

Monday, November 22

Become imitators of God, as beloved children.—

Ephesians 5:1.

The more we learn about the qualities that make up Jehovah's personality, the better we will be able to imitate him. David came to know his heavenly Father well, so he was able to imitate Him when dealing with others. Because David had such a good relationship with Jehovah, he became one of Israel's most beloved kings and the standard by which Jehovah measured other kings of Israel. (1 Kings 15:11; 2 Kings 14:1-3) What is the lesson for us? We need to be "imitators of God." When we model our personality after his, we prove that we are his children. (Ephesians 4:24) We will never stop learning about Jehovah. (Ecclesiastes 3:11) The important thing is, not how much we know about him, but what we do with what we know. If we apply what we learn and try to imitate our loving Father, he will continue to draw close to us. (James 4:8) Through his Word, he assures us that he will never abandon those seeking him. w19.12 20 paragraph 20; 21 paragraph 21, 23

Tuesday, November 23

*The heart is more treacherous than anything else.—
Jeremiah 17:9.*

Jacob loved all his sons, but he had special affection for 17 year old Joseph. How did Joseph's brothers react? They became envious of him, and that envy made them bitter. So they sold Joseph into slavery and lied to their father, saying that a wild animal had killed his favorite son. Envy caused them to disrupt the peace of the family and to break their father's heart. (Genesis 37:3, 4, 27-34) Envy is listed among the death-dealing "works of the flesh" that can disqualify a person from inheriting God's Kingdom. (Galatians 5:19-21) Envy is often the root cause of such poisonous fruits as hostility, strife, and fits of anger. The example of Joseph's brothers shows how envy can damage relationships and disturb the peace that once existed in a family. Although we would never do what Joseph's brothers did, we all have an imperfect and treacherous heart. Little wonder, then, that we may at times struggle with feelings of envy. w20.02 14 paragraphs 1-3

Wednesday, November 24

With humility consider others superior to you.—

Philippians 2:3.

On one occasion, Jehovah took away some of his holy spirit from Moses and gave it to a group of Israelite elders who were standing near the tent of meeting. Shortly thereafter, Moses heard that two elders who had not gone out to the tent of meeting had also received holy spirit and had begun to behave as prophets. How did he react when Joshua asked him to restrain the two elders? Moses did not become envious of the attention these two men were getting from Jehovah. Instead, he humbly rejoiced with them in their privilege. (Numbers 11:24-29) What lesson can we learn from Moses? If you are an elder, have you ever been asked to train someone else to care for a privilege in the congregation that you have and truly love? If you are humble like Moses, you will not feel threatened if you are asked to train another brother so that, in time, he will be able to handle this privilege. Instead, you will be happy to help your brother. w20.02 15 paragraph 9; 17 paragraphs 10-11

Thursday, November 25

Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, but a good word cheers it up.—Proverbs 12:25.

Illness can take an emotional toll on us. We may feel embarrassed when people notice our limitations or when we must rely on others for help. Even when others are not aware of our illness, we may fight feelings of shame because of how limited we have become. At such distressing times, Jehovah lifts us up. How? In the Bible, Jehovah has stored up good words that remind us that we matter to him despite our sickness. (Psalm 31:19; 41:3) Through those inspired words, Jehovah will help us to deal with the negative emotions that our illness brings. Be assured that Jehovah knows what you are going through. Beg him for help so that you can develop a wholesome view of your situation. Then use the Bible to retrieve the good words Jehovah has stored up for you. Focus on passages that show how much Jehovah values his servants. As you do, you will see that Jehovah is good to all those who serve him faithfully.—

Psalm 84:11. *w20.01* 15-16 paragraphs 9-10; 17 paragraph 12

Friday, November 26

*Do not imitate what is bad, but imitate what is good.—
3 John 11.*

Isaac was a wealthy man, and the Philistines envied Isaac's prosperity. (Genesis 26:12-14) They even stopped up the wells that Isaac depended on in order to water his flocks and herds. (Genesis 26:15, 16, 27) Like the Philistines, some people today become envious of those who have more material possessions than they do. They not only want the things others have but also want to deprive them of what they have. The Jewish religious leaders envied Jesus because he was much appreciated by the common people. (Matthew 7:28, 29) Jesus was God's representative, and he was teaching the truth. Even so, these religious leaders spread wicked lies and slander to ruin Jesus' good name. (Mark 15:10; John 11:47, 48; 12:12, 13, 19) What warning lesson can we learn from this account? We must fight any tendency to envy those who have qualities that endear them to the congregation. Instead, we should try to imitate their loving ways.—1 Corinthians 11:1. w20.02 15 paragraphs 4-5

Saturday, November 27

He is to be put to death.—Esther 4:11.

Imagine that you are living some 2,500 years ago in Persia and want to speak to the king. You would not even think of approaching the monarch without first receiving his permission. To do otherwise could very well cost you your life! How thankful we are that Jehovah is not like that Persian king! He welcomes us at any time. He wants us to feel free to approach him. For example, although Jehovah bears such lofty titles as Grand Creator, Almighty, and Sovereign Lord, we are invited to call on him using the familiar term “Father.” (Matthew 6:9) How touching that Jehovah wants us to view him in such a warm and intimate way! We can rightly call Jehovah “Father”—he is the Source of our life. (Psalm 36:9) Because he is our Father, we have a responsibility to obey him. When we do what he asks of us, we will enjoy marvelous blessings. (Hebrews 12:9) Those blessings include everlasting life, whether in heaven or on earth.

w20.02 2 paragraphs 1-3

Sunday, November 28

Make disciples.—Matthew 28:19.

Our goal is to help our Bible student to grow spiritually. (Ephesians 4:13) When someone agrees to a study of the Bible, he may mainly be interested in how the study will benefit him personally. As his love for Jehovah grows, however, he will likely begin to think about how he can help others, including those who are already part of the congregation. (Matthew 22:37-39) When the time is right, do not hold back from mentioning the privilege of supporting the Kingdom work financially. Teach your Bible student what to do when problems arise. Suppose, for example, that your student, an unbaptized publisher, tells you that he has been offended by someone in the congregation. Rather than take sides, why not explain what his Scriptural options are? He can either forgive the brother or, if he cannot let the matter go, approach the person kindly and lovingly with the goal of 'gaining the brother.' (Compare Matthew 18:15.) Help your student to prepare what he is going to say. *w20.01* 5-6 paragraphs 14-1

Song 126 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 min.)

TREASURES
FROM GOD'S WORD

“A Story of Courage and Intrigue”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Jg 2:10-12—How is this a warning example for us? (w05 1/15 24 ¶7)

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.) Jg 3:12-31 (5)

APPLY YOURSELF
TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

“Increase Your Joy in the Ministry—Accept Jehovah's Help Through Prayer”: (10 min.)

Discussion. Play the video *Experience the Joy of Disciple-Making—Accept Jehovah's Help—Prayer*.

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 02 intro and points 1-3 (11)

LIVING
AS CHRISTIANS

Song 53

Become Jehovah's Friend—Be Good in the Ministry: (5 min.) Discussion. Play the video (video category CHILDREN). Then, if possible, invite selected young children to the stage and ask them: How can we prepare for service? How can our appearance be well-arranged and modest? How can we have good conduct while in the ministry?

“Tips for Making Meetings for Field Service Practical”: (10 min.) Discussion by the service overseer. Invite the audience to comment on why it is important to arrive at the meeting for field service before it begins.

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)
rr chap. 16 ¶9-13, box 16A



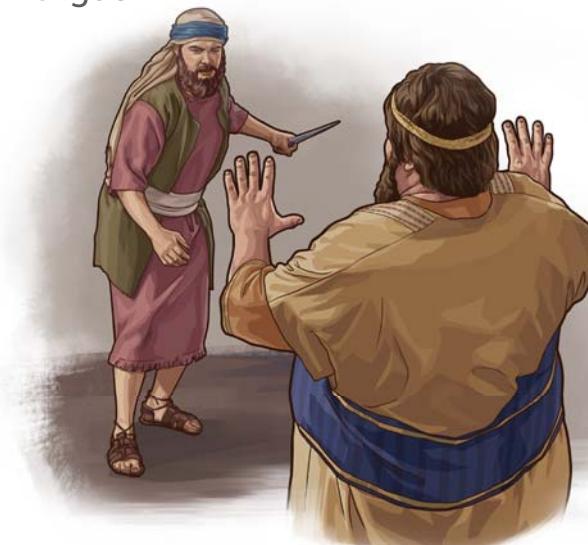
A Story of Courage and Intrigue

[Play the video *Introduction to Judges*.]

