f
Then even the floodwaters will not reach him.
- 7 You are a hiding place for me;
You will safeguard me from distress.^g
You will surround me with joyful shouts of deliverance.^h (*Selah*)
- 8 "I will give you insight and instruct you in the way you should go.ⁱ
I will give you advice with my eye upon you.^j
- 9 Do not become like a horse or a mule, without understanding,^k
Whose spiritedness must be controlled with a bridle or a halter
Before it will come near to you."
- 10 Many are the pains of the wicked;
But the one trusting in Jehovah is surrounded by His loyal love.^l
- 11 Rejoice in Jehovah and be joyful, you righteous ones;
Shout joyfully, all you who are upright in heart.
- 33** Shout joyfully, you righteous ones, because of Jehovah.^m

32:4 *Or "displeasure." #Or "My life's moisture changed."

CHAP. 32

- a Ps 38:2
b Ps 38:18
Ps 51:4
1Jo 1:9
c Le 5:5
Ps 41:4
d 2Sa 12:13
Ps 86:5
Ps 103:3
Isa 44:22
e Ps 65:2, 3
f Ps 69:13
Isa 55:6
g Ps 9:9
h Ex 15:1
2Sa 22:1
i Ps 86:11
j Pr 3:6
k Pr 26:3
Jer 8:6
l Ps 34:8
Pr 13:21
Pr 16:20

CHAP. 33

m Php 4:4

Second Col.

- a Ps 40:3
Ps 98:1
Ps 149:1
Isa 42:10
Re 5:9
b Ps 12:6
c Job 37:23
Ps 11:7
Ps 45:7
d Ps 145:16
Ac 14:17
e Heb 11:3
f Ge 1:9
Job 38:8-11
Pr 8:29
Jer 5:22
g Re 14:7
h Ps 148:4, 5
i Ps 119:90
j Isa 8:10
Isa 19:3
k Ps 21:8, 11
l Pr 19:21
Isa 46:10
m De 33:29
n Ps 65:4
Ps 135:4
1Pe 2:9

- It is fitting for the upright to praise him.
- 2 Give thanks to Jehovah with the harp;
Sing praises* to him with a ten-stringed instrument.
- 3 Sing to him a new song;^a
Play skillfully on the strings, along with shouts of joy.
- 4 For the word of Jehovah is upright,^b
And everything he does is trustworthy.
- 5 He loves righteousness and justice.^c
The earth is filled with Jehovah's loyal love.^d
- 6 By the word of Jehovah the heavens were made,^e
And by the spirit* of his mouth everything in them.[#]
- 7 He gathers the seawaters like a dam;^f
He puts the surging waters in storehouses.
- 8 Let the whole earth fear Jehovah.^g
Let the inhabitants of the productive land be in awe of him.
- 9 For he spoke, and it came to be;^h
He commanded, and it stood firm.ⁱ
- 10 Jehovah has frustrated the schemes* of the nations;^j
He has thwarted the plans[#] of the peoples.^k
- 11 But the decisions* of Jehovah will stand forever;^l
The thoughts of his heart are from generation to generation.
- 12 Happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah,^m
The people he has chosen as his own possession.ⁿ

33:2 *Or "Make music." 33:6 *Or "breath." #Lit., "all their army." 33:10, 11 *Or "counsel." 33:10 *Or "thoughts."

- 13 Jehovah looks down from heaven;
He sees all the sons of men.^a
- 14 From his place of residence,
He gazes on the inhabitants of the earth.
- 15 He is the one forming the hearts of all;
He examines all their works.^b
- 16 No king is saved by a large army;^c
A mighty man is not saved by his great power.^d
- 17 The horse is a false hope for salvation;^e
Its great strength does not ensure escape.
- 18 Look! The eye of Jehovah watches over those fearing him,^f
Those waiting for his loyal love,
- 19 To rescue them* from death
And to keep them alive during famine.^g
- 20 We are* in expectation of Jehovah.
He is our helper and our shield.^h
- 21 Our hearts rejoice in him,
For we trust in his holy name.ⁱ
- 22 May your loyal love rest upon us, O Jehovah,^j
While we keep waiting for you.^k
- Of David, when he disguised his sanity^l before A-bim'e-lech, who drove him away, and he left.
- Ⲁ [Aleph]
- 34** I will praise Jehovah at all times;
His praise will be on my lips constantly.
- ⲁ [Beth]
- 2 I* will boast in Jehovah;^m
The meek will hear and rejoice.

33:17 *Or "for victory." 33:19 *Or "their soul." 33:20 *Or "Our soul is." 34:2 *Or "My soul."

CHAP. 33

- a Ps 11:4
Ps 14:2
Pr 15:3
Heb 4:13
- b 1Ch 28:9
Job 34:21
Pr 24:12
- c Jos 11:6
- d 2Ch 32:21
Ps 44:4, 5
- e 2Ki 7:6, 7
Ps 20:7
Pr 21:31
Isa 31:1
- f Job 36:7
Ps 34:15
- g Isa 33:15, 16
- h De 33:29
- i Ps 28:7
Pr 18:10
- j Ps 32:10
- k Mic 7:7

CHAP. 34

- l 1Sa 21:12, 13
- m Jer 9:24
1Co 1:31

Second Col.

