

Monday, May 31

We love, because he first loved us.—1 John 4:19.

Jehovah has invited us to join his family of worshippers. Our family is made up of those who have dedicated themselves to God and who exercise faith in the ransom sacrifice of his Son. Ours is a happy family. We enjoy a meaningful life now, and we rejoice in the prospect of life without end—whether in heaven or in Paradise on earth. Moved by love and at great cost to himself, Jehovah opened the way for us to be part of his family. (John 3:16) We were “bought with a price.” (1 Corinthians 6:20) By means of the ransom, Jehovah made it possible for us to have a warm relationship with him. We have the honor of addressing the greatest Person in the universe as Father. And Jehovah is the ideal Father. Like one Bible writer, we might ask: “With what will I repay Jehovah for all the good he has done for me?” (Psalm 116:12) The answer is that we can never repay our heavenly Father. Still, we feel moved to love him. w20.02
8 paragraphs 1-3

Tuesday, June 1

Her rival wife taunted her relentlessly in order to upset her.—1 Samuel 1:6.

The prophet Samuel's mother, Hannah, had to deal with some difficult problems. For many years she was unable to have children. (1 Samuel 1:2) In Israelite culture, a woman who was barren was believed to be cursed. This left her feeling humiliated. (Genesis 30:1, 2) To make matters worse for Hannah, her husband had another wife, Peninnah, who bore him children and taunted Hannah about it. Hannah did not cope well with these difficult challenges. She was so upset that "she would weep and not eat." She became "extremely bitter" at heart. (1 Samuel 1:7, 10) How did Hannah find comfort? Hannah poured out her feelings to Jehovah in prayer. After she prayed, she explained her situation to High Priest Eli. He then told her: "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant your petition." What was the result? Hannah "went on her way and ate, and her face was no longer downcast." (1 Samuel 1:17, 18) Prayer helped Hannah to regain peace. w20.02 21 paragraphs 4-5

Wednesday, June 2

Let your words always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should answer each person.—Colossians 4:6.

Soon, Jehovah will bring this system to an end. Only those who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life” will survive. (Acts 13:48) So it is natural that we would also want our relatives to serve Jehovah with us. Our loving Father, Jehovah, “does not desire anyone to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9) We need to keep in mind that there is a right way and a wrong way to share the message of salvation. Although we may be tactful when witnessing to a stranger, we may be too blunt when talking with our relatives. Many of us may look back with regret on our initial attempt to witness to our relatives and wish we had dealt with them differently. It is good to remember the apostle Paul’s advice, mentioned in today’s text, when we approach our relatives. Otherwise, we might end up alienating them rather than persuading them. *w19.08*
14-15 paragraphs 3-5

Thursday, June 3

Christ [left] a model for you to follow his steps closely.—1 Peter 2:21.

What was your reaction when you learned the following truths about the Son? Jesus is the second most important person in the universe. He is our Ransomer. He willingly gave his life for us. When we show by our actions that we have faith in the ransom, we can have our sins forgiven, develop a friendship with God, and gain everlasting life. (John 3:16) Jesus is our High Priest. He wants to help us to benefit from the ransom and to have a close relationship with God. (Hebrews 4:15; 7:24, 25) As King of God's Kingdom, he is the one through whom Jehovah will sanctify His name, end wickedness, and bring eternal blessings in the coming Paradise. (Matthew 6:9, 10; Revelation 11:15) Jesus is our model. He set an example for us in devoting his life to doing God's will. (John 4:34) When you accept what the Bible teaches about Jesus, you come to love God's dear Son. That love moves you to use your life to do God's will, as Jesus did. w20.03 10 paragraphs 12-13

Friday, June 4

Pray constantly.—1 Thessalonians 5:17.

