

- Song 106 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “The Shulammitte Girl—An Example Worthy of Imitation”: (10 min.)

[Play the video *Introduction to the Song of Solomon.*]

Ca 2:7; 3:5—The Shulammitte was determined to wait for the one she could truly love (w15 1/15 31 ¶11-13)

Ca 4:12; 8:8-10—She remained loyal and chaste as she waited (w15 1/15 32 ¶14-16)

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

Ca 2:1—What qualities added to the Shulammitte’s beauty? (w15 1/15 31 ¶13)

Ca 8:6—Why is true love described as “the flame of Jah”? (w15 1/15 29 ¶3; w06 11/15 20 ¶7)

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) Ca 2:1-17

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) *bh*—Use the video *Why Study the Bible?* to introduce the book. (Note: Do not play the video during the demonstration.)
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) *bh*—Invite the person to the meeting.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *bh* 29-31 ¶8-9

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 115
- “**Young People Ask—Am I Ready to Date?**”: (9 min.) Talk based on the article “Young People Ask—Am I Ready to Date?” (Go to jw.org, and look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > TEENAGERS.)
- **Is It Love or Infatuation?:** (6 min.) Play and then discuss the whiteboard animation *Is It Love or Infatuation?* (video category OUR MEETINGS AND MINISTRY)
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *kr* chap. 4 ¶16-23, box on p. 48
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 34 and Prayer

SONG OF SOLOMON 1-8 | The Shulammitte Girl—An Example Worthy of Imitation



2:7; 4:12

What made her an outstanding example for worshippers of Jehovah?

- She wisely waited for true love
- She refused to have others pressure her into feeling romantic love for just anyone who came along
- She was humble, modest, and chaste
- She would not let her love be bought with gold or flattery

Ask yourself:

‘Which quality of the Shulammitte girl could I better imitate?’



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106 *Gaining Jehovah's Friendship*

(Psalm 15)

1. Who is your friend, O God?

Who in your tent may dwell?

Who gains your friendship? Who gains your trust?

Who really knows you well?

All who embrace your Word,

All who have faith in you,

All who are loyal, all who are just,

Living the truth for you.

2. Who is your friend, O God?

Who may approach your throne?

Who brings delight and Makes you rejoice?

Whose name to you is known?

All who exalt your name,

All who your Word obey,

All who are faithful, honest in heart,

Truthful in all they say.

3. Rolling our cares on you,

Baring our hearts in prayer,

Drawing us closer, bonding in love,

Feeling your daily care,

We yearn to be your friend.

Long may our friendship grow.

No greater Friend could we ever gain,

No greater Friend we'll know.

(See also Ps. 139:1; 1 Pet. 5:6, 7.)

THE SONG OF SOLOMON

1 The song of songs, which is Sol'o-mon's:

2 "May he kiss me with the kisses of his mouth,
For your expressions of affection are better than
wine.

3 The fragrance of your oils is pleasant.
Your name is like a fragrant oil poured out.
That is why the young women love you.

4 Take me with you; let us run.
The king has brought me into his interior rooms!
Let us be joyful and rejoice in you.
Let us praise your expressions of affection more
than wine.
Rightly they love you.

5 I am dark, but lovely, O daughters of Jerusalem,
Like the tents of Ke'dar, like the tent cloths of
Sol'o-mon.

6 Do not stare at me because I am swarthy,
Because the sun has gazed upon me.
The sons of my mother were angry with me;
They appointed me the keeper of the vineyards,
But my own vineyard I did not keep.

7 Tell me, you whom I love so much,
Where you pasture your flock,

Where you have them lie down at midday.
Why should I be like a woman wrapped in a veil
Among the flocks of your companions?"

8 "If you do not know, O most beautiful of women,
Go follow the tracks of the flock
And pasture your young goats next to the tents
of the shepherds."

9 "I liken you, my beloved, to a mare among the
chariots of Phar'aoh.

10 Your cheeks are lovely with ornaments,
Your neck with strings of beads.

11 We will make for you gold ornaments
Studded with silver."

12 "While the king sits at his round table,
My perfume gives off its fragrance.

13 My dear one is to me like a fragrant bag of myrrh
Spending the night between my breasts.

14 My dear one is to me like a cluster of henna
Among the vineyards of En-ged'i."

15 "Look! You are beautiful, my beloved.
Look! You are beautiful. Your eyes are those of
doves."

16 "Look! You are beautiful, my dear one, and
delightful.

Our bed is among the foliage.

¹⁷ The beams of our house are cedars,
Our rafters are juniper trees.

² “I am but a saffron of the coastal plain,
A lily of the valleys.”

² “Like a lily among thorns
Is my beloved among the daughters.”

³ “Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest,
So is my dear one among the sons.
I passionately desire to sit in his shade,
And his fruit is sweet to my taste.

⁴ He brought me into the banquet house,
And his banner over me was love.

⁵ Refresh me with raisin cakes;
Sustain me with apples,
For I am lovesick.

⁶ His left hand is under my head,
And his right hand embraces me.

⁷ I put you under oath, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles and the does of the field:
Do not try to awaken or arouse love in me until it
feels inclined.

⁸ The sound of my dear one!

Look! Here he comes,
Climbing the mountains, leaping over the hills.

⁹ My dear one is like a gazelle, like a young stag.
There he is, standing behind our wall,
Gazing through the windows,
Looking through the lattices.

¹⁰ My dear one speaks, he says to me:
‘Rise up, my beloved,
My beautiful one, come away with me.

¹¹ Look! The winter has passed.
The rains are over and gone.

¹² Blossoms have appeared in the land,
The time of pruning has arrived,
And the song of the turtledove is heard in our
land.

¹³ The fig tree ripens its early figs;
The vines are in blossom and give off their
fragrance.
Rise up, my beloved, and come.
My beautiful one, come away with me.

¹⁴ O my dove, in the retreats of the crag,
In the recesses of the cliff,
Let me see you and hear your voice,

For your voice is pleasant and your appearance
is lovely.”

15 “Catch the foxes for us,
The little foxes that ruin the vineyards,
For our vineyards are in bloom.”

16 “My dear one is mine and I am his.
He is shepherding among the lilies.

17 Until the day grows breezy and the shadows flee,
Return quickly, O my dear one,
Like the gazelle or the young stag upon the
mountains of separation.