- a Ps 35:27
- b Heb 5:7
- c Ps 18:48
- d 2Sa 22:1
- e 2Ki 6:17
Ps 91:11
Mt 18:10
Heb 1:7, 14
- f 2Ki 19:35
Da 6:22
Ac 5:18, 19
Ac 12:11
- g 1Pe 2:3
- h Ps 23:1
Php 4:19
- i Ps 23:6
Ps 84:11
- j Job 28:28
Pr 1:7
Pr 8:13
- k De 6:1, 2
De 30:19, 20
1Pe 3:10-12

Ⲁ [Gimel]

- 3 Magnify Jehovah along with me;^a
Let us exalt his name together.
- ⲁ [Daleth]
- 4 I inquired of Jehovah, and he answered me.^b
He rescued me from all my fears.^c
- ⲁ [Heth]
- 5 Those who looked to him became radiant;
Their faces could not be put to shame.
- Ⲁ [Zayin]
- 6 This lowly one called, and Jehovah heard.
He saved him from all his distresses.^d
- ⲁ [Heth]
- 7 The angel of Jehovah camps all around those fearing Him,^e
And he rescues them.^f
- ⲁ [Teth]
- 8 Taste and see that Jehovah is good;^g
Happy is the man who takes refuge in him.
- Ⲁ [Yod]
- 9 Fear Jehovah, all you his holy ones,
For those who fear him lack nothing.^h
- ⲁ [Kaph]
- 10 Even strong young lions* have been reduced to hunger,
But those seeking Jehovah will lack nothing good.ⁱ
- ⲁ [Lamed]
- 11 Come, my sons, listen to me;
I will teach you the fear of Jehovah.^j
- ⲁ [Mem]
- 12 Who among you takes pleasure in life
And would love to see many good days?^k

34:10 *Or "maned young lions."

- Song 23 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “**Look to Jehovah for Courage**”: (10 min.)
Ps 27:1-3—Thinking about how Jehovah is our light will give us courage (w12 7/15 22-23 ¶3-6)
Ps 27:4—Appreciation for true worship fortifies us (w12 7/15 24 ¶7)
Ps 27:10—Jehovah is ready to support his servants when others desert them (w12 7/15 24 ¶9-10)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Ps 26:6—How do we, like David, figuratively march around Jehovah’s altar? (w06 5/15 19 ¶11)

Ps 32:8—What is one benefit of receiving insight from Jehovah? (w09 6/1 5 ¶3)

What does this week’s Bible reading teach me about Jehovah?

What points from this week’s Bible reading can I use in the field ministry?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ps 32:1–33:8

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) *kt*—Read a scripture from a mobile device.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) Demonstrate how to offer a Bible study to someone on your magazine route by showing the video *What Happens at a Bible Study?* from *JW Library*.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *jl* lesson 9—Briefly show the student how he can use *JW Library* to prepare for the meetings.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 130
- **Local needs:** (15 min.) As an option, discuss the lessons learned from the *Yearbook*. (*yb16* 112-113; 135-136)
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *ia* chap. 16 ¶16-29, box on p. 142, review on p. 144
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 16 and Prayer

PSALMS 26-33 | Look to Jehovah for Courage

27:1-3

Remembering Jehovah’s saving acts gave David courage

- Jehovah saved young David from a lion
- Jehovah helped David kill a bear to protect the flock
- Jehovah supported David when he killed Goliath

27:4, 7, 11

What can help us to have courage like David?

- Prayer
- Preaching
- Attending meetings
- Personal study and family worship
- Encouraging others
- Remembering how Jehovah helped us in the past



(w12 7/15 22-23 ¶3-6)

“JEHOVAH IS MY LIGHT AND MY SALVATION”

³ The metaphor “Jehovah is my light” draws attention to the fact that Jehovah frees us from ignorance and spiritual darkness. (Ps. 27:1) A literal light may reveal a danger or an obstacle on our pathway, but it does not remove it. We must act wisely on what we see. In a similar way, Jehovah reveals to us the basic meaning of world events. He alerts us to the dangers of this system of things. He provides us with Bible principles that always work, but we must apply what we learn. When we do, we can act with more wisdom than either our enemies or our teachers.—Ps. 119:98, 99, 130.

⁴ David’s words at Psalm 27:1 show that he must have recalled how Jehovah had delivered, or saved, him on previous occasions. For instance, Jehovah had delivered him “from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear.” Jehovah also gave him victory over the giant Goliath. Later, King Saul tried to pierce David with a spear, but each time Jehovah delivered him. (1 Sam. 17:37, 49, 50; 18:11, 12; 19:10) No wonder David could say with conviction: “Jehovah is my . . . salvation”! Jehovah will again become to his servants what he was to David—a salvation. How? By delivering his worshippers through the coming “great tribulation.”—Rev. 7:14; 2 Pet. 2:9.

REMEMBER EACH SUCCESS

⁵ An important factor in developing courage is brought to our attention at **Psalm 27:2, 3. (Read.)** David recalled events in which he experienced deliverance with the aid of Jehovah. (1 Sam. 17:34-37) Those memories filled him with confidence to face even the worst of adversities. Do you draw similar conclusions from your experiences? For instance, have you prayed intensely about a distressing problem and then seen how Jehovah gave you wisdom or strength to cope with that trial? Or can you recall how obstacles to your joyful service were removed or how a large door of activity was opened to you? (1 Cor. 16:9) What effect does remembering such events have on you now? Do not those memories continue to persuade you that Jehovah can help you to overcome or endure even more serious obstacles or adversities?—Rom. 5:3-5.