Jesus prayed often throughout the last day of his life on earth. When he instituted the commemoration of his death, he prayed over the bread and the wine. (1 Corinthians 11:23-25) Before leaving the place where they had held the Passover, he prayed with the disciples. (John 17:1-26) When he and the disciples arrived at the Mount of Olives that night, he prayed repeatedly. (Matthew 26:36-39, 42, 44) And the very last words Jesus spoke before dying were uttered in prayer. (Luke 23:46) Through prayer, Jesus included Jehovah in every major event on that momentous day. One reason why Jesus could endure his trial was that he turned to his Father in prayer. The apostles, on the other hand, failed to persevere in prayer that night. As a result, their courage weakened when the hour of test arrived. (Matthew 26:40, 41, 43, 45, 56) When we face trials, we will remain faithful only if we follow Jesus' example and "pray continually." w19.04 9 paragraphs 4-5

Saturday, June 5

I am Jehovah; I do not change.—Malachi 3:6.

Jehovah hates spiritism! He told the Israelites: “There should not be found in you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, anyone who employs divination, anyone practicing magic, anyone who looks for omens, a sorcerer, anyone binding others with a spell, anyone who consults a spirit medium or a fortune-teller, or anyone who inquires of the dead. For whoever does these things is detestable to Jehovah.” (Deuteronomy 18:10-12) Christians are not under the Law that Jehovah gave to the Israelites. However, we know that his feelings about spiritism have not changed. Jehovah warns us against spiritism because he knows that Satan uses it to harm people. Satan uses spiritism to promote lies—including the lie that the dead are alive in some other realm. (Ecclesiastes 9:5) Satan also uses spiritism to keep people in fear and to turn them away from Jehovah. His aim is that people who practice spiritism will trust in wicked spirits instead of in Jehovah. *w19.04 21* paragraphs 5-6

Sunday, June 6

If you are doing what is bad, be in fear.—Romans 13:4.

Child abuse is a grave sin. The child abuser hurts the child in devastating ways. He betrays the child's trust, robbing the child of his or her security. Children must be protected from such a wicked deed, and those who have been victimized by it need comfort and help. (1 Thessalonians 5:14) When someone who is a part of the congregation becomes guilty of child abuse, he brings reproach on the congregation. (Matthew 5:16; 1 Peter 2:12) We do not tolerate in our midst individuals who unrepentantly commit wicked deeds and who bring reproach on the good name of the congregation. If someone in the congregation becomes guilty of violating a criminal law, such as by committing child abuse, he is sinning against the secular authorities. (Compare Acts 25:8.) While the elders are not authorized to enforce the law of the land, they do not shield any perpetrator of child abuse from the legal consequences of his sin. w19.05 9 paragraphs 4-7

Song 125 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“The Judgment Belongs to God”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

De 1:19; 2:7—How did Jehovah care for his people during their 40-year trek through a “great and fearsome wilderness”? (w13 9/15 9 ¶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 min.) De 1:1-18 (10)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

Initial Call: (3 min.) Use the sample conversation. Overcome a common objection. (16)

Return Visit: (4 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Give the householder a meeting invitation, and introduce (but do not play) the video *What Happens at a Kingdom Hall?* (11)

Talk: (5 min.) w13 8/15 11 ¶7—Theme: Avoid Uttering or Listening to Negative Speech. (13)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 30

“Remain Prepared During the Last of ‘the Last Days’”: (15 min.) Discussion by an elder. Play the video *Are You Prepared for a Natural Disaster?* (video category THE BIBLE). Include reminders from the branch office and the body of elders, if provided.

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) rr chap. 9 ¶10-17

 “The Judgment Belongs to God”

[Play the video *Introduction to Deuteronomy*.]