3 “Upon my bed during the nights,
I sought the one I love.
I sought him, but I did not find him.

2 I will arise and roam the city;
In the streets and in the public squares,
Let me seek the one I love.
I sought him, but I did not find him.

3 The watchmen making their rounds in the city
found me.

‘Have you seen the one I love?’

4 Scarcely had I passed by them
When I found the one I love.
I held on to him, I would not let him go

Until I brought him into my mother's house,
Into the interior room of her who conceived me.

⁵ I put you under oath, O daughters of Jerusalem,
By the gazelles and the does of the field:
Do not try to awaken or arouse love in me until it
feels inclined."

⁶ "What is this coming up from the wilderness like
columns of smoke,
Perfumed with myrrh and frankincense,
With all the fragrant powders of a merchant?"

⁷ "Look! It is the couch belonging to Sol'o-mon.
Sixty mighty men surround it,
Of the mighty men of Israel,

⁸ All of them armed with a sword,
All trained in warfare,
Each with his sword at his side
To guard against the terrors of the night."

⁹ "It is the royal litter of King Sol'o-mon
That he made for himself from the trees of
Leb'a-non.

¹⁰ Its pillars he made of silver,
Its supports of gold.
Its seat is of purple wool;
Its interior was lovingly decorated

By the daughters of Jerusalem.”

¹¹ “Go out, O daughters of Zion,
Gaze at King Sol'o-mon
Wearing the wedding crown his mother made for
him
On the day of his marriage,
On the day of his heart's rejoicing.”

⁴ “Look! You are beautiful, my beloved.
Look! You are beautiful.
Your eyes are those of doves behind your veil.
Your hair is like a flock of goats
Streaming down the mountains of Gil'e-ad.

² Your teeth are like a flock of newly shorn sheep
That have come up from being washed,
All of them bearing twins,
And not one has lost her young.

³ Your lips are like a scarlet thread,
And your speech is delightful.
Like a segment of pomegranate
Are your cheeks behind your veil.

⁴ Your neck is like the tower of David,
Built with courses of stone
Upon which are hung a thousand shields,
All the circular shields of the mighty men.

- ⁵ Your two breasts are like two fawns,
The twins of a gazelle,
That feed among the lilies.”
- ⁶ “Until the day grows breezy and the shadows flee,
I will go my way to the mountain of myrrh
And to the hill of frankincense.”
- ⁷ “You are altogether beautiful, my beloved,
There is no blemish in you.
- ⁸ Come with me from Leb'a·non, my bride,
Come with me from Leb'a·non.
Descend from the peak of A·ma'nah,
From the peak of Se'nir, the peak of Her'mon,
From the lairs of lions, from the mountains of
leopards.
- ⁹ You have captured my heart, my sister, my bride,
You have captured my heart with one glance of
your eyes,
With one pendant of your necklace.
- ¹⁰ How beautiful your expressions of affection are, my
sister, my bride!
Your expressions of affection are far better than
wine,
And the fragrance of your perfume than any
spice!

- 11 Your lips, my bride, drip with comb honey.
Honey and milk are under your tongue,
And the fragrance of your garments is like the
fragrance of Leb'a-non.
- 12 My sister, my bride, is like a locked garden,
A locked garden, a spring sealed shut.
- 13 Your shoots are a paradise of pomegranates
With the choicest fruits, with henna along with
spikenard plants,
- 14 Spikenard and saffron, cane and cinnamon,
With all sorts of trees of frankincense, myrrh,
and aloes,
Along with all the finest perfumes.
- 15 You are a garden spring, a well of fresh water,
And flowing streams from Leb'a-non.
- 16 Awake, O north wind;
Come in, O south wind.
Breathe upon my garden.
Let its fragrance spread.”
“Let my dear one come into his garden
And eat its choicest fruits.”
- 5 “I have entered my garden,
O my sister, my bride.
I have picked my myrrh and my spice.

I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey;
I have drunk my wine and my milk.”

“Eat, dear friends!

Drink and become intoxicated with expressions
of affection!”

² “I am asleep, but my heart is awake.
There is the sound of my dear one knocking!”
“Open to me, O my sister, my beloved,
My dove, my flawless one!
For my head is wet with dew,
The locks of my hair with the moisture of the
night.”

³ “I have taken off my robe.
Must I put it back on?
I have washed my feet.
Must I soil them again?’

⁴ My dear one withdrew his hand from the hole of the
door,
And my feelings for him were stirred.

⁵ I got up to open to my dear one;
My hands dripped with myrrh,
And my fingers with liquid myrrh,
Onto the handles of the lock.

⁶ I opened to my dear one,
But my dear one had turned away, he had gone.

I felt despair when he departed.
I sought him, but I did not find him.
I called him, but he did not answer me.

⁷ The watchmen making their rounds in the city
found me.
They struck me, they wounded me.
The watchmen of the walls took my shawl away
from me.

⁸ I put you under oath, O daughters of Jerusalem:
If you find my dear one,
Tell him that I am lovesick.”

⁹ “How is your dear one better than any other dear
one,
You most beautiful of women?
How is your dear one better than any other dear
one,
That you put us under such an oath?”

¹⁰ “My dear one is dazzling and ruddy;
He stands out among ten thousand.

¹¹ His head is gold, the finest gold.
The locks of his hair are like waving palm
fronds,
As black as the raven.

¹² His eyes are like doves by streams of water,

Bathing themselves in milk,
Sitting by a brimming pool.

¹³ His cheeks are like a bed of spices,
Mounds of scented herbs.
His lips are lilies, dripping with liquid myrrh.

¹⁴ His hands are cylinders of gold, set with
chrys'o-lite.
His abdomen is polished ivory covered with
sapphires.

¹⁵ His legs are pillars of marble set on pedestals of
the finest gold.
His appearance is like Leb'a-non, as unrivaled
as the cedars.

¹⁶ His mouth is sweetness itself,
And everything about him is desirable.
This is my dear one, this is my beloved, O
daughters of Jerusalem.”

6 “Where has your dear one gone,
O most beautiful of women?
Which way did your dear one turn?
Let us seek him with you.”

² “My dear one has gone down to his garden,
To the beds of spice plants,
To shepherd among the gardens

And to pick lilies.

³ I am my dear one's,
And my dear one is mine.
He is shepherding among the lilies.”

⁴ “You are as beautiful as Tir'zah, my beloved,
As lovely as Jerusalem,
As breathtaking as armies around their banners.

