

Sunday, May 16

If this is how God loved us, then we are also under obligation to love one another.—1 John 4:11.

God's great love for us will move us to love our brothers. (1 John 4: 20, 21) We might think that love for our brothers and sisters will come naturally. After all, we worship Jehovah and strive to imitate his fine qualities. We follow the example of Jesus, whose love was so great that he gave his life in our behalf. Yet, we may at times find it difficult to obey the commandment to love one another. Euodia and Syntyche were zealous sisters who had served "side by side" with the apostle Paul. Yet, they had perhaps allowed personal differences to cause a rift between them. In his letter to the congregation where those sisters served, Paul specifically named Euodia and Syntyche and gave them pointed admonition "to be of the same mind." (Phil. 4: 2, 3) Paul felt compelled to instruct the entire congregation: "Keep doing all things free from murmuring and arguments."—Phil. 2:14. *w19.08 9 ¶6-7*

Monday, May 17

Go on carrying the burdens of one another.—Gal. 6:2.

Commendably, many congregations and individuals do what they can to enable those in full-time service to remain in their assignments. They do so by encouraging them to continue their work, by giving them financial or other material support, or by helping them to care for their family members back home. If those in full-time service receive a new assignment to your congregation, do

not view the change of assignment as an indication that they somehow failed or were disciplined. Instead, help them to make the transition easier. Give them a warm welcome and commend them for the work they have done, even if poor health limits what they can do at present. Get to know them. Learn from their wealth of knowledge, training, and experience. Initially, those receiving a new assignment may need your help to obtain housing, transportation, work, and other basic necessities. *w19.08 23-24 ¶12-13*

Tuesday, May 18

*I [will] sanctify myself through you before their eyes, O Gog.
—Ezek. 38:16.*

Gog will trust in his "arm of flesh"—his military might. (2 Chron. 32:8) We will trust in Jehovah our God—a stand that will seem foolish to the nations. After all, the gods of the once powerful Babylon the Great did not save her from "the wild beast" and its "ten horns"! (Rev. 17: 16) So Gog will expect an easy victory. "Like clouds covering the land," he will attack Jehovah's people. But Gog will soon see that he has marched into a trap. Like Pharaoh at the Red Sea, Gog will learn that he is fighting against Jehovah. (Ex. 14:1-4; Ezek. 38:3, 4, 18, 21-23) Christ and his heavenly armies will defend God's people and crush Gog's hordes. (Rev. 19:11, 14, 15) But what about Jehovah's chief enemy, Satan, whose lying propaganda led the nations to Armageddon? Jesus will hurl him and his demons into an abyss, where they will be locked away for a thousand years.—Rev. 20: 1-3. *w19.09 11-12 ¶14-15*

Wednesday, May 19

Keep in expectation of it! For it will without fail come true.

—Hab. 2:3.

We naturally long for the good things that Jehovah has promised. However, when the fulfillment of our expectations appears to be delayed, it may dampen our enthusiasm. We could even lose heart. (Prov. 13:12) This happened at the beginning of the 20th century. At that time, many anointed Christians expected to receive their heavenly reward in 1914. When that did not happen, how did faithful ones deal with their delayed expectations? They did not give up the race for life, because their primary focus was on faithfully doing God's will, not on gaining their reward. They were determined to run the race with endurance. No doubt you long to see Jehovah vindicate his name and sovereignty and fulfill all his promises. Be assured that these things will happen in Jehovah's due time. Until then, may we keep busy serving our God, never allowing postponed expectations to discourage us or slow us down. *w19.08 4-5 ¶9-10*

Thursday, May 20

I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart.—Matt. 11:29.

Ask yourself: 'Do I have a reputation for being mild-tempered and humble? Do I willingly do menial jobs to serve others? Am I kind to others?' Jesus created a peaceful, inviting environment for his fellow workers, and he enjoyed training them. (Luke 10:1, 19-21) He encouraged his disciples to ask questions, and he wanted to hear their opinions. (Matt. 16:13-16) Much like plants in a greenhouse, the dis-

ciples flourished. They absorbed the lessons that Jesus taught and produced fruit in the form of good works. Do you have a position of authority? If so, ask yourself: 'What kind of environment do I create at work or at home? Do I promote peace? Do I encourage others to ask questions? And am I willing to hear their opinions?' Never would we want to be like the Pharisees, who resented those who questioned them and persecuted those who expressed an opinion contrary to their own.—Mark 3:1-6; John 9:29-34. *w19.09 20 ¶1; 23 ¶9-11*

Friday, May 21

Whenever it is that they are saying, "Peace and security!" then sudden destruction is to be instantly on them.—1 Thess. 5:3.

World leaders sometimes use similar expressions when they talk about stabilizing relationships between nations. However, the announcement of "peace and security" that the Bible describes will be different. Why? When this happens, people may think that world leaders have succeeded in making the world a safer, more secure place. But in reality, "sudden destruction" will follow as the "great tribulation" unfolds. (Matt. 24:21) We do not know what will lead up to the declaration or how it will be made. And we do not know whether it will involve just one proclamation or a series of announcements. Whatever happens, we do know this: We should not be fooled into thinking that world leaders can actually achieve world peace. Rather, it is the signal that "Jehovah's day" is about to begin!—1 Thess. 5:2. *w19.10 8-9 ¶3-4*

Saturday, May 22

During that time your people will escape.—Dan. 12:1.

The war of Armageddon will be the grand finale to the conclusion of this system of things. However, we have nothing to fear. Why? Because this will be God's fight. (Prov. 1: 33; Ezek. 38:18-20; Zech. 14:3) At Jehovah's signal, Jesus Christ will lead the charge. He will have alongside him the resurrected anointed ones and myriads of angels. Together, they will war against Satan, his demons, and their earthly forces. (Rev. 6:2; 17:14) Jehovah has guaranteed: "No weapon formed against you will have any success." (Isa. 54: 17) "A great crowd" of Jehovah's faithful worshippers will "come out of the great tribulation" alive! Then they will continue to render him sacred service. (Rev. 7:9, 13-17) How the Bible fills us with confidence about the future! We know that "Jehovah protects the faithful." (Ps. 31: 23) All who love and praise Jehovah will delight to see him vindicate his holy name.—Ezek. 38:23. *w19.10* 18-19 ¶17-18

Sunday, May 23

A true friend shows love at all times.—Prov. 17:17.

As we move deeper into "the last days," we may face severe adversities. (2 Tim. 3:1) For example, after an election campaign, a country in western Africa was torn apart by social unrest and mob violence. For over six months, our brothers and sisters could not move about freely because they were in a combat zone. What helped them to cope with such hardships? Some found refuge in the homes of brothers liv-

ing in a safer area. One brother reported: "In such a situation, I appreciated having friends around me. We were able to encourage one another." When "the great tribulation" strikes, we will appreciate having good friends who love us. (Rev. 7:14) So it is urgent that we build strong bonds of friendship now. (1 Pet. 4: 7, 8) Why? Because our enemies will try to divide us by means of lies and misinformation. They will try to turn us against one another. But their efforts will be wasted. They will be unable to break our bonds of love. *w19.11* 2 ¶1-2; 7 ¶19

Monday, May 24

You will be able to extinguish all the wicked one's burning arrows.—Eph. 6:16.

Satan, "the father of the lie," uses those under his control to spread lies about Jehovah and about our brothers and sisters. (John 8:44) For instance, apostates publish lies and distort facts about Jehovah's organization on websites and through television and other media. Those lies are among Satan's "burning arrows." How should we respond if someone confronts us with such lies? We reject them! Why? Because we have faith in Jehovah and we trust our brothers. In fact, we avoid all contact with apostates. We do not allow anyone or anything, including curiosity, to draw us into arguing with them nor to weaken our faith. Have you resisted the urge to listen to and argue with apostates about the lies they spread? That is commendable. But we must remain on guard because Satan has other weapons that he tries to use against us. *w19.11* 15 ¶8; 16 ¶11



**TREASURES
FROM GOD'S WORD**

“Drive Away All the Inhabitants of the Land”:
(10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Nu 33:54—How was land distributed to the tribes of Israel? (*it-1* 359 ¶2)

What spiritual gems from this week’s Bible reading would you like to share regarding Jehovah, the field ministry, or something else?

Bible Reading: (4 min.) Nu 32:28-42 (5)



**APPLY YOURSELF
TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

“Increase Your Joy in the Ministry—Illustrate Key Points”: (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Experience the Joy of Disciple-Making—Improve Your Skills—Illustrating Key Points*.

Talk: (5 min.) *w09* 10/1 30, box—Theme: Why Did Jehovah Bless Wars in Ancient Israel? (13)



**LIVING
AS CHRISTIANS**

Song 58

Local Needs: (15 min.)