Elders must “judge with righteousness” (De 1:16; w96 3/15 23 ¶1)

Elders “must not be partial in judgment” (De 1:17; w02 8/1 9 ¶4)

How can we all show that we appreciate the elder arrangement?—Heb 13:17; Jas 5:13-15



125 *“Happy Are the Merciful!”*

(Matthew 5:7)

1. Our happy God is merciful,
His mercy not just dutiful.
He takes delight in kindly deeds
And freely grants our daily needs.
Repentant ones can be assured
Their plea for mercy will be heard.
Remembering that we are dust,
He’s merciful and kind and just.
2. When we have sinned and feel distressed,
When God’s forgiveness we request,
Our Lord, Christ Jesus, showed the way
To ask for mercy when we pray:
“Forgive our debts, we beg of you,
As we forgive our debtors too.”
We then can let resentment go,
And peace of mind and heart we’ll know.
3. When gifts of mercy we bestow,
The giving spirit we should show.
We give without desiring praise,
Content with joy our gift conveys.
Then God, who sees all things we do,
Will be the One repaying you.
Yes, happy are the merciful,
In God’s eyes they are beautiful.

Deuteronomy 1-2

1 These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel in the region of the Jordan in the wilderness, on the desert plains in front of Suph, between Pa'ran, To'phel, La'ban, Ha-ze'roth, and Di'za-hab. ² It is 11 days from Hor'eb to Ka'desh-bar'ne-a by way of Mount Se'ir. ³ In the 40th year, in the 11th month, on the first of the month, Moses spoke to the Israelites according to all that Jehovah had instructed him to tell them. ⁴ This was after he defeated Si'hon the king of the Am'or-ites, who was dwelling in Hesh'bon, and Og the king of Ba'shan, who was dwelling in Ash'ta-roth, in Ed're-i. ⁵ In the region of the Jordan in the land of Mo'ab, Moses undertook to explain this Law, saying:

⁶ “Jehovah our God told us in Hor'eb, ‘You have stayed long enough in this mountainous region. ⁷ Turn and set out for the mountainous region of the Am'or-ites and toward all their neighbors in the Ar'a-bah, the mountainous region, the She-phe'lah, the Neg'eb, and the seacoast, the land of the Ca'naan-ites, and Leb'a-non, up to the great river, the river Eu-phra'tes. ⁸ See, I have set the land before you. Go in and take possession of the land about which Jehovah swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give it to them and their offspring after them.’

⁹ “And I told you at that time, ‘I am not able to carry you by myself. ¹⁰ Jehovah your God has multiplied you, and here you are today as numerous as the stars of the heavens.

¹¹ May Jehovah, the God of your forefathers, multiply you a thousand times as many as you are, and may he bless you just as he has promised you. ¹² How can I bear by myself the burden of you and the load of you and your quarreling?

¹³ Select wise, discreet, and experienced men of your tribes, and I will appoint them as heads over you.’ ¹⁴ You answered me, ‘What you have told us to do is good.’ ¹⁵ So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and appointed them as heads over you, chiefs of thousands, chiefs of hundreds, chiefs of fifties, chiefs of tens, and officers of your tribes.

¹⁶ “At that time I instructed your judges, ‘When you hear a case between your brothers, you are to judge with righteousness between a man and his brother or a foreign resident. ¹⁷ You must not be partial in judgment. You should hear the small one the same as the great one. You must not become intimidated by men, for the judgment belongs to God; and if a case is too difficult for you, you should present it to me, and I will hear it.’ ¹⁸ At that time I instructed you regarding all the things that you should do.

¹⁹ “Then we departed from Hor'eb and marched through all that great and fearsome wilderness that you saw on the way to the mountainous region of the Am'or-ites, just as Jehovah our God had commanded us, and we eventually came to Ka'desh-bar'ne-a. ²⁰ I then said to you, ‘You have come to the mountainous region of the Am'or-ites, which Jehovah our God is giving to us. ²¹ See, Jehovah your God has given the

land over to you. Go up, take possession of it, just as Jehovah, the God of your forefathers, has told you. Do not be afraid or terrified.'