⁶ What if a powerful government were to hatch a plot to exterminate Jehovah's Witnesses as an organization? Many men in modern times have attempted to do just that but have failed. Recounting how Jehovah has helped his people in the past will instill in us confidence to face the future.—Dan. 3:28.

(w12 7/15 24 ¶7)

⁷ Another essential component of courageous action is our fondness for true worship. (**Read Psalm 27:4.**) In David's day, "the house of Jehovah" was the tabernacle. It was David himself who made arrangements for the elaborate temple structure that was to be built by his son Solomon. Centuries later, Jesus revealed that rendering acceptable worship to Jehovah would no longer be contingent on having one grand structure that was blessed by God. (John 4:21-23) The apostle Paul indicated in Hebrews chapters 8 to 10 that a great spiritual temple came into existence at Jesus' baptism in 29 C.E., when he presented himself to do Jehovah's will. (Heb. 10:10) This great spiritual temple is the arrangement Jehovah has made so that we, through our faith in Jesus' ransom sacrifice, can approach God acceptably. How do we worship there? By praying "with true hearts in the full assurance of faith"; by declaring our hope publicly without wavering; and by considering, inciting, and encouraging fellow worshippers when we assemble together at our congregation meetings and during family worship. (Heb. 10:22-25) Appreciation for the arrangement of true worship fortifies us in these critical last days.

(w12 7/15 24 ¶9-10)

⁹ David forcefully articulates his trust in Jehovah's help by saying: "In case my own father and my own mother did leave me, even Jehovah himself would take me up." (Ps. 27:10) We may conclude from the events mentioned in 1 Samuel chapter 22 that David's parents did not abandon him. However, many today have had to endure extreme rejection by their family. Yet, many thus forsaken have found help and protection in the warmth of the Christian congregation.

¹⁰ Since Jehovah is ready to support his servants when others desert them, would he not also sustain them during any other sort of tribulation? If, for instance, we are concerned about how to provide materially for our family, can we not be certain that Jehovah will help us? (Heb. 13:5, 6) He understands the circumstances and needs of all his loyal servants.

(w06 5/15 19 ¶11)

26:6—How do we, like David, figuratively march around Jehovah's altar? The altar represents Jehovah's will in accepting the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ for the redemption of mankind. (Hebrews 8:5; 10:5-10) We march around Jehovah's altar by exercising faith in that sacrifice.

(w09 6/1 5 ¶3)

In the Bible, God made this promise: “I shall make you have insight and instruct you in the way you should go. I will give advice with my eye upon you.” (Psalm 32:8) Note that God offers not only advice but also insight, which is the ability to see into or below the surface of a situation. Having insight to discern what goals are truly beneficial can protect us from wasting our life on worthless pursuits.



Cambodia



Ukraine



FIND OUT MORE

Following the method outlined above, prepare for the *Watchtower* Study or the Congregation Bible Study. With your Bible teacher's help, prepare a comment that you might make at the next meeting.



How Can We Best Prepare for the Meetings?

If you are studying the Bible with one of Jehovah's Witnesses, you likely try to review the material in advance of each study. For the greatest benefit, it is good to do the same before attending a congregation meeting. The best results are achieved when we establish a good routine.

Determine when and where to study. When can you concentrate the best? Is it in the early morning before starting your day's work or later in the evening after the children have gone to bed? Even if you cannot study for long periods, decide how much time you can set aside, and try not to let anything interfere. Seek out a quiet place, and remove all distractions by turning off the radio, television, and cell phone. Praying before you study will help to relieve the anxious cares of the day so that you can concentrate on God's Word.—Philippians 4:6, 7.

Mark the material, and prepare to participate. Begin by getting an overall idea of the subject. Think about the title of the article or chapter, consider how each subheading relates to that theme, and examine any pictures and the review questions that highlight the main points. Then read each paragraph, and look for the answer to the printed question. Look up and read the scriptures that are cited, and think of how they support the material. (Acts 17:11) When you can answer the question, underline or highlight a few key words or phrases in the paragraph that will bring the answer back to your mind. Then, at the meeting, you can raise your hand if you wish and make a brief comment in your own words.

By examining the different subjects that are discussed each week at the meetings, you will add new thoughts to your "treasure store" of Bible knowledge.—Matthew 13:51, 52.

- What routine could you establish to prepare for the meetings?
- How can you prepare yourself to make a comment at the meeting?

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- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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1. Ev'ry newborn child, Ev'ry drop of rain,
Ev'ry golden ray of sun, Each head of grain—
All are gifts from God; They reveal his way.
Miracles performed by him sustain us each day.

(CHORUS)

*So, what are we to do with a gift so rare
But to love the One who gave it
and show him we care.*

*No matter what we do, We never can earn it.
This gift is still a gift—The miracle of life.*

2. Others may give up, Lose their will to try,
Echoing the wife of Job: "Curse God and die."
We are not that way. Praise to God we give,
Thanking him for ev'ry precious moment we live.

(CHORUS)

*So, what are we to do with a gift so rare
But to love the ones around us
and show them we care.*

*No matter what we do, We never can earn it.
This gift is still a gift—The miracle of life.*



André Elias

BORN 1915

BAPTIZED 1940

PROFILE A courageous pioneer who repeatedly stood firm under interrogation and threats.