Jehovah raised up Ehud to deliver Israel from the Moabites (Jg 3:15; w04 3/15 31 ¶3)

Ehud assassinated King Eglon and led Israel to victory (Jg 3:16-23, 30; w04 3/15 30 ¶1-3)

What does this account teach us about courage and reliance on Jehovah?



126 *Stay Awake, Stand Firm, Grow Mighty*

(1 Corinthians 16:13)

1. Stay awake, stand firm, grow mighty,
Be determined to endure.
Carry on with manly courage,
For the victory is sure.
We obey Christ Jesus' clear command;
Under him we firmly take our stand.

(CHORUS)

*Stay awake, stand firm, and grow mighty!
Carry on right to the end!*

2. Stay awake, and keep your senses,
Always ready to obey.
Stay alert to Christ's direction
Through his faithful slave today.
Heed the counsel of the older men,
Who protect his sheep and truth defend.

(Chorus)

3. Stay awake, remain united
As the good news we defend.
Though our enemies will fight it,
We will preach until the end.
Join the shout of praise throughout the land.
Look! Jehovah's day is soon at hand!

(Chorus)

JUDGES 1-3

1 After the death of Joshua, the Israelites inquired of Jehovah: "Who of us will go up first to fight against the Ca'naan-ites?"² Jehovah replied: "Judah will go up. Look! I am giving the land into his hand."³ Then Judah said to his brother Sim'e-on: "Come up with me into my assigned territory to fight against the Ca'naan-ites. Then I will go with you into your assigned territory." So Sim'e-on went with him.

⁴ When Judah went up, Jehovah gave the Ca'naan-ites and the Per'iz-zites into their hands, and they defeated 10,000 men in Be'zek.⁵ They found A-do'ni-be'zek in Be'zek, and there they fought against him and defeated the Ca'naan-ites and the Per'iz-zites.⁶ When A-do'ni-be'zek fled, they chased him and caught him and cut off his thumbs and his big toes.⁷ Then A-do'ni-be'zek said: "There are 70 kings whose thumbs and big toes were cut off and who are picking up food under my table. Just as I have done, so God has repaid me." After that they brought him to Jerusalem, and he died there.

⁸ Furthermore, the men of Judah fought against Jerusalem and captured it; they struck it with the sword and set the city on fire.⁹ Afterward, the men of Judah went down to fight against the Ca'naan-ites inhabiting the mountainous region and the Neg'eb and the She-phe'lah.¹⁰ So Judah marched against the Ca'naan-ites who were dwelling in Heb'ron (the name of Heb'ron was previously Kir'i-ath-ar'ba), and they struck down She'shai, A-hi'man, and Tal'mai.

¹¹ They marched from there against the inhabitants of De'bir. (The name of De'bir was previously Kir'i-ath-se'pher.)
¹² Then Ca'leb said: "To the man who strikes Kir'i-ath-se'pher and captures it, I will give my daughter Ach'sah as a wife."
¹³ And Oth'ni-el the son of Ke'naz, Ca'leb's younger brother, captured it. So he gave him his daughter Ach'sah as a wife.
¹⁴ While she was going home, she urged him to ask her father for a field. Then she dismounted from her donkey. Ca'leb asked her: "What do you want?" ¹⁵ She said to him: "Please grant me a blessing, for you have given me a piece of land in the south; give me also Gul'loth-ma'im." So Ca'leb gave her Upper Gul'loth and Lower Gul'loth.

¹⁶ And the descendants of the Ken'ite, Moses' father-in-law, came up from the city of palm trees with the people of Judah to the wilderness of Judah south of A'rad. They went there and settled among the people. ¹⁷ But Judah marched on with his brother Sim'e-on, and they attacked the Ca'naan-ites inhabiting Ze'phath and devoted it to destruction. So they named the city Hor'mah. ¹⁸ Then Judah captured Gaz'a and its territory, Ash'ke-lon and its territory, and Ek'ron and its territory. ¹⁹ Jehovah was with Judah, and they took possession of the mountainous region, but they could not drive out the inhabitants of the plain, because they had war chariots with iron scythes. ²⁰ They gave Heb'ron to Ca'leb, just as Moses had promised, and he drove out from there the three sons of A'nak.

²¹ But the Ben'ja·min·ites did not drive out the Jeb'u·sites inhabiting Jerusalem, so the Jeb'u·sites continue dwelling with the Ben'ja·min·ites in Jerusalem down to this day.

²² Meantime, the house of Joseph went up against Beth'el, and Jehovah was with them. ²³ The house of Joseph was spying on Beth'el (incidentally, the name of the city was previously Luz), ²⁴ and the spies saw a man going out of the city. So they said to him: "Show us, please, the way into the city, and we will treat you kindly." ²⁵ So the man showed them the way into the city, and they struck the city with the sword, but they let the man and all his family go free. ²⁶ The man went to the land of the Hit'tites and built a city and named it Luz, which is its name to this day.

²⁷ Ma·nas'seh did not take possession of Beth-she'an and its dependent towns, Ta'a·nach and its dependent towns, the inhabitants of Dor and its dependent towns, the inhabitants of Ib'le·am and its dependent towns, and the inhabitants of Me·gid'do and its dependent towns. The Ca'naan·ites persisted in dwelling in this land. ²⁸ When Israel grew stronger, they subjected the Ca'naan·ites to forced labor, but they did not drive them out completely.

²⁹ Nor did E'phra·im drive out the Ca'naan·ites who were dwelling in Ge'zer. The Ca'naan·ites continued to dwell among them in Ge'zer.

³⁰ Zeb'u·lun did not drive out the inhabitants of Kit'ron and the inhabitants of Na'ha·lol. The Ca'naan·ites continued to dwell among them and were subjected to forced labor.

³¹ Ash'er did not drive out the inhabitants of Ac'co and the inhabitants of Si'don, Ah'lab, Ach'zib, Hel'bah, A'phik, and Re'hob. ³² So the Ash'er-ites continued to dwell among the Ca'naan-ites inhabiting the land, because they did not drive them out.

³³ Naph'ta-li did not drive out the inhabitants of Beth-she'mesh and the inhabitants of Beth-a'nath, but they continued to dwell among the Ca'naan-ites inhabiting the land. The inhabitants of Beth-she'mesh and Beth-a'nath became forced laborers for them.

³⁴ The Am'or-ites confined the Dan'ites to the mountainous region, for they would not let them come down into the plain. ³⁵ So the Am'or-ites persisted in dwelling in Mount He'res, Ai'ja-lon, and Sha-al'bim. But when the power of the house of Joseph increased, they were forced into hard labor. ³⁶ The territory of the Am'or-ites was from the ascent of A-krab'bim, from Se'la upward.

2 Then Jehovah's angel went up from Gil'gal to Bo'chim and said: "I brought you up out of Egypt into the land about which I swore to your forefathers. Furthermore, I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you. ² For your part, you must not make a covenant with the inhabitants of this land and you should pull down their altars.' But you have not obeyed my voice. Why have you done this? ³ That is why I also said, 'I will not drive them away from before you, and they will ensnare you, and their gods will lure you away.'"

⁴ When Jehovah's angel spoke these words to all the Israelites, the people began to weep loudly. ⁵ So they named that place Bo'chim, and they sacrificed there to Jehovah.

⁶ When Joshua sent the people away, each of the Israelites went to his inheritance to take possession of the land. ⁷ The people continued to serve Jehovah all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua and who had seen all of Jehovah's great deeds in behalf of Israel. ⁸ Then Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of Jehovah, died at the age of 110. ⁹ So they buried him in the territory of his inheritance in Tim'nath-he'res, in the mountainous region of E'phra-im, north of Mount Ga'ash.

¹⁰ All that generation were gathered to their ancestors, and another generation arose after them that did not know Jehovah or what he had done for Israel.

¹¹ So the Israelites did what was bad in the eyes of Jehovah and served the Ba'als. ¹² Thus they abandoned Jehovah, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Egypt. And they followed other gods, the gods of the peoples who were all around them, and they bowed down to them and offended Jehovah. ¹³ They abandoned Jehovah and served Ba'al and the Ash'to-reth images. ¹⁴ At this Jehovah's anger blazed against Israel, so he handed them over to plunderers who pillaged them. He sold them into the hand of the enemies around them, and they were no longer able to hold their own against their enemies.