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)
rr chap. 8 ¶23-27, box 8B



“Drive Away All the Inhabitants of the Land”

Jehovah commanded his people to eliminate from the Promised Land anything that could stumble them (Nu 33:52; *w10* 8/1 23)

Jehovah would bless their determined efforts to take complete control of the land (Nu 33:53)

Problems would result if the Israelites did not completely conquer their enemies (Nu 33:55, 56; *w08* 2/15 27 ¶15-6; *it-1* 404 ¶12)

To please Jehovah, we must eliminate from our life all morally and spiritually defiling practices. (Jas 1:21) Jehovah gives us the strength to combat sinful tendencies and resist the contaminating influences of this world.



Holding Fast to Our Hope

(Hebrews 6:18, 19)

Dm Dsus4 Dm A Dm/A Gadd9/B A/C# Dm Gm/D

Man - kind has stum - bled for cen - tu - ries in dark - ness.
 "God's day is near!" rings the King - dom proc - la - ma - tion;

Dm Dsus4 Dm A Dm/A Gadd9/B A/C# Dm

Vain is their quest as they try to catch the wind.
 Men will no long - er cry out to God: "How long?"

Dm7 Gm Gm/Bb G7/B C Bb/D C7/E F F/A

Man's trag - ic flaw is re - vealed in its stark - ness;
 Soon he will free all his groan - ing cre - a - tion.

Bb Gm6/Bb Bb Gm6/Bb Bb6 E7/B B° A/C#

None can they save, for they all have sinned.
 Praise God Al - might - y, and join our song.

Holding Fast to Our Hope

Chorus

D Dma7 G G/B Gm/Bb A Bm7 A7/C# D F#/C#

Sing with good cheer, for God's King - dom is here! His

Bm Bm/A G Em7 A7 G/B A7/C# D

Son's might - y reign brings us free - dom from fear.

Dma7 G G/B Gm/Bb A Bm7 A7/C# D F#/C#

Through him, at last, e - vil soon will be past; This

Bm Bm/A G G/B Gm/Bb A7 G/A A7 D

hope, like an an - chor, is hold - ing us fast.

the herd, 36,000, **45** and of the donkeys, 30,500, **46** and of the people,* 16,000. **47** Then Moses took from the half belonging to the Israelites one out of 50, of the people and of the animals, and gave them to the Levites,^a who cared for the responsibility of Jehovah's tabernacle,^b just as Jehovah had commanded Moses.

48 Then the appointed men who were of the thousands of the army,^c the chiefs of the thousands and the chiefs of the hundreds, approached Moses, **49** and they said to Moses: "Your servants have taken the count of the men of war who are under our command, and not one has been reported missing from us.^d **50** So let us each present what he has found as Jehovah's offering, articles of gold, ankle chains, bracelets, signet rings, earrings, and other jewelry, in order to make atonement for ourselves* before Jehovah."

51 So Moses and El-e-a'zar the priest accepted the gold from them, all the jewelry. **52** All the gold of the contribution that they made to Jehovah amounted to 16,750 shekels,* from the chiefs of the thousands and the chiefs of the hundreds. **53** The men of the army had each taken plunder for himself. **54** Moses and El-e-a'zar the priest accepted the gold from the chiefs of the thousands and of the hundreds and brought it into the tent of meeting as a reminder* for the people of Israel before Jehovah.

32 Now the sons of Reu'ben^e and the sons of Gad^f had very large quantities of livestock, and they saw that the lands of Ja'zer^g and Gil'e-ad

31:46 *Or "the human souls." **31:50** *Or "our souls." **31:52** *A shekel equaled 11.4 g (0.367 oz t). See App. B14. **31:54** *Or "memorial."

CHAP. 31

a De 12:19

b Nu 3:6, 7
Nu 18:2, 3
1Ch 23:32

c Nu 31:4

d Ex 23:27
Le 26:7, 8

CHAP. 32

e Nu 26:7

f Nu 26:18

g Nu 21:32

Second Col.

a Nu 21:26

b Nu 33:47

c Nu 32:37, 38

d Nu 21:23, 24
De 2:24

e De 2:35

f Nu 13:31
Jos 14:7, 8g Nu 13:23
De 1:24h Nu 13:32
De 1:26-28i Ps 95:11
Eze 20:15
Heb 3:18j Nu 14:29, 30
De 2:14k Ge 13:14, 15
Ge 26:3
Ge 28:13

l Nu 13:30

m Jos 19:49

n Nu 14:24
De 1:34-38
Jos 14:8o Nu 14:33
De 29:5
Jos 5:6
Ps 95:10
Ac 13:18

were a good region for livestock.

2 So the sons of Gad and the sons of Reu'ben approached Moses, El-e-a'zar the priest, and the chieftains of the assembly and said: **3** "At'a-roth, Di'bon, Ja'zer, Nim'rah, Hesh'bon,^a E-le-a-leh, Se'bam, Ne'bo,^b and Be'on,^c **4** the land that Jehovah defeated before the assembly of Israel,^d is a good land for livestock, and your servants have much livestock." **5** They continued: "If we have found favor in your eyes, let this be the land given to your servants as a possession. Do not make us cross the Jordan."

6 Then Moses said to the sons of Gad and the sons of Reu'ben: "Are your brothers to go to war while you yourselves keep dwelling here? **7** Why should you discourage the people of Israel from crossing into the land that Jehovah is certain to give them? **8** That is what your fathers did when I sent them from Ka'desh-bar'ne-a to see the land.^f **9** When they went up to the Valley* of Esh'col^g and saw the land, they discouraged the people of Israel from going into the land that Jehovah was to give them.^h **10** Jehovah's anger blazed on that day so that he swore:ⁱ

11 'The men who came up out of Egypt from 20 years old and up will not see the land^j of which I have sworn to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,^k because they have not followed me wholeheartedly— **12** except Ca'leb^l the son of Je-phun'neh the Ken'iz-zite and Joshua^m the son of Nun, because they have followed Jehovah wholeheartedly.ⁿ **13** So Jehovah's anger blazed against Israel and he made them wander about in the wilderness for 40 years,^o until all the generation that was

32:9 *Or "Wadi."

doing evil in the eyes of Jehovah came to its end.^a **14** Now here you have risen in the place of your fathers as a brood of sinful men who increase the burning anger of Jehovah against Israel. **15** If you turn back from following him, he will certainly leave them again in the wilderness, and you will bring ruin to all this people.”

16 They later approached him and said: “Let us build here stone pens for our livestock and cities for our children. **17** But we will continue ready for battle^b and will go before the Israelites until we have brought them to their place, while our children will dwell in the fortified cities, safe from the inhabitants of the land. **18** We will not return to our houses until each of the Israelites has received his land as an inheritance.^c **19** For we will not receive an inheritance with them on the other side of the Jordan and beyond, because we have received our inheritance on the east side of the Jordan.”^d

20 Moses replied to them: “If you will do this: Take up arms before Jehovah for the war;^e **21** and if every one of you takes up arms and crosses the Jordan before Jehovah as he drives away his enemies from before him^f **22** until the land is subdued before Jehovah,^g afterward you may return^h and be free from guilt before Jehovah and Israel. Then this land will become your possession before Jehovah.ⁱ **23** But if you do not do this, you will have sinned against Jehovah. In that case, know that your sin will catch up with you. **24** So you may build cities for your children and pens for your flocks,^j but you must do what you have promised.”

25 The sons of Gad and the sons of Reu'ben said this to Moses: “Your servants will do

CHAP. 32

a Nu 26:63, 64
De 2:14
1Co 10:5
Heb 3:17

b De 3:18
Jos 4:12

c Jos 22:1, 4

d Nu 32:33
Jos 12:1
Jos 13:8

e Jos 4:13

f Ps 78:55

g Jos 11:23
Jos 18:1
Ps 44:2

h Jos 22:4, 9

i De 3:19, 20
Jos 1:14, 15
Jos 13:8

j Nu 32:16
Nu 32:34-38

Second Col.

a Jos 1:12-14

b Jos 4:12

c Jos 13:15, 24

d Jos 4:13

e De 3:12

f Jos 22:7

g Nu 21:23, 24
De 2:31

h De 3:4

i Nu 33:45
Jos 13:15, 17

j Nu 32:3, 4

k De 2:36
Jos 12:1, 2

l Nu 21:32

m Jg 8:11

n Nu 32:3, 4

o Jos 13:27, 28

just as my lord is commanding. **26** Our children, our wives, our livestock, and all our domestic animals will stay there in the cities of Gil'e-ad,^a **27** but your servants will cross over, every man armed for battle to wage war before Jehovah,^b just as my lord is speaking.”