A Fearless Pioneer

DURING World War II, Brother Elias and his wife, Josephine, appeared before officials in Sukabumi, West Java, at the headquarters of the dreaded *Kempeitai*, the Japanese military police. André was interrogated first. Questions rained down on him like hammer blows. “Who are Jehovah’s Witnesses? Do you oppose the Japanese government? Are you a spy?”

“We are servants of Almighty God and have done nothing wrong,” replied André. The commanding officer grabbed a samurai sword from the wall and held it aloft.

“What if I kill you now?” he snarled. André placed his head on the office desk and silently prayed. After a long pause, laughter erupted. “You are brave!” said the officer. He then summoned Josephine. When her testimo-

ny agreed with André's, the officer barked: "You are not spies. Get out of here!"

Several months later, André was denounced by "false brothers" and imprisoned. (2 Cor. 11:26) For several months, he survived by eating food scraps scavenged from the cell gutter. Still, the jailers could not break his integrity. When Josephine was able to visit him, he whispered to her through the prison bars: "Do not worry. Whether they kill me or set me free, I will remain faithful to Jehovah. They can carry me out as a corpse but not as a traitor."

After six months in jail, André defended himself before the Jakarta High Court and was released.

Some 30 years later, when the Indonesian government banned Jehovah's Witnesses again, the district attorney in Manado, North Sulawesi, summoned André to his office. "Do you know that Jehovah's Witnesses are banned?" he asked.

"Yes," replied André.

"Are you now prepared to change your religion?" asked the official.

André leaned forward and dramatically beat his chest. "You can tear my heart from my body, but you can never make me change my religion," he boomed.

The district attorney dismissed André and never bothered him again.

In 2000, André died at the age of 85, after some 60 years of zealous pioneer service.

back. A sea of hands waved to us, and a collective cry echoed across the tarmac: 'Thank you. Thank you for being here.' We boarded the plane and wept."

Outrage on Sumba

As news of the ban spread throughout the archipelago, the Indonesian Communion of Churches urged its members to report any Witness activity to the authorities. This triggered a wave of arrests and interrogations on many islands.

In Waingapu, on the island of Sumba, the district military commander summoned 23 brothers to the local military camp and demanded that they sign a declaration renouncing their faith. When the brothers refused, the commander ordered them to return to the camp the following day—an eight-mile round-trip on foot.

When the brothers reported to the commander early the next morning, they were called forward one by one and ordered to sign the declaration. When a brother would refuse to sign, soldiers would beat him with thorny branches. The soldiers worked themselves into a frenzy, knocking some brothers unconscious. Meanwhile, the other brothers awaited their turn. Finally, one young brother named Mone Kele stepped forward and wrote on the declaration. The brothers' hearts sank, but the commander went berserk. Mone had written, "I intend to remain one of Jehovah's Witnesses forever!" Mone was beaten and bruised and ended up in the hospital, but he remained spiritually unbroken.

The commander tried for 11 days to break the brothers' integrity. He ordered them to stand all day in

“Being in prison taught me to depend on Jehovah more, and it actually made me spiritually stronger”

the hot tropical sun. He forced them to crawl on their hands and knees for several miles and to run long distances carrying heavy loads. While holding a bayonet at their throats, he commanded

them to salute the flag; still, they refused. So he ordered that they be beaten some more.

Each morning the brothers trudged to the camp, wondering what new torments awaited them. Along the way, they prayed together and encouraged one another to stay loyal. And each night they shuffled home, bruised and bloodied, rejoicing that they had stayed faithful to Jehovah.

Upon learning of this mistreatment, the brothers at the branch office immediately telegraphed protests to the military commander in Waingapu, the regional military commander in Timor, the divisional military commander in Bali, the supreme military commander in Jakarta, and other key government authorities. Embarrassed that his vile actions were being publicized throughout Indonesia, the military commander in Waingapu stopped persecuting the brothers.

“Jehovah’s Witnesses Are Like Nails”

In the years that followed, countless Witnesses throughout Indonesia were detained, interrogated, and physically abused. “In one area, many brothers had their front teeth knocked out,” recalls missionary Bill Perrie. “When they met a brother who still had his front teeth, they would jokingly ask: ‘Are you new?’

tra day to present her request to the king, Haman was given time to lay the basis for his own downfall. And might not Jehovah God have been behind the king's sleeplessness? (Prov. 21:1) Little wonder that God's Word encourages us to show "a waiting attitude"! (***Read Micah 7:7.***) When we wait on God, we may find that his solutions to our problems far exceed anything that we might have devised ourselves.

She Spoke Up Bravely

¹⁶ Esther dared not test the king's patience any further; at her second banquet, she had to tell all. But how? As it turned out, the king gave her the opportunity, asking again what her petition might be. (Esther 7:2) Esther's "time to speak" had come.

¹⁷ We may imagine Esther saying a silent prayer to her God before uttering these words: "If I have found favor in your eyes, O king, and if to the king it does seem good, let there be given me my own soul at my petition and my people at my request." (Esther 7:3) Notice that she assured the king that she respected his judgment regarding what seemed good.

16, 17. (a) When did Esther's "time to speak" come? (b) How did Esther differ from Vashti, the king's former wife?