¹⁵ Wherever they went, the hand of Jehovah was against them, bringing disaster on them, just as Jehovah had said

and just as Jehovah had sworn to them, and they were in great distress. ¹⁶ So Jehovah would raise up judges who would save them from the hand of their plunderers.

¹⁷ But they refused to listen even to the judges and would prostitute themselves to other gods and bow down to them. They quickly turned aside from the way in which their forefathers had walked, those who had obeyed the commandments of Jehovah. They failed to do that.

¹⁸ Whenever Jehovah did raise up judges for them, Jehovah would be with the judge and save them from the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for Jehovah was moved to pity over their groaning caused by those who oppressed them and those who were treating them abusively.

¹⁹ But when the judge died, they would again act more corruptly than their fathers by following other gods, serving them and bowing down to them. They did not abandon their practices and their stubborn behavior. ²⁰ Finally Jehovah's anger blazed against Israel, and he said: "Because this nation has violated my covenant that I commanded their forefathers and they have disobeyed me, ²¹ I for my part will not drive out from before them even one of the nations that Joshua left behind when he died. ²² This is to test whether Israel will keep Jehovah's way by walking in it as their fathers did." ²³ So Jehovah allowed these nations to remain. He did not drive them out quickly, and he did not give them into Joshua's hand.

3 These are the nations that Jehovah allowed to remain so that they could test all those of Israel who had not experienced any of the wars of Ca'naan ² (this was so that succeeding generations of Israelites would experience war, those who had not experienced such things before): ³ the five lords of the Phi-lis'tines, and all the Ca'naan-ites, the Si-do'ni-ans, and the Hi'vites inhabiting Mount Leb'a-non from Mount Ba'al-her'mon as far as Le'bo-ha'math. ⁴ They served as a means of testing Israel to determine whether Israel would obey Jehovah's commandments that he had given their fathers through Moses. ⁵ So the Israelites lived among the Ca'naan-ites, the Hit'tites, the Am'or-ites, the Per'iz-zites, the Hi'vites, and the Jeb'u-sites. ⁶ They would take their daughters as wives, and their own daughters they gave to their sons, and they began serving their gods.

⁷ So the Israelites did what was bad in Jehovah's eyes, and they forgot Jehovah their God and were serving the Ba'als and the sacred poles. ⁸ At this Jehovah's anger blazed against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of Cu'shan-rish-a-tha'im the king of Mes-o-po-ta'mi-a. The Israelites served Cu'shan-rish-a-tha'im for eight years.

⁹ When the Israelites called to Jehovah for help, Jehovah raised up a savior to rescue the Israelites, Oth'ni-el the son of Ke'naz, the younger brother of Ca'leb. ¹⁰ The spirit of Jehovah came upon him, and he became the judge of Israel. When he went out to battle, Jehovah gave Cu'shan-rish-a-tha'im the king of Mes-o-po-ta'mi-a into his hand so that he prevailed over Cu'shan-rish-a-tha'im. ¹¹ After that the

land had rest for 40 years. Then Oth'ni-el the son of Ke'naz died.

¹² And once again the Israelites began doing what was bad in Jehovah's eyes. So Jehovah let Eg'lon the king of Mo'ab prevail over Israel, because they did what was bad in Jehovah's eyes. ¹³ Furthermore, he brought against them the Am'mon-ites and the A-mal'ek-ites. They attacked Israel and captured the city of palm trees. ¹⁴ The Israelites served Eg'lon the king of Mo'ab for 18 years. ¹⁵ Then the Israelites called to Jehovah for help, so Jehovah raised up for them a savior, E'hud the son of Ge'ra, a Ben'ja-min-ite who was left-handed. In time the Israelites sent tribute through him to Eg'lon the king of Mo'ab. ¹⁶ Meanwhile, E'hud made for himself a two-edged sword, a cubit long, and he strapped it underneath his garment on his right thigh. ¹⁷ He then presented the tribute to Eg'lon the king of Mo'ab. Now Eg'lon was a very fat man.

¹⁸ When E'hud finished presenting the tribute, he sent away the people who had carried the tribute. ¹⁹ But after reaching the carved images at Gil'gal, he himself went back and said: "I have a secret message for you, O king." So the king said: "Silence!" With that all his attendants left him. ²⁰ So E'hud came to him as he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber. Then E'hud said: "I have a message from God for you." So he rose up from his throne. ²¹ Then E'hud drew the sword from his right thigh with his left hand and plunged it into his belly. ²² The handle went in after the blade, and the fat closed in over the blade, for he did not draw the sword

out of his belly, and the fecal matter came out. ²³ E'hud went out through the porch, closing the doors of the roof chamber behind him and locking them. ²⁴ After he left, the servants returned and saw that the doors of the roof chamber were locked. So they said: "He must be relieving himself in the cool interior room." ²⁵ They kept waiting until they were embarrassed, but when they saw that he was still not opening the doors of the roof chamber, they took the key and opened them and saw their lord fallen to the floor dead!

²⁶ E'hud escaped while they were lingering, and he passed by the carved images and made it safely to Se-i'rah. ²⁷ When he arrived, he sounded the horn in the mountainous region of E'phra-im; and the Israelites went down out of the mountainous region, with him at their head. ²⁸ Then he said to them: "Follow me, because Jehovah has given your enemies, the Mo'ab-ites, into your hand." So they followed him and captured the fords of the Jordan against the Mo'ab-ites, and they did not allow anyone to cross. ²⁹ At that time they struck down about 10,000 Mo'ab-ites, all strong and valiant men; not a single one escaped. ³⁰ So Mo'ab was subdued on that day under Israel's hand; and the land had rest for 80 years.

³¹ After him was Sham'gar the son of A'nath, who struck down 600 Phi-lis'tine men with a cattle goad; he too saved Israel.

Song 126 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 min.)

TREASURES
FROM GOD'S WORD

“A Story of Courage and Intrigue”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

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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.) Jg 3:12-31 (5)

APPLY YOURSELF
TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

“Increase Your Joy in the Ministry—Accept Jehovah's Help Through Prayer”: (10 min.)

Discussion. Play the video *Experience the Joy of Disciple-Making—Accept Jehovah's Help—Prayer*.

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 02 intro and points 1-3 (11)

LIVING
AS CHRISTIANS

Song 53

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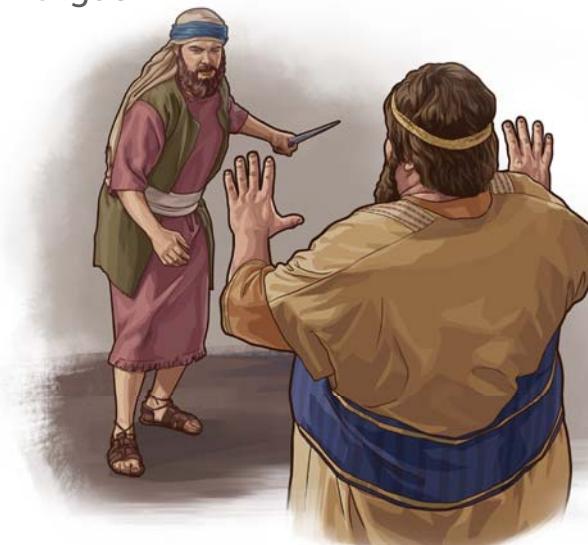
A Story of Courage and Intrigue

[Play the video *Introduction to Judges*.]

Jehovah raised up Ehud to deliver Israel from the Moabites (Jg 3:15; w04 3/15 31 ¶3)

Ehud assassinated King Eglon and led Israel to victory (Jg 3:16-23, 30; w04 3/15 30 ¶1-3)

What does this account teach us about courage and reliance on Jehovah?



November 22-28 / Judges 1-3

Song 126 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 minute)

Treasures From God's Word

"A Story of Courage and Intrigue": (10 minutes)

[Play the video *Introduction to Judges.*]

Jehovah raised up Ehud to deliver Israel from the Moabites

Judges 3:15: Then the Israelites called to Jehovah for help, so Jehovah raised up for them a savior, Ehud the son of Gera, a Benjaminite who was left-handed. In time the Israelites sent tribute through him to Eglon the king of Moab.

w04 3/15 31 paragraph 3

Ehud's plans succeeded, not because of any cleverness on his part, nor because of any incompetence on the part of the enemy. The outworking of divine purposes does not depend on human factors. The primary reason for Ehud's success was that he had God's backing as he acted in harmony with His

invincible will to liberate His people. God had raised up Ehud, “and when Jehovah did raise up judges for [his people], Jehovah proved to be with the judge.”—Judges 2:18; 3:15.