⁵ Turn your eyes away from me,
For they overwhelm me.
Your hair is like a flock of goats
Streaming down the slopes of Gil'e-ad.

⁶ Your teeth are like a flock of sheep
That have come up from being washed,
All of them bearing twins,
And not one has lost her young.

⁷ Like a segment of pomegranate
Are your cheeks behind your veil.

⁸ There may be 60 queens
And 80 concubines
And young women without number.

⁹ But only one is my dove, my flawless one.
The only one of her mother.
She is the favorite of the one who bore her.

The daughters see her, and they pronounce her
happy;
Queens and concubines, and they praise her.

10 ‘Who is she who shines like the dawn,
As beautiful as the full moon,
As pure as the sunlight,
As breathtaking as armies around their
banners?’”

11 “I went down to the garden of nut trees
To see the new growth in the valley,
To see whether the vine had sprouted,
Whether the pomegranate trees had blossomed.

12 Before I knew it,
My desire had put me
At the chariots of my noble people.”

13 “Return, return, O Shu'lam-mite!
Return, return,
That we may look upon you!”
“Why do you gaze upon the Shu'lam-mite?”
“She is like the dance of two companies!”

7 “How beautiful your feet are in your sandals,
O noble daughter!
The curves of your thighs are like ornaments,
The work of an artisan’s hands.

- ² Your navel is a round bowl.
 May it never lack mixed wine.
 Your belly is a heap of wheat,
 Encircled by lilies.
- ³ Your two breasts are like two fawns,
 The twins of a gazelle.
- ⁴ Your neck is like an ivory tower.
 Your eyes are like the pools in Hesh'bon,
 By the gate of Bath-rab'bim.
 Your nose is like the tower of Leb'a-non,
 Which looks toward Damascus.
- ⁵ Your head crowns you like Car'mel,
 And the locks of your hair are like purple wool.
 The king is captivated by the flowing tresses.
- ⁶ How beautiful you are, and how pleasant you are,
 O beloved girl, above all exquisite delights!
- ⁷ Your stature is like a palm tree,
 And your breasts are like date clusters.
- ⁸ I said, 'I will climb the palm tree
 To take hold of its stalks of fruit.'
 May your breasts be like clusters of grapes,
 Your breath as fragrant as apples,
- ⁹ And your mouth like the best wine."
 "May it go down smoothly for my dear one,

Softly flowing over the lips of those asleep.

¹⁰ I am my dear one's,
And his desire is for me.

¹¹ Come, O my dear one,
Let us go out to the fields;
Let us lodge among the henna plants.

¹² Let us rise early and go to the vineyards
To see if the vine has sprouted,
If the blossoms have opened,
If the pomegranates are in bloom.
There I will express my affection for you.

¹³ The mandrakes give off their fragrance;
At our doors are all sorts of choice fruits.
The new as well as the old,
O my dear one, I have kept in store for you.

8 "If only you were like my brother,
Who nursed at my mother's breasts!
Then if I found you outside, I would kiss you,
And no one would despise me.

² I would lead you;
I would bring you into the house of my mother,
She who taught me.
I would give you spiced wine to drink,
The fresh juice of pomegranates.

- ³ His left hand would be under my head,
And his right hand would embrace me.
- ⁴ I put you under oath, O daughters of Jerusalem:
Do not try to awaken or arouse love in me until it
feels inclined.”
- ⁵ “Who is this coming up from the wilderness,
Leaning upon her dear one?”
“Under the apple tree I awakened you.
There your mother was in labor with you.
There she who gave birth to you was in labor.
- ⁶ Place me as a seal upon your heart,
As a seal upon your arm,
For love is as strong as death is,
And exclusive devotion is as unyielding as the
Grave.
Its flames are a blazing fire, the flame of Jah.
- ⁷ Surging waters cannot extinguish love,
Nor can rivers wash it away.
If a man would offer all the wealth of his house
for love,
It would be utterly despised.”
- ⁸ “We have a little sister,
And she has no breasts.
What will we do for our sister
On the day when she is spoken for?”

- 9 “If she is a wall,
We will build upon her a battlement of silver,
But if she is a door,
We will board her up with a cedar plank.”
- 10 “I am a wall,
And my breasts are like towers.
So in his eyes I have become
As one who finds peace.
- 11 Sol'o-mon had a vineyard in Ba'al-ha'mon.
He entrusted the vineyard to caretakers.
Each one would bring in a thousand pieces of
silver for its fruit.
- 12 I have my own vineyard at my disposal.
The thousand pieces of silver belong to you, O
Sol'o-mon,
And two hundred to those who care for its fruit.”
- 13 “O you who are dwelling in the gardens,
The companions listen for your voice.
Let me hear it.”
- 14 “Hurry, my dear one,
And be swift like a gazelle
Or a young stag
Upon the mountains of spices.”

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SONG OF SOLOMON 1-8 | The Shulammitte Girl—An Example Worthy of Imitation



2:7; 4:12

What made her an outstanding example for worshippers of Jehovah?

- She wisely waited for true love
- She refused to have others pressure her into feeling romantic love for just anyone who came along
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- She would not let her love be bought with gold or flattery

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November 28–December 4

Treasures From God's Word

Song of Solomon 2:7; 3:5—The Shulammitte was determined to wait for the one she could truly love

Reference: w15 1/15 31 **paragraphs 11-13.**

Do Not Awaken Love “Until It Feels Inclined”

11 The Song of Solomon also provides lessons for unmarried Christians, especially for those looking for a mate. The young woman felt no love for Solomon. Putting the daughters of Jerusalem under oath, she said: “Do not try to awaken or arouse love in me until it feels inclined.” (**Song of Solomon 2:7; 3:5**) Why? Because it is simply not proper to develop a romantic attachment for just anyone who comes along. A Christian desiring to marry, then, is wise to wait patiently for the one he or she can truly love.

