

- Song 77 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Your Sons and Your Daughters Will Prophesy”:** (10 min.)
[Play the video *Introduction to Joel.*]
Joe 2:28, 29—Anointed Christians serve as spokesmen for Jehovah (*w02 8/1 15 ¶4-5; jd 167 ¶4*)
Joe 2:30-32—Only those who call on the name of Jehovah will be saved during his awe-inspiring day (*w07 10/1 13 ¶2*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Joe 2:12, 13—What do these verses teach us about true repentance? (*w07 10/1 13 ¶5*)

Joe 3:14—What is “the valley of the decision”? (*w07 10/1 13 ¶3*)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Joe 2:28–3:8

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) JW.ORG contact card
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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 30
- **Jehovah Helps Us to Endure Trials:** (9 min.) Play the video *Jehovah Is a Strong Tower for Me* (video category INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES). Then ask the audience: What trials did the Henschel family face? What impact can the faith and integrity of parents have on their children? How can Jehovah strengthen you as he did Brother Henschel?
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JOEL 1-3 | “Your Sons and Your Daughters Will Prophesy”


2:28, 29

Anointed Christians share in the work of prophesying. They speak about “the magnificent things of God” and proclaim the “good news of the Kingdom.” (Ac 2:11, 17-21; Mt 24:14) The other sheep support them by participating in this work

2:32

What does it mean to ‘call on the name of Jehovah’?

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- To respect the name
- To rely on and trust in the One who bears that name

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nwb17-10-E
170522

Light in a Darkened World

(2 Corinthians 4:6)

1. In these days, dark and lawless days,
Shines a light we can see.
Like the dawn of another day
That will soon come to be.

(CHORUS)

*Shining through the darkness,
Ours is a message so bright.
It offers hope and light—
Sparkling like the daylight,
Bringing tomorrow in sight—
So ends the night.*

2. Those who sleep need awakening
As the time ebbs away.
We give hope and encouragement.
For their future we'll pray.

(Chorus)

Joel 1-3

1 The word of Jehovah that came to Joel the son of Pe-thu'el:

2 "Hear this, you elders,
And pay attention, all you inhabitants of the land.
Has anything like this happened in your days
Or in the days of your forefathers?

3 Tell about it to your sons,
And let your sons tell about it to their sons,
And their sons to the next generation.

4 What was left by the devouring locust, the
swarming locust has eaten;
And what was left by the swarming locust, the
unwinged locust has eaten;
And what the unwinged locust has left, the
voracious locust has eaten.

5 Wake up, you drunkards, and weep!
Wail, all you wine drinkers,
Because the sweet wine has been taken from
your mouths.

6 For a nation has come up into my land, mighty and
without number.
Its teeth are the teeth of a lion, and its jaws are
those of a lion.

- ⁷ It has devastated my vine and turned my fig tree
into a stump,
Stripping them completely bare and tossing them
aside,
Leaving their twigs white.
- ⁸ Wail as a virgin wearing sackcloth does
For the bridegroom of her youth.
- ⁹ Grain offering and drink offering have ceased from
the house of Jehovah;
The priests, the ministers of Jehovah, are in
mourning.
- ¹⁰ The field has been devastated, the ground mourns;
For the grain has been devastated, the new wine
has dried up, the oil has failed.
- ¹¹ Farmers are dismayed, vinedressers wail,
Because of the wheat and the barley;
For the harvest of the field has perished.
- ¹² The vine has dried up,
The fig tree has withered.
The pomegranate, the palm, and the apple,
All the trees of the field have dried up;
For joy has turned to shame among the people.
- ¹³ Put on sackcloth and mourn, you priests;
Wail, you ministers of the altar.
Come in and spend the night in sackcloth, you
ministers of my God;

For grain offering and drink offering have been withheld from the house of your God.

¹⁴ Proclaim a fast; call for a solemn assembly.
Gather the elders together, with all the inhabitants of the land,
To the house of Jehovah your God, and cry to Jehovah for help.

¹⁵ Woe because of the day!
For the day of Jehovah is near,
And it will come like a destruction from the Almighty!

¹⁶ Has not food been taken from before our very eyes,
And rejoicing and joy from the house of our God?

¹⁷ The seeds have shriveled under their shovels.
Storehouses are desolate.
Granaries have been torn down, for the grain has dried up.

¹⁸ Even the livestock groan!
The herds of cattle wander in confusion, for they have no pasture!
And the flocks of sheep bear the punishment.

¹⁹ To you, O Jehovah, I will call;
For fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness,

And a flame has consumed all the trees of the field.

²⁰ Even the wild beasts long for you,
Because the streams of water have dried up
And fire has devoured the pastures of the wilderness.”

2 “Blow a horn in Zion!
Shout a war cry in my holy mountain.
Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble,
For the day of Jehovah is coming! It is near!

² It is a day of darkness and gloom,
A day of clouds and thick gloom,
Like light of dawn spreading out on the mountains.

There is a people numerous and mighty;
Never before has there been one like it,
And never again will there be another
Through the years of all generations.

³ Ahead of it a fire devours,
And behind it a flame consumes.
The land ahead of it is like the garden of E'den,
But behind it is a desolate wilderness,
And nothing can escape.

⁴ Its appearance is like the appearance of horses,
And they run like warhorses.

