

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.” (Matt. 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. (Ps. 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. (Heb. 12:9) Those blessings include everlasting life, whether in heaven or on earth. *w20.02 2 ¶1-3*

Sunday, November 28

Make disciples.—Matt. 28:19.

Our goal is to help our Bible student to grow spiritually. (Eph. 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. (Matt. 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 ¶14-15*

Monday, November 29

I confessed my sin to you; I did not cover my error. . . . And you pardoned the error of my sins.

—*Ps. 32:5.*

We show that we appreciate Jehovah’s forgiveness when we pray for it, accept discipline, and work hard to avoid repeating our mistakes. When we take these steps, we will regain our inner peace. How encouraging it is to know that “Jehovah is close to the brokenhearted; he saves those who are crushed in spirit”! (Ps. 34:18) As these last days come to a close, the causes of anxiety are likely to increase. When you have anxious thoughts, do not delay in seeking Jehovah’s help. Study the Bible diligently. Learn from the examples set by Hannah, the apostle Paul, and King David. Ask your heavenly Father to help you identify the cause of your anxiety. (Ps. 139:23) Let him carry your burdens, especially those over which you have little or no control. If you do, you can be like the psalmist who sang to Jehovah: “When anxieties overwhelmed me, you comforted and soothed me.”—Ps. 94:19. *w20.02 24 ¶17; 25 ¶20-21*

Tuesday, November 30

All Scripture is inspired of God.

—2 Tim. 3:16.

The Greek word translated “inspired of God” literally means “God-breathed.” God used his spirit to “breathe” his thoughts into the minds of Bible writers. When we read the Bible and meditate on what we read, God’s instructions enter our mind and heart. Those inspired thoughts move us to bring our life in line with God’s will. (Heb. 4:12) But to benefit fully from holy spirit, we must set aside time to study the Bible regularly and to think deeply about what we read. Then God’s Word will influence all that we say and do. Also, we must worship God together. (Ps. 22:22) Jehovah’s spirit is present at meetings. (Rev. 2:29) When we meet for worship with fellow Christians, we pray for holy spirit, we sing Kingdom songs based on God’s Word, and we listen to Bible-based instruction presented by brothers who have been appointed by holy spirit. To benefit fully from holy spirit, however, we need to come prepared to participate in the meetings. *w19.11* ¶13-14

Wednesday, December 1

There is . . . a time to be silent.

—Eccl. 3:1, 7.

If we fail to control our speech, it can cause a lot of damage. For example, if you meet someone who lives in a land where our work is banned, are you tempted to ask him to give details about how our work is carried out in that country? No doubt your motives are good. We love our brothers and are interested in what is happening to them. We also want to be specific when praying for them.

However, this is a time when we should hold back from speaking. If we put pressure on someone who has confidential information, we show a lack of love—both to that person and to the brothers and sisters who are relying on him to keep quiet about their activity. Certainly, none of us would want to add to the difficulties of our brothers and sisters who live in countries where our work is under ban. Similarly, no brother or sister serving in such a land would want to reveal details about how Witnesses living there conduct their ministry or Christian activities. *w20.03* 21 ¶11-12

Thursday, December 2

You certainly will not die.

—Gen. 3:4.

God did not intend for humans to die. But in order to live forever, Adam and Eve had to obey Jehovah, who gave them a simple command: “As for the tree of the knowledge of good and bad, you must not eat from it, for in the day you eat from it you will certainly die.” (Gen. 2:16, 17) Then Satan came on the scene. Speaking through a serpent, he said the words of today’s text to Eve. Sadly, she believed the lie and ate the fruit. Later, her husband too ate the fruit. (Gen. 3:6) In this way, sin and death entered the human family. (Rom. 5:12) Adam and Eve died, just as God had said they would. But Satan did not stop lying about death. At some point in time, he began to introduce other lies. One of those lies is the teaching that the physical body dies but that some part of the person lives on, perhaps in the spirit realm. Variations of that lie have deceived countless humans right down to our day.—1 Tim. 4:1. *w19.04* 14-15 ¶3-4

Friday, December 3

When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, to think as a child, to reason as a child.—1 Cor. 13:11.