12 Why did the Shulammitte girl love the shepherd? True, he was handsome, resembling “a gazelle”; his hands were strong like “cylinders of gold”; and his legs were beautiful and strong like “pillars of marble.” But he was more than just strong and handsome. “Like an

apple tree among the trees of the forest” was her “dear one among the sons.” For a girl who was faithful to Jehovah to feel this way about the man, he had to have been spiritually inclined. —**Song of Solomon 2:3, 9; 5:14, 15.**

13 What about the Shulammite girl? Though she was beautiful enough to attract the attention of a king who at the time had “60 queens and 80 concubines and young women without number,” she viewed herself as “but a saffron of the coastal plain”—a common flower. The girl was remarkably modest and humble. No wonder she was “like a lily among thorns,” anything but common to the shepherd! She was faithful to Jehovah. —**Song of Solomon 2:1, 2; 6:8.**

Song of Solomon 4:12; 8:8-10—She remained loyal and chaste as she waited

Reference: w15 1/15 32 **paragraphs 14-16.**

14 In the Scriptures, powerful admonition is given to Christians to marry “only in the Lord.” (**1 Corinthians 7:39**) A single person who wants to marry refrains from forming romantic ties with unbelievers and looks for a mate only among loyal worshippers of Jehovah. Moreover, to face

life's realities while maintaining marital peace and spiritual unity calls for faith in and devotion to God—desirable qualities to look for in a prospective marriage mate. Those are the very qualities that the shepherd and the young woman found in each other.

My Bride “Is Like a Locked Garden”

15 Read Song of Solomon 4:12. Why does the shepherd describe his beloved as “a locked garden”? A walled or fenced-in garden is not open to the public. It can be accessed only through a locked gate. The Shulammitte girl is like that garden because her affection was available only to her husband-to-be—the shepherd. By not giving in to the enticements of the king, she proved herself to be like “a wall” and not “a door” that swings wide open. (**Song of Solomon 8:8-10**) Similarly, godly unmarried men and women reserve their love and affection for their future mate.

16 When the shepherd asked the Shulammitte girl to go for a walk with him on a spring day, her brothers did not permit her to go. Instead, they assigned her the work of guarding the vineyards. Why? Did they not trust her? Did they perhaps think that she had immoral

intentions? Actually, they were taking precautions so that their sister would not come into a tempting situation. (**Song of Solomon 1:6; 2:10-15**) Here, then, is a lesson for single Christians: During courtship, take necessary precautions to keep the relationship chaste. Avoid secluded places. While clean expressions of affection may be appropriate, be careful to avoid tempting situations.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Song of Solomon 2:1—What qualities added to the Shulammitte's beauty?

Reference: *w15* 1/15 31 **paragraph 13**.

What about the Shulammitte girl? Though she was beautiful enough to attract the attention of a king who at the time had “60 queens and 80 concubines and young women without number,” she viewed herself as “but a saffron of the coastal plain”—a common flower. The girl was remarkably modest and humble. No wonder she was “like a lily among thorns,” anything but common to the shepherd! She was faithful to Jehovah.—Song of Sol. 2:1, 2; 6:8.

Song of Solomon 8:6—Why is true love described as “the flame of Jah”?

Reference: *w15* 1/15 29 **paragraph 3**.

Read Song of Solomon 8:6. The expression “the flame of Jah” that is used to describe love speaks volumes. True love is “the flame of Jah” in that Jehovah is the Originator of such love. He created man in his image with the ability to love. (**Genesis 1:26, 27**) When God presented the first woman, Eve, to the first man, Adam, the words that came out of Adam’s mouth were nothing short of poetic. No doubt Eve felt a closeness to Adam, from whom “she was taken.” (**Genesis 2:21-23**) Since Jehovah has given humans the capacity for showing love, it is possible for a man and a woman to have unswerving and unflinching love for each other.

Reference: *w06* 11/15 20 **paragraph 7**.

One who has put in us the capacity to love. It is a flame whose blazings are inextinguishable. The Song of Solomon beautifully illustrates that love between a man and a woman can be “as strong [unflinching] as death is.”—Song of Solomon 8:6.

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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 115
- “**Young People Ask—Am I Ready to Date?**”: (9 min.) Talk based on the article “Young People Ask—Am I Ready to Date?” (Go to jw.org, and look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > TEENAGERS.)
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- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 34 and Prayer

SONG OF SOLOMON 1-8 | The Shulammitte Girl—An Example Worthy of Imitation



2:7; 4:12

What made her an outstanding example for worshippers of Jehovah?

- She wisely waited for true love
- She refused to have others pressure her into feeling romantic love for just anyone who came along
- She was humble, modest, and chaste
- She would not let her love be bought with gold or flattery

Ask yourself:

‘Which quality of the Shulammitte girl could I better imitate?’



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sinned, all his offspring inherited sin from him. (Romans 5:12) The situation might be illustrated with a pan used for baking bread. If the pan has a dent in it, what happens to each loaf of bread made in the pan? Each loaf has a dent, or an imperfection, in it. Similarly, each human has inherited a “dent” of imperfection from Adam. That is why all humans grow old and die.—Romans 3:23.

⁸ When Satan led Adam and Eve into sinning against God, he was really leading a rebellion. He was challenging Jehovah’s way of ruling. In effect, Satan was saying: ‘God is a bad ruler. He tells lies and holds back good things from his subjects. Humans do not need to have God ruling over them. They can decide for themselves what is good and what is bad. And they will be better off under my rulership.’ How would God handle such an insulting challenge? Some think that God should simply have put the rebels to death. But would that have answered Satan’s challenge? Would it have proved that God’s way of ruling is right?

8, 9. (a) What challenge did Satan evidently make? (b) Why did God not destroy the rebels immediately?

⁹ Jehovah's perfect sense of justice would not allow him to put the rebels to death right away. He decided that time was needed to answer Satan's challenge in a satisfying way and to prove that the Devil is a liar. So God determined that he would permit humans to rule themselves for some time under Satan's influence. Why Jehovah did that and why he has allowed so much time to pass before settling these issues will be discussed in Chapter 11 of this book. Now, though, it is good to think about this: Were Adam and Eve right to believe Satan, who had never done anything good for them? Was it right for them to believe that Jehovah, who had given them everything they had, is a cruel liar? What would you have done?

¹⁰ It is good to think about these questions because each of us faces similar issues today. Yes, you have the opportunity to support Jehovah's side in answer to Satan's challenge. You can accept Jehovah as your Ruler and help to show that Satan is a

10. How can you support Jehovah's side in answer to Satan's challenge?

115 *Making Our Way Successful* (Joshua 1:8)

1. We delight in Jehovah's Word.

 May we read it each day.
 Sound each thought in an undertone;
 Meditate and obey.
 May it guide ev'ry step we take,
 Ev'ry thought we express.