Ehud assassinated King Eglon and led Israel to victory

Judges 3:16-23: Meanwhile, Ehud made for himself a two-edged sword, a cubit long, and he strapped it underneath his garment on his right thigh. He then presented the tribute to Eglon the king of Moab. Now Eglon was a very fat man. When Ehud finished presenting the tribute, he sent away the people who had carried the tribute. But after reaching the carved images at Gilgal, he himself went back and said: “I have a secret message for you, O king.” So the king said: “Silence!” With that all his attendants left him. So Ehud came to him as he was sitting alone in his cool roof chamber. Then Ehud said: “I have a message from God for you.” So he rose up from his throne. Then Ehud drew the sword from his right thigh with his left hand and plunged it into his belly. The handle went in after the blade, and the fat closed in over the blade, for he did not draw the sword out of his belly, and the

fecal matter came out. Ehud went out through the porch, closing the doors of the roof chamber behind him and locking them.

Judges 3:30: So Moab was subdued on that day under Israel's hand; and the land had rest for 80 years.

w04 3/15 30 paragraphs 1-3

Ehud's first step was to prepare "a sword for himself"—a doubled-edged sword that was short enough to be concealed under his clothes. He may have expected to be searched. Swords were normally worn on the left side of the body, where right-handers could quickly draw them. Being left-handed, Ehud hid his weapon "underneath his garment upon his right thigh," where the king's guards were less likely to search. Without hindrance, therefore, "he proceeded to present the tribute to Eglon the king of Moab."—Judges 3:16, 17.

The details of the initial events in Eglon's court are not provided. The Bible simply says: "It came about that when [Ehud] had finished presenting the tribute, he at once sent the people away, the bearers of the tribute." (Judges 3:18)

Ehud presented the tribute, accompanied the bearers of the tribute to a safe distance from Eglon's residence, and returned after dismissing them. Why? Did he have those men with him for protection, because of mere protocol, or perhaps simply as porters for the tribute? And did he want them out of the way for safety before carrying out his plan? Whatever his thinking was, Ehud bravely retraced his steps alone.

"[Ehud] turned back at the quarries that were at Gilgal, and he proceeded to say: 'I have a secret word for you, O king.'" How he managed to regain entry to Eglon's presence is not explained in the Scriptures. Should not the guards have been suspicious? Did they think that a single Israelite presented no threat to their lord? Did Ehud's coming alone create the impression that he was betraying his countrymen? Whatever the case, Ehud sought a private audience with the king, and he got it.—Judges 3:19.

What does this account teach us about courage and reliance on Jehovah?

[Image:] Ehud wielding his sword before Eglon.

Spiritual Gems

Judges 2:10-12—How is this a warning example for us?

Judges 2:10-12: All that generation were gathered to their ancestors, and another generation arose after them that did not know Jehovah or what he had done for Israel. So the Israelites did what was bad in the eyes of Jehovah and served the Baals. Thus they abandoned Jehovah, the God of their fathers, who brought them out of the land of Egypt. And they followed other gods, the gods of the peoples who were all around them, and they bowed down to them and offended Jehovah.

w05 1/15 24 paragraph 7

We must have a regular program of Bible study so as 'not to forget Jehovah's doings.' (Psalm 103:2) Parents need to sound down the truth of God's Word into the hearts of their children.—Deuteronomy 6:6-9.

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) Judges 3:12-31 (*th* study 5)

Song 126 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 min.)

TREASURES
FROM GOD'S WORD

“A Story of Courage and Intrigue”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Jg 2:10-12—How is this a warning example for us? (w05 1/15 24 ¶7)

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.) Jg 3:12-31 (5)

APPLY YOURSELF
TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

“Increase Your Joy in the Ministry—Accept Jehovah's Help Through Prayer”: (10 min.)

Discussion. Play the video *Experience the Joy of Disciple-Making—Accept Jehovah's Help—Prayer*.

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 02 intro and points 1-3 (11)

LIVING
AS CHRISTIANS

Song 53

Become Jehovah's Friend—Be Good in the Ministry: (5 min.) Discussion. Play the video (video category CHILDREN). Then, if possible, invite selected young children to the stage and ask them: How can we prepare for service? How can our appearance be well-arranged and modest? How can we have good conduct while in the ministry?

“Tips for Making Meetings for Field Service Practical”: (10 min.) Discussion by the service overseer. Invite the audience to comment on why it is important to arrive at the meeting for field service before it begins.

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)
rr chap. 16 ¶9-13, box 16A



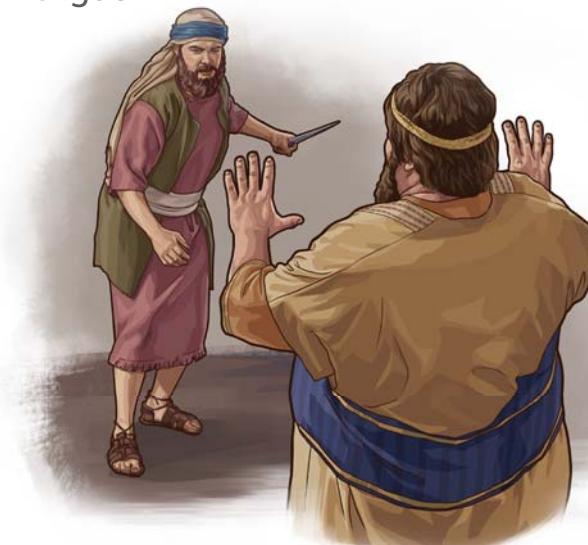
A Story of Courage and Intrigue

[Play the video *Introduction to Judges*.]

Jehovah raised up Ehud to deliver Israel from the Moabites (Jg 3:15; w04 3/15 31 ¶3)

Ehud assassinated King Eglon and led Israel to victory (Jg 3:16-23, 30; w04 3/15 30 ¶1-3)

What does this account teach us about courage and reliance on Jehovah?





INCREASE YOUR JOY IN THE MINISTRY

Accept Jehovah's Help Through Prayer

It is Jehovah who makes the seed of truth take root and grow in someone's heart. (1Co 3:6-9) Therefore, in order to succeed in the ministry, we must rely on Jehovah to help us and our Bible students.

Ask Jehovah to help your students to endure pressures and to overcome obstacles. (Php 1:9, 10) Be specific. Pray for holy spirit to guide your thoughts and actions. (Lu 11:13) Teach your Bible students how to pray, and urge them to do so. Pray with and for your Bible students, using their name.

WATCH THE VIDEO DRAMATIZATION *EXPERIENCE THE JOY OF DISCIPLE-MAKING—ACCEPT JEHOVAH'S HELP—PRAYER, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:*

- What challenge did Neeta encounter in her study with Jade?

- How did 1 Corinthians 3:6 help Neeta?

- How was Neeta's challenge resolved?



SAMPLE CONVERSATIONS

Initial Call November (Special Campaign)

Question: Is an end to violence and war realistic?

Scripture: Ps 37:10, 11

Link: What Bible promise gives us hope?

- ▶ FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:
 - wp21.2 5

Initial Call December*

Question: How do you view the Bible?

Scripture: Ro 15:4

Link: What Bible promise gives us hope?

- ▶ FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:
 - Iffi 5

Return Visit*

Question: What Bible promise gives us hope?

Scripture: Re 21:3, 4

Link: How can we understand the Bible?

- ▶ FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:
 - Iffi 7; wp21.2 14

* You may adjust the question and link according to local circumstances.



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“Experience the Joy of Disciple-Making Accept Jehovah’s Help— Prayer”

Brother Gerrit Lösch, a Member of the Governing Body

“Help!” No doubt, you have sometime in your life heard somebody call out “Help!” Perhaps you yourself have called out “Help!” to Jehovah. At Psalm 30:10, David once sang: “O Jehovah, become my helper.” Jehovah becomes our Helper not only when we are in danger. He provides help in many positive ways in everyday life. What help does Jehovah provide for us? First, find with me Revelation 14:6. For one thing, Jehovah provides his holy angels to support the worldwide preaching work. At Revelation 14:6, John recorded: “And I saw another angel flying in midheaven, “and he had everlasting good news to declare “to those who dwell on the earth, to every nation and tribe and tongue and people.”