Children are not fully developed in their ability to think, to reason, or to recognize and avoid danger. So it is all too easy for devious abusers to deceive children. Abusers teach children dangerous lies, such as the idea that the child is to blame, that the abuse must be kept secret, that no one will listen or care if the child reports the abuse, or that sexual acts between an adult and a child are actually normal expressions of sincere love. Such lies can distort a child's thinking ability and perception of truth for many years. Such a child may grow up thinking of herself or himself as damaged, defiled, and unworthy of love or comfort. It is not surprising, then, that sexual abuse can cause lasting harm. We are living in the last days, a time when many have "no natural affection" and when "wicked men and impostors will advance from bad to worse."—2 Tim. 3:1-5, 13. *w19.05 15 ¶7-8*

Saturday, December 4

In this way you will fulfill the law of the Christ.—Gal. 6:2.

In what ways did Jesus teach? First, he taught people by what he said. His words had power because they conveyed the truth about God, taught the real meaning of life, and pointed to God's Kingdom as the remedy for all human suffering. (Luke 24:19) Jesus also taught by example. By how he lived, he showed his followers how they should live. (John 13:15)

When did Jesus teach? He taught during his ministry on earth. (Matt. 4:23) He also taught his followers shortly after he was resurrected. For example, he appeared to a group of disciples—perhaps numbering over 500—and gave them the command to "make disciples." (Matt. 28:19, 20; 1 Cor. 15:6) As head of the congregation, Jesus continued to instruct his disciples after he returned to heaven. For instance, about 96 C.E., Christ directed the apostle John to give encouragement and counsel to anointed Christians.—Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:1. *w19.05 3 ¶4-5*

Sunday, December 5

Make sure of the more important things.—Phil. 1:10.

It takes a great deal of effort to earn a living these days. Many of our brothers work long hours just to provide the necessities of life for their families. Countless others spend several hours each workday traveling to and from their place of employment. Many support themselves by doing hard physical labor. By the end of the day, these hardworking brothers and sisters are exhausted! The last thing many are inclined to do is study. The fact is, though, that we must find time to study—really study—God's Word and our Christian publications. Our relationship with Jehovah and our everlasting life depend on it! (1 Tim. 4:15) Some rise early every day and study when their home is quiet and their mind is fresh after a night's rest. Others set aside a few tranquil minutes at the end of the day to take in spiritual food and meditate on it. *w19.05 26 ¶1-2*

Song 137 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Jehovah Uses Two Women to Deliver His People”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Jg 5:20—How did the stars fight from the heavens in behalf of Barak? (w05 1/15 25 ¶15)

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 4:1-16 (10)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

Initial Call: (3 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer *The Watchtower* No. 2 2021. (1)

Return Visit: (4 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer the *Enjoy Life Forever!* brochure. (4)

Talk: (5 min.) w06 3/1 28-29—Theme: In What Way Should “Women Keep Silent in the Congregations”?—1Co 14:34. (14)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 84

“How Can Sisters Reach Out?”: (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video “Women Who Are Working Hard in the Lord” (video category OUR ACTIVITIES).

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) rr chap. 16 ¶14-20, box 16B

 Jehovah Uses Two Women to Deliver His People

A fearsome enemy oppressed Israel (Jg 4:3; 5:6-8; w15 8/1 13 ¶1)

Jehovah raised up Deborah to help his people (Jg 4:4-7; 5:7; w15 8/1 13 ¶2; see cover picture)

Jehovah used Jael to execute Sisera (Jg 4:16, 17, 21; w15 8/1 15 ¶2)

What does this account indicate about Jehovah’s regard for women?



Faithful Women, Christian Sisters

(Romans 16:2)

D A/C# G/B D/A G

Sa - rah and Es - ther, Mar - y, Ruth, and oth - ers—
 Good - ness and cour - age, loy - al love and kind - ness—
 Moth - ers and daugh - ters, sis - ters, wives, and wid - ows,

Em D/F# Em/G

All these were ca - pa - ble wom - en, loy - al
 Lov - a - ble qual - i - ties in all hu - man -
 Will - ing - ly la - bor - ing, glad to do your

A D A/C#

wives.
 kind,
 part.