- ⁵ The sound is like that of chariots as they leap on
the mountaintops,
Like the crackling of a blazing fire that consumes
stubble.
It is like a mighty people drawn up in battle
formation.
- ⁶ Because of them, peoples will be in anguish.
Every face will grow flushed.
- ⁷ They charge like warriors,
They scale a wall like soldiers,
Each keeps to his own course,
And they do not swerve from their paths.
- ⁸ They do not shove one another;
Each man advances in his course.
If the weapons cause some to fall,
The others do not break ranks.
- ⁹ Into the city they rush, on the wall they run.
Onto the houses they climb, through the
windows they enter like a thief.
- ¹⁰ Before them the land trembles and the heavens
rock.
Sun and moon have become dark,
And the stars have lost their brightness.
- ¹¹ Jehovah will raise his voice before his army, for his
camp is very numerous.
For the one carrying out His word is mighty;

For the day of Jehovah is great and very awe-inspiring.

Who can endure it?"

¹² "Yet even now," declares Jehovah, "return to me with all your hearts,
With fasting and weeping and wailing.

¹³ Rip apart your hearts, and not your garments,
And return to Jehovah your God,
For he is compassionate and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in loyal love,
And he will reconsider the calamity.

¹⁴ Who knows whether he will turn back and reconsider
And leave behind a blessing,
A grain offering and a drink offering for Jehovah your God?

¹⁵ Blow a horn in Zion!
Proclaim a fast; call for a solemn assembly.

¹⁶ Gather the people; sanctify the congregation.
Collect the old men; gather the children and nursing infants.

Let the bridegroom go out from his inner chamber, and the bride from her bridal chamber.

¹⁷ Between the porch and the altar

Let the priests, the ministers of Jehovah, weep
and say:

‘Do feel pity, O Jehovah, for your people;
Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn,
Letting the nations rule over them.
Why should the peoples say, “Where is their
God?”’

¹⁸ Then Jehovah will be zealous for his land
And show compassion on his people.

¹⁹ Jehovah will answer his people:
‘Here I am sending to you grain and new wine
and oil,
And you will be fully satisfied;
I will no longer make you a reproach among the
nations.

²⁰ I will drive the northerner far away from you;
I will disperse him to a dry and desolate
wasteland,
With his vanguard toward the eastern sea
And his rear guard toward the western sea.
The foul smell from him will ascend,
The stench from him will keep ascending;
For He will do great things.’

²¹ Do not be afraid, O land.
Be joyful and rejoice, for Jehovah will do great
things.

- ²² Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field,
For the pastures of the wilderness will become
green,
And the trees will bear fruit;
The fig tree and the vine must give their full yield.
- ²³ You sons of Zion, be joyful and rejoice in Jehovah
your God;
For he will give you the autumn rain in the right
amount,
And he will send upon you a downpour,
The autumn rain and the spring rain, as before.
- ²⁴ The threshing floors will be full of pure grain,
And the presses will overflow with new wine and
oil.
- ²⁵ And I will make compensation to you for the years
That the swarming locust, the unwinged locust,
the voracious locust, and the devouring locust
have eaten,
My great army that I sent among you.
- ²⁶ You will surely eat to satisfaction,
And you will praise the name of Jehovah your
God,
Who has done wonders in your behalf;
My people will never again be put to shame.
- ²⁷ And you will have to know that I am in the midst of
Israel

And that I am Jehovah your God—there is no other!

My people will never again be put to shame.

²⁸ After that I will pour out my spirit on every sort of flesh,
And your sons and your daughters will prophesy,
Your old men will dream dreams,
And your young men will see visions.

²⁹ And even on my male slaves and female slaves
I will pour out my spirit in those days.

³⁰ And I will give wonders in the heavens and on the earth,
Blood and fire and columns of smoke.

³¹ The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon into blood
Before the coming of the great and awe-inspiring day of Jehovah.

³² And everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved;
For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who escape, just as Jehovah has said,
The survivors whom Jehovah calls.”

3 “For look! in those days and in that time,
When I bring back the captives of Judah and Jerusalem,

- ² I will also gather together all the nations
And bring them down to the Valley of
Je-hosh'a-phat.
I will enter into judgment with them there
In behalf of my people and my inheritance Israel,
For they scattered them among the nations,
And they divided up my land among themselves.
- ³ For my people they cast lots;
They would trade a boy to hire a prostitute
And sell a girl for wine to drink.
- ⁴ Also, what do you have against me,
O Tyre and Si'don and all the regions of
Phi-lis'ti-a?
Are you repaying me for something?
If you are repaying me,
I will swiftly, speedily bring your repayment on
your heads.
- ⁵ Because you have taken my silver and gold,
And you have brought my finest treasures into
your temples;
- ⁶ And the people of Judah and Jerusalem you have
sold to the Greeks,
In order to remove them far from their territory;
- ⁷ Here I am rousing them to come from the place
where you sold them,
And I will bring your repayment on your heads.

- ⁸ I will sell your sons and daughters into the hand of
the people of Judah,
And they will sell them to the men of She'ba, to a
nation far away;
For Jehovah himself has spoken it.
- ⁹ Proclaim this among the nations:
'Prepare for war! Stir up the mighty men!
Let all the soldiers draw near, let them advance!
- ¹⁰ Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning
shears into spears.
Let the weak one say: "I am powerful."
- ¹¹ Come and help, all you surrounding nations,
assemble together!"
To that place, O Jehovah, bring down your
powerful ones.
- ¹² "Let the nations be roused and come up to the
Valley of Je-hosh'a-phat;
For there I will sit in order to judge all the
surrounding nations.
- ¹³ Thrust in a sickle, for the harvest is ripe.
Come down and tread, for the winepress is full.
The vats overflow, for their badness is abundant.
- ¹⁴ Crowds, crowds are in the valley of the decision,
For the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of
the decision.