²² "However, all of you approached me and said, 'Let us send men ahead of us to search out the land for us and bring word back to us as to what route we should take and what kind of cities we will encounter.'²³ The suggestion seemed good to me, so I selected 12 of your men, one for each tribe.²⁴ They left and went up into the mountainous region and reached the Valley of Esh'col and spied it out.²⁵ They took some of the fruitage of the land and carried it back to us, and they brought word back to us, 'The land that Jehovah our God is giving us is good.'²⁶ But you refused to go up, and you rebelled against the order of Jehovah your God.²⁷ You kept grumbling in your tents and were saying, 'It was because Jehovah hated us that he brought us out of the land of Egypt to hand us over to the Am'or-ites to annihilate us.'²⁸ What kind of place are we going to? Our brothers made us lose heart by saying, "They are a people greater and taller than we are, and their cities are great and fortified to the heavens, and we saw the sons of the An'a-kim there."

²⁹ "So I said to you, 'Do not be struck with terror or be afraid because of them.'³⁰ Jehovah your God will go before you and will fight for you, just as he did in Egypt before your very eyes.³¹ And you saw in the wilderness how Jehovah your God carried you just as a man carries his son, everywhere you went until you came to this place.'³² But

despite all of this, you did not put faith in Jehovah your God,³³ who was going ahead of you on the way, to spy out a place for you to camp. He appeared by fire at night and by a cloud in the daytime to show you the way you should walk.

³⁴ “All the while Jehovah heard what you were saying, and he became indignant and solemnly swore,³⁵ ‘Not one of these men of this evil generation will see the good land that I swore to give to your fathers,³⁶ except Ca'leb the son of Je-phun'neh. He will see it, and I will give the land on which he walked to him and to his sons, because he has followed Jehovah wholeheartedly.³⁷ (Jehovah even became angry with me because of you, and he said, “You too will not go in there.³⁸ Joshua the son of Nun, who stands before you, is the one who will enter into the land. Make him strong, for he will cause Israel to inherit it.”)³⁹ Moreover, your children who you said would become plunder and your sons who today do not know good or bad, these will enter, and I will give it to them to possess.⁴⁰ But as for you, turn back and depart for the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea.’

⁴¹ “At this you said to me, ‘We have sinned against Jehovah. We will now go up and fight, just as Jehovah our God has commanded us!’ So each of you put on his weapons of war, and you thought it would be an easy thing to go up the mountain.⁴² But Jehovah said to me, ‘Tell them: “You must not go up and fight, for I will not be with you. If you do, you will be defeated by your enemies.”’⁴³ So I spoke to you, but you did not listen. Instead, you rebelled against

Jehovah's order and presumptuously tried to go up the mountain. ⁴⁴ Then the Am'or-ites who were dwelling in that mountain came out to meet you and chased you away like bees do, and they scattered you in Se'ir as far as Hor'mah. ⁴⁵ So you returned and began to weep before Jehovah, but Jehovah did not listen to you or pay attention to you. ⁴⁶ That is why you kept dwelling in Ka'desh for as long as you did.

2 “Then we turned and departed for the wilderness by the way of the Red Sea, just as Jehovah had told me, and we traveled for many days around Mount Se'ir. ² Finally Jehovah said to me, ³ ‘You have gone around this mountain long enough. Now turn north. ⁴ And give this command to the people: “You will pass by the border of your brothers, the descendants of E'sau, who are dwelling in Se'ir, and they will be afraid of you, and you must be very careful. ⁵ Do not engage in hostilities with them, for I will not give you any of their land, not even the space of a footprint, because I have given Mount Se'ir to E'sau as his possession. ⁶ You should give them money for the food you will eat, and you should pay for the water you will drink. ⁷ For Jehovah your God has blessed you in all that you have done. He is fully aware of your walking through this great wilderness. These 40 years Jehovah your God has been with you, and you have lacked nothing.” ⁸ So we passed by our brothers, the descendants of E'sau, who are dwelling in Se'ir, keeping away from the way of the Ar'a-bah, from E'lath and from E'zi-on-ge'ber.