God - ly de - vo - tion was
 Vir - tues these ex - cel - lent
 Mod - est your bear - ing, sub -

Bm D/A G

fore - most in their lives. They were
 wom - en bring to mind. They were
 mis - sive is your heart, Hav - ing

ly. **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**a and made it safely to Se-i'rah. **27** When he arrived, he sounded the horn^b in the mountainous region of E'phra-im;^c 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,^d all strong and valiant men; not a single one escaped.^e **30** So Mo'ab was subdued on that day under Israel's hand; and the land had rest* for 80 years.^f

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

3:23 *Or possibly, "air vent." 3:24 *Lit., "covering his feet." 3:25 *Lit., "earth." 3:26 *Or possibly, "the quarries." 3:30 *Or "peace."

CHAP. 3

a Jg 3:19

b Jg 6:34
1Sa 13:3

c Jg 7:24

d De 28:7

e Le 26:7,8

f Jg 3:11

g Jg 5:6

h Jos 13:1,2

i Jg 15:3,15
1Sa 17:47,50

Second Col.

CHAP. 4

a Jg 2:19

b Jg 2:14
Jg 3:8
Jg 10:7

c Jg 4:16

d Jg 2:18
Jg 3:9
Ps 107:19e Jos 17:16
Jg 1:19

f De 28:48

g Ex 15:20
2Ki 22:14
Lu 2:36
Ac 21:8,9

h Jos 18:21,25

i Ge 28:17,19

j Heb 11:32

k Jos 21:32

l 1Ki 18:40
Ps 83:9

m De 20:1

n Jg 4:21,22
Jg 5:24,26o Jos 20:7,9
Jos 21:32

p Jg 5:18

4 But after E'hud died, the Israelites again did what was bad in Jehovah's eyes.^a **2** So Jehovah sold them into the hand of Ja'bin the king of Ca'naan,^b who reigned in Ha'zor. The chief of his army was Sis'e-ra, who lived in Ha-ro'sheth^c of the nations.* **3** The Israelites cried out to Jehovah,^d because Ja'bin* had 900 war chariots with iron scythes,^e and he harshly oppressed the Israelites^f for 20 years.

4 Now Deb'o-rah, a prophetess,^g the wife of Lap'pi-doth, was judging Israel at that time.

5 She used to sit under Deb'o-rah's palm tree between Ra'mah^h and Beth'elⁱ in the mountainous region of E'phra-im; the Israelites would go up to her for judgment. **6** She sent for Ba'rak^j the son of A-bin'o-am out of Ke'desh-naph'ta-li^k and said to him: "Has not Jehovah the God of Israel given the command? 'Go and march to* Mount Ta'bor, and take 10,000 men of Naph'tali and Zeb'u-lun with you. **7** I will bring to you Sis'e-ra, the chief of Ja'bin's army, along with his war chariots and his troops to the stream* of Ki'shon,^l and I will give him into your hand.'"^m

8 At this Ba'rak said to her: "If you go with me, I will go, but if you do not go with me, I will not go." **9** To this she said: "I will certainly go with you. However, the campaign you are going on will not bring you glory, for it will be into the hand of a woman that Jehovah will give Sis'e-ra."ⁿ Then Deb'o-rah got up and went with Ba'rak to Ke'desh.^o **10** Ba'rak summoned Zeb'u-lun and Naph'tali^p to Ke'desh, and 10,000 men followed his steps. Deb'o-rah also went up with him.

4:2 *Or "Harosheth-ha-goiim." 4:3 *Lit., "he." [#]Lit., "chariots of iron." 4:6 *Or "Deploy your men on." 4:7 *Or "wadi."

11 Incidentally, He'ber the Ken'ite had separated from the Ken'ites,^a the descendants of Ho'bab, Moses' father-in-law,^b and his tent was pitched near the big tree in Za-a-nan'nim, which is at Ke'desh.

12 They reported to Sis'e-ra that Ba'arak the son of A-bin'o-am had gone up to Mount Ta'bor.^c 13 At once Sis'e-ra assembled all his war chariots—900 chariots with iron scythes*—and all the troops that were with him from Ha-ro'sheth of the nations to go to the stream^d of Ki'shon.^d

14 Deb'o-rah now said to Ba'arak: "Rise up, for this is the day that Jehovah will give Sis'e-ra into your hand. Is Jehovah not going out before you?" And Ba'arak descended from Mount Ta'bor with 10,000 men following him.