- 15 Sun and moon will become dark,
And the stars will lose their brightness.
- 16 And Jehovah will roar out of Zion,
Out of Jerusalem he will raise his voice.
And heaven and earth will rock;
But Jehovah will be a refuge for his people,
A fortress for the people of Israel.
- 17 And you will have to know that I am Jehovah your
God, residing in Zion, my holy mountain.
Jerusalem will become a holy place,
And strangers will pass through her no more.
- 18 In that day the mountains will drip with sweet wine,
The hills will flow with milk,
And the streams of Judah will all flow with water.
Out of the house of Jehovah a spring will flow,
And it will irrigate the Valley of the Acacia Trees.
- 19 But Egypt will become desolate,
And E'dom will be a desolate wilderness,
Because of the violence done to the people of
Judah,
In whose land they shed innocent blood.
- 20 But Judah will always be inhabited,
And Jerusalem to generation after generation.
- 21 I will consider innocent their blood that I had not
considered innocent;
And Jehovah will reside in Zion.”

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nwb17-10-E
170522

October 30–November 5

Treasures From God's Word

Joel 2:28, 29—Anointed Christians serve as spokesmen for Jehovah

Reference: w02 8/1 15 paragraphs 4-5

4 Having received the holy spirit, the disciples in Jerusalem lost no time in sharing the good news of salvation with others, beginning with the crowd who had gathered that morning. Their preaching fulfilled a remarkable prophecy, recorded eight centuries earlier by Joel, the son of Pethuel: “I shall pour out my spirit on every sort of flesh, and your sons and your daughters will certainly prophesy. As for your old men, dreams they will dream. As for your young men, visions they will see. And even on the menservants and on the maidservants in those days I shall pour out my spirit . . . before the coming of the great and fear-inspiring day of Jehovah.”—Joel 1:1; 2:28, 29, 31; Acts 2:17, 18, 20.

5 Did this mean that God was going to raise up a whole generation of prophets, both male and female, in the manner of David, Joel, and Deborah, and use them to foretell future events? No. Christian ‘sons and daughters, menservants and maidservants’ would prophesy in the sense that they would be impelled by Jehovah’s spirit to declare “the magnificent things” that

Jehovah had done and would still do. So they would serve as spokesmen for the Most High. How, though, did the crowd react?—**Hebrews 1:1, 2.**

Reference: jd 167 **paragraph 4.**

Look at the matter from another standpoint. Jehovah God told the prophet Joel of a time when people of every sort would prophesy, so to speak: “After that it must occur that I shall pour out my spirit on every sort of flesh, and your sons and your daughters will certainly prophesy. As for your old men, dreams they will dream. As for your young men, visions they will see.” (Joel 2:28-32) On the day of Pentecost 33 C.E., the apostle Peter applied this passage to the pouring out of holy spirit upon those who were gathered in an upper chamber in Jerusalem and to their subsequent preaching of “the magnificent things of God.” (**Acts 1:12-14; 2:1-4, 11, 14-21**) Now consider our time. Joel’s prophecy has been undergoing its major fulfillment since early in the 20th century. Spirit-anointed Christians—male and female, old and young—began to “prophesy,” that is, to declare “the magnificent things of God,” including the good news of the Kingdom, now established in the heavens.

Joel 2:30-32—Only those who call on the name of Jehovah will be saved during his awe-inspiring day

Reference: w07 10/1 13 **paragraph 2**.

What does it mean to ‘call on the name of Jehovah’? To call on God’s name means to know that name, to respect it deeply, and to rely upon and trust in the bearer of that name.—**Romans 10:13, 14**.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Joel 2:12, 13—What do these verses teach us about true repentance?

Reference: w07 10/1 13 **paragraph 5**.

Genuine repentance is heartfelt. It involves an inward ‘ripping apart of our hearts,’ not an outward ‘ripping apart of garments.’

Joel 3:14—What is “the valley of the decision”?

Reference: w07 10/1 13 **paragraph 3**.

It is a symbolic place for meting out God’s judgment. In the days of Judean King Jehoshaphat, whose name means “Jehovah Is Judge,” God delivered Judah from surrounding nations by confusing their military forces. Hence, the place is also called “the low plain of Jehoshaphat.” (**Joel 3:2, 12**) In our day, it represents a symbolic location in which nations will be crushed like grapes in a winepress.—Revelation 19:15.

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Are You Making Good Use of JW.ORG Contact Cards?

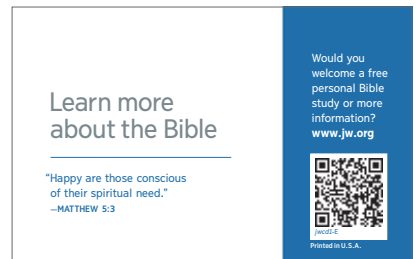
In view of the approaching great tribulation, our preaching work is urgent. (Pr 24:11, 12, 20) To help people, we can use contact cards to direct their attention to God’s Word and to our website. The card contains a code that leads to the video *Why Study the Bible?* and an invitation to request more information or a Bible study. Some people are not inclined to accept literature but are willing to visit our website. Do not hesitate to give them a contact card. However, do not leave contact cards with those who show no interest.