“Next we turned and traveled by the way of the wilderness of Mo'ab. ⁹ Jehovah then said to me, ‘Do not engage in hostilities or in war with Mo'ab, for I will not give you any of his land as a possession because I have given Ar as a possession to the descendants of Lot. ¹⁰ (The E'mim formerly lived there, a people great and numerous and tall like the An'a·kim. ¹¹ The Reph'a·im were also considered like the An'a·kim, and the Mo'ab·ites used to call them E'mim. ¹² Previously, the Hor'ites were living in Se'ir, but the descendants of E'sau dispossessed and annihilated them and settled in their place, just as Israel will do to the land that is their possession, which Jehovah will certainly give to them.) ¹³ Now go and cross over the Valley of Ze'red.’ So we crossed over the Valley of Ze'red. ¹⁴ The time it took us to walk from Ka'desh-bar'ne·a until we crossed the Valley of Ze'red was 38 years, until the entire generation of the men of war had perished from the camp, just as Jehovah had sworn to them. ¹⁵ Jehovah's hand was against them to eliminate them from the camp until they had perished.

¹⁶ “As soon as all the men of war had died off from among the people, ¹⁷ Jehovah spoke to me again, saying, ¹⁸ ‘Today you are to pass by the territory of Mo'ab, that is, Ar. ¹⁹ When you come near to the Am'mon·ites, do not harass or provoke them, for I will not give you any of the land of the Am'mon·ites as a possession, because I have given it to the descendants of Lot as their possession. ²⁰ This too used to be considered the land of the Reph'a·im. (The Reph'a·im

formerly lived there, and the Am'mon-ites used to call them Zam-zum'mim. ²¹ They were a great and numerous and tall people like the An'a-kim; but Jehovah annihilated them before the Am'mon-ites, and these drove them out and settled in their place. ²² That is what he did for the descendants of E'sau, who now dwell in Se'ir, when he annihilated the Hor'ites from before them, so that they could dispossess them and dwell in their place to this very day. ²³ As for the Av'vim, they had dwelled in settlements as far as Gaz'a until the Caph'to-rim, who came out from Caph'tor, annihilated them and settled in their place.)

²⁴ “Get up, and make your way across the Ar'non Valley. See, I have given into your hand Si'hon the Am'or-ite, king of Hesh'bon. So begin taking possession of his land, and engage him in war. ²⁵ This day I will start to put the dread and the fear of you upon all the people under the heavens who hear the report about you. They will be disturbed and will tremble because of you.’

²⁶ “Then I sent messengers from the wilderness of Ked'e-moth to King Si'hon of Hesh'bon, with these peaceful words, ²⁷ ‘Let me pass through your land. I will remain on the road and not turn to the right or to the left. ²⁸ I will eat only the food and drink only the water that you will sell to me. Just allow me to pass through on foot ²⁹ —that is what the descendants of E'sau dwelling in Se'ir and the Mo'ab-ites dwelling in Ar did for me—until I pass over the Jordan into the land that Jehovah our God is giving to us.’ ³⁰ But King

Si'hon of Hesh'bon did not let us pass through, because Jehovah your God allowed his spirit to become obstinate and his heart to become hard, in order to give him into your hand as is now the case.

³¹ “Then Jehovah said to me, ‘See, I have already begun to give Si'hon and his land over to you. Start to take possession of his land.’ ³² When Si'hon came out along with all his people to meet us in battle at Ja'haz, ³³ Jehovah our God handed him over to us, so that we defeated him, his sons, and all his people. ³⁴ We captured all his cities at that time and devoted every city to destruction, including men, women, and children. We left no survivor. ³⁵ We plundered only the livestock for ourselves along with the spoils from the cities that we had captured. ³⁶ From A-ro'er, which is on the rim of the Ar'non Valley (including the city that is in the valley), as far as Gil'e-ad, no town was beyond our reach. Jehovah our God handed them all over to us. ³⁷ However, you did not approach the land of the Am'mon-ites, the whole bank of the Valley of Jab'bok and the cities of the mountainous region, or any other place forbidden by Jehovah our God.