How Esther differed from Vashti, the king's former wife, who had purposely humiliated her husband! (Esther 1:10-12) Further, Esther did not criticize the king for his folly of trusting in Haman. Rather, she begged the king to protect her from a danger to her own life.

¹⁸ That request surely moved and amazed the king. Who would dare endanger his queen? Esther went on: "We have been sold, I and my people, to be annihilated, killed and destroyed. Now if we had been sold for mere men slaves and for mere maidservants, I should have kept silent. But the distress is not appropriate when with damage to the king." (Esther 7:4) Note that Esther frankly exposed the problem, yet she added that she would have kept quiet about it if mere slavery had been the threat. This genocide, though, would be too costly to the king himself to keep quiet about it.

¹⁹ Esther's example teaches us much about the art of persuasion. If you ever need to lay bare a serious

18. How did Esther reveal the problem to the king?

19. What can we learn from Esther about the art of persuasion?

A Prophecy Fulfilled

In fighting for God's people, Esther and Mordecai fulfilled an ancient Bible prophecy. Over a dozen centuries earlier, Jehovah inspired the patriarch Jacob to foretell regarding one of his sons: "Benjamin will keep on tearing like a wolf. In the morning he will eat the animal seized and at evening he will divide spoil." (Gen. 49:27) In "the morning" of Israel's kingly history, Benjamin's descendants included King Saul and other mighty warriors for Jehovah's people. In the "evening" of that royal history, after the sun had set on Israel's kingly line, Esther and Mordecai, both of the tribe of Benjamin, warred effectively against Jehovah's enemies. In a sense, they also divided spoil, in that Haman's vast estate went to them.

problem to a loved one or even to a person in authority, a combination of patience, respect, and candor can be of great help.—Prov. 16:21, 23.

²⁰ Ahasuerus demanded: "Who is this, and just where is the one who has emboldened himself to do that way?" Imagine Esther pointing a finger as she

20, 21. (a) How did Esther expose Haman, eliciting what reaction from the king? (b) How did Haman act when exposed as a scheming coward?

said: “The man, the adversary and enemy, is this bad Haman.” The accusation hung in the air. Terror filled Haman. Picture the volatile monarch’s face coloring as he realized that his trusted adviser had duped him into signing an order that would destroy his own beloved wife! The king stormed out into the garden to regain his composure.—Esther 7:5-7.

²¹ Haman, exposed as the scheming coward that he was, groveled at the queen’s feet. When the king came back into the room and saw Haman on Esther’s couch pleading with her, he angrily accused Haman of attempting to rape the queen in the king’s own home. That sounded the death knell for Haman. He was taken away, his face covered. One of the king’s officials then spoke up, telling the king of the huge stake that Haman had intended for Mordecai. Ahasuerus immediately ordered that Haman himself be hanged on it.—Esther 7:8-10.

²² In today’s unjust world, it is easy to imagine that we will never see justice done. Have you ever felt that way? Esther never despaired, never turned cyn-

22. How can Esther’s example teach us never to despair, turn cynical, or lose faith?

ical, never lost faith. When the time came, she spoke up bravely for what was right, and she trusted in Jehovah to do the rest. Let us do the same! Jehovah has not changed since Esther's day. He is still more than able to catch the wicked and cunning in their own traps, just as he did Haman.—*Read Psalm 7: 11-16.*

She Acted Unselfishly for Jehovah and for His People

²³ At last, the king learned who Mordecai was—not only his loyal protector against assassination but also the adoptive father of Esther. Ahasuerus bestowed Haman's position as prime minister on Mordecai. Haman's house—including his immense fortune—the king gave to Esther, who placed Mordecai over it.—Esther 8:1, 2.

²⁴ Now that Esther and Mordecai were safe, could the queen relax? Only if she were selfish. At that moment, Haman's decree to kill all the Jews was making

23. (a) How did the king reward Mordecai and Esther? (b) How was Jacob's deathbed prophecy over Benjamin fulfilled? (See the box "A Prophecy Fulfilled.")

24, 25. (a) Why could Esther not relax after Haman's plot was exposed? (b) How did Esther risk her life once more?

its way to every corner of the empire. Haman had cast lots, or *Pur*—evidently a form of spiritism—to determine the opportune time to carry out this vicious attack. (Esther 9:24-26) The day was yet months away, but it was fast approaching. Could disaster still be averted?

²⁵ Esther unselfishly risked her life again, appearing before the king once more without an official invitation. This time, she wept for her people, pleading with her husband to revoke the terrible edict. But laws passed in the Persian monarch's name could not be revoked. (Dan. 6:12, 15) So the king empowered Esther and Mordecai to enact a new law. A second proclamation was sent out, giving the Jews the right to defend themselves. Riders sped to every part of the empire, taking this good news to the Jews. Hope was kindled anew in many hearts. (Esther 8:3-16) We may imagine the Jews throughout that vast empire arming themselves and preparing for battle, which they could never have done without that new edict. More important, though, would “Jehovah of armies” be with his people?—1 Sam. 17:45.

²⁶ When the chosen day finally came, God's people were ready. Even many Persian officials were on their side now, as news had traveled far and wide about the new prime minister, Mordecai the Jew. Jehovah gave his people a great victory. He no doubt protected his people from terrible reprisals by handing their enemies a thorough defeat.*—Esther 9:1-6.