As you go about your daily activities, you could generate someone’s interest simply by saying: “I have something I would like to give you. This card directs you to a website that has free information and videos on a variety of subjects.” (Joh 4:7) Because the contact cards are small, you can likely keep a few with you to share with others at every opportunity.



OFFER A CONTACT CARD . . .

- when witnessing informally
- when witnessing in business territory
- when someone listens to our message but is not inclined to accept literature



KEEP BUILDING FAITH IN JEHOVAH'S RIGHTEOUS REQUIREMENTS

³ First of all, we need to strengthen our faith in divine law. In the course of studying this book, you have considered a number of Jehovah's righteous requirements regarding conduct. What is your view of them? Satan would like to mislead you into viewing Jehovah's laws, principles, and standards as restrictive, even oppressive. He has been using this tactic ever since it proved so effective way back in Eden. (Genesis 3:1-6) Will his tactic work on you? Much will depend on your point of view.

⁴ To illustrate: As you walk along in a pleasant park, you notice a sturdy high fence blocking off part of the grounds. The landscape beyond the fence looks inviting. At first, you might view the fence as a needless restriction of your freedom. As you look through it, though, you notice a ferocious lion stalking prey on the other side! Now you see the fence for what it is—a protection. Is there a dangerous predator stalking you right now? God's Word warns: "Keep your senses, be watchful. Your adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone."—1 Peter 5:8.

3-5. (a) Satan would like to mislead you into having what view of Jehovah's requirements? (b) What should be our viewpoint of God's requirements, and what effect should it have on how we feel? Illustrate.

⁵ Satan is a vicious predator. Because Jehovah does not want us to become Satan's prey, He has instituted laws to protect us from the many "crafty acts" of that wicked one. (Ephesians 6:11, footnote) So whenever we meditate on God's laws, we should see in them the love of our heavenly Father. Viewed in that light, God's laws are a source of security and joy. The disciple James wrote: "He who peers into the perfect law that belongs to freedom and who persists in it . . . will be happy in his doing it." —James 1:25.

⁶ Living by God's commandments is the best way to build up our faith in the Lawgiver and in the wisdom of his laws. For example, "the law of the Christ" includes Jesus' command to teach others "all the things [he has] commanded." (Galatians 6:2; Matthew 28:19, 20) Christians also take seriously the directive to keep on meeting together for worship and upbuilding association. (Hebrews 10:24, 25) God's commandments include, too, the exhortation to pray to Jehovah regularly and often and from the heart. (Matthew 6:5-8; 1 Thessalonians 5:17) As we live by such commands, we see ever more clearly what

6. What is the best way to build faith in God's righteous laws and principles? Give an example.

30 *My Father, My God and Friend* (Hebrews 6:10)

1. Life in this world can be hard.

Life in this world can bring tears and pain.
Still ev'ry day I will say,
"My life is not in vain."

(CHORUS)

*For God is not unrighteous,
And he remembers the love I've shown.
So he is ever near me;
With Jehovah, I'm not alone.
Yes, God is my provider
and my protector down to the end.
Yes, Jehovah is my Father,
My God and Friend.*

2. Gone are the days of my youth;
Days of calamity now are here.
Still through the eyes of my faith,
My hope is bright and clear.

(Chorus)

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[Play the video *Introduction to Joel.*]
Joe 2:28, 29—Anointed Christians serve as spokesmen for Jehovah (*w02 8/1 15 ¶4-5; jd 167 ¶4*)
Joe 2:30-32—Only those who call on the name of Jehovah will be saved during his awe-inspiring day (*w07 10/1 13 ¶2*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Joe 2:12, 13—What do these verses teach us about true repentance? (*w07 10/1 13 ¶5*)

Joe 3:14—What is “the valley of the decision”? (*w07 10/1 13 ¶3*)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Joe 2:28–3:8

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) JW.ORG contact card
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) JW.ORG contact card —The card was placed on the preceding visit. Continue the conversation, and conclude by introducing a video from *jw.org*.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *lv 196-197 ¶3-5*

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 30
- **Jehovah Helps Us to Endure Trials:** (9 min.) Play the video *Jehovah Is a Strong Tower for Me* (video category INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES). Then ask the audience: What trials did the Henschel family face? What impact can the faith and integrity of parents have on their children? How can Jehovah strengthen you as he did Brother Henschel?
- **Become Jehovah’s Friend—Jehovah’s Name:** (6 min.) Play the video *Become Jehovah’s Friend —Jehovah’s Name* (video category CHILDREN). Then invite selected young children to the stage, and ask them: What does Jehovah’s name mean? What did Jehovah create? How can Jehovah help you?
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *kr chap. 20 ¶17-19; boxes on pp. 216, 218-219; review box on p. 217*
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 106 and Prayer

JOEL 1-3 | “Your Sons and Your Daughters Will Prophesy”


2:28, 29

Anointed Christians share in the work of prophesying. They speak about “the magnificent things of God” and proclaim the “good news of the Kingdom.” (Ac 2:11, 17-21; Mt 24:14) The other sheep support them by participating in this work

2:32

What does it mean to ‘call on the name of Jehovah’?