15 Then Jehovah threw Sis'e-ra and all his war chariots and all the army into confusion^e before the sword of Ba'arak. Finally Sis'e-ra got down from his chariot and fled on foot. 16 Ba'arak chased after the war chariots and the army as far as Ha-ro'sheth of the nations. So Sis'e-ra's whole army fell by the sword; not even one remained.^f

17 But Sis'e-ra fled on foot to the tent of Ja'el^g the wife of He'ber^h the Ken'ite, for there was peace between Ja'binⁱ the king of Ha'zor and the house of He'ber the Ken'ite. 18 Then Ja'el came out to meet Sis'e-ra and said to him: "Come in, my lord, come in here. Do not be afraid." So he went into her tent, and she covered him with a blanket. 19 Then he said to her: "Give me, please, a little water to drink, for I am thirsty." So she opened a skin bottle of milk and gave him a drink,^j after which she again covered him. 20 He told her: "Stand at the entrance

4:13 *Lit., "chariots of iron." #Or "wadi."

CHAP. 4

a Nu 24:21
Jg 1:16
1Sa 15:6

b Nu 10:29

c Jg 4:6

d Jg 5:20, 21

e Ex 14:24
Jos 10:10

f Le 26:7

g Jg 5:24

h Jg 4:11

i Jg 4:1, 2

j Jg 5:25

Second Col.

a Jg 4:9
Jg 5:26, 27

b Heb 11:32, 33

c Ge 9:25

d De 7:24

CHAP. 5

e Jg 4:4

f Jg 4:6
Heb 11:32

g Ex 15:1
Ps 18:Sup

h Jg 4:10

i 2Sa 22:50
Ps 7:17

j Ex 20:2

k De 33:2

l De 4:11

of the tent, and if anybody comes and asks you, 'Is there a man here?' say, 'No!'"

21 But Ja'el the wife of He'ber took a tent pin and a hammer in her hand. Then while he was fast asleep and exhausted, she stealthily approached him and drove the pin through his temples and beat it into the ground, and he died.^a

22 Ba'arak went there in pursuit of Sis'e-ra, and Ja'el now came out to meet him and said: "Come and I will show you the man you are looking for." He went in with her and saw Sis'e-ra lying dead, with the tent pin through his temples.

23 So on that day, God subdued Ja'bin the king of Ca'naan before the Israelites.^b 24 The hand of the Israelites came down harder and harder against Ja'bin the king of Ca'naan,^c until they destroyed Ja'bin the king of Ca'naan.^d

5 On that day Deb'o-rah^e along with Ba'arak^f the son of A-bin'o-am sang this song:^g

2 "Because of the unbound hair* in Israel,
Because of the people's volunteering,^h
Praise Jehovah!

3 Listen, you kings! Give ear, you rulers!
To Jehovah I will sing.
I will sing praises* to
Jehovah,ⁱ Israel's God.^j

4 Jehovah, when you went out from Se'ir,^k
When you marched out of the territory of E'dom,
The earth shook, and the heavens poured,
The clouds poured down water.

5 Mountains melted* before the face of Jehovah,^l

5:2 *Or "the warriors with unbound hair." 5:3 *Or "make music." 5:5 *Or possibly, "quaked."

- Even Si'nai before the face
of Jehovah,^a Israel's God.^b
- 6** In the days of Sham'gar^c
the son of A'nath,
In the days of Ja'el,^d the
roads were deserted;
Travelers kept to the back
roads.
- 7** The villagers in Israel were
no more;^e
They were no more until I,
Deb'o-rah,^e rose up,
Until I arose as a mother
in Israel.^f
- 8** They chose new gods;^g
Then there was war in the
gates.^h
A shield could not be seen,
nor a lance,
Among 40,000 in Israel.
- 9** My heart is with the com-
manders of Israel,ⁱ
Who went as volunteers
with the people.^j
Praise Jehovah!
- 10** You riders on tawny donkeys,
You who sit on fine carpets,
And you who walk on the
road,
Consider!
- 11** The voices of the water
distributors were heard
at the watering places;
There they were recounting
the righteous acts of
Jehovah,
The righteous acts of his
villagers in Israel.
Then Jehovah's people went
down to the gates.
- 12** Awake, awake, O Deb'o-rah!^k
Awake, awake, sing a song!^l
Rise up, Ba'ra!^m Lead your
captives away, you son of
A-bin'o-am!
- 13** Then those who were left
came down to the nobles;
Jehovah's people came down
to me against the mighty.

5:7 *Or "ceased."