²⁷ Furthermore, Mordecai would never be safe to preside over Haman's house while the ten sons of that evil man still lived. They too were killed. (Esther 9:7-10) A Bible prophecy was thus fulfilled, for God had earlier foretold the complete destruction of the Amalekites, who had proved to be wicked enemies of his people. (Deut. 25:17-19) The sons of Haman may well have been among the very last of that condemned nation.

* The king allowed the Jews a second day to finish their conquest of their enemies. (Esther 9:12-14) Even today, the Jews commemorate that victory each year in the month of Adar, which corresponds to late February and early March. The festival is called Purim, named after the lots that Haman cast in his quest to destroy Israel.

26, 27. (a) How great and how thorough was the victory that Jehovah gave his people over their enemies? (b) What prophecy was fulfilled by the destruction of Haman's sons?

²⁸ Esther had to take on her young shoulders her share of very heavy burdens—such as royal edicts involving war and execution. It could not have been easy. But Jehovah’s will required that his people be protected from destruction; the nation of Israel was to produce the promised Messiah, the one source of hope for all mankind! (Gen. 22:18) Servants of God today are delighted to know that when the Messiah, Jesus, came to the earth, he forbade his followers from that time forward to take part in physical warfare.—Matt. 26:52.

²⁹ Nonetheless, Christians do engage in spiritual warfare; Satan is ever more eager to destroy our faith in Jehovah God. (*Read 2 Corinthians 10:3, 4.*) What a blessing to have Esther as an example! Like her, may we show faith by our wise and patient use of persuasion, by our courage, and by our unselfish willingness to stand up for God’s people.

28, 29. (a) Why was it Jehovah’s will for Esther and her people to be involved in warfare? (b) Why is Esther’s example a blessing for us today?

TO THINK ABOUT . . .

- How did Esther show wisdom in choosing “a time to speak”?
- Esther’s patience led to what blessings?
- How did Esther prove to be brave and selfless in defending her people?
- In what ways are you determined to imitate the faith of Esther?

16 *Flee to God's Kingdom!* (Zephaniah 2:3)

1. Oh, seek Jehovah, you meek ones and lowly;
Seek what is right, and seek meekness today.
Thus it may be in the day of his anger
That you may be hidden away.

(CHORUS)

*Flee to God's Kingdom, the hope of mankind;
Firm for his rule take your stand.
There you will find God's protection and blessing;
Hasten to heed his command.*

2. Come, you who hunger for truth and for justice;
Why longer sorrow and cry out in pain?
Seek now God's way to escape the oppressor,
Submitting yourself to Christ's reign.

(Chorus)

3. Look up, yes, lift up your heads with rejoicing;
See all the proof that the Kingdom is here!
Welcome the light that Jehovah is sending,
And let him alone be your fear!

(Chorus)

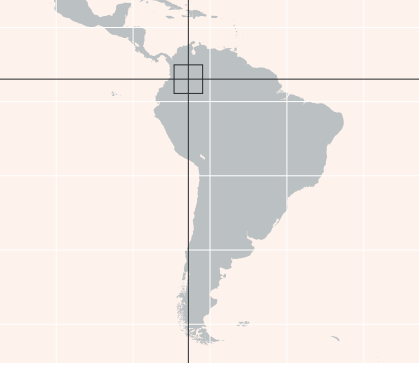
APRIL 2016

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
MAY 30–JUNE 26, 2016



COVER IMAGE:
COLOMBIA

The Wayuu people like to talk about God. Many efforts are made to reach them with the good news. They are skilled artisans who usually sell their products in the city. There they hear the good news through public witnessing

PUBLISHERS
166,049

BIBLE STUDIES
229,723

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE
(2015)
510,952

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86 Faithful Women, Christian Sisters (Romans 16:2)

1. Sarah and Esther, Mary, Ruth, and others—
All these were capable women, loyal wives.
Godly devotion was foremost in their lives.
They were faithful women, ones we know by name.
There were others favored by Jehovah,
Nameless in the record,
their faith was just the same.
2. Loyalty, courage, goodness, loving-kindness,
Lovable qualities in all humankind,
Virtues these excellent women bring to mind.
They were fine examples all can imitate.
Christian sisters, walking in their footsteps,
Worthy is your service
and happy your estate.
3. Mothers and daughters, sisters, wives, and widows,
Willingly laboring, glad to do your part.
Modest your bearing, submissive is your heart,
Having God's approval, may you never fear.
Christian sisters, may Jehovah keep you
Firm in your conviction,
your prize is drawing near.

(See also Phil. 4:3; 1 Tim. 2:9, 10; 1 Pet. 3:4, 5.)

Being Faithful Leads to God's Approval

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

SONGS: 86, 54

CAN YOU ANSWER?

How can the example of Jephthah and his daughter help us resist worldly influences?

What Bible principles do you find helpful in resolving personal conflicts?

How has this article encouraged you to make sacrifices for the Kingdom?

THE anxious wait is over. Relieved to see her father returning safely from battle, the young woman races to greet him and rejoices over his astounding victory. Instead of joining her in song and dance, he rips apart his battle-stained garments and cries out: “Oh no, my daughter! You have broken my heart.” Then he utters the words

1, 2. What challenge did Jephthah and his daughter face?