(CHORUS)

*Read and meditate, then obey.
 This Jehovah will bless.
Walk with him each and ev'ry day.
 Find the way to success.*

2. When the kings ruled in Israel,

 They received this command:
 'Ev'ry king for himself must write
 God's Law in his own hand.
 He must read in it all his days,
 That he may not transgress.'

(Chorus)

3. As we feed on God's Word each day,

 Hope and comfort we find.
 Calm descends on our troubled hearts;
 Faith in Him is refined.
 When we truly embrace his Word,
 We mature and progress.

(Chorus)

(See also Deut. 17:18; 1 Ki. 2:3, 4; Ps. 119:1; Jer. 7:23.)

- Song 106 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “The Shulammitte Girl—An Example Worthy of Imitation”: (10 min.)

[Play the video *Introduction to the Song of Solomon*.]

Ca 2:7; 3:5—The Shulammitte was determined to wait for the one she could truly love (w15 1/15 31 ¶11-13)

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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) Ca 2:1-17

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What made her an outstanding example for worshippers of Jehovah?

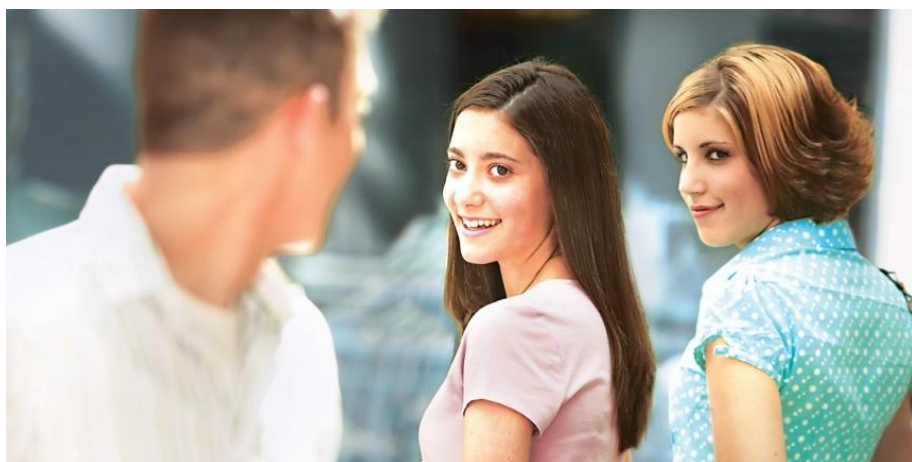
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- She was humble, modest, and chaste
- She would not let her love be bought with gold or flattery

Ask yourself:

‘Which quality of the Shulammitte girl could I better imitate?’



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YOUNG PEOPLE ASK Am I Ready to Date?

- **What is dating?**
- **What is the purpose of dating?**
- **Am I old enough to date?**
- **Why wait to date?**

What is dating?

- You regularly go out with a certain member of the opposite sex. Are you dating?
- You and a member of the opposite sex are attracted to each other. Several times a day, you send text messages or talk to this person on the phone. Are

you dating?

- Every time you get together with your friends, you pair off with the same person of the opposite sex. Are you dating?

You most likely had no problem answering the first question. But you may have paused before responding to the second and the third. What exactly is dating?

Really, dating is any social activity in which your romantic interest is focused on one particular person and that person's interest is focused on you.

So the answer to all three questions is yes. Whether on the phone or face-to-face, in the open or in secret, if you and a friend of the opposite sex have a special romantic understanding and communicate regularly, it's dating.

What is the purpose of dating?

Dating should have an honorable purpose—to help a young man and woman determine if they want to get married to each other.

Granted, some of your peers might take a casual view

of dating. Perhaps they simply enjoy being with a special friend of the opposite sex, without any intention of marriage. Some might even view such a friend as little more than a trophy or an accessory to be seen with in public to boost their own self-esteem.

Often, though, such shallow relationships are short-lived. “Many young ones who date break up with each other a week or two later,” says a girl named Heather. “They come to view relationships as transitory—which in a sense prepares them for divorce rather than for marriage.”

Clearly, when you date someone, you’re affecting that person’s feelings. So be sure your intentions are honorable.—Luke 6:31.

Think: Would you like someone to play with your feelings as if they were some child’s toy—to be picked up for a moment and then quickly abandoned? Then don’t do that to someone else! The

Bible says that love “does not behave indecently.”—1 Corinthians 13:4, 5.

A youth named Chelsea says: “Part of me wants to say that dating should be just for fun, but it’s no fun when one person is taking it seriously and the other isn’t.”

Tip: To prepare for dating and marriage, read 2 Peter 1:5-7 and pick one quality you need to work on. In a month’s time, see how much you have learned about—and improved in—that quality.



If you date with no intention of marriage, you are acting like a child who plays with a new toy and then discards it

Am I old enough to date?

At what age, do you think, is it appropriate for a youth to start dating?

Now ask one of your parents the same question.

Chances are, your answer is different from that of your parent. Or maybe not! You might be among the many youths who are wisely putting off dating until they're old enough to know themselves better.

That's what Danielle, 17, decided to do. She says: "Thinking back two years ago, what I would have looked for in a potential mate was so different from what I would look for now. Basically, even at this point I don't trust myself to make such a decision. When I feel that my personality has been stable for a couple of years, then I'll think about dating."

There's another reason why waiting is wise. The Bible uses the phrase "the bloom of youth" to describe the period of life when sexual feelings and romantic emotions first become strong.

(1 Corinthians 7:36) To maintain close association with one particular member of the opposite sex while you're still in this phase can fan the flames of desire and lead to wrong conduct.

True, that might mean little to your peers. Many of them may be all too eager to experiment with sex. But you can—you must—rise above that kind of thinking! (Romans 12:2) After all, the Bible urges you to “flee from sexual immorality.” (1 Corinthians 6:18, New International Version) By waiting until you're past the bloom of youth, you can “ward off calamity.”—Ecclesiastes 11:10.

Why wait to date?

Being pressured to date before you're ready would be like being forced to take a final exam for a course that you've barely started. Obviously, that wouldn't be fair! You need time to study your subject so that you can become familiar with the kind of problems you'll face in the test.

It's similar with dating.

Dating is no trivial matter. So before you're ready to focus on one particular person, you need to take time to study a very important "subject"—how to build friendships.