Song 125 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

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How can we all show that we appreciate the elder arrangement?—Heb 13:17; Jas 5:13-15



Introduction to Deuteronomy

See how Jehovah rewards those who love him and withholds his blessing from those who disobey him.

Raw Transcript

An introduction to the book of Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy was written by Moses on the plains of Moab in 1473 B.C.E. just before the Israelites entered the Promised Land. The name Deuteronomy means “Second Law,” or “Repetition of the Law.” However, the book is also an explanation of the Law. Deuteronomy urges the Israelites to love and obey Jehovah in the land he is about to give them. The book consists primarily of four discourses, a song, and a blessing by Moses. In the first discourse, found in chapters 1-4, Moses reviews Israel’s history after the Exodus and urges the people to remember what Jehovah has done for them. For example, Moses reminds them that Jehovah eliminated the faithless and cowardly generation that, 40 years earlier, feared the inhabitants of Canaan. In the second discourse, contained in chapters 5-26, Moses exhorts the people to obey God’s commandments, not out of mere duty, but because they love him with all their heart, soul, and strength. Did you know? In the ancient world, foreigners often had no legal rights and widows and fatherless children faced many difficulties. In Israel, however, Jehovah’s Law applied to and benefited all, including foreigners, widows, and fatherless

children. Jehovah loves these individuals, and his people should love them too. In chapter 7, Moses tells the Israelites that Jehovah will clear away the nations in the Promised Land, which are more populous and mightier than Israel. In chapter 8, Moses describes Israel's inheritance as "a good land" with streams of water, wheat, barley, grapevines, fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil, and honey. But it is a land filled with false worship. So in chapter 12, the Israelites are commanded to pull down the altars to false gods, to shatter the sacred pillars, to burn the sacred poles, and to cut down the graven images. In chapter 16, Moses reminds God's people to celebrate the Passover as well as the three great festivals: the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Festival of Weeks, and the Festival of Booths. Chapter 18 contains a prophecy about a future great prophet. Moses says: "Jehovah your God will raise up for you "from among your brothers a prophet like me. You must listen to him." The third discourse, in chapters 27 and 28, sets out the cursings for disobedience and the blessings for obedience. After the nation crosses the Jordan River, the cursings are to be recited on Mount Ebal, where half of the tribes are to stand. The other tribes are to stand on Mount Gerizim and bless the people. Chapters 29 and 30 contain Moses' fourth discourse, in which he makes a covenant with the people, telling them to choose life by obeying Jehovah. In chapter 31, Jehovah commissions Joshua as Moses' successor. Joshua should "be courageous and strong" as he leads the nation into its

God-given land. Chapter 32 records the song of Moses, which powerfully extols God's faithfulness in contrast with the Israelites' unfaithfulness. In chapter 33, we read "the blessing that Moses . . . pronounced on the Israelites before his death." In the final chapter, Moses ascends Mount Nebo, where he is shown the Promised Land. Jehovah says: "I have let you see it with your own eyes, but you will not cross over there." Moses then dies at 120 years of age, and Jehovah buries him in a secret location in Moab. As you read the book of Deuteronomy, see how Jehovah blesses those who love him, note how he withholds his blessing from those who disobey him, and discern how the principles behind God's Law are reflected in the teachings of Jesus—the Prophet like Moses, who is also the King of God's Kingdom.

video source: <https://www.jw.org/en/library/videos/books-of-bible-intros/book-of-deuteronomy>

May 31–June 6 / Deuteronomy 1-2

Song 125 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 minute)

Treasures From God's Word

"The Judgment Belongs to God": (10 minutes)

[Play the video *Introduction to Deuteronomy*.]