It is not just one angel that is active in support of the preaching work. Many angels are involved in it. If it were not for the help and direction of the angels, we would sometimes overlook somebody with a good heart when we go out and preach.

Second, Jehovah has also given us his holy spirit, the fruitage of which makes us more effective teachers and helps us to draw sheeplike ones to the truth.

Third, Jehovah has given us as a help the privilege of prayer. He gets personally involved in our activities. Bible teachers and students alike need Jehovah's help. Psalm 127:1 says: "Unless Jehovah builds the house, it is in vain that its builders work hard on it."

Fourth, Jehovah gives us also the needed wisdom. It is wisdom to pray for "the wisdom from above" mentioned at James 3:17.

Last, Jehovah also gives us the needed strength, which helps us a lot when we are tired or discouraged or have a lot of work. First Peter 4:11 refers to "the strength that God supplies." Yes, we can pray for Jehovah's help, for wisdom, and for the necessary strength.

In the following dramatization, notice the power of praying in behalf of a Bible student.

Jade: "How long would Jesus need to wait before Jehovah would make him King?"

(Jade looking at her watch)

Neeta: Good, so "how do we know that Jesus "did not become King when he was on earth or immediately after he was resurrected?"

Jade: Oh, uh, because he didn't.

Neeta: Well, what did Jesus teach his disciples to pray?

(Jade continue to look at her watch)

Jade: Oh, um, yep—well, I know the obvious. “Let your Kingdom come,” implied future tense. But how can we know for sure what’s going on in heaven?

Neeta: Maybe it would help if we reviewed the cited scriptures here. Before you leave, a suggestion: Maybe if you were to study ahead of time?

Jade: I really . . . How about no. I’m really swamped.

Neeta: I know you’re busy; we all are.

Jade: You have no clue, do you? I have to go.

Neeta: (thinking to herself) I didn’t know what to do next. I thought she was making our study a priority, but maybe she wasn’t.

Jade at School Teacher Speaking: Exams next week—it’s do or die time.

(Jade at school, studying, taking exams, washing her clothes, etc.....)

Neeta: (thinking to herself) Then I remembered 1 Corinthians 3:6 says that ‘God keeps making it grow.’ So I asked him to help Jade and then left it with him.

Jade: Look, I need to apologize.

Neeta: Forget it, you were stressed.

Jade: Yeah, but there’s more. Inside I knew you were right; it’s just the last thing I wanted to hear.

Neeta: Stop, really. How about I show you how I prepare?

Jade: OK.

Neeta: Yeah?

Jade: Yeah.

Neeta: Thank you, Jehovah. OK.

How can prayer help us in making disciples? Please locate with me Philippians 1:9, 10. “And this is what I continue praying, that your love may abound “still more and more with accurate knowledge “and full discernment;

“that you may make sure of the more important things, “so that you may be flawless and not stumbling others up to the day of Christ.”

Just as Paul prayed that the love of the Philippians “may abound . . . with accurate knowledge and full discernment,” we can pray for the same in behalf of our Bible students. Pray also for the holy spirit to guide your thoughts and actions and the ones of your students. Pray from your heart, confident that Jehovah will hear you. Psalm 65:2 says: “O Hearer of prayer, to you people of all sorts will come.” Teach your Bible students how to pray, not only encourage them to do so. Urge them to do so! Learning to pray will help your students to form a close friendship with Jehovah. Pray with your Bible students and for them, using or spelling out their name. Be confident that Jehovah will answer your prayers and 6 theirs.

Please turn to Acts 10:9. Peter was a fine example of one who prayed. Acts 10:9 says: “The next day as they were continuing on their journey “and were approaching the city, Peter went up to the housetop about the sixth hour to pray.” In the same chapter, Cornelius was also a fine example. At Acts 10:30, 31, he reported to Peter: “Four days ago counting from this hour, “I was praying in my house at the ninth hour; “just then a man in bright clothing stood in front of me “and said: ‘Cornelius, your prayer has been favorably heard, and your gifts of mercy have been remembered before God.’”

Jehovah answered Peter's prayer and Cornelius' prayer. Jehovah has given us what we need to increase our joy in making disciples. When a report came to John that Jesus was making many disciples, John did not become jealous. At John chapter 3, he replied: "This joy of mine has been made full. That one must go on increasing, but I must go on decreasing."

When we do not make disciples personally, we can still rejoice with those who do make them. The angels rejoice although they do not personally make disciples. At Luke 15:7, Jesus said: "There will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 righteous ones who have no need of repentance." We also rejoice because we have the Bible and powerful research tools in print and electronically as well as in audio format.

We rejoice because we have our brotherhood to support and assist us. We can ask them for suggestions, and we can invite them to accompany us in the ministry, even if it is only by computer tie-in or telephone witnessing. If we cannot meet together physically for a congregation meeting, we can arrange for tie-ins with others and hear and see them. It warms our heart.

Don't forget the provisions from Jehovah, which we mentioned at the beginning of this talk. First, we have the privilege of prayer; second, the help of God's angels; third,

the support of the holy spirit; fourth, “the wisdom from above”; and fifth, the spiritual and emotional strength that God supplies. Jehovah has given us all of this because he cares about us and about those we teach. We will have great joy in the ministry if we take full advantage of Jehovah’s help.

Lastly, we want to mention something very precious that brings us deep inner joy, Psalm 25:14: “Close friendship with Jehovah belongs to those who fear him” and pray to him. May your joyous friendship with Jehovah—and the joyous friendship that disciples have with Jehovah—last for an eternity!

Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry

Bible Study: (5 minutes) *lffi* lesson 02 intro and points 1-3
(*th* study 11)

People around the world deal with problems that cause them to feel sadness, anxiety, and even pain. Have you ever faced a situation that made you feel those things? Perhaps you are suffering because of an illness or because someone you love has died. You may ask yourself, 'Will life ever get better?' The Bible provides a reassuring answer to that question.

1. How does the Bible give hope?

The Bible not only explains why the world is filled with problems but also shares the good news that these problems are temporary and will soon be gone. The Bible's promises can **"give you a future and a hope."** (Read Jeremiah 29:11, 12.) Those promises help us to cope with our present problems, to have a positive attitude, and to find lasting happiness.

["Read" scripture.] Jeremiah 29:11, 12: "'For I well know the thoughts that I am thinking toward you,' declares Jehovah,

'thoughts of peace, and not of calamity, to give you a future and a hope. And you will call me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you.' [End of "Read" scripture.]

2. What kind of future does the Bible describe?

The Bible describes a future time when **"death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore."** (Read Revelation 21:4.) The problems that can make life seem hopeless today—such as poverty, injustice, sickness, and death—will no longer exist. The Bible promises that humans will be able to enjoy life forever in Paradise on earth.

["Read" scripture.] Revelation 21:4: And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away." [End of "Read" scripture.]

3. How can you build up your trust in the hope the Bible gives?

Many people hope for good things to happen, but they cannot be sure that their hopes will ever be fulfilled. What

the Bible promises is different. We can build up our trust in what it says by “**carefully examining the Scriptures.**” (Acts 17:11) As you study the Bible, you will be able to decide for yourself whether you can believe what it says about the future.

1. Morning comes.

Soon we will be

On our way to preach good news.

But it's dark outside,

And the rain starts to fall.

It would be easy to stay inside,
sleepy-eyed.

(CHORUS)

Positive thoughts and preparation,

Praying that we'll succeed;

This can provide the inspiration,

We'll surely need.

We're not alone; the angels guide us.

Jesus commands them all.

And with a loyal friend beside us,

We'll never fall.

2. Soon we'll see

Joy come our way

If these things we keep in mind.

And Jehovah sees

Ev'ry effort we make,

And he remembers the love we show;
this we know.

(Chorus)

Song 126 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 min.)

TREASURES
FROM GOD'S WORD

“A Story of Courage and Intrigue”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Jg 2:10-12—How is this a warning example for us? (w05 1/15 24 ¶7)

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.) Jg 3:12-31 (5)

APPLY YOURSELF
TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

“Increase Your Joy in the Ministry—Accept Jehovah's Help Through Prayer”: (10 min.)