- To know the name
- To respect the name
- To rely on and trust in the One who bears that name

 Ask yourself, ‘How can I support the anointed in their work of prophesying?’



IT SHAPED THE COURSE OF HIS LIFE

WHAT impact may taking part in relief work have on young ones? Consider what happened to **Peter Johnson**, who did so for the first time at age 18. He recalls: “Seeing the gratefulness of the brothers and feeling the joy that comes from giving touched me deeply. It reinforced my desire to use my life to serve Jehovah to the fullest extent.” Thereafter, Peter started pioneering. He also worked at Bethel and later began serving as a member of a Regional Building Committee. “Doing relief work that first time back in 1974,” says Peter today, “shaped the course of my life.” Are you young? Could you follow Peter’s example? Who knows how relief work may shape the course of *your* life in Jehovah’s service!

Box on page 216

exactly what relief workers today experience. “Doing relief work made me feel closer to my brothers than ever before,” says an elder who helped in flood relief. One grateful sister who received relief aid put it this way, “Our brotherhood is the closest thing we have to Paradise on earth.”—**Read Proverbs 17:17.**

¹⁷ When relief workers arrive at the scene of a

17. (a) How do the words found at Isaiah 41:13 apply to relief work? (b) Mention some examples of how relief work honors Jehovah and strengthens our bond of union. (See also the box “Volunteers Around the World Bring Relief.”)

disaster, our afflicted brothers experience in a special way the truth of God's promise: "I, Jehovah your God, am grasping your right hand, the One saying to you, 'Do not be afraid. I will help you.'" (Isa. 41:13) After surviving a disaster, a sister said: "I felt hopeless seeing the damage, but Jehovah extended his hand. The help I received from the brothers is indescribable." After a disaster devastated their area, two elders wrote in behalf of the congregations where they serve: "The earthquake caused great pain, but we experienced the help that Jehovah provides through our brothers. We had read about relief work, but now we saw it carried out in front of our eyes."

Can You Have a Part?

¹⁸ Would you like to taste the joy that relief work provides? If so, keep in mind that relief workers are often selected from those who work on Kingdom Hall construction projects. So mention to your elders that you would like to fill out an application form. An elder with much experience in relief work gives

18. What can you do if you want to share in relief work? (See also the box "It Shaped the Course of His Life.")

this reminder: “Travel to a disaster area only after you have received an official invitation from a Disaster Relief Committee to do so.” In that way, our relief work will proceed in an orderly manner.

¹⁹ Relief work is indeed an outstanding way in which we obey Christ’s command to “love one another.” By showing such love, we demonstrate that we are truly Christ’s disciples. (John 13:34, 35) What a blessing it is for us today to have so many willing workers who bring glory to Jehovah as they provide needed relief to those who loyally support God’s Kingdom!

19. How do relief workers help greatly in demonstrating that we are truly Christ’s disciples?

How Real Is the Kingdom to You?

- How do we know that relief work is part of our sacred service to Jehovah?
- What are three main objectives of our relief efforts?
- Relief work brings what lasting benefits?
- How does relief work relate to Jesus’ command found at John 13:34?

VOLUNTEERS AROUND THE WORLD BRING RELIEF

CENTRAL AND WEST AFRICA

In 1994, some 800,000 or more people in Rwanda were killed in tribal genocide. In the aftermath of that massacre, unrest spread to other lands in Central Africa, resulting in overcrowded refugee camps. To help their afflicted fellow believers, Jehovah's Witnesses in Belgium, France, and Switzerland airlifted some 300 tons of clothing, medicine, tents, food, and other supplies. Within weeks, those supplies reached our needy brothers.

Also in Africa, a team of ten Witness doctors and nurses from France have been providing relief to our brothers to alleviate their suffering caused by civil war, famine, and disease. In the past two years alone, the team handled over 10,000 medical consultations. Their work brings praise to Jehovah and his organization. "When we arrive in an area to help our brothers and sisters," relates one of the nurses, "people say with respect: 'These are Jehovah's Witnesses. They have come to help their brothers.'" After receiving help from a nurse, one Witness exclaimed: "Thank you, my sister. Thank you, Jehovah!"

At times, relief work may also be needed when severe accidents occur. In 2012, a road accident in Nigeria killed

13 Witnesses, all belonging to one small congregation, and left 54 others seriously injured. A relief committee organized around-the-clock personal care for each victim. When a hospital patient observed the outpouring of support that the injured brothers and sisters received, she telephoned her pastor, saying: “No one from our church has visited me. Come to the hospital and see love in action among Jehovah’s Witnesses!”

Though our dear brothers in that small congregation suffered a painful loss, they felt comforted by the expressions of love they received from their fellow believers. Furthermore, after observing the loving care that the relief workers showered on the afflicted brothers, several individuals in that congregation were moved to intensify their ministry. Before the accident, the congregation had 35 publishers. Within a year, that number had grown to 60.

AUSTRALIA

In 2013, parts of Queensland’s coast were hit by a flood that left 70 Witnesses homeless. Mark and Rhonda and their daughter fled their flooded home and ended up in an evacuation center. The place was packed. “It was basically standing room only,” relates Rhonda. The deafening noise from the helicopters that were landing and departing close-by added to the tense atmosphere in the

center. Worried, she asked her husband, “What are we going to do?” Mark fervently prayed to Jehovah, asking for help. “About 30 minutes later,” says Rhonda, “a car arrived at the center, and three brothers got out. When we met, they said: ‘We’re taking you with us. You will stay at a brother’s house.’” Adds Rhonda: “It’s hard to describe the overwhelming emotion we felt at that moment for the loving care of Jehovah’s organization.”