28 So Moses gave a command concerning them to El-e-a'zar the priest, to Joshua the son of Nun, and to the heads of the paternal houses of the tribes of Israel. **29** Moses said to them: “If the sons of Gad and the sons of Reu'ben cross over the Jordan with you, every man armed for the war before Jehovah, and the land is subdued before you, you will then give them the land of Gil'e-ad as a possession.^c **30** But if they do not take up arms and cross over with you, they will then settle among you in the land of Ca'naan.”

31 To this the sons of Gad and the sons of Reu'ben answered: “What Jehovah has spoken to your servants is what we will do. **32** We will take up arms and cross over before Jehovah to the land of Ca'naan,^d but the possession we are to inherit will be on this side of the Jordan.” **33** So Moses gave to them—to the sons of Gad, the sons of Reu'ben,^e and to the half tribe of Ma-nas'seh^f the son of Joseph—the kingdom of Si'hon^g the king of the Am'or-ites and the kingdom of Og^h the king of Ba'shan, the land belonging to its cities in those territories, and the cities of the surrounding land.

34 And the sons of Gad built* Di'bon,ⁱ At'a-roth,^j A-ro'er,^k **35** At'roth-sho'phan, Ja'zer,^l Jog'be-hah,^m **36** Beth-nim'rah,ⁿ and Beth-ha'ran,^o fortified cities, and they built stone pens for

32:34 *Or “rebuilt.”

the flocks. **37** And the sons of Reu'ben built Hesh'bon,^a E-le-a'-leh,^b Kir-i-a-tha'im,^c **38** Ne'bo,^d and Ba'al-me'on^e—their names being changed—and Sib'mah; and they began to rename the cities that they rebuilt.

39 The sons of Ma'chir^f the son of Ma-nas'seh marched against Gil'e-ad and captured it and drove away the Am'orites who were in it. **40** So Moses gave Gil'e-ad to Ma'chir the son of Ma-nas'seh, and he began dwelling in it.^g **41** And Ja'ir the son of Ma-nas'seh marched against them and captured their tent villages, and he began to call them Hav'voth-ja'ir.^{*h} **42** And No'bah marched against and captured Ke'nath and its dependent* towns, and he began to call it No'bah by his own name.

33 These were the stages of the journey of the people of Israel when they went out of the land of Egyptⁱ by their companies^{*j} under the direction of Moses and Aaron.^k **2** Moses kept recording the departure places by the stages of their journey at the order of Jehovah, and these were their stages from one departure place to another:^l **3** They departed from Ram'e-ses^m in the first month, on the 15th day of the month.ⁿ On the very day after the Passover,^o the Israelites went out with confidence* before the eyes of all the Egyptians. **4** Meanwhile, the Egyptians were burying all the firstborn whom Jehovah had struck down among them,^p for Jehovah had executed judgments on their gods.^q

5 So the Israelites departed from Ram'e-ses and camped at

32:41 *Meaning "Tent Villages of Jair."
32:42 *Or "surrounding." **33:1** *Lit., "according to their armies." **33:3** *Lit., "with uplifted hand."

CHAP. 32

- a Nu 21:26
b Nu 32:3, 4
c Jos 13:15, 19
d Nu 32:3, 4
e Jos 13:15, 17
f Nu 26:29
g De 3:13
Jos 13:31
Jos 17:1
h De 3:14
Jos 13:29, 30

CHAP. 33

- i Ex 12:51
j Ex 13:18
k Jos 24:5
1Sa 12:8
l Nu 9:17
m Ge 47:11
Ex 12:37
n Ex 12:2
Ex 13:4
o Ex 12:3, 6
De 16:1
p Ex 12:29
Ps 78:51
q Ex 12:12
Ex 18:11

Second Col.

- a Ex 12:37
b Ex 13:20
c Ex 14:9
d Ex 14:2
e Ex 14:22
f Ex 15:22
g Ex 13:20
h Ex 15:23
i Ex 15:27
j Ex 16:1
k Ex 17:1, 8
l Ex 18:5
Ex 19:1, 2
Nu 1:1
Nu 3:4
Nu 9:1
m Nu 11:34
De 9:22
n Nu 11:35
Nu 12:16

Suc'coth.^a **6** Then they departed from Suc'coth and camped at E'tham,^b which is on the edge of the wilderness. **7** Next they departed from E'tham and turned back toward Pi-ha-hi'roth, which is in view of Ba'al-ze'phon,^c and they camped before Mig'dol.^d **8** After that they departed from Pi-ha-hi'roth and passed through the midst of the sea^e to the wilderness^f and kept marching a three-day journey in the wilderness of E'tham^g and camped at Ma'rah.^h

9 Then they departed from Ma'rah and came to E'lim. Now in E'lim there were 12 springs of water and 70 palm trees, so they camped there.ⁱ **10** Next they departed from E'lim and camped by the Red Sea. **11** After that they departed from the Red Sea and camped in the wilderness of Sin.^j **12** Then they departed from the wilderness of Sin and camped at Doph'kah. **13** Later they departed from Doph'kah and camped at A'lush. **14** They next departed from A'lush and camped at Reph'i-dim,^k where there was no water for the people to drink. **15** After that they departed from Reph'i-dim and camped in the wilderness of Si'nai.^l

16 They departed from the wilderness of Si'nai and camped at Kib'roth-hat-ta'a-vah.^m **17** Then they departed from Kib'roth-hat-ta'a-vah and camped at Ha-ze'roth.ⁿ **18** After that they departed from Ha-ze'roth and camped at Rith'mah. **19** Next they departed from Rith'mah and camped at Rim'mon-pe'rez. **20** Then they departed from Rim'mon-pe'rez and camped at Lib'nah. **21** They departed from Lib'nah and camped at Ris'sah. **22** Next they departed from Ris'sah and camped at Ke-he-la'thah.

23 Then they departed from Ke-he-la'thah and camped at Mount She'pher.

24 After that they departed from Mount She'pher and camped at Har-a'dah. **25** Then they departed from Har-a'-dah and camped at Mak-he'loth. **26** Next they departed^a from Mak-he'loth and camped at Ta'hath. **27** After that they departed from Ta'hath and camped at Te'rah. **28** Then they departed from Te'rah and camped at Mith'kah. **29** Later they departed from Mith'kah and camped at Hash-mo'nah. **30** Next they departed from Hash-mo'nah and camped at Mo-se'roth. **31** Then they departed from Mo-se'roth and camped at Ben'e-ja'a-kan.^b **32** And they departed from Ben'e-ja'a-kan and camped at Hor-hag-gid'gad. **33** Next they departed from Hor-hag-gid'gad and camped at Jot'ba-thah.^c **34** Later they departed from Jot'ba-thah and camped at A-bro'nah. **35** Then they departed from A-bro'nah and camped at E'zi-on-ge'ber.^d **36** After that they departed from E'zi-on-ge'ber and camped in the wilderness of Zin,^e that is, Ka'desh.

37 Later they departed from Ka'desh and camped at Mount Hor,^f on the frontier of the land of E'dom. **38** And Aaron the priest went up into Mount Hor at the order of Jehovah and died there in the 40th year after the Israelites left the land of Egypt, in the fifth month, on the first of the month.^g **39** Aaron was 123 years old at his death on Mount Hor.

40 Now the king of A'rad,^h the Ca'naan-ite who was dwelling in the Neg'eb in the land of Ca'naan, heard about the coming of the Israelites.

41 In time they departed from Mount Horⁱ and camped

CHAP. 33

a Nu 9:17

b De 10:6

c De 10:7

d De 2:8

1Ki 9:26

e Nu 20:1

Nu 27:14

De 32:51

Jos 15:1

f Nu 20:22

g De 10:6

h Nu 21:1

i Nu 21:4

Second Col.

a Nu 21:10

b Ge 19:36, 37

Nu 21:11, 13

c Nu 32:34

d Nu 27:12

De 32:48, 49

e De 34:1

f Nu 22:1

g Nu 25:1

Jos 2:1

h Jos 3:17

i Le 26:1

j Le 19:4

De 27:15

k Ex 23:24

Ex 34:13, 17

De 7:5

De 12:3

l De 32:8

m Pr 16:33

n Nu 26:53, 54

o Jos 15:1

Jos 16:1

Jos 18:11

at Zal-mo'nah. **42** After that they departed from Zal-mo'nah and camped at Pu'non. **43** Next they departed from Pu'non and camped at O'both.^a **44** Then they departed from O'both and camped at I'ye-ab'a-rim, on the border of Mo'ab.^b **45** Later they departed from I'yim and camped at Di'bon-gad.^c **46** After that they departed from Di'bon-gad and camped at Al'mon-dib-la-tha'im. **47** Then they departed from Al'mon-dib-la-tha'im and camped in the mountains of Ab'a-rim^d before Ne'bo.^e **48** Finally they departed from the mountains of Ab'a-rim and camped on the desert plains of Mo'ab by the Jordan at Jer'i-cho.^f **49** They continued camping along the Jordan, from Beth-jesh'i-moth as far as A'bel-shit'tim,^g on the desert plains of Mo'ab.