Being Faithful Leads to God's Approval



How can we display faith like that of Jephthah and his daughter?
(See paragraphs 16, 17)

that change her life forever, shattering her dreams and hopes of a normal life. Yet, without hesitation, she makes a beautiful reply, encouraging her father to follow through on what he promised Jehovah. Her words reveal her great faith. She trusts that whatever Jehovah asks is best for her. (Judg. 11:34-37) Her father's heart swells with pride because he knows that his daughter's willingness to support his decision brings Jehovah's smile of approval.

2 Jephthah and his God-fearing daughter put their trust and confidence in Jehovah's way of doing things, even when it was hard to do so. They were convinced that gaining God's approval was worth any sacrifice.

3 We know that it is not always easy to stay faithful to Jehovah. The reality is that we need to

3. Why can the example of Jephthah and his daughter be helpful for us today?

“put up a hard fight for the faith.” (Jude 3)
To help us do so, let us consider the challenges that Jephthah and his daughter successfully coped with. How did they remain faithful to Jehovah?

STAYING FAITHFUL DESPITE WORLDLY INFLUENCES

4 Every day, Jephthah and his daughter would have been reminded of the disastrous consequences of unfaithfulness to Jehovah. Nearly 300 years earlier, their forefathers had been commanded to exterminate all the pagan inhabitants in the Promised Land. (Deut. 7:1-4) The Israelites’ failure to obey led many of them to adopt the sinful ways of the Canaanites, causing them to become ensnared by false gods and degenerate, immoral practices.—**Read Psalm 106:34-39.**

4, 5. (a) What command did Jehovah give the Israelites when they entered the Promised Land? **(b)** According to Psalm 106, what happened to the Israelites because of their disobedience?

5 That rebellion, in turn, brought Jehovah's disapproval; he no longer granted them his protective care. (Judg. 2:1-3, 11-15; Ps. 106:40-43) What a challenge it must have been for God-fearing families to remain loyal to Jehovah during those hard years! Nevertheless, the Bible reveals that there were faithful ones, such as Jephthah and his daughter as well as Elkanah, Hannah, and Samuel, who were determined to gain God's approval.—1 Sam. 1:20-28; 2:26.

6 We live in a world where people think and act in ways that are similar to those in ancient Canaan—they glorify sex and violence and promote materialism. Jehovah has given us clear warnings—just as he did the Israelites—to safeguard us from such influences. Will we learn from the mistakes of the Israelites? (1 Cor. 10:6-11) We must

6. What worldly influences exist today, and what must we do?

strive to remove any trace of Canaanitelike thinking from our lives. (Rom. 12:2) Have we been faithful in making an effort to do so?

REMAINING FAITHFUL DESPITE DISAPPOINTMENTS

7 In Jephthah's day, the disobedience of the Israelites resulted in their becoming enslaved to the Philistines and the Ammonites. (Judg. 10:7, 8) However, Jephthah's challenges came not only from the enemy nations but also from his own brothers and the leaders of Israel. Jealousy and hatred moved his half brothers to drive him away, illegally depriving him of his rightful inheritance as firstborn. (Judg. 11:1-3) Jephthah refused to allow their cruel behavior to control his attitude. Instead of spitefully ignoring a plea for help from the elders of the nation, he came to their aid.

7. (a) What did Jephthah's own people do to him?
(b) How did Jephthah react?

(Judg. 11:4-11) What may have motivated Jephthah to react as a spiritual man?

8 Not only was Jephthah a mighty warrior but he was a student of God's dealings with His people. Jephthah's thorough grasp of Israel's history gave him a clear picture of what was right and what was wrong in Jehovah's eyes. (Judg. 11:12-27) Godly principles that were embedded in the Mosaic Law molded Jephthah's thinking as well as his heart. He knew that Jehovah disapproved of holding grudges; rather, God required that His people love one another. The Law also taught that a person must not ignore the needs of others, even of someone who "hates" him.—Read Exodus 23:5; Leviticus 19:17, 18.

9 Examples of faithful ones like Joseph, who showed mercy to his brothers—even though "they

8, 9. (a) What principles in the Mosaic Law may have helped Jephthah? (b) What was of greatest importance to Jephthah?

began to hate him”—may also have influenced Jephthah’s response. (Gen. 37:4; 45:4, 5) Meditating on such examples would have helped Jephthah to choose a course of action that was pleasing to Jehovah. The conduct of his brothers no doubt hurt him deeply, but he would not hold back from serving Jehovah and His people. (Judg. 11:9) The fight to defend Jehovah’s name was more important to Jephthah than any personal conflicts. He was determined to be faithful to Jehovah, resulting in good for himself and for others.—Heb. 11:32, 33.

10 Will we allow Jephthah’s example to touch our hearts? Perhaps we have experienced disappointment or ill-treatment from certain Christian brothers. If so, we should not allow such challenges to hold us back from attending

10. How can we allow divine principles to help us act as Christians today?

Christian meetings or serving Jehovah and being with the congregation to the full. In imitation of Jephthah, we too can allow divine standards to help us overcome negative circumstances and continue to be a force for good.—Rom. 12:20, 21; Col. 3:13.

WILLING SACRIFICES REVEAL OUR FAITH

11 Jephthah realized that he would need God’s help to free Israel from the Ammonites. He promised Jehovah that if He gave him the victory, he would offer to Jehovah, as “a burnt offering,” the first one who came out of his house when he returned home from the battle. (Judg. 11:30, 31) What did that offering involve?