Discussion. Play the video *Experience the Joy of Disciple-Making—Accept Jehovah's Help—Prayer*.

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 02 intro and points 1-3 (11)

LIVING
AS CHRISTIANS

Song 53

Become Jehovah's Friend—Be Good in the Ministry: (5 min.) Discussion. Play the video (video category CHILDREN). Then, if possible, invite selected young children to the stage and ask them: How can we prepare for service? How can our appearance be well-arranged and modest? How can we have good conduct while in the ministry?

“**Tips for Making Meetings for Field Service Practical:**” (10 min.) Discussion by the service overseer. Invite the audience to comment on why it is important to arrive at the meeting for field service before it begins.

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)
rr chap. 16 ¶9-13, box 16A



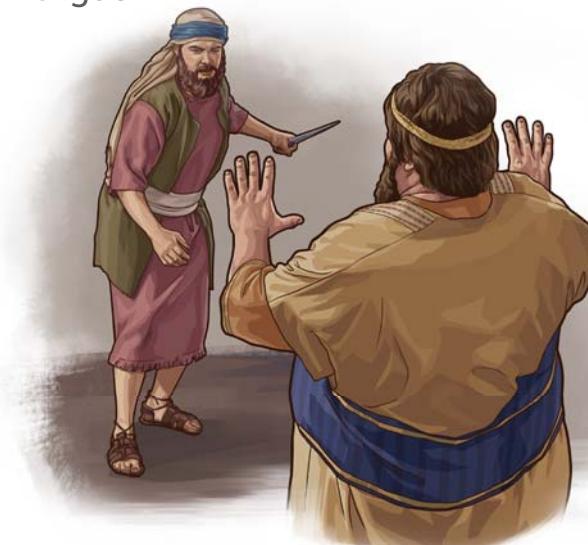
A Story of Courage and Intrigue

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Ehud assassinated King Eglon and led Israel to victory (Jg 3:16-23, 30; w04 3/15 30 ¶1-3)

What does this account teach us about courage and reliance on Jehovah?



Become Jehovah's Friend

Lesson 32: Be Good in the Ministry

Dad: So you are excited to go out in service! Do you think you are ready?

Caleb: (Non his head Yes

Dad: Not so fast! Before you go in the ministry, there are a few things we need to go over. First, we must learn the three P's.

Caleb: The three P's?

Dad: Yes! **Preparation, personal appearance, and proper behavior.**

First, preparation. **Preparation** is the first pillar of success in the ministry. Every job requires the proper tools. When it comes to tools for preaching, the variety might seem intimidating. But never fear! We have the Teaching Toolbox. Finding the right tools is easier than ever! Once you have your tools, make sure and practice your presentation before you leave the house. We wouldn't want to be preparing on the doorstep.

Now that you are well-prepared, it's time to talk about **personal appearance**. How we look is very important because we represent Jehovah. Getting ready for the ministry, we need to make sure our appearance is saying

the right things. Jehovah wants your appearance to be well-arranged and modest. What that means is that we look and smell clean; our clothes fit well, but not too well; our hair is done; and we aren't drawing too much attention to ourselves. Looking sharp, my son!

Now it's time to talk about **proper behavior**. Our conduct while in the ministry is another way, we can bring praise to Jehovah. So make sure you are on your best behavior. Avoid talking or laughing loudly, playing around, or intruding on anyone's property or privacy. Also, no eating at the door. Remember, when we go door to door, people see us, and good behavior gives a good witness. We would never want to give anyone a reason to find fault with our ministry.

Caleb: Can I go out in service now?

Dad: Yes! It looks like you are ready. It's time to put the three P's to the test.

Caleb: Hi! My name is Caleb. What's your name?

Householder: Hi, Caleb! My name is . . .



Tips for Making Meetings for Field Service Practical

Meetings for field service, like all congregation meetings, are a provision from Jehovah that enables us to incite one another to love and fine works. (Heb 10:24, 25) They should be five to seven minutes long, which includes organizing the groups, assigning territory, and saying a prayer. (If the meeting follows another meeting, it should be even shorter.) The conductor should prepare something that will be practical for those participating in the ministry that day. For example, on Saturday when many in attendance have not shared in the ministry since the previous weekend, it may be practical simply to consider what to say. What are some other subjects that might be beneficial to discuss?



- A sample conversation from the *Our Christian Life and Ministry—Meeting Workbook*
- How to use a current event or news report to start a conversation
- How to respond to a common objection
- How to respond to an atheist, an evolutionist, a person who speaks another language, or a person who belongs to a religion that is not common in your territory
- How to use a feature of the jw.org website, the *JW Library*® app, or the Bible
- How to use one of the tools from the Teaching Toolbox
- How to engage in a specific aspect of the ministry, such as telephone witnessing, letter writing, public witnessing, return visits, or Bible studies
- Reminders about safety, flexibility, good manners, a positive attitude, or something similar
- A lesson or video from the *Apply Yourself to Reading and Teaching* brochure
- How to encourage and help your field service partner
- A scripture that relates to the ministry or an encouraging field service experience

9:6) The executioners were to begin their work at Jerusalem's heart, the temple, which was no longer sacred to Jehovah. The first to be slain were "the elders who were in front of the house"—the 70 elders of Israel who were in the temple and were offering incense to false gods.—Ezek. 8:11, 12; 9:6.

⁸ What was the final outcome? As Ezekiel continued watching and listening, the man with the inkhorn gave his report to Jehovah: "I have done just as you have commanded me." (Ezek. 9:11) We cannot help but wonder: 'How did matters turn out for Jerusalem's inhabitants? Were there any faithful ones who survived the destruction?'

How Was the Vision Fulfilled in Ezekiel's Day?

⁹ **Read 2 Chronicles 36:17-20.** Ezekiel's prophecy was fulfilled in 607 B.C.E. when the Babylonian army destroyed Jerusalem and its temple. Like a "cup in the hand of Jehovah," the Babylonians were the instruments Jehovah used to pour out punishment on unfaithful Jerusalem. (Jer. 51:7) Was the destruction indiscriminate? No. Ezekiel's vision had foretold that 9, 10. **Who were some of the faithful ones to survive Jerusalem's destruction, and what may we conclude about them?**

IS CHRISTENDOM THE ANTITYPICAL JERUSALEM?

SEE PARAGRAPHS 12, 13

In the past, our literature has referred to Christendom as the antitype of apostate Jerusalem. The conditions in unfaithful Jerusalem—including idolatry and widespread corruption—certainly remind us of what is happening in Christendom. However, in recent years our publications, including the one you are now reading, have not taken the type-antitype approach to prophecy except where the Bible provides a clear basis for doing so. Is there a solid Scriptural basis for referring to Christendom as the antitypical Jerusalem? No.

Consider the following: Jerusalem was at one time a center of pure worship; later, its inhabitants turned apostate. By contrast, Christendom has *never* practiced pure worship. Right from its inception in the fourth century C.E., Christendom has *always* taught false doctrine.

In addition, after Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians, Jehovah restored the city to his favor and it again became the center of true worship. Christendom, on the other hand, has never had God's favor, and once it is destroyed during the great tribulation, it will never rise again.

In view of the foregoing, what may we conclude? When we examine Bible prophecies that were fulfilled on un-

faithful Jerusalem, we may say, ‘This or that reminds us of what we see in Christendom today.’ But there appears to be no Scriptural basis for referring to Christendom as the antitypical Jerusalem.

some would not be wiped out by the Babylonians.—Gen. 18:22-33; 2 Pet. 2:9.

¹⁰ A number of faithful individuals survived, including the Rechabites, Ebed-melech the Ethiopian, Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch, his secretary. (Jer. 35:1-19; 39:15-18; 45:1-5) From Ezekiel’s vision, we may conclude that such ones must have been “sighing and groaning over all the detestable things” being done in Jerusalem. (Ezek. 9:4) *Before* the destruction, they undoubtedly showed their heartfelt rejection of wickedness and their devotion to pure worship, and they thus put themselves in line to be spared.