50 Jehovah spoke to Moses on the desert plains of Mo'ab by the Jordan at Jer'i-cho, saying: **51** "Speak to the Israelites and tell them, 'You are crossing the Jordan into the land of Ca'naan.^h **52** You must drive away all the inhabitants of the land from before you and destroy all their carvings of stoneⁱ and all their metal statues,^j and you should demolish all their sacred high places.^k **53** And you will take possession of the land and dwell in it, because I will certainly give you the land as a possession.^l **54** You must apportion the land by lot^m as a possession among your families. To the larger group you should increase his inheritance, and to the smaller group you should reduce his inheritance.ⁿ Everyone's inheritance will be where his lot falls. You will receive your property as an inheritance by the tribes of your fathers.^o

33:52 *Or "molten statues."

55 "If, though, you do not drive the inhabitants of the land away from before you,^a those whom you allow to remain will be as irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they will harass you in the land where you will dwell.^b 56 And I will do to you what I intended to do to them."^c

34 And Jehovah spoke further to Moses, saying: 2 "Give these instructions to the Israelites: 'When you go into the land of Ca'naan,^d this is the land that will fall to you as an inheritance, the land of Ca'naan according to its boundaries.'^e

3 "Your southern border will extend from the wilderness of Zin alongside E'dom, and your south boundary on the east will be from the extremity of the Salt Sea.^f 4 Your boundary will change direction to pass south of the ascent of A-krab'-bim^g and continue to Zin, and its end will be south of Ka'-desh-bar'ne-a.^h Then it will extend to Ha'zar-ad'darⁱ and continue to Az'mon. 5 The boundary will change direction at Az'mon to the Wadi* of Egypt, and its end will be at the Sea.^{ji}

6 "Your western boundary will be the Great Sea* and the coast. This will become your western boundary.^k

7 "Now this will be your northern boundary: From the Great Sea you will mark your boundary out to Mount Hor.^l 8 From Mount Hor you will mark out the boundary to Le'bo-ha'math,^m and the end of the boundary will be at Ze'dad.ⁿ 9 And the boundary will extend to Ziph'ron, and its end will be

34:3 *That is, the Dead Sea. 34:5 *See Glossary. #That is, the Great Sea, the Mediterranean. 34:6 *That is, the Mediterranean. 34:8 *Or "the entrance of Hamath."

CHAP. 33

- a Jg 1:21
Ps 106:34
b Ex 23:31-33
De 7:3, 4
Jos 23:12, 13
Jg 2:2, 3
c Le 18:28
Jos 23:15

CHAP. 34

- d Ge 15:18
Ge 17:8
e Ge 10:19
De 4:38
Jos 1:4
Jos 14:1
Jer 3:19
Ac 17:26
f Jos 15:1, 2
g Jg 1:36
h Nu 13:26
Nu 32:8
i Jos 15:1, 3
j Ex 23:31
Jos 15:1, 4
k Jos 1:4
Jos 15:12
l Nu 33:37
De 32:50
m Nu 13:21
2Ki 14:25
n Eze 47:15

Second Col.

- a Eze 47:17
b De 3:16, 17
Jos 11:1, 2
Lu 5:1
Joh 6:1
c Jos 15:1, 2
d De 8:7-9
e Nu 26:55
Nu 33:54
Jos 14:2
Jos 18:6
Pr 16:33
f Nu 32:33
De 3:12, 13
Jos 13:8
g Nu 32:5, 32
h Nu 3:32
Nu 20:26
Jos 14:1
i Nu 14:38
Nu 27:18
Jos 19:51
j Nu 1:4, 16
k Jos 15:1
l Nu 14:30
Nu 26:65
m Jos 19:1
n Jos 18:11
o Jos 19:40

Ha'zar-e'nan.^a This will become your northern boundary.

10 "Then you should mark as your boundary on the east from Ha'zar-e'nan to She'pham.

11 The boundary will extend from She'pham to Rib'lah to the east of A'in, and the border will go down and cross the eastern slope of the Sea of Chin'ne-reth.^{*b} 12 The border will extend to the Jordan, and its end will be the Salt Sea.^c This will be your land^d and the boundaries surrounding it."^e

13 So Moses instructed the Israelites, saying: "This is the land that you will apportion as your possession by lot,^e just as Jehovah has commanded to give to the nine and a half tribes.

14 For the tribe of the Reu'benites by their paternal house, the tribe of the Gad'ites by their paternal house, and the half tribe of Ma-nas'seh have already taken their inheritance.^f 15 The two and a half tribes have already taken their inheritance east of the region of the Jordan by Jer'i-cho, toward the sunrising."^g

16 Jehovah spoke further to Moses, saying: 17 "These are the names of the men who will divide the land for you to possess: El-e-a'zar^h the priest and Joshuaⁱ the son of Nun. 18 And you will take one chieftain out of each tribe to divide the land as your inheritance.^j 19 These are the names of the men: of the tribe of Judah,^k Ca'leb^l the son of Je-phun'neh; 20 of the tribe of the sons of Sim'e-on,^m She-mu'el the son of Am-mi'-hud; 21 of the tribe of Benjamin,ⁿ E-li'dad the son of Chis'-lon; 22 of the tribe of the sons of Dan,^o a chieftain, Buk'ki the son of Jog'li; 23 of the sons of

34:11 *That is, the lake of Gennesaret, or the Sea of Galilee.



TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Drive Away All the Inhabitants of the Land”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Nu 33:54—How was land distributed to the tribes of Israel? (*it-1 359 ¶2*)

What spiritual gems from this week’s Bible reading would you like to share regarding Jehovah, the field ministry, or something else?

Bible Reading: (4 min.) Nu 32:28-42 (5)



APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

“Increase Your Joy in the Ministry—Illustrate Key Points”: (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Experience the Joy of Disciple-Making—Improve Your Skills—Illustrating Key Points*.

Talk: (5 min.) *w09 10/1 30, box*—Theme: Why Did Jehovah Bless Wars in Ancient Israel? (13)



LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 58

Local Needs: (15 min.)

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr chap. 8 ¶23-27, box 8B*



“Drive Away All the Inhabitants of the Land”

Jehovah commanded his people to eliminate from the Promised Land anything that could stumble them (Nu 33:52; *w10 8/1 23*)

Jehovah would bless their determined efforts to take complete control of the land (Nu 33:53)

Problems would result if the Israelites did not completely conquer their enemies (Nu 33:55, 56; *w08 2/15 27 ¶15-6; it-1 404 ¶12*)

To please Jehovah, we must eliminate from our life all morally and spiritually defiling practices. (Jas 1:21) Jehovah gives us the strength to combat sinful tendencies and resist the contaminating influences of this world.



May 17-23 / Numbers 32-33

Treasures From God's Word

"Drive Away All the Inhabitants of the Land": (10 minutes)

Jehovah commanded his people to eliminate from the Promised Land anything that could stumble them

Numbers 33:52: You must drive away all the inhabitants of the land from before you and destroy all their carvings of stone and all their metal statues, and you should demolish all their sacred high places.

w10 8/1 23

When the Israelites were about to enter the Promised Land, Jehovah told them to eliminate all the places of worship of the Canaanites who lived there. "You must . . . destroy all their stone figures, and all their images of molten metal you should destroy, and all their sacred high places you should annihilate," God commanded. (Numbers 33:52) Those centers of false worship may have been either open-air hilltop sites or constructed platforms in other locations, such as under trees or in cities. (1 Kings 14:23; 2 Kings 17:29; Ezekiel 6:3) They could be equipped with altars, sacred pillars or poles, images, incense stands, and other paraphernalia for worship.

Jehovah would bless their determined efforts to take complete control of the land

Numbers 33:53: And you will take possession of the land and dwell in it, because I will certainly give you the land as a possession.

Problems would result if the Israelites did not completely conquer their enemies

Numbers 33:55, 56: "If, though, you do not drive the inhabitants of the land away from before you, those whom you allow to remain will be as irritants in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and they will harass you in the land where you will dwell. And I will do to you what I intended to do to them."

w08 2/15 27 paragraphs 5-6

Today, we face many challenges that are similar to those faced by the Israelites. Modern-day society has its share of idols. They include money, entertainment personalities, sports figures, political systems, certain religious leaders, and even family members. Any of these could potentially become our focus in life. Cultivating close friendships with those who do not love Jehovah can lead us to spiritual ruin.