Elders must "judge with righteousness"

Deuteronomy 1:16: "At that time I instructed your judges, 'When you hear a case between your brothers, you are to judge with righteousness between a man and his brother or a foreign resident.

w96 3/15 23 paragraph 1

Appointed congregation elders are obliged to judge in cases of serious wrongdoing. (1 Corinthians 5:12, 13) When doing so, they remember that God's justice seeks to extend mercy where possible. If there is no basis for it—as in the case of unrepentant sinners—mercy cannot be extended. But the elders do not expel such a wrongdoer from the congregation

out of vindictiveness. They hope that the disfellowshipping action itself will bring him to his senses. (Compare Ezekiel 18:23.) Under Christ's headship, the elders serve in the interests of justice, and this includes being like "a hiding place from the wind." (Isaiah 32:1, 2) They must therefore show impartiality and reasonableness.—Deuteronomy 1:16, 17.

Elders "must not be partial in judgment"

Deuteronomy 1:17: You must not be partial in judgment. You should hear the small one the same as the great one. You must not become intimidated by men, for the judgment belongs to God; and if a case is too difficult for you, you should present it to me, and I will hear it.'

w02 8/1 9 paragraph 4

There was more to being a judge than knowing the Law, however. Being imperfect, the older men had to be alert to curb any of their own wayward tendencies—such as selfishness, partiality, and greed—that might pervert their judgment. Moses told them: "You must not be partial in

judgment. You should hear the little one the same as the great one. You must not become frightened because of a man, *for the judgment belongs to God.*” Yes, Israel’s judges were judging for God. What an awe-inspiring privilege that was!—Deuteronomy 1:16, 17.

How can we all show that we appreciate the elder arrangement?

Hebrews 13:17: Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over you as those who will render an account, so that they may do this with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you.

James 5:13-15: Is there anyone suffering hardship among you? Let him carry on prayer. Is there anyone in good spirits? Let him sing psalms. Is there anyone sick among you? Let him call the elders of the congregation to him, and let them pray over him, applying oil to him in the name of Jehovah. And the prayer of faith will make the sick one well, and Jehovah will raise him up. Also, if he has committed sins, he

will be forgiven.

[Image:] A young brother meeting with the elders.

Spiritual Gems

Deuteronomy 1:19; 2:7—How did Jehovah care for his people during their 40 year trek through a “great and fearsome wilderness”?

Deuteronomy 1:19: “Then we departed from Horeb and marched through all that great and fearsome wilderness that you saw on the way to the mountainous region of the Amorites, just as Jehovah our God had commanded us, and we eventually came to Kadesh-barnea.

Deuteronomy 2:7: For Jehovah your God has blessed you in all that you have done. He is fully aware of your walking through this great wilderness. These 40 years Jehovah your God has been with you, and you have lacked nothing.”

w13 9/15 9 paragraph 9

When the Israelites set out on what became a 40 year trek through a “fear-inspiring wilderness,” Jehovah did not give them specific details beforehand as to how he would direct,

protect, and care for them. Still, he repeatedly demonstrated that they could trust in him and his instructions. Using a pillar of cloud by day and one of fire by night, Jehovah reminded the Israelites that he was backing them as he led them across that inhospitable terrain. (Deuteronomy 1:19; Exodus 40:36-38) He also provided for their basic needs. "Their very garments did not wear out, and their feet themselves did not become swollen." Indeed, "they lacked nothing."—Nehemiah 9:19-21.

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) Deuteronomy 1:1-18 (*th*
study 10)

Song 125 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“The Judgment Belongs to God”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

De 1:19; 2:7—How did Jehovah care for his people during their 40-year trek through a “great and fearsome wilderness”? (w13 9/15 9 ¶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 min.) De 1:1-18 (10)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

Initial Call: (3 min.) Use the sample conversation. Overcome a common objection. (16)

Return Visit: (4 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Give the householder a meeting invitation, and introduce (but do not play) the video *What Happens at a Kingdom Hall?* (11)

Talk: (5 min.) w13 8/15 11 ¶7—Theme: Avoid Uttering or Listening to Negative Speech. (13)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 30

“Remain Prepared During the Last of ‘the Last Days’”: (15 min.) Discussion by an elder. Play the video *Are You Prepared for a Natural Disaster?* (video category THE BIBLE). Include reminders from the branch office and the body of elders, if provided.