Later, when you meet the right person, you'll be in a better position to build a solid relationship. After all, a good marriage is the union of two good friends.

Waiting to date won't stifle your freedom. On the contrary, it will give you more freedom to 'rejoice in your youth.' (Ecclesiastes 11:9) You will also have time to prepare yourself by developing your personality and, most important, your spirituality.—Lamentations 3:27.

In the meantime, you can enjoy the company of the opposite sex. What's the best way to do so? Spend time together in properly supervised mixed groups. A girl named Tammy says: "I think it's more fun that way. It's better to have a lot of friends." Monica agrees. "The group idea is a really good idea," she says, "because you get to associate with people who have different personalities."

In contrast, if you focus on one person too soon, you set yourself up for heartache. So take your time. Use this period of your life to learn how to cultivate and maintain friendships. Later, if you choose to date, you'll have a better idea of who you are and what you need in a lifelong partner.

Source: <http://www.jw.org/en/bible-teachings/family/teenagers/ask/ready-to-date>

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name, a clearer understanding of the work God had assigned them to do, and a deeper insight into the main issue to be settled. Now, Jehovah's time had come to give his servants the honor of publicly bearing his name. To see how that came about, let us consider some past events.

Jehovah Takes “a People for His Name”

¹⁶ An outstanding way in which Jehovah exalts his name is by having a people on earth who bear his name. From 1513 B.C.E. onward, the nation of Israel represented Jehovah as his people. (Isa. 43:12) However, they failed to keep their part of the covenant with God, and in 33 C.E., they lost their special relationship with him. Shortly thereafter, Jehovah “turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name.” (Acts 15:14) That newly chosen people became known as “the Israel of God,” which consists of anointed followers of Christ from various nations.—Gal. 6:16.

¹⁷ In about 44 C.E., Christ's disciples were “by divine providence called Christians.” (Acts 11:26)

16. (a) In what outstanding way does Jehovah exalt his name? (b) In the past, who first served as a people for God's name?

17. What scheme did Satan succeed in carrying out?

Initially, that name was distinctive, for it referred to true Christians only. (1 Pet. 4:16) However, as indicated in Jesus' parable of the wheat and the weeds, Satan succeeded in his scheme to apply the unique name Christian to all kinds of imitation Christians. Consequently, for many centuries, true Christians did not stand out clearly from imitation Christians. But that started to change during "the harvest season," which began in 1914. Why? Because angels began separating imitation Christians from genuine ones.—Matt. 13:30, 39-41.

¹⁸ After the appointment of the faithful slave in 1919, Jehovah helped his people to discern the work he had assigned them to do. They quickly saw that preaching from house to house set them apart from all imitation Christians. Once they realized that fact, it was not long before they understood that the designation "Bible Students" was not distinctive enough. Their prime purpose in life was not simply to study the Bible but to witness about God and to honor and exalt his name.

18. What helped our brothers to see that a new name was needed?

fitting for the work they were doing? That question was answered in 1931.

¹⁹ In July 1931, some 15,000 Bible Students arrived in Columbus, Ohio, U.S.A., for a convention. Seeing the convention program, they were intrigued by the two large letters *J* and *W* printed on its front cover. ‘What do those letters mean?’ they wondered. Some thought they meant, ‘Just Watch’; others, ‘Just Wait.’ Then, on Sunday, July 26, Brother Joseph Rutherford presented a resolution containing the powerful statement: “We desire to be known as and called by the name, to wit, *Jehovah’s witnesses*.” At that moment, all in attendance understood the meaning of those puzzling letters—they stood for *Jehovah’s Witnesses*, a Scriptural name based on Isaiah 43:10.

²⁰ The audience responded to that resolution with a tremendous shout and long applause. By radio, that enthusiastic reaction in Columbus was heard half-way around the globe! Ernest and Naomi Barber in Australia recalled: “When the applause went up in America, the brothers in Melbourne jumped to their

19, 20. (a) What exciting resolution was made at a convention in 1931? (b) How did our brothers react to the adoption of the new name?

feet and kept on applauding. We will never forget it!”*^[2]

God’s Name Is Being Exalted Worldwide

²¹ Having the Scriptural name Jehovah’s Witnesses gave God’s servants added strength to share in the preaching work. Edward and Jessie Grimes, a pioneer couple in the United States who attended the 1931 convention in Columbus, observed: “We left home as Bible Students, but we returned as Jehovah’s Witnesses. We were happy that we now had a name that helped us to magnify the name of our God.” After that convention, some Witnesses used a new method to do just that. They introduced themselves to householders by handing them a card with the message: “One of JEHOVAH’S witnesses preaching the Kingdom of JEHOVAH our God.” Yes, God’s people were proud to bear the name Jehovah, and they were ready to proclaim its significance far and wide.—Isa. 12:4.

²² Many years have passed since Jehovah moved

*^[2] See Chapter 7, pages 125-130, for details about that use of the radio.

21. How did the new name stimulate the preaching work?

22. What proves that Jehovah’s people have a distinct identity?

our anointed brothers to embrace their distinctive name. During the intervening years, has Satan been able to obscure the identity of God’s people? Has he succeeded in absorbing us into the world’s religious landscape? No, indeed! On the contrary, our distinct identity as witnesses of God stands out more than ever. (**Read Micah 4:5; Malachi 3:18.**) In fact, we have become so closely associated with God’s name that anyone who freely uses it today is quickly identified as one of Jehovah’s Witnesses. Instead of being obscured by a range of mountainlike false religions, Jehovah’s true worship is “firmly established *above* the top of the mountains.” (Isa. 2:2) Today, Jehovah’s worship and his sacred name are, indeed, highly exalted.

²³ How strengthening it is to know that Jehovah will shield us against Satan’s present and future attacks! (Ps. 121:5) With good reason we echo the sentiments of the psalmist who wrote: “Happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah, the people he has chosen as his own possession.”—Ps. 33:12.

23. According to Psalm 121:5, what important truth about Jehovah gives us much strength?

How Real Is the Kingdom to You?

- What has the Kingdom accomplished regarding God's name?
- How do you personally share in sanctifying God's name?
- Why are you proud to bear God's personal name and eager to tell others about its significance?

Living Up to Our Name (Isaiah 43:10-12)

1. Glorious Jehovah, almighty, eternal,
Perfect in justice, in power, in love.
Source of all truth and of infinite wisdom,
You rule as Sov'reign in heaven above.
We as your people delight in your service;
Your Kingdom truth we delight to proclaim.