Illicit sex was an integral part of Baal worship that attracted and seduced many Israelites. Similar snares still claim victims among God's people. For example, the click of a mouse at a computer in the privacy of one's own home may be all that a curious or unwary person needs to ruin his good conscience. How sad it would be if a Christian were to be enticed by Internet pornography!

it-1 404 paragraph 2

Joshua wisely "did not remove a word from all that Jehovah had commanded Moses" as to the destruction of the Canaanites. (Joshua 11:15) But the Israelite nation failed to follow up his good lead and completely eliminate the source of pollution of the land. The continued presence of the Canaanites among them brought infection into Israel that, in the course of time, undoubtedly contributed toward more deaths (not to mention crime, immorality, and idolatry) than the decreed extermination of all the Canaanites would have produced had it been faithfully effected. (Numbers 33:55, 56; Judges 2:1-3, 11-23; Psalm 106:34-43) Jehovah had warned the Israelites that his justice and his judgments would not be partial and that for the Israelites to enter into relations with the Canaanites, intermarry with them, practice interfaith, and adopt their religious customs and degenerate practices would mean their inevitably bringing down upon themselves the same decree of annihilation and would result in their also being 'vomited out of the land.'—Exodus 23:32, 33; 34:12-17; Leviticus 18:26-30; Deuteronomy 7:2-5, 25, 26.

To please Jehovah, we must eliminate from our life all morally and spiritually defiling practices. (James 1:21) Jehovah gives us the strength to combat sinful tendencies and resist the contaminating influences of this world.

[Image:] Collage: 1. Three young men enthusiastically play a violent video game. 2. A young man turns off the television.

Spiritual Gems

Numbers 33:54—How was land distributed to the tribes of Israel?

Numbers 33:54: You must apportion the land by lot as a possession among your families. To the larger group you should increase his inheritance, and to the smaller group you should reduce his inheritance. Everyone's inheritance will be where his lot falls. You will receive your property as an inheritance by the tribes of your fathers.

***it-1* 359 paragraph 2**

After the casting of the lot had determined the geographic location of a tribe, it would then be necessary to determine the extent of its territory on the basis of the second factor: its proportionate size. "You must apportion the land to yourselves as a possession by lot according to your families. To the populous one you should increase his inheritance, and to the sparse one you should reduce his inheritance. To where the lot will come out for him, there it will become his." (Numbers 33:54) The decision of the lot as to the basic geographic location would stand, but adjustment could be made as to the size of the inheritance. Thus, when Judah's territory was found to be too large, its land area was reduced by assigning portions of it to the tribe of Simeon.—Joshua 19:9.

What spiritual gems from this week's Bible reading would you like to share regarding Jehovah, the field ministry, or something else?

Bible Reading: (4 minutes) Numbers 32:28-42 (*th* study 5)

Song 142 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

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Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

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Talk: (5 min.) *w09 10/1 30, box*—Theme: Why Did Jehovah Bless Wars in Ancient Israel? (13)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 58

Local Needs: (15 min.)

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr chap. 8 ¶23-27, box 8B*

 “Drive Away All the Inhabitants of the Land”

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INCREASE YOUR JOY IN THE MINISTRY

Illustrate Key Points

When making return visits or conducting Bible studies, we need to help our listeners understand main points. By illustrating these points, we can stir their heart and make the teachings easier to remember.

As you prepare for a return visit or a Bible study, pick key points, not minor details, that you want to illustrate. Then choose simple illustrations based on daily life. (Mt 5:14-16; Mr 2:21; Lu 14:7-11) Be sure to consider the background and activities of your listener. (Lu 5:2-11; Joh 4:7-15) When you see his eyes light up because he understands a point, you will experience joy.



WATCH THE VIDEO DRAMATIZATION EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF DISCIPLE-MAKING—IMPROVE YOUR SKILLS—ILLUSTRATING KEY POINTS, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:



- Why may students need help to understand Bible verses?



- How did Neeta illustrate the truth found at Romans 5:12?



- What effect can good illustrations have on our listeners?

- In our ministry, why should we use videos and other teaching tools provided by Jehovah's organization?

**Good illustrations
touch the heart**

[Box on page 30]

WARS THAT GOD BLESSED

Ancient Israel, a nation uniquely chosen by God centuries before Christianity was established, was at times authorized to assemble an army and engage in warfare. Before entering Canaan, the land that God had promised to Abraham, the Israelites were told: “Jehovah your God will certainly abandon [seven nations] to you, and you must defeat them. You should without fail devote them to destruction. You must conclude no covenant with them nor show them any favor.” (Deuteronomy 7:1, 2) Thus, Israelite General Joshua defeated those enemy nations “just as Jehovah the God of Israel had commanded.”—Joshua 10:40.

Was this a ruthless conquest wherein Israel greedily subjugated foreign countries? Not at all. Those nations had become full of idolatry, bloodshed, and degraded sexual practices. Even children were killed in sacrificial fires. (Numbers 33:52; Jeremiah 7:31) God’s holiness, justice, and love for his people compelled him to remove all uncleanness from the land. Even so, Jehovah searched the hearts of everyone—something no military commander can do today—and spared those who were willing to abandon wicked ways and serve him.

Searching for Friends of Peace

(Luke 10:6)

D Dsus4 D A

Je - sus com - mand - ed: 'Let the truth be heard.' In sum - mer
Time waits for no one, so the search goes on. A mil - lion

Bm7 D/G Gadd9

heat, on dust - y roads, He let all hear Je - ho - vah's word.
hearts, a mil - lion lives, We give our all to save just one.

D Dsus4 D A

He loved God's sheep and called to ev - 'ry - one. He searched the
Love is the force that makes us call a - gain. A wound - ed

Bm7 Em7 D/F# D/G Gadd9

land from the sun - rise 'til the day was done. From
heart can be healed, and bro - ken lives can mend. We

Searching for Friends of Peace

Em11 D/G A D/F# Gadd9 D/E

door to door and in the street, We share with ev - 'ry -
search the towns and cit - y squares, And when we find some -

A Bm7 Em11 D/G A Bm7

one we meet The news that soon man's trou - bles all will be
one who cares, The joy we feel in - spi - res us to go

Asus4 A Chorus D

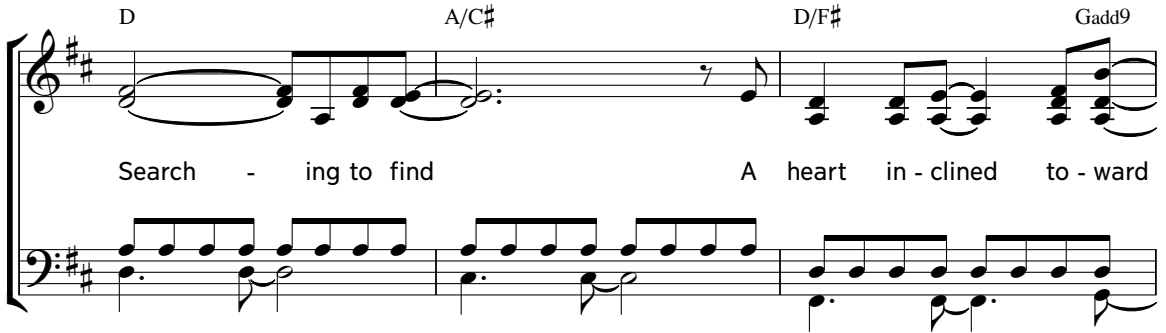
gone.
on. Search - ing the world

A/C# D/F# Gadd9

For friends of peace in ev - 'ry na - tion,

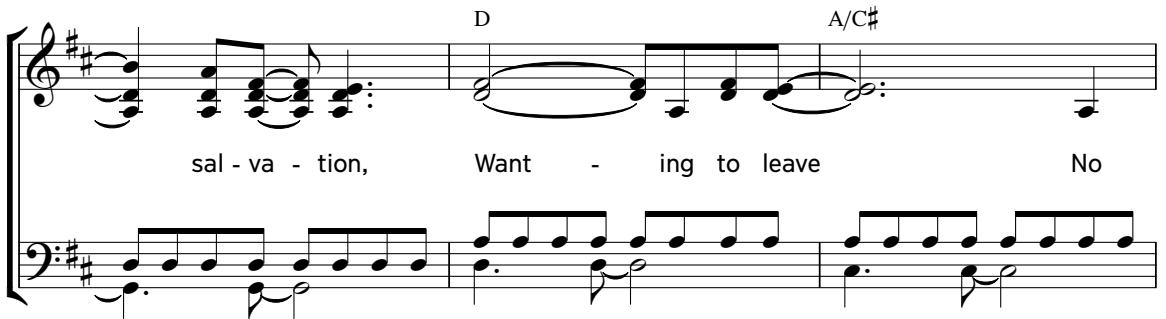
Searching for Friends of Peace

D A/C# D/F# Gadd9



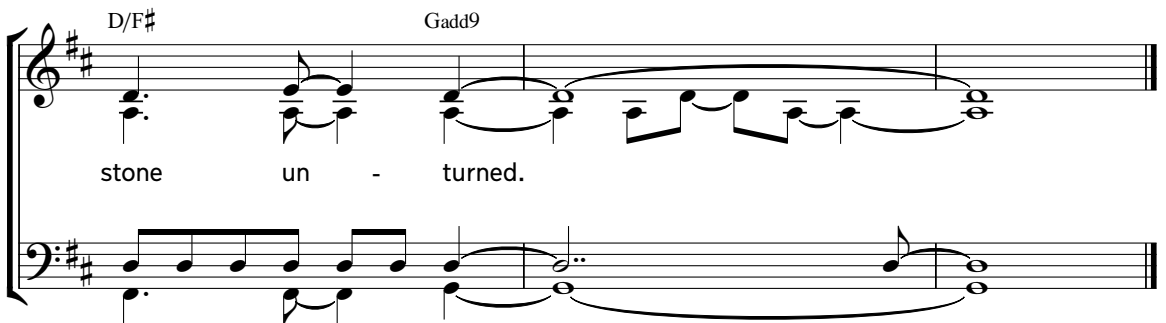
Search - ing to find A heart in - clined to - ward

D A/C#



sal - va - tion, Want - ing to leave No

D/F# Gadd9



stone un - turned.