12 The sacrificing of humans is something detestable to Jehovah. Thus, it is clear that Jephthah

11, 12. What vow did Jephthah make, and what did this involve?

did not intend to sacrifice anyone literally. (Deut. 18:9, 10) Under the Mosaic Law, a burnt offering was given entirely to Jehovah, so Jephthah evidently meant that he would devote the person to the exclusive service of God. This promise implied permanent service at the tabernacle. Jehovah accepted Jephthah's terms and blessed him with a resounding victory, striking and subduing the enemy. (Judg. 11:32, 33) But who would be the person given as "a burnt offering" to God?

13 Recall the scene described at the beginning of this article. When Jephthah returns from battle, who goes out to meet him but his beloved daughter, his only child! Now comes the test. Will he keep his word and give over his daughter so that she could serve at the tabernacle for the rest of her life?

13, 14. What do Jephthah's words recorded at Judges 11:35 reveal about his faith?

14 Again, divine principles must have guided Jephthah to make the right choice. Perhaps he recalled the words of Exodus 23:19, which instructed God’s people to be willing to give their best to Jehovah. The Law also indicated that once a man made a vow, fulfillment was compulsory. It states: “If a man makes a vow to Jehovah . . . , he must not violate his word. He should do everything he vowed he would do.” (Num. 30:2) Like faithful Hannah, who was probably a contemporary of his, Jephthah would be called on to live up to his vow, knowing what it meant for his own future and that of his daughter. He had no other child; his daughter was his only hope for a descendant, someone to carry on his name and his inheritance in Israel. (Judg. 11:34) Nevertheless, Judges 11:35 concludes with Jephthah saying: “I have opened my mouth to Jehovah, and I am unable to turn back.” His faithfulness even at

great personal cost brought him God's approval and blessing. Would you have made the same choice?

15 When we dedicated our lives to Jehovah, we vowed that we would do his will unreservedly. We knew that living up to that promise would require self-sacrifice. However, our willingness is especially put to the test when we are asked to do things that are not initially to our liking. When we make such sacrifices and serve God in a way that takes us out of our comfort zone, we prove ourselves faithful. The resulting blessings are always far greater than any sacrifices we may make, painful as they may be. (Mal. 3:10) But what about Jephthah's daughter?

16 It could not have been easy for Jephthah's

15. What vow have many of us made, and how can we prove faithful?

16. How did Jephthah's daughter react to her father's promise? (See opening picture of the standard edition.)

daughter to accept the consequences of her father's vow. This was different from Hannah's vow, by which she dedicated her son Samuel to serve at the tabernacle as a Nazirite. (1 Sam. 1:11) A Nazirite was able to marry and have a family. But Jephthah's daughter was to be a whole "burnt offering"; she would have to forgo such joys. (Judg. 11:37-40) As the daughter of the victorious chief and leader in Israel, she might have been given in marriage to the best man in the land. But now she was to become a humble servant at the tabernacle. How did the young woman respond? She showed that she put Jehovah's service first by saying: "My father, if you have opened your mouth to Jehovah, do to me as you have promised." (Judg. 11:36) She sacrificed her natural desires for a husband and children in order to promote true worship. How might we imitate her self-sacrificing attitude?

17 Thousands of young Christian men and women are willingly sacrificing marriage or are not having children—at least for now—in order to serve Jehovah to the full. Older ones too may be sacrificing the time they could otherwise spend with their children and grandchildren in order to work on theocratic construction projects or to attend the School for Kingdom Evangelizers and to serve in areas where the need for Kingdom publishers is greater. Others set aside personal matters to share in service campaigns during the Memorial season. Such wholehearted service brings deep joy to Jehovah, who will never forget their work and the love shown for him. (Read Hebrews 6:10-12.) Would it be possible for you to make additional sacrifices to serve Jehovah more fully?

17. (a) How can we imitate the faith of Jephthah and his daughter? (b) How do the words at Hebrews 6:10-12 encourage you to be self-sacrificing?

LESSONS LEARNED

18 Although Jephthah's life was full of challenges, he allowed Jehovah's thinking to guide his choices in life. He rejected the influences of the world around him. Bitter disappointments caused by others failed to weaken his determination to remain faithful. His willing sacrifices and those of his daughter led to blessings, as Jehovah used both of them to promote pure worship. At a time when others abandoned divine standards, Jephthah and his daughter clung to them.

19 The Bible urges us to "be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises." (Heb. 6:12) May we be like Jephthah and his daughter by living in harmony with a fundamental truth that their lives highlight: Faithfulness leads to God's approval.

18, 19. What have we learned from the Bible account about Jephthah and his daughter, and how can we imitate them?

1. On many occasions God spoke to men
By means of his prophets of old.
Today he has said, 'Let all men repent,'
By God's own Son we are told.

(CHORUS)

*Do we have the faith that is sure?
We must build such faith to survive.
Is our faith proved true by our works?
This kind of faith preserves our souls alive.*

2. We gladly obey Christ Jesus' command
To share Kingdom truth far and wide.
We carefully guard our freeness of speech;
This truth we never will hide.

(Chorus)

3. Our faith is an anchor firm and secure;
We never will shrink back in fear.
Though enemies will against us arise,
We know salvation is near.

(Chorus)