Over 250 volunteers rushed to that same disaster area to help their brothers. Says an elderly brother: “A group of Witnesses came out of nowhere and toiled like ants to clear up the mess in my home. My wife and I will never forget how they came to our aid.”

BRAZIL

In 2008, mudslides and floods in the state of Santa Catarina forced some 80,000 people out of their homes. It was like a “tsunami of clay, mud and trees,” said a resident. Some brothers found shelter in an Assembly Hall. “They escaped with only the clothes they were wearing, all soaked with mud,” relates Márcio, the hall’s caretaker. Says one sister: “Our house collapsed. It was painful to see it disappear in seconds, but I will never forget how our brothers and sisters comforted us. We received so many expressions of love! The experience taught me how wise it is to treasure spiritual things.”

Mudslides have devastated entire neighborhoods on the mountain slopes near the city of Rio de Janeiro. To respond effectively to such recurring disasters, the brothers formed a permanent Disaster Relief Committee. When there is a threat of imminent mudslides, monitors (assigned brothers living in the affected area) alert the committee. Quickly, volunteers arrive in trucks marked with the sign “Jehovah’s Witnesses—Humanitarian Aid.” All members of the well-equipped rescue crews have preassigned tasks. The workers wear vests that clearly identify them as Jehovah’s Witnesses. Together with brothers of the Hospital Liaison Committees, they provide aid to injured brothers and sisters. Relief workers bring in food, water, medical supplies, clothing, and cleaning products. Cleaning mud from houses is a huge task. After one recent mudslide, it took 60 volunteers to remove four truckloads of mud from just one home!

106 *Cultivating the Quality of Love*

(1 Corinthians 13:1-8)

1. We humbly bow to our God in prayer,
That all his qualities we may share.
But most important of all those things
Is love, which having his spirit brings.
We may be talented, wise, or bold,
But we are nothing if love grows cold.
We pray for love that is warm and true,
Revealed in all that we say and do.
2. Love looks for ways to give graciously
And thinks of others unselfishly.
Love never harbors a hateful thought,
Forgives our brothers, as Jesus taught.
Love helps us patiently suffer wrong,
Bears heavy loads when it's really strong.
Through ev'ry trial let love prevail;
It bears all things; it will never fail.

SEPTEMBER 2017

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
OCTOBER 23–NOVEMBER 26, 2017

**LARGE
PRINT
EDITION**



COVER IMAGE:

EL SALVADOR

Two couples share in public witnessing, using carts in front of one of the biggest malls in San Salvador

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4 WEEK OF OCTOBER 23-29

Cultivate Self-Control

Jehovah is the supreme example of self-control. How can humans imitate him in exercising this quality? And what practical steps can you take to strengthen your self-control?

16 WEEK OF OCTOBER 30–NOVEMBER 5

Imitate Jehovah's Compassion

What does it mean to be compassionate? Both Jehovah and Jesus have set perfect examples of exercising this quality. In what practical ways, though, can we imitate their examples? And what good results can we obtain from doing so?

57 *Preaching to All Sorts of People*

(1 Timothy 2:4)

1. We really want to imitate our God,
To be impartial, as we know he is.
To save all sorts of people is his will;
He welcomes all to come and to be his.

(CHORUS)

*It's the person, not the place;
It's the heart and not the face.
God's message to all people we extend.
So because we really care,
We keep preaching ev'rywhere:
"All sorts of people can become God's friend."*

2. It doesn't matter where they may be found
Or what at first they might appear to be.
What really counts is what they are at heart—
The inner self, the one Jehovah sees.

(Chorus)

3. Jehovah welcomes all who make the choice
To leave the world and all its ways behind.
This we have learned, and this we want to share,
And so we preach to people of all kinds.

(Chorus)



SONGS:

57, 147

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

Why can it sometimes be a challenge to show compassion?

How does Jehovah teach his people to manifest compassion?

In what circumstances can you exercise the godly quality of compassion?

Imitate Jehovah's Compassion

“Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and compassionate.”—EX. 34:6.

ON ONE occasion, God revealed himself to Moses by declaring His own name and qualities. The first ones that he listed were mercy and compassion. (Read Exodus 34:5-7.) Jehovah could have stressed his power or his wisdom.

1. In what special way did Jehovah reveal himself to Moses, and why is this significant?

Yet, to Moses, who was seeking reassurance of God's backing, Jehovah emphasized instead qualities that underscore his willingness to help his servants. (Ex. 33:13) Do you not find it heartwarming that God mentioned these endearing traits ahead of any others? This article will focus on the quality of compassion, a sympathetic awareness of another's suffering or adversity coupled with a desire to lessen it.

² Humans were made in God's image. Accordingly, because Jehovah is compassionate, interest in others' well-being is rooted in human nature. Even those who do not know the true God often show compassion. (Gen. 1:27) We find many accounts in the Bible where a sense of compassion shines through. Recall the account of the two prostitutes who argued before Solomon over which one of them was the actual mother of a child. When Solomon put them to the test by ordering that the baby be cut in half, the real mother's compassion was stirred. That moved her to act, even at the cost of giving the child up to the other woman. (1 Ki. 3:23-27) Or recall Pharaoh's daughter who saved baby Moses' life.