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) rr chap. 9 ¶10-17



“The Judgment Belongs to God”

[Play the video *Introduction to Deuteronomy*.]

Elders must “judge with righteousness” (De 1:16; w96 3/15 23 ¶1)

Elders “must not be partial in judgment” (De 1:17; w02 8/1 9 ¶4)

How can we all show that we appreciate the elder arrangement?—Heb 13:17; Jas 5:13-15





Make Wise Decisions Regarding Alcoholic Beverages



All Christians need to exercise self-control regarding alcoholic beverages. (Pr 23:20, 29-35; 1Co 6:9, 10) If a Christian chooses to drink, he should do so in moderation. He must also avoid dependence on alcohol and avoid stumbling others. (1Co 10:23, 24; 1Ti 5:23) Certainly, no one, especially young ones, should be pressured to consume alcoholic beverages.

WATCH THE WHITEBOARD ANIMATION *THINK PAST THE DRINK*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- Why must all Christians obey laws regarding drinking alcohol?—Ro 13:1-4

- Why should we avoid letting others pressure us to drink alcohol?—Ro 6:16

- How can we avoid pitfalls related to alcoholic beverages?



SAMPLE CONVERSATIONS

Initial Call

Question: What is God’s purpose for humans?

Scripture: **Ge 1:28**

Link: How do we know that God will accomplish his purpose for humans?

▶ FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



• *bhs 29 ¶1*

Return Visit

Question: How do we know that God will accomplish his purpose for humans?

Scripture: **Isa 55:11**

Link: What will life be like when God fulfills his purpose?

▶ FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



• *bhs 29 ¶2*



Talk: (5 min.) w13 8/15 11 ¶7—Theme: Avoid Uttering or Listening to Negative Speech. (*th* study 13)

⁷ **The negative speech of others can influence us. (*Read Deuteronomy 1:26-28.*)** The Israelites had just been delivered from slavery in Egypt. Jehovah had miraculously brought ten plagues on that oppressive nation and thereafter destroyed Pharaoh and his military force in the Red Sea. (Ex. 12:29-32, 51; 14:29-31; Ps. 136:15) God's people were poised to enter the Promised Land. Yet, at that crucial moment, the Israelites started to complain about Jehovah. What caused this lack of faith? Their hearts melted because of the negative report of some who had been sent to spy out the land. (Num. 14:1-4) What resulted? A whole generation was not allowed to enter into that "good land." (Deut. 1:34, 35) Could we at times allow the negative speech of others to weaken our faith and cause us to grumble about Jehovah's dealings with us?

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)

Song 125 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

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 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

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How can we all show that we appreciate the elder arrangement?—Heb 13:17; Jas 5:13-15





Remain Prepared During the Last of “the Last Days”



As we endure the last of “the last days,” we expect troubles of increasing intensity. (2Ti 3:1; *nwtsty* study note on Mt 24:8) When facing a disaster, Jehovah’s people often receive timely and lifesaving direction. Our survival *then* may depend on our obedient preparation *now*, both spiritually and physically.—Lu 16:10.

- Prepare spiritually: Develop a good routine. Learn different forms of the ministry. Do not panic if you are temporarily separated from others in the congregation. (Isa 30:15) You are never isolated from Jehovah and Jesus.—od 176 ¶15-17
- Prepare physically: In addition to go bags, each household should have a reasonable reserve of food, water, medicine, and similar items in case it is necessary to shelter in place for an extended period of time.—Pr 22:3; *g17.5* 4, 6

WATCH THE VIDEO ARE YOU PREPARED FOR A NATURAL DISASTER? AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- How can we prepare spiritually for a disaster?

- Why should we . . . maintain good communication with the elders?

prepare an emergency kit?

review the types of disasters that might occur and what to do in each situation?

- What are three ways we can help others when they experience a disaster?



ASK YOURSELF, ‘What lessons regarding being prepared can I learn from the COVID-19 pandemic?’