¹¹ Were those faithful ones literally marked for survival? There is no record that anyone—either Ezekiel or any other prophet—went through Jerusalem and put an actual mark on the foreheads of faithful ones. Evidently, then, Ezekiel’s prophetic vision

11. Who were represented by the six men with the smashing weapons and the man with the secretary’s inkhorn?

“PUT A MARK ON THE FOREHEADS”

reveals what was happening in the heavenly realm and what was therefore invisible to human eyes. The man with the secretary's inkhorn and the six men with the weapons for smashing were visionary representations of Jehovah's faithful spirit creatures, who are always ready to carry out his will. (Ps. 103:20, 21) Jehovah no doubt used his angels to direct the execution of judgment on unfaithful Jerusalem. As if putting a mark on the foreheads of those who were to be spared, the angels made sure that the judgment would be selective, not an indiscriminate slaughter.

What Does Ezekiel's Vision Mean for Our Day?

¹² Today we are facing an unparalleled execution of divine judgment—the “great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again.” (Matt. 24:21) As we await that climactic event, some key questions arise: Will the coming destruction be, not random, but selective? Will Jehovah's pure worshippers somehow be marked for survival? In other words, does Ezekiel's prophetic

12, 13. (a) Why did Jehovah pour out his wrath on Jerusalem, and why should we expect a similar response in our day? (b) Is Christendom the antitype of unfaithful Jerusalem? Explain. (See the box “Is Christendom the Antitypical Jerusalem?”)

vision of the man with the inkhorn have a fulfillment in our day? The answer to all three questions is yes. Why can we conclude that? To find out, let us return to Ezekiel's vision.

¹³ Do you recall why Jehovah poured out his wrath on ancient Jerusalem? Look again at **Ezekiel 9:8, 9.** **(Read.)** When Ezekiel feared that the coming destruction might mean the end of “all the remaining ones of Israel,” Jehovah cited four reasons for the judgment. First, “the error” of the nation was “very, very great.”*^[2] Second, the land of Judah was “filled with bloodshed.” Third, Jerusalem, the capital of the kingdom of Judah, was “full of corruption.” Fourth, the people excused their wicked ways by convincing themselves that Jehovah was “not seeing” their wicked deeds. Do not those words sound like an indictment of this morally perverse, violent, corrupt, and faithless world today? Surely, since Jehovah “does not vary or change,” what provoked his righteous anger in Ezekiel's time would evoke a similar response in our day.

*^[2] According to one reference work, the Hebrew noun rendered “error” can convey the idea of “perversity.” Another reference work notes that this noun “is a deeply religious term, almost always being used to indicate moral guilt or iniquity before God.”

(Jas. 1:17; Mal. 3:6) We should expect, then, that the six men with the smashing weapons and the man with the inkhorn will have a modern-day work to do!

¹⁴ How, though, is Ezekiel’s prophetic vision fulfilled in our day? If we look back at how the vision was fulfilled in the past, we can learn what to expect now and in the future. Consider some of the developments we have seen or will see in fulfillment of Ezekiel’s prophecy.

¹⁵ *Jehovah warns people before a time of destruction.* As we saw in Chapter 11 of this publication, Jehovah commissioned Ezekiel “as a watchman to the house of Israel.” (Ezek. 3:17-19) Starting in 613 B.C.E., Ezekiel clearly warned Israel of the destruction that was approaching. Other prophets, including Isaiah and Jeremiah, also sounded a warning about the calamity that would befall Jerusalem. (Isa. 39:6, 7; Jer. 25:8, 9, 11) In our day, Jehovah, through Christ, has used a small group of anointed servants not only to feed pure worshippers, the domestics, but also to warn others about the fast-approaching great tribulation.—Matt. 24:45.

14, 15. What examples show that Jehovah warns people before a time of destruction?

29

Living Up to Our Name

(Isaiah 43:10-12)

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

(CHORUS)

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

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

(Chorus)

SEPTEMBER 2021

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
NOVEMBER 1–DECEMBER 5, 2021

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Study Article 38: November 22-28 Draw Close to Your Spiritual Family	38
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COVER PICTURE:

God's people around the globe have happily shared in witnessing to others about God's Kingdom (See study article 37, paragraph 13)

Credit: Globe based on NASA/Visible Earth imagery

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3

Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

(Proverbs 14:26)

1. O Jehovah, you have given us
a hope that we hold dear.
It's a hope we find so thrilling
we want the world to hear.
But at times this life's anxieties
are the cause of fears within,
And the hope that burned so brightly
has suddenly grown dim.

(CHORUS)

*You're our strength, you're our hope,
you're our confidence.*

Whatever we lack, you supply.

*When we preach, when we teach,
we have confidence*

because it's on you we rely.

2. So Jehovah, please instill in us
a heart that won't forget,
For you've always been our comfort
when troubled times we've met.
And these thoughts that lift and strengthen us
can revive that dying flame,
For they fill our hearts with courage
to speak about your name.

(Chorus)

Draw Close to Your Spiritual Family

“I am ascending to my Father and your Father.”—JOHN 20:17.

SONG 3

Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

PREVIEW

We enjoy the extraordinary privilege of being part of a loving family of brothers and sisters. All of us want to strengthen the bond of love that exists among us. How can we do so? By imitating the way in which our loving Father treats us and by following the examples of Jesus and of our brothers and sisters.

JEHOVAH'S family of worshippers includes Jesus, who is "the firstborn of all creation," and a multitude of angels. (Col. 1:15; Ps. 103:20) When Jesus was on earth, he indicated that faithful humans can view Jehovah as their Father. Speaking to his disciples, Jesus referred to Jehovah as "my Father and your Father." (John 20:17) And when we dedicate ourselves to Jehovah and get baptized, we become part of a loving family of brothers and sisters.—Mark 10:29, 30.

² Some find it difficult to view Jehovah as a loving Father. Others may not know how to express love to their brothers and sisters. In this article, we will consider how Jesus helps us to view Jehovah as a loving Father, one to whom we can draw close. We will also identify ways that we can imitate Jehovah in how we treat our brothers and sisters.

JEHOVAH WANTS YOU TO DRAW CLOSE TO HIM

³ Jehovah is a loving Father. Jesus wants us to view Jehovah the way he does—as a warm and loving parent who is easy to approach, not as a cold authority figure. This is evident in what Jesus taught his disciples to pray for. He began the model prayer with the

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1. What relationship can faithful humans have with Jehovah?
 2. What will we consider in this article?
 3. How does the model prayer draw us closer to Jehovah?

words: “Our Father.” (Matt. 6:9) Jesus could have directed us to call Jehovah “the Almighty,” “the Creator,” or “the King of eternity”—all of which are appropriate and Scriptural titles. (Gen. 49:25; Isa. 40:28; 1 Tim. 1:17) However, Jesus used the intimate term “Father.”

⁴ Do you find it difficult to view Jehovah as a loving Father? Some of us do. We may find the idea of a loving parent hard to grasp because our upbringing was painful. How comforting it is to know that Jehovah completely understands our feelings! He wants to be close to us. That is why his Word urges us: “Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you.” (Jas. 4:8) Jehovah loves us, and he offers to be the best Father we could ever have.

⁵ Jesus can help us to draw closer to Jehovah. Jesus knows Jehovah so well and reflects His qualities so perfectly that he said: “Whoever has seen me has seen the Father also.” (John 14:9) Like an older brother, Jesus teaches us how to respect and obey our Father, how to avoid displeasing Him, and how to gain His approval. But Jesus’ life course on earth especially reveals how kind and loving Jehovah is. (Read Luke 10:22.) Let us consider some examples.

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4. How do we know that Jehovah wants us to draw close to him?
 5. According to Luke 10:22, how can Jesus help us to draw closer to Jehovah?

⁶ *Jehovah listens to his children.* Consider the way that Jehovah listened to his firstborn Son. Jehovah certainly heard many prayers offered by his Son when he was on earth. (Luke 5:16) He heard Jesus pray about weighty decisions, such as when he selected his 12 apostles. (Luke 6:12, 13) Jehovah also heard Jesus pray when he was in distress. Just before his betrayal, Jesus fervently prayed to his Father concerning the difficult test he was about to face. Jehovah not only heard Jesus' prayer but also sent an angel to strengthen His dear Son.—Luke 22:41-44.

⁷ Today, Jehovah continues to listen to the prayers of his servants, and he answers them at the right time and in the best possible way. (Ps. 116:1, 2) Consider

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- 6.** Give examples of how Jehovah listened to Jesus.
 - 7.** How should we feel knowing that Jehovah listens to our prayers?



As a loving Father,
Jehovah strengthened
his Son by means of
an angel
(See paragraph 6)

how a sister in India personally experienced this. She had been dealing with severe emotional problems, and she earnestly prayed to Jehovah about the matter. She writes: “The May 2019 JW Broadcasting® program about how to deal with worry and anxiety was just the right thing for me. It was an answer to my prayers.”