2, 3. (a) What shows that compassion is part of human nature?
(b) Why should you be interested in what the Bible says about compassion?

Though she realized that the infant she had found was a child of the Hebrews and should not be kept alive, “she felt compassion for him” and decided to raise the child as her own.—Ex. 2:5, 6.

³ Why should the topic of compassion interest you? Because the Bible urges you to imitate Jehovah. (Eph. 5:1) Yet, while humans were created to be compassionate, our imperfection as descendants of Adam inclines us toward self-interest. Sometimes we may find that it is not easy to decide whether we will help others or concentrate on ourselves. For some, this is an ongoing conflict, or a balancing act. What can help you to develop and maintain your interest in others? First, take time to examine how Jehovah has shown compassion and how others have shown it. Second, consider how you can imitate God’s example and how your doing so is truly beneficial.

JEHOVAH—THE PERFECT MODEL OF COMPASSION

⁴ We find many instances where Jehovah’s compassion must have been involved. Think of what God did for Lot. That righteous man was “greatly dis-

4. (a) Why did Jehovah send angels to Sodom? (b) What does the account about Lot and his daughters teach us?

tressed” by the brazen conduct of the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah. Indeed, God determined that those immoral people deserved to die. (2 Pet. 2:7, 8) God sent angels to rescue Lot. They urged him and his family to flee from the doomed cities. “When he kept lingering, then because of Jehovah’s compassion for him, the [angels] seized hold of his hand and the hand of his wife and the hands of his two daughters, and they brought him out and stationed him outside the city.” (Gen. 19:16) Does that example not indicate that Jehovah is fully aware of the difficult situations in which his faithful people sometimes find themselves?—Isa. 63:7-9; Jas. 5:11, fn.; 2 Pet. 2:9.

⁵ Not only has Jehovah shown compassion but he has also taught his people the need to display that quality. Consider the law given to Israel regarding the seizing of a man’s garment as security for a loan. (Read Exodus 22:26, 27.) A hard-hearted lender might have been tempted to seize the debtor’s garment, leaving him without a covering in which to sleep. Yet, Jehovah taught his people to avoid such an unfeeling attitude and course. His people were to be compassionate. Does not the principle reflected

5. How does God’s Word, such as at 1 John 3:17, help us learn to show compassion?

in that particular law move us to action? Would we want to leave our brothers out in the cold, so to speak, if there is something that we can do to relieve their suffering?—Col. 3:12; Jas. 2:15, 16; read **1 John 3:17**.

⁶ Jehovah felt compassion for his people Israel even when they sinned. We read: “Jehovah the God of their forefathers kept warning them by means of his messengers, warning them again and again, because he felt compassion for his people and for his dwelling place.” (2 Chron. 36:15) Should we not feel similar compassion for people who could potentially repent over a sinful life course and gain God’s favor? Jehovah does not want any to be destroyed in the coming judgment. (2 Pet. 3:9) So until God acts to destroy the wicked, let us continue to proclaim his compassionate warning message.

⁷ Many experiences could be used to illustrate God’s acts of compassion. Consider what happened to the family of a 12-year-old lad whom we will call Milan. It was during a time of ethnic strife in the early 1990’s. Milan, his brother, his parents, and a

6. What lesson can we draw from Jehovah’s persistent efforts to reform the sinful Israelites?

7, 8. Why did one family believe that Jehovah had exercised compassion toward them?

number of other Witnesses were riding on a bus from Bosnia to Serbia. They were on their way to a convention at which Milan's parents intended to get baptized. But at the border, soldiers pulled the family off the bus because of their ethnicity; yet, they allowed the other brothers to proceed. After holding the family for two days, the officer in charge radioed his superior to ask what should be done with them. The officer was standing right in front of the family, so all heard the response, "Just take them out and shoot them!"

⁸ As the officer spoke to his men, two strangers came up to the family and quietly identified themselves as Witnesses. They had heard of the crisis from others on the bus. The two told Milan and his brother to get into their car to cross the border, as the children's papers were not being checked. The newcomers then told the parents to walk around the back of the border post and meet them on the other side. Milan did not know whether to laugh or to cry at this suggestion. "Do you think they are just going to let us walk off?" his parents asked. Yet, as they walked away, it seemed as if the soldiers were staring right through them. The parents and children were reunited on the other side of the border. They proceeded to the convention city, convinced

that Jehovah had answered their desperate prayers for help. We know from the Bible that there have been times when Jehovah did not directly intervene to protect his servants. (Acts 7:58-60) Yet, Milan shares how he felt. He says, “It seemed to me that the angels blinded the soldiers and that Jehovah rescued us.”—Ps. 97:10.

⁹ We can learn a lesson from Jesus. He felt compassion for the crowds he met, for “they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd.” How did he react to their pitiful state? “He started to teach them many things.” (Matt. 9:36; read Mark 6:34.) His attitude was in stark contrast to that of the Pharisees, who had no desire to help the common people. (Matt. 12:9-14; 23:4; John 7:49) Do you not feel a yearning, similar to what Jesus had, to feed spiritually famished people?