**TREASURES
FROM GOD'S WORD**

“Drive Away All the Inhabitants of the Land”:
(10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

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**LIVING
AS CHRISTIANS**

Song 58

Local Needs: (15 min.)

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rr chap. 8 ¶23-27, box 8B



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Jehovah blesses his worshippers' loving global brotherhood

SEE PARAGRAPH 26



23. What promise did Jehovah make regarding unifying the nation of Israel, and how did he fulfill it?

24. How does Jehovah describe the Messianic Ruler, and what will this King's rule be like?

FOOTNOTE

[3] Ezekiel's prophecy about two sticks and how it was fulfilled will be discussed in Chapter 12 of this publication.

accounting.” (Ezek. 34:10) The Supreme Shepherd keeps a close eye on how his sheep are treated—and so does his Son.

“David My Servant Will Be Their Chieftain Forever”

²³ Jehovah wants his worshippers to serve together in unity. In a prophecy about restoration, God promised that he would gather his people—representatives of both the two-tribe kingdom of Judah and the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel—and reunite them as “one nation,” as if causing two “sticks” to “become one” in his hand. (Ezek. 37:15-23) In a fulfillment of the prophecy, God restored a united nation of Israel to the Promised Land in 537 B.C.E.^[3] But that unity was only a token of a far grander and more lasting unity to come. After promising to unify Israel, Jehovah gave Ezekiel a prophecy about how *the future Ruler would bring true worshippers together earth wide in a bond of unity that would last forever.*

²⁴ *What the prophecy says. (Read Ezekiel 37:24-28.)* Jehovah once again refers to the Messianic Ruler as “my servant David,” “one shepherd,” and “chieftain,” but now Jehovah



also calls this Promised One a “king.” (Ezek. 37:22) What will this King’s rulership be like? *His rule will be permanent.* The use of the terms “forever” and “eternal” suggest that there will be no end to the blessings of the King’s rule.^[4] *His rule will be marked by unity.* Under their “one king,” loyal subjects will follow the same “judicial decisions,” and “they will dwell on the land” together. *His rule will bring the King’s subjects closer to Jehovah God.* Jehovah will make “a covenant of peace” with these subjects. Jehovah will be their God, and they will be his people. And his sanctuary will be “in their midst forever.”

²⁵ *How the prophecy is fulfilled.* In 1919, faithful anointed ones were united under their “one shepherd,” the Messianic King, Jesus Christ. Later, “a great crowd” from “all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues” became united with their anointed fellow believers. (Rev. 7:9) Together, they have become “one flock” under “one shepherd.” (John 10:16) Whether their hope is heavenly or earthly, they all obediently walk in Jehovah’s judicial decisions. As a result, they dwell together in a spiritual paradise as a united worldwide brotherhood.

25. How is the prophecy about the Messianic King fulfilled?

FOOTNOTE

[4] Regarding the Hebrew term rendered “forever” and “eternal,” one reference work notes: “Along with the sense of duration, the word bears nuances of permanence, durability, inviolability, irrevocability, and immutability.”

26. How can you contribute to the unity of the spiritual paradise?

27. (a) How do you feel about the Messianic prophecies in the book of Ezekiel? (b) What will we examine in the chapters that follow?

Jehovah has blessed them with peace, and his sanctuary, representing pure worship, is among them. Jehovah is their God, and they are proud to be his worshippers—now and forever!

²⁶ *What we can learn from the prophecy.* We are privileged to be united in a worldwide brotherhood engaged in the pure worship of Jehovah. But that privilege brings with it a responsibility—we must contribute to the unity. Hence, all of us need to do our part to maintain harmony of belief and of action. (1 Cor. 1:10) To that end, we eagerly feed on the same spiritual food, hold to the same Scriptural standards of conduct, and share in the same vital work of Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making. The real key to our unity, however, is love. As we strive to cultivate and display love in its many facets—including empathy, compassion, and forgiveness—we contribute to our unity. “Love,” the Bible says, “is a perfect bond of union.”—Col. 3:12-14; 1 Cor. 13:4-7.

²⁷ How thankful we are for the Messianic prophecies found in the book of Ezekiel! Reading and meditating on those prophecies teaches us that our beloved King, Jesus Christ, deserves our trust, has the legal right to rule, tenderly shepherds us, and will preserve us in a bond of unity that will last forever. How privileged we are to be subjects of the Messianic King! Let us remember that these Messianic prophecies are part of an overall theme of restoration that is developed in the Bible book of Ezekiel. Jesus is the one through whom Jehovah collects together His people and restores pure worship among them. (Ezek. 20:41) In the following chapters of this publication, we will examine that thrilling theme of restoration and how it is developed in the book of Ezekiel.

YOUR PLACE IN PURE WORSHIP

- 1 What lesson did you learn from the prophetic riddle about the great eagles? (Ezek. 17:3-10)
- 2 Explain how the Messianic prophecies found in Ezekiel give you sound reasons to trust in the King, Jesus Christ.

- 3 How can you contribute to the peace and unity of the spiritual paradise?

THREE MESSIANIC PROPHECIES

1

“The One Who Has
the Legal Right”

EZEKIEL 21:25-27

SEE PARAGRAPHS 12-15

607 B.C.E.

1914 C.E.

Zedekiah
dethroned

Gentile Times

Jesus, the one with “the legal
right” to the Messianic Kingdom,
enthroned as King, becoming
Shepherd-Ruler

2

“My Servant . . . Will Feed Them
and Become Their Shepherd”

EZEKIEL 34:22-24

SEE PARAGRAPHS 18-22

3

“One King Will Rule
Over All of Them” Forever

EZEKIEL 37:22, 24-28

SEE PARAGRAPHS 23-26

1919 C.E.



The faithful and discreet
slave appointed to
shepherd God’s sheep

Last Days

Faithful anointed ones brought
together under the Messianic
King; later united with a great
crowd

AFTER ARMAGEDDON



The blessings of
the King’s rule will
last forever

The Divine Pattern of Love

(1 John 4:19)

B \flat 7 E \flat Cm7 A \flat Fm7 B \flat 7/F

The pat - tern of love, we learn from Je - ho - vah Shows the
 When we walk his way, our love for each oth - er Will be
 The pat - tern of love, the bond that u - nites us Lets us

E \flat /G A \flat ma7 A \flat 6 B \flat 9sus4 B \flat 7

way, guides our way. In all he has
 true, warm and true, Will move us to
 be fam - i - ly. Our Fa - ther a -

Fm C+5/E Fm/E \flat A \flat /B \flat B \flat 7

done, his deal - ings have shown us How to dis -
 care for all of our broth - ers, Old ones and
 bove now warm - ly in - vites us: "Come taste and

E \flat 6 Fm/B \flat A \flat /B \flat E \flat ma7 E \flat 6

play his lov - ing way. He gave us his
 new, not just a few. True love for our
 see real u - ni - ty." Come share in the

The Divine Pattern of Love

Bb9sus4 *Bb9* *Bb7/D*

Son, his dear - est pos - ses - sion To cov - er our
 God and love for our broth - er, We can't have the
 love and joy that de - fine us; God's spir - it and

Ebma7 *Bbm/G* *C7*

sin, for - giv - ing trans - gres - sion. What proof of his
 one and not have the oth - er. The faults of our
 Word, he gives to re - fine us. Our broth - ers and

Fm *Cm7/G* *Fm/Ab* *Abm6/Cb*

love— its great - est ex - pres - sion! His way is
 friends, we read - i - ly cov - er, Prov - ing our
 friends are here to re - mind us, God's way is

Eb/Bb *Bb7* *Ab/Bb* *Bb7* *Eb*

love, Yes, God's way is love.
 love, Our broth - er - ly love.
 love. Je - ho - vah is love.