CHAP. 5

- a Ex 19:18
Ne 9:13
- b Ex 20:2
- c Jg 3:31
- d Jg 4:17
- e Jg 4:4
- f Jg 4:5
- g De 32:16, 17
Jg 2:12
- h Jg 4:1-3
- i Jg 4:6
- j Jg 4:10
- k Jg 4:4
- l Jg 5:1
- m Jg 4:6

Second Col.

- a Nu 32:39
- b Jg 4:6
Heb 11:32
- c Jg 4:14
- d Nu 32:1
- e Jos 22:9
- f Jos 19:46, 48
- g Jos 19:24, 29
- h Jg 4:6, 10
- i Jg 4:14
- j Jg 4:13
- k Jg 1:27
- l Jg 4:16

- 14** Out of E'phra-im was their
origin, those in the valley;^{*}
They are following you,
O Benjamin, among your
peoples.
From Ma'chir^a the command-
ers went down,
And from Zeb'u-lun those
who bear the recruiter's
staff.[#]
- 15** The princes in Is'sa-char
were with Deb'o-rah,
As was Is'sa-char, so was
Ba'ra.^b
Into the valley plain* he was
sent on foot.^c
Among the divisions of
Reu'ben there was intense
heart-searching.
- 16** Why did you sit down be-
tween the two saddlebags,
Listening to them playing
their pipes for the flocks?^d
For the divisions of Reu'ben,
there was intense heart-
searching.
- 17** Gil'e-ad remained beyond
the Jordan;^e
And Dan, why did he stay
with the ships?^f
Ash'er sat idle at the
seashore,
And by his harbors* he
remained.^g
- 18** Zeb'u-lun was a people who
risked their lives* to the
point of death;
Naph'ta-li also,^h on the open
heights.ⁱ
- 19** Kings came, they fought;
The kings of Ca'naan then
fought!^j
In Ta'a-nach, by the waters
of Me-gid'do.^k
No spoil of silver did they
take.^l
- 20** From heaven the stars
fought;
- 5:14, 15 *Or "low plain." 5:14 #Or possi-
bly, "those handling the equipment of
a scribe." 5:17 *Or "landing places."
5:18 *Or "scorned their souls."

- From their orbits they fought
against Sis'e-ra.
- 21** The torrent* of Ki'shon
washed them away,^a
The ancient torrent,* the
torrent* of Ki'shon.
You trampled down the
powerful, O my soul.[#]
- 22** Then the hooves of horses
pounded
As his stallions galloped
furiously.^b
- 23** 'Curse Me'roz,' said the angel
of Jehovah,
'Yes, curse its inhabitants,
For they did not come to the
assistance of Jehovah,
To the assistance of Jehovah
with the mighty ones.'
- 24** Most blessed of women
is Ja'el^c
The wife of He'ber^d the
Ken'ite;
She is most blessed of
women living in tents.
- 25** He asked for water; she gave
him milk.
In a majestic banquet bowl
she offered curdled milk.^{e*}
- 26** With her hand she reached
for the tent pin,
Her right hand for the
workman's mallet.
And she hammered Sis'e-ra,
she crushed his head,
And she smashed and
pierced his temples.^f
- 27** Between her feet he col-
lapsed; he fell and lay still;
Between her feet he col-
lapsed and fell;
Where he collapsed, there
he fell defeated.
- 28** From the window a woman
looked out,
Sis'e-ra's mother peered out
from the lattice,
'Why is his chariot delayed
in coming?

5:21 *Or "stream." #See Glossary.
5:25 *Or "offered cream."

CHAP. 5

a Jg 4:7, 13
Ps 83:9

b Ps 20:7
Pr 21:31

c Jg 4:17

d Jg 4:11

e Jg 4:19

f Jg 4:21, 22

Second Col.

a Jg 4:15, 16

b Ps 83:9

c Jg 3:10, 11
Jg 3:30

CHAP. 6

d Jg 2:19

e De 28:15, 48
Jg 2:14
Ne 9:28

f Nu 33:55

g 1Sa 13:5, 6

h Jg 3:13

i Jg 8:10

j De 28:15, 33
De 28:31, 48

k Jg 8:10

l Jg 7:12

Why are the hoofbeats of his
chariots so late?'^a

- 29** The wisest of her noble
ladies would answer her;
Yes, she too would repeat
to herself,
- 30** 'They must be dividing the
spoil they found,
A girl,* two girls,[#] to every
warrior,
Spoil of dyed cloth for Sis'e-
ra, spoil of dyed cloth,
An embroidered garment,
dyed cloth, two embroi-
dered garments
For the necks of the
plunderers.'
- 31** So let all your enemies
perish,^b O Jehovah,
But let those who love you
be like the sun rising in
its glory.^c