(CHORUS)

*Being your Witnesses, great is our priv'lege.
Oh, may we ever live up to our name!*

2. Working together in your sacred service
Binds us as brothers in love and in peace.
Teaching the truth and reflecting your glory
Fill us with joy as your praises increase.
Known by your name, O Jehovah, our Father,
We have the honor to add to your fame.

(Chorus)

OCTOBER 2016

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
NOVEMBER 28–DECEMBER 25, 2016



COVER IMAGE:
LUXEMBOURG

Brothers working business territory witness to a mechanic in an auto repair garage. They use the tract *How Do You View the Bible?* to draw his attention to God's Word

POPULATION
562,958

PUBLISHERS
2,058

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE
(2015)
3,895

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“Do Not Forget Kindness to Strangers”

13 WEEK OF **DECEMBER 5-11**
**Maintain Your Spiritual Health
While Serving in a Foreign Field**

In recent years, the makeup of our congregations has become more diverse and international. The first article helps us to show genuine concern for those from a foreign background who attend meetings in our congregation. The second article discusses how those serving in a foreign field can maintain their spiritual health.

18 Do You “Safeguard Practical Wisdom”?

21 WEEK OF **DECEMBER 12-18**
**Strengthen Your Faith
in What You Hope For**

26 WEEK OF **DECEMBER 19-25**
**Exercise Your Faith
in Jehovah’s Promises**

These articles examine the two aspects of faith that are described at Hebrews 11:1. The first article shows how our faith can grow and remain strong. The second article shows how true faith is much more than just a mental understanding of the blessings that Jehovah has in store for us.

31 DID YOU KNOW?

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October 2016
Vol. 137, No. 15 ENGLISH

124 Receive Them With Hospitality **(Acts 17:7)**

1. Jehovah shows sincere hospitality.

He cares for all without partiality.

He gives both rain and sun,

withholding these from none;

He fills our hearts with food and good cheer.

Whenever we show favor to lowly ones,

We imitate our God as beloved sons.

Our Father will repay the goodness we display,

Our kindness that is truly sincere.

2. We never know the good that may come about

When we see those in need and we help them out.

Though strangers they may be, in hospitality,

We lend a hand to care for their needs.

Like Lydia of old, we say: 'Be my guest.'

When they come to our home,

they find peace and rest.

Our Father is aware of all those ev'rywhere,

Who imitate his merciful deeds.

“Do Not Forget Kindness to Strangers”

“Do not forget kindness to strangers.”

—HEB. 13:2, ftn.

SONGS: 124, 79

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

Why might we need to adjust our view of strangers?

**How did Boaz reflect Jehovah’s view of strangers
in his dealings with Ruth?**

How can we show kindness to strangers?

OVER 30 years ago, Osei,[1] who was not a Witness at that time, arrived in Europe from Ghana. He recalls: “I soon realized that most people did not care about me. The climate was also quite a shock. When I left

1, 2. (a) What challenges do many strangers face today? (See opening picture of the standard edition.) (b) What reminder did the apostle Paul give, and what questions does this raise?



“Do Not Forget Kindness to Strangers”

“Do not forget kindness to strangers.”—HEB. 13:2, fn.

Are we showing gracious hospitality to newcomers from other lands?
(See paragraphs 16, 17)



the airport and felt the cold for the first time in my life, I started crying.” Because he struggled with the language, Osei could not find a decent job for over a year. Being far away from his family, he felt alone and homesick.

2 Think about how you would like others to act toward you if you were in a similar situation. Would you not appreciate a warm welcome at the Kingdom Hall, regardless of your nationality or skin color? In fact, the Bible urges genuine Christians: “Do not forget kindness to strangers.” (Heb. 13:2, ftn.) So let us consider the following questions: How does Jehovah view strangers? Why might we need to adjust our view of strangers? And how can we help those from

a foreign background to feel at home in our congregation?

HOW JEHOVAH VIEWS STRANGERS

3 After Jehovah delivered his people from Egypt, he gave them a set of laws that showed special consideration for the many non-Israelites who had joined them. (Ex. 12:38, 49; 22:21) Since foreigners are often disadvantaged, Jehovah lovingly made provisions for them. The right to glean food was one such provision.—Lev. 19:9, 10.

4 Rather than order the Israelites to respect foreigners, Jehovah appealed to their empathy. (Read Exodus 23:9.) They knew ‘how it felt to be a foreigner.’ Even before they were reduced to slavery, the Hebrews

3, 4. According to Exodus 23:9, how were God’s ancient people expected to treat foreigners, and why?

were likely shunned by the Egyptians because of racial pride or religious prejudice. (Gen. 43:32; 46:34; Ex. 1:11-14) The Israelites had experienced a bitter life as foreign residents, but Jehovah expected them to treat the foreigner “like a native” among them.—Lev. 19:33, 34.

5 Today, we can be sure that Jehovah is equally concerned about people from a foreign background who attend meetings in our congregations. (Deut. 10:17-19; Mal. 3:5, 6) If we reflect on the challenges that they are facing, such as discrimination or the language barrier, we will look for ways to show them kindness and fellow feeling.—1 Pet. 3:8.

5. What will help us to reflect Jehovah’s concern for people from a foreign background?

DO WE NEED TO ADJUST OUR VIEW OF STRANGERS?

6 First-century Christians learned to overcome the deep-seated prejudices that prevailed among the Jews. At Pentecost 33 C.E., those living in Jerusalem extended hospitality to newly converted Christians from various lands. (Acts 2:5, 44-47) The loving concern of Jewish Christians for fellow believers from other lands showed that they understood the meaning of the word “hospitality,” that is, “kindness to strangers.”

7 As the early Christian congregation grew, however, a situation that apparently involved discrimination arose. Greek-speaking

6, 7. What shows that first-century Christians learned to overcome deep-seated prejudices?

Jews complained that their widows were not being treated fairly. (Acts 6:1) To settle this issue, the apostles appointed seven men to make sure that nobody was neglected. These men all had Greek names, which seems to indicate that the apostles wanted to ease any tensions over background that might have existed among the early Christians.—Acts 6: 2-6.