(See also Rom. 12:10; Eph. 4:3; 2 Pet. 1:7.)

MARCH 2021

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
MAY 3–JUNE 6, 2021

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COVER PICTURE:

David was responsible and reliable when caring for his father's flock, even protecting the sheep from an attacking bear (See study article 9, paragraph 4)

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Grateful for God's Word

(Philippians 2:16)

F F/A B \flat C7 B \flat /C C7 F

Je - ho - vah, our Fa - ther, we want to ex - press
Your Word has the pow - er to reach deep in - side.
Your Word, O Je - ho - vah, has hu - man ap - peal.

C7/E Gm/D A7/C \sharp Dm C \sharp 7 \flat 5 F/C Gm9 Gm B \flat ma7 C7

How grate - ful we are that your Word we pos - sess!
Our thoughts and in - ten - tions, it helps to di - vide.
Your proph - ets were like us; they felt what we feel.

F/A C F C/B \flat B \flat D/C Gm/B \flat D/A Gm/B \flat G7/B C

All Scrip - ture is in - spir - ed; its truth has set us free.
Your laws are clear and per - fect, your judg - ments ev - er true.
Please help us build a strong faith that fol - lows what is heard.

F/A C/G F B \flat D7/A Gm Gm/B \flat F/C C7sus4 C7 F

Its light gives us knowl - edge; the truth we can see.
Your prin - ci - ples guide us in all that we do.
We thank you, Je - ho - vah, for your pre - cious Word!

SONG 94

Grateful for God's Word

PREVIEW

Many accounts in the Bible prove that Jehovah loves his servants and will help them through any trial.

This article discusses how you can do personal Bible study that will help you to benefit more from the accounts you read.

How to Gain Strength From the Scriptures

“God . . . supplies endurance.”—ROM. 15:5.

ARE you suffering through a difficult trial? Perhaps someone in the congregation has hurt you. (Jas. 3:2) Or maybe your workmates or schoolmates ridicule you for serving Jehovah. (1 Pet. 4:3, 4) Or family members are possibly trying to stop you from attending meetings or from talking to others about your faith. (Matt. 10:35, 36) If a trial is especially painful, you may feel like giving up. But you can be confident that no matter what challenge you face, Jehovah will give you the wisdom to deal with it and the strength to endure it.

² In his Word, Jehovah included detailed descriptions of how imperfect individuals dealt with difficult trials. Why? So that we can learn from them. That is what Jehovah moved the apostle Paul to write. **(Read Romans 15:4.)** Reading these accounts can bring us a measure of comfort and hope. However, to benefit, we need to do more than just read the Bible. We must allow the Scriptures to mold our thinking and to touch our hearts. What can we do if we are looking for guidance on how to deal with a specific challenge? We can use this four-step method: **(1) Pray, (2) Imagine, (3) Meditate, and (4) Apply.** Let us discuss what is involved in each of those steps.* Then we will use this method of study to learn from

* The method of study suggested here is just one option you can use. Other suggestions for studying the Bible can be found by consulting the *Research Guide for Jehovah's Witnesses* under the subject “The Bible” and the subheading “Reading and Understanding the Bible.”

1. What types of trials may Jehovah's people face?
2. According to Romans 15:4, what effect can reading God's Word have on us?

incidents in the lives of King David and the apostle Paul.

³ **(1) Pray.** Before you start reading the Bible, ask Jehovah to help you to see how you can benefit from what you read. For example, if you are looking for counsel on how to deal with a problem, ask Jehovah to help you find principles in his Word that can guide you.—Phil. 4: 6, 7; Jas. 1:5.

⁴ **(2) Imagine.** Jehovah has given us the amazing faculty of imagination. To help you bring a Bible account to life, try to imagine the scene and see yourself in the place of the key character. Try to see the things he or she saw and to feel the emotions that the character might have felt.

⁵ **(3) Meditate.** Meditation means thinking carefully about what you read and about how the information applies to you. It helps you to connect thoughts and gain a deeper understanding of a subject. Reading the Bible without meditation is like looking at pieces of a jigsaw puzzle on a table without assembling them. Meditation is like putting those pieces together so that you can see the whole picture. To help you meditate, you could ask and answer such questions as these: ‘What did the key character in the account do to help himself? How did Jehovah help him? How can I use the lessons I have learned to help me endure trials?’

⁶ **(4) Apply.** Jesus said that if we do not

3. Before you start reading the Bible, what should you do, and why?

4. What can help you to bring a Bible account to life?

5. What is meditation, and how can you meditate?

6. Why must we apply what we learn?

apply what we learn, we are like a man who builds his house on sand. He works hard, but he is wasting his effort. Why? Because when a storm and flood hit his house, it will collapse. (Matt. 7:24-27) Similarly, if we pray, imagine, and meditate but we do not apply what we learn, we will have wasted our effort. When our faith is tested by trials or persecution, it will not be strong enough. On the other hand, when we study and apply what we learn, we make better decisions, we gain more peace, and we develop stronger faith. (Isa. 48:17, 18) Using the four steps we have just discussed, let us see what we can learn from an incident in the life of King David.

WHAT CAN YOU LEARN FROM KING DAVID?

⁷ Has a friend or a family member betrayed your trust? If so, you would benefit by reviewing the account of King David’s son Absalom, who betrayed his father and tried to steal the kingdom from him.—2 Sam. 15:5-14, 31; 18:6-14.

⁸ **(1) Pray.** With the account in mind, tell Jehovah how you are feeling about the way you have been mistreated. (Ps. 6:6-9) Be specific. Then ask Jehovah to help you see principles that can guide you as you try to cope with this difficult challenge.

⁹ **(2) Imagine.** Think about the events in this account, and imagine how King David was affected. David’s son Absalom works for years to make the

7. What Bible account will we now consider?

8. What could you do to get Jehovah’s help?

9. How would you summarize the events involving David and Absalom?

If we are looking for guidance on how to deal with a specific challenge, what can we do?

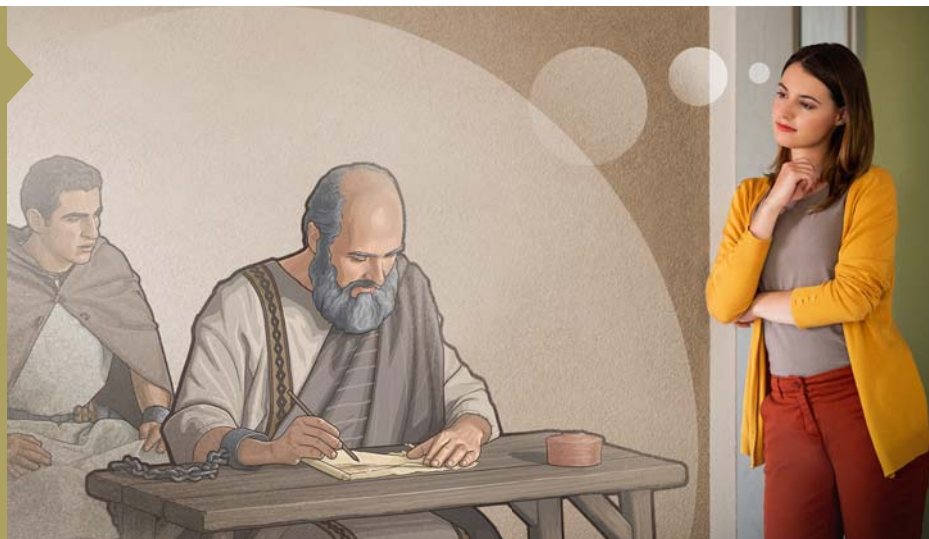
1 PRAY

Before you start reading the Bible, ask Jehovah to help you to see how you can benefit
(See paragraph 3)



2 IMAGINE

Try to see yourself in the place of the key character in the Bible account
(See paragraph 4)



3 MEDITATE

Think carefully about what you read and about how the information applies to you
(See paragraph 5)



4 APPLY

Use what you learn in order to make better decisions, to gain more peace, and to strengthen your faith
(See paragraph 6)



people love him. (2 Sam. 15:7) When Absalom feels that the time is right, he sends spies throughout all of Israel to prepare the people to accept him as their ruler. He even convinces one of David's close friends and advisers, Ahithophel, to join in the rebellion. Absalom declares himself king, and then he tries to capture and kill David, who may have been seriously ill at the time. (Ps. 41:1-9) David learns of the plot and escapes from Jerusalem. Eventually, Absalom's army clashes with forces loyal to David. The rebel army loses, and David's son Absalom is killed.