¹⁰ That is not to say that compassion is to be shown in every situation. God’s compassion was appropriate in the Bible examples mentioned above. However, King Saul was disobedient when he showed what he may have felt was compassion. He

9. How did Jesus respond to the condition of the crowds who followed him? (See opening picture.)

10, 11. Is compassion always appropriate? Explain.

spared the life of Agag, an enemy of God's people, and he also spared the best of the flock. Consequently, Jehovah rejected Saul from being king over Israel. (1 Sam. 15:3, 9, 15, ftn.) Jehovah, of course, is the righteous Judge. He can read people's hearts, and he knows when compassion is not warranted. (Lam. 2:17; Ezek. 5:11) The time is coming when he will execute judgment on all those who refuse to obey him. (2 Thess. 1:6-10) That will not be the time for him to show compassion for those whom he has judged to be wicked. Rather, executing them will be an appropriate expression of God's compassion for the righteous, whom he will preserve.

¹¹ Clearly, it is not our role to judge whether people should be executed or preserved alive. Instead, we need to do all we can now to *help* people. So how can we manifest fitting compassion for our fellow man in practical ways? Consider a number of suggestions.

CULTIVATING AND SHOWING APPROPRIATE COMPASSION

¹² *Be helpful in everyday life.* Showing compassion for one's neighbor and Christian brothers is a basic

12. How can you show a compassionate attitude in your dealings with others?

requirement of those who strive to imitate Jesus. (John 13:34, 35; 1 Pet. 3:8) One meaning of compassion is “to suffer together.” A person who shows compassion is moved to relieve others’ suffering, perhaps by helping them out of their difficulties. Seek opportunities to do so! For example, could you help someone by offering to perform a necessary chore, maybe running an errand for him?—Matt. 7:12.

Show your compassion for others by offering practical help
(See [paragraph 12](#))



¹³ *Share in relief work.* The sufferings of those struck by disasters move many to manifest compassion. Jehovah’s people are known for coming forward to help in such times of need. (1 Pet. 2:17) One Japanese sister lived in an area that was seriously damaged by the earthquake and tsunami of 2011. She says that she was “very encouraged and comforted” by the efforts of the many volunteers from elsewhere in Japan and from overseas to repair property damage. She writes: “This experience helped me to realize that Jehovah cares. And fellow Witnesses care about one another. Many brothers and sisters all over the world are praying for us.”

¹⁴ *Assist the sick and the elderly.* When we see others experiencing the effects of Adamic sin, we are rightly moved to show compassion. We long to see sickness and aging brought to an end. So we pray for God’s Kingdom to come. In the meantime, we do what we can to assist those in need. Consider what one author wrote about his elderly mother, who suffered from Alzheimer’s disease. One day, she soiled her clothes. As she was trying to clean up, the doorbell rang. The visitors turned out to be two

13. What qualities of God’s people become particularly evident in the aftermath of disasters?

14. How can you assist the sick and the elderly?

Witnesses who regularly called on the woman. The sisters asked if there was anything they could do to help. “It is embarrassing but yes,” the woman replied. The visitors helped her to clean up. Then they made her a cup of tea and stayed for a chat. The son was most grateful. “Hats off to these Witnesses,” he wrote. “They practice what they preach.” Does your compassion for the sick and the elderly move you to do all *you* can to lessen their suffering?—Phil. 2:3, 4.

¹⁵ *Help people spiritually.* People’s problems and worries move us to want to help them spiritually. The best way we can do that is by teaching them about God and about what his Kingdom will do for mankind. Another way is by helping them to see the wisdom of living by godly standards. (Isa. 48:17, 18) Could you increase the share you are having in the ministry, a work that truly honors Jehovah and manifests your compassion for others?—1 Tim. 2:3, 4.

COMPASSION IS GOOD FOR YOU TOO!

¹⁶ Mental-health experts say that practicing compassion can improve your health, well-being, and relationships. When you relieve the suffering of oth-

15. What important opportunities does our preaching work offer?

16. How does a compassionate person benefit himself?

ers, you will feel happier, more optimistic, less lonely, and less inclined to think negative thoughts. Yes, your showing compassion will benefit you. (Eph. 4: 31, 32) Christians who lovingly seek to help others are rewarded with a good conscience, knowing that they are acting in harmony with godly principles. Having such a disposition makes for a more caring parent, a better spouse, and a better friend. Those who are quick to show compassion are, in turn, more likely to receive help and support when they need it.—Read Matthew 5:7; Luke 6:38.

¹⁷ Knowing that compassion is good for you should not be your main reason for wanting to cultivate it. The principal reason should be your desire to imitate and glorify the Source of love and compassion, Jehovah God. (Prov. 14:31) He sets the perfect example for us. May we do all we can, then, to imitate him—to promote warm affection among our brothers and good relations with our neighbors by showing compassion.—Gal. 6:10; 1 John 4:16.

17. Why do you want to cultivate and show compassion?

147 *Life Everlasting Is Promised*

(Psalm 37:29)

1. Life everlasting is promised.
Our earthly home will endure.
'Meek ones will thrive,' said the psalmist.
This grand future is sure.

(CHORUS)

*We can live forever.
It's worth all endeavor.
God's promise is faithful.
His Word will come true.*

2. Paradise brought to perfection;
All of God's children set free.
Under Jehovah's direction,
Peace on earth we will see.

(Chorus)

3. Soon in the grand resurrection,
Sorrow will all disappear.
Showering tender affection,
God will dry ev'ry tear.

(Chorus)