8 Whether we realize it or not, we are all deeply influenced by our culture. (Rom. 12:2) Moreover, we likely hear neighbors, fellow workers, or schoolmates make derogatory remarks about those of another background, tribe, or skin color. How deeply

8, 9. (a) What might indicate that we are harboring prejudice or racial pride? (b) What must we root out of our heart? (1 Pet. 1:22)

are we affected by such biased views? And how do we react when someone makes fun of our nationality—maybe by exaggerating some feature of our culture?

9 For a while, the apostle Peter harbored prejudice against non-Jews, but he gradually learned to eradicate negative views from his heart. (Acts 10:28, 34, 35; Gal. 2:11-14) Likewise, if we detect any trace of prejudice or racial pride in us, we should make a conscious effort to root it out of our heart. (Read 1 Peter 1:22.) We might reflect on the fact that none of us deserve salvation; we are all imperfect humans, regardless of our nationality. (Rom. 3:9, 10, 21-24) So why should we feel superior to anyone else? (1 Cor. 4:7) We should have a view like that of the apostle Paul, who admonished his

fellow anointed Christians that they were “no longer strangers and foreigners, but . . . members of the household of God.” (Eph. 2:19) Earnest effort to overcome prejudiced views regarding those who are of a different background will certainly help us to put on the new personality.—Col. 3:10, 11.

HOW TO SHOW KINDNESS TO STRANGERS

10 Boaz undoubtedly reflected Jehovah’s view of strangers in his dealings with Ruth the Moabitess. When he came to inspect his fields during the harvest, Boaz could not fail to notice a hardworking foreign woman gleaning behind his harvesters. On hearing that she had asked permission to glean

10, 11. How did Boaz reflect Jehovah’s view of strangers in his dealings with Ruth the Moabitess?

—even though she was within her full right to do so—Boaz generously allowed her to glean even among the sheaves.—Read Ruth 2:5-7, 15, 16.

11 The conversation that ensued shows that Boaz was clearly concerned about Ruth and her precarious situation as a foreigner. For one thing, he invited her to stay with his group of young women so that she would not be harassed by the men who were working in the field. He even made sure that she would get enough food and water, just like the hired workers. In addition, Boaz did not speak down to the poor foreign woman but, instead, reassured her.—Ruth 2:8-10, 13, 14.

12 Not only was Boaz moved by Ruth's

12. What positive effect can kindness have on newcomers from a foreign background?

unselfish love for her mother-in-law, Naomi, but he was also impressed that she had become a worshipper of Jehovah. Boaz' kindness was actually an expression of Jehovah's loyal love toward a woman who had come to 'seek refuge under the wings of the God of Israel.' (Ruth 2:12, 20; Prov. 19:17) Similarly today, our kindly demeanor can help "all sorts of people" recognize the truth and sense how much Jehovah loves them. —1 Tim. 2:3, 4.

13 We can show kindness to newcomers from a foreign background by warmly greeting them at the Kingdom Hall. We may have noticed that new immigrants are sometimes

13, 14. (a) Why should we make an earnest effort to greet strangers at the Kingdom Hall? (b) How can you overcome awkward feelings about approaching individuals from another culture?

shy and stay by themselves. Because of their upbringing or social status, they may feel inferior to those of another race or nationality. So we should take the initiative to show a warm and sincere interest in them. If available in your language, the *JW Language* app can help you learn how to greet newcomers in their mother tongue.—Read **Philippians 2:3, 4.**

14 You may feel awkward about approaching those from another culture. To overcome such feelings, you might tell them something about yourself. You may soon realize that you have more things in common than you have differences—real or imagined—and that each culture has its own strengths and weaknesses.

HELP ALL TO FEEL AT HOME

15 To help others feel at home in the congregation, honestly ask yourself, ‘If I were in a foreign country, how would I want to be treated?’ (Matt. 7:12) Be patient with those who are adjusting to a new country. At first, we may not fully understand their way of thinking or reacting. But rather than expect them to embrace our culture, why not accept them just the way they are?—Read Romans 15:7, footnote.

16 If we learn about the homeland and culture of those from a foreign background,

15. What will help us to be more understanding toward those who are adjusting to a new country?

16, 17. (a) What initiatives can we take in order to feel closer to those from another culture? (b) In what practical ways can we assist immigrants in our congregation?

we may find it easier to interact with them. We might include time in our family worship to do research on peoples we are not acquainted with in our congregation or territory. Another way to draw closer to those from another background is to invite them for a meal in our home. Since Jehovah has “opened to the nations the door to faith,” could we not open our own door to strangers who are “related to us in the faith”? —Acts 14:27; Gal. 6:10; Job 31:32.

17 By spending time with an immigrant family, we will better appreciate the extent of their efforts to adjust to our culture. We may realize, though, that they need practical help to learn the language. Also, could we direct them to local agencies that may help them

to obtain suitable housing or employment? Such initiatives may make a big difference in the life of a fellow believer.—Prov. 3:27.

18 Of course, immigrants will want to do their best to adjust to the culture of the new country. Ruth set a fine example in this regard. First, she showed respect for the customs of her new country by asking permission to glean. (Ruth 2:7) She did not take this right for granted as if others owed her something. Second, she readily expressed gratitude for the kindnesses shown to her. (Ruth 2:13) When immigrants display such a fine attitude, they are more likely to gain the respect of local residents and fellow believers.

18. What example of respect and gratitude can immigrants imitate today?

19 We rejoice that Jehovah in his undeserved kindness has allowed people from all backgrounds to hear the good news. In their home country, they may not have been able to take advantage of a Bible study or to associate freely with Jehovah’s people. But now that they have the opportunity to associate with us, should we not help them so that they no longer feel like strangers in our midst? Even though we may be limited in the material or practical help we can provide, our kindness to them reflects Jehovah’s love for them. As “imitators of God,” then, let us do our very best to welcome strangers among us. —Eph. 5:1, 2.

19. What reasons do we have for welcoming strangers among us?

ENDNOTE:

[1] (paragraph 1) Name has been changed.

The Power of Kindness (Ephesians 4:32)

1. We're grateful to know Jehovah, our God,
For in his Word we find:
Although he is great in wisdom and might,
Jehovah is loving and kind.
2. Christ Jesus invites the weary at heart
To leave their cares behind.
How kindly his yoke, how light is his load,
For he is refreshing and kind.
3. We see in our God and Jesus our Lord,
The persons we should be.
In all that we do, we want to reflect
Their kindness and true empathy.