¹⁰ Next, imagine how David must have felt as all of this was happening to him. He loved Absalom and trusted Ahithophel. Yet, both of these close companions betrayed him. They hurt him deeply and even tried to kill him. David could have lost faith in his other friends, suspecting that they too had joined Absalom. He might have thought only of himself and have wanted to flee the country alone. Or he could just have given up in despair. But David did none of those things. Instead, he overcame this difficult trial. Why was he able to do so?

¹¹ **(3) Meditate.** What principles can you learn from the account? Answer the question, "What did David do to help himself?" David did not panic and make hasty, unwise decisions. Neither did he procrastinate, seemingly paralyzed by fear. Instead, he prayed to Jehovah for help. He also asked his friends to help him. And he acted quickly to implement

10. How could King David have reacted?

11. How did David respond to the crisis?

the decisions he made. Although he was deeply hurt, David did not become cynical and bitter. He continued to trust in Jehovah and to trust his friends.

¹² How did Jehovah help David? By doing some research, you will learn that Jehovah gave David the strength he needed to endure this trial. (Ps. 3:1-8; superscription) Jehovah blessed the decisions David made. And he supported David's loyal friends as they fought to protect their king.

¹³ **(4) Apply.** Ask yourself, 'How can I imitate David?' You would need to act immediately to solve the problem. Depending on the circumstances, you could apply Jesus' counsel recorded in Matthew chapter 18 either directly or in principle. **(Read Matthew 18:15-17.)** But you should not make hasty decisions that are driven by emotion. You should pray for Jehovah to give you a calm heart and the wisdom you need to deal with the matter. Do not lose faith in your friends. Instead, be willing to accept help that is offered. (Prov. 17:17) Most important, follow the advice Jehovah gives you in his Word.—Prov. 3:5, 6.

WHAT CAN YOU LEARN FROM PAUL?

¹⁴ Are you dealing with opposition from members of your family? Or do you live in a country where the work of Jehovah's people is severely restricted or even banned? If so, you might be encouraged

12. What did Jehovah do to help David?

13. How can you imitate David if another person seriously hurts you in some way? (Matthew 18:15-17)

14. What situations might cause you to focus on 2 Timothy 1:12-16; 4:6-11, 17-22?

by reading 2 Timothy 1:12-16 and 4:6-11, 17-22.* Paul wrote this portion of Scripture while he was in prison.

¹⁵ **(1) Pray.** Before you read those passages, tell Jehovah about your problem and how it makes you feel. Be specific. Then ask Jehovah to help you discern principles in the accounts about Paul's trials that will help you to know how you should respond to the challenge you are facing.

¹⁶ **(2) Imagine.** Imagine yourself in Paul's situation. He is bound in chains in a prison in Rome. He had been in prison before, but this time he is certain that he will be executed. Some of his associates have abandoned him, and he is physically exhausted.—2 Tim. 1:15.

¹⁷ Paul could have focused on the past, thinking that if he had made different choices, he might not have been arrested. He could have become bitter with the men in the district of Asia who had abandoned him, and he might have adopted a cynical attitude toward his other friends. But Paul did not do any of those things. Why was he able to stay confident and hopeful?

¹⁸ **(3) Meditate.** Answer the question, "How did Paul help himself?" Even with the threat of death hanging over him, Paul did not lose sight of the big issue—that of bringing glory to Jehovah. And he continued to think about

how he could encourage others. He relied on Jehovah through regular prayer. (2 Tim. 1:3) Rather than focus excessively on those who had abandoned him, he expressed deep gratitude for the loving support of his friends who loyally helped him in practical ways. In addition, Paul continued to study God's Word. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 4:13) Most important, he had absolute confidence that Jehovah and Jesus loved him. They had not abandoned him, and they would reward him for his loyal service.

¹⁹ Jehovah had warned Paul that he would have to endure persecution for being a Christian. (Acts 21:11-13) How did Jehovah help Paul? He answered Paul's prayers and over time gave him power. (2 Tim. 4:17) Paul was assured that he would receive the reward that he had worked so hard to gain. Jehovah also moved Paul's loyal friends to give him practical help.

²⁰ **(4) Apply.** Ask yourself, 'How can I imitate Paul?' Like Paul, we should expect that we will be persecuted for our faith. (Mark 10:29, 30) To maintain our integrity under trial, we need to rely on Jehovah in prayer and maintain a good study routine. And we must always remember that one of the most important things we can do is to bring glory to Jehovah. We can be certain that Jehovah will never abandon us and that there is nothing anyone can do to break his love for us.—**Read Romans 8:38, 39; Heb. 13:5, 6.**

* Do not read these accounts during the congregation Watchtower Study.

15. What could you ask Jehovah for?
16. How would you summarize Paul's situation?
17. How could Paul have reacted?
18. How did Paul respond to the trial he faced?

19. How did Jehovah help Paul?
20. With Romans 8:38, 39 in mind, how can you imitate Paul?

LEARN FROM OTHER BIBLE CHARACTERS

²¹ Whatever our circumstances, we can gain strength from Bible examples. For instance, Aya, a pioneer in Japan, says that the story of Jonah helped her to overcome her fear of public witnessing. Hector, a youth in Indonesia whose parents do not serve Jehovah, is motivated by the example of Ruth to learn about Jehovah and serve him.

²² Where can you find Bible examples that will strengthen you? Our videos and audio dramas and the series “Imitate Their Faith” help bring Bible events to life.* Before you watch, listen to, or read these well-researched accounts, ask

* See “Imitate Their Faith—Men and Women in the Bible” on jw.org. (Go to BIBLE TEACHINGS > FAITH IN GOD.)

21. What helped Aya and Hector to overcome the challenges they faced?

22. How can you get the most out of Bible dramas or the series “Imitate Their Faith”?

Jehovah to help you find specific points that you can apply. Imagine yourself in the place of the main character. Meditate on what these dear servants of Jehovah did and how he helped them to overcome difficulties. Then apply the lessons to your own situation. Thank Jehovah for the help he is already giving you. And show that you appreciate the help by looking for opportunities to encourage and support others.

²³ Life in this world controlled by Satan can be hard to deal with, even overwhelming at times. (2 Tim. 3:1) But we do not need to be anxious or afraid. Jehovah knows what we are going through. When we fall, he promises to hold on to us with his strong right hand. **(Read Isaiah 41:10, 13.)** With full confidence in his support, we can gain strength from the Scriptures and overcome any challenge.

23. According to Isaiah 41:10, 13, what does Jehovah promise to do for us?

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- What four-step method of study can help us to benefit from Bible examples?
- What did you learn from the examples of King David and of the apostle Paul?
- What Bible character would you like to study in more detail?

God's Own Book—A Treasure

(Proverbs 2:1)

Ab Gb/Bb Ab7/C Db Ab/C Bbm Bbm/Ab Ab/Gb Gb

There is a book that by its man - y pag - es,
They wrote a rec - ord true of God's cre - a - tions,
The time has come with rea - son for re - joic - ing:

Bb Ab/C Bb7/D Ebm9 Ebm Ebm/Db Ebm/C

Brings peace and joy and hope to hu - man - kind.
How by his might this u - ni - verse ap - peared.
Je - ho - vah rules by his a - noint - ed King.

Ebm/F F7 Bbm9 Bbm Bbm/Ab Gbma7 Ebm/Gb

Its won - drous thoughts are charged with such great pow - er;
They al - so told how man at first was sin - less
So now we preach the good news of the King - dom

Db/F Bbm7 Eb7 Ebm11

It brings life to the "dead," sight to the "blind."
But how his Par - a - dise then dis - ap - peared.
And share the hope of bless - ings it will bring.

God's Own Book—A Treasure

Ab7 Gb/Bb Ab7/C Db Ab/C Bbm Bbm/Ab Ab/Gb Gb

That pre - cious book is God's own Ho - ly Bi - ble.
 They fur - ther told a - bout a cer - tain an - gel
 With - in his book are found these cheer - ful tid - ings;

Bb Ab/C Bb7/D Ebm9 Ebm EbmDb Ebm/C

Its words were penned by men whom God in - spired,
 Who chal - langed God and spurned his sov - 'reign - ty.
 A sa - cred ban - quet feast on which to feed.

F7 Eb/G F7/A Bbm Fm/Ab Gb Db/F Ebm9 Ebm

By men who tru - ly loved their God Je - ho - vah,
 That chal - lenge led to sin and man's great sor - row,
 It of - fers peace be - yond all hu - man think - ing;

Gbm Gbm(ma7) Gbm6 Db/F Ab/Eb D° Gb/Db Ab7/C Gb/Bb Ab7/C Db

And by his ho - ly spir - it they were fired.
 But soon will come Je - ho - vah's vic - to - ry.
 This Liv - ing Trea - sure beck - ons all to read.

(See also 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21.)