⁸ Jehovah loves us and cares for us, just as he loved Jesus and cared for him during his challenging earthly assignment. (John 5:20) He provided for all of Jesus’ spiritual, emotional, and physical needs. And Jehovah did not hold back from expressing love for and approval of his Son. (Matt. 3:16, 17) Because he could always count on his loving heavenly Father, Jesus never felt alone.—John 8:16.

⁹ Like Jesus, all of us have experienced many expressions of Jehovah’s love. Just think: Jehovah drew us to him and has given us a loving and united spiritual family to make us happy and to help fill our emotional needs. (John 6:44) Jehovah also provides us with a steady supply of upbuilding spiritual food. And he even helps us to care for our daily material needs. (Matt. 6:31, 32) As we reflect on Jehovah’s love for us, our love for him grows.

8. In what ways did Jehovah show love for Jesus?

9. What evidence do we have that Jehovah loves us?

TREAT YOUR SPIRITUAL FAMILY THE WAY JEHOVAH DOES

¹⁰ Jehovah loves our brothers and sisters. But we may not always find it easy to feel and express love for members of our spiritual family. After all, we come from many different cultures and backgrounds. And we all make mistakes that can frustrate and disappoint others. Still, we can contribute to the love of our spiritual family. How? By imitating our Father in showing love to our brothers and sisters. (Eph. 5:1, 2; 1 John 4:19) Let us see what we can learn from Jehovah's example.

¹¹ *Jehovah shows "tender compassion."* (Luke 1:78) A compassionate person is concerned when he notices that people are suffering; he looks for ways to provide help and comfort. By the way he treated people, Jesus reflected Jehovah's concern for them. (John 5:19) When seeing a crowd on one occasion, Jesus "felt pity for them, because they were skinned and thrown about like sheep without a shepherd." (Matt. 9:36) Jesus' compassion went beyond warm feelings. He cured the sick and offered refreshment to those who were "toiling and loaded down."—Matt. 11:28-30; 14:14.

10. What can we learn from the way Jehovah treats our brothers and sisters?

11. How did Jesus reflect Jehovah's "tender compassion"?

¹² Before we can show compassionate concern for our brothers and sisters, we need to consider what challenges they are facing. For example, a sister may have a serious health problem. She never complains about it, but she would likely appreciate some practical help. How is she caring for the physical needs of her family? Would she welcome a little assistance with preparing meals or cleaning the house? A brother may have lost his job. Would a modest monetary gift, perhaps given anonymously, help tide him over until he finds another job?

¹³ *Jehovah is generous.* (Matt. 5:45) We should not wait until our brothers and sisters ask for our help before we show compassion. Like Jehovah, we can take the initiative. He makes the sun rise on us daily without our even asking for it! And the warmth of the sun sustains everyone, not just those who are thankful. Would you not agree that by providing for our needs, Jehovah is expressing his love for us? How we love Jehovah for being so kind and generous!

¹⁴ In imitation of their heavenly Father, many of our brothers and sisters take the initiative in showing generosity. For example, in 2013, Super Typhoon Haiyan caused tremendous destruction in the Philip-

12. Give an example of how we can show compassion.

13-14. How can we be generous like Jehovah?



Imitate Jehovah by being compassionate
and generous with your brothers and sisters

(See paragraphs 12-14)

pires. A number of brothers and sisters lost their homes and possessions. But their spiritual family from around the world rallied to support them. Many contributed funds or participated in a massive construction effort, which resulted in repairing or rebuilding almost 750 homes in less than a year! During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Witnesses worked hard to support their brothers and sisters. When we are quick to support our spiritual family, we show them that we love them.

¹⁵ *Jehovah is merciful and forgiving.* (Read Luke 6: 36.) We daily experience our heavenly Father's mercy. (Ps. 103:10-14) Jesus' followers were imperfect;

15-16. According to Luke 6:36, what is an important way in which we can imitate our heavenly Father?

yet, he showed them mercy and forgiveness. He was even willing to sacrifice his life so that our sins can be forgiven. (1 John 2:1, 2) Do you not feel drawn to Jehovah and Jesus because they are merciful and forgiving?

¹⁶ We strengthen the bond of love in our spiritual family when we are “freely forgiving.” (Eph. 4:32) Of course, forgiving others can be very hard at times, so we need to work at it. One sister felt that the *Watchtower* article “Forgive One Another Freely” helped her to do just that.* She writes: “Studying this article has given me a different, more positive perspective on the matter. It explained that being willing to forgive others does not mean that you approve of their wrong behavior or minimize the damage it causes. But forgiving does mean letting go of resentment for such wrongs and maintaining your own peace.” When we freely forgive our brothers and sisters, we show that we love them and that we imitate our Father, Jehovah.

CHERISH YOUR PLACE IN THE FAMILY

¹⁷ It is a great privilege to belong to a loving international family. We want as many as possible to join

* See *The Watchtower*, November 15, 2012, pp. 26-30.

17. According to Matthew 5:16, how can we honor our heavenly Father?

us in worshipping our God. With this in mind, we should be careful never to do anything that would reflect badly on Jehovah’s people or on our heavenly Father. We try to conduct ourselves in a way that will attract people to the good news.—Read Matthew 5:16.

¹⁸ At times, some may belittle us or even persecute us because we obey our heavenly Father. What if we feel intimidated when speaking to others about our beliefs? We can count on Jehovah and his Son to come to our aid. Jesus reassured his disciples that they did not have to worry about how to speak or what to say. Why not? “What you are to speak will be given you in that hour,” explained Jesus, “for the

18. What can help us to give a fearless witness?

Young and old have shown loving interest
in others in the brotherhood

(See paragraph 17)



ones speaking are not just you, but it is the spirit of your Father that speaks by you.”—Matt. 10:19, 20.

¹⁹ Consider the example of Robert. Some time ago when he was a new Bible student with limited Bible knowledge, he appeared before a military court in South Africa. He boldly explained to the court that he wanted to remain neutral because of his love for his Christian brothers. He cherished his place in our spiritual family! “Who are your brothers?” the judge asked suddenly. Robert had not anticipated that question, but immediately the text for that day came to mind. It was Matthew 12:50: “Whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven, that one is my brother and sister and mother.” Even though Robert was a new Bible student, Jehovah’s spirit helped him to answer that question and a number of other unexpected questions. Jehovah must have been proud of Robert! And Jehovah is also proud of us when we rely on him to give a courageous witness in challenging situations.

²⁰ May we continue to treasure the blessing we have of belonging to a loving spiritual family. We have the best possible Father as well as many devoted brothers and sisters. We must never take these things for

19. Give an example of someone who gave a bold witness.

20. What should we be determined to do? (John 17:11, 15)

granted. Satan and his hateful followers try to make us doubt our heavenly Father's love and try to disrupt the unity we enjoy. Jesus, however, prayed in our behalf, asking our Father to watch over us so that our family remains united. (Read John 17:11, 15.) Jehovah is answering that prayer. Like Jesus, may we never doubt the love and support of our heavenly Father. Let us be determined to continue drawing ever closer to our spiritual family.

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Page 41: Jehovah sent an angel to strengthen Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane. **Page 45:** During the COVID-19 pandemic, many worked to prepare and distribute provisions of food. **Page 47:** A mother supports her daughter, who is sending a letter of encouragement to a brother in prison.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- What proves to you that Jehovah is a loving Father?
- What are some ways we can express love for our brothers and sisters?
- How do we show that we cherish our spiritual family?

Myriads of Brothers

(Revelation 7:9, 10)

1. Myriads on myriads of brothers,
Millions for all to see,
Each one a faithful witness,
Firm in integrity.
Myriads we are on myriads,
Growing, a mighty crowd,
From ev'ry nation and tribe and tongue,
We praise our God aloud.
2. Myriads on myriads of brothers,
We preach both far and near
"Good news of something better,"
Which millions long to hear.
And as we keep on preaching,
Though we at times are stressed,
Jesus refreshes the weary souls;
He gives us peace and rest.
3. Myriads on myriads of brothers,
God keeps us in his sight,
Safe in his earthly courtyards,
Serving him day and night.
Myriads we are on myriads,
With Kingdom news we go,
God's fellow workers we have become,
Serving him here below.