And the land had rest* for 40
years.^c

6 But the Israelites again did
what was bad in the eyes of
Jehovah,^d so Jehovah gave them
into the hand of Mid'i-an for sev-
en years.^e **2** The hand of Mid'-
i-an dominated over Israel.^f Be-
cause of Mid'i-an, the Israelites
made hiding places* for them-
selves in the mountains, in the
caves, and in the places difficult
to approach.^g **3** If Israel sowed
seed, Mid'i-an and Am'a-lek^h
and the Easternersⁱ would at-
tack them. **4** They would camp
against them and ruin the pro-
duce of the land all the way to
Gaz'a, and they left nothing for
Israel to eat and no sheep or bull
or donkey.^j **5** For they would
come up with their livestock and
tents as numerous as the lo-
custs,^k and they and their cam-
els could not be numbered,^l and
they would come into the land to
destroy it. **6** So Israel became
greatly impoverished on account

5:30 *Lit., "womb." #Lit., "wombs."
5:31 *Or "peace." 6:2 *Or possibly,
"underground storage places."

Song 137 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Jehovah Uses Two Women to Deliver His People”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Jg 5:20—How did the stars fight from the heavens in behalf of Barak? (w05 1/15 25 ¶15)

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 4:1-16 (10)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

Initial Call: (3 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer *The Watchtower* No. 2 2021. (1)

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Talk: (5 min.) w06 3/1 28-29—Theme: In What Way Should “Women Keep Silent in the Congregations”?—1Co 14:34. (14)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 84

“How Can Sisters Reach Out?”: (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video “Women Who Are Working Hard in the Lord” (video category OUR ACTIVITIES).

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) rr chap. 16 ¶14-20, box 16B

 Jehovah Uses Two Women to Deliver His People

A fearsome enemy oppressed Israel (Jg 4:3; 5:6-8; w15 8/1 13 ¶1)

Jehovah raised up Deborah to help his people (Jg 4:4-7; 5:7; w15 8/1 13 ¶2; see cover picture)

Jehovah used Jael to execute Sisera (Jg 4:16, 17, 21; w15 8/1 15 ¶2)

What does this account indicate about Jehovah’s regard for women?



November 29–December 5 / Judges 4-5

Song 137 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 minute)

Treasures From God's Word

"Jehovah Uses Two Women to Deliver His People": (10 minutes)

A fearsome enemy oppressed Israel

Judges 4:3: The Israelites cried out to Jehovah, because Jabin had 900 war chariots with iron scythes, and he harshly oppressed the Israelites for 20 years.

Judges 5:6-8: In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, In the days of Jael, the roads were deserted; Travelers kept to the back roads. The villagers in Israel were no more; They were no more until I, Deborah, rose up, Until I arose as a mother in Israel. They chose new gods; Then there was war in the gates. A shield could not be seen, nor a lance, Among 40,000 in Israel.

w15 8/1 13 paragraph 1

Sisera! The very name caused terror and panic in Israel. The Canaanite religion and culture were brutal, featuring child sacrifice and temple prostitution. What was it like to have a Canaanite general and his army dominating the land? Deborah's song reveals that travel was nearly impossible in the land and village life had all but ended. (Judges 5:6, 7) We may imagine people cowering in the woods and hills, afraid to farm or to live in unwallled villages and terrified to travel on the open roads lest they be attacked, their children taken, and their women raped.

Jehovah raised up Deborah to help his people

Judges 4:4-7: Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was judging Israel at that time. She used to sit under Deborah's palm tree between Ramah and Bethel in the mountainous region of Ephraim; the Israelites would go up to her for judgment. She sent for Barak the son of Abinoam out of Kedesh-naphtali and said to him: "Has not Jehovah the God of Israel given the command? 'Go and march to Mount Tabor, and take 10,000 men of Naphtali and Zebulun with you. I will bring to you Sisera, the chief of Jabin's army, along with his war chariots and his troops to the stream of Kishon, and I will give him into your hand.'"

Judges 5:7: The villagers in Israel were no more; They were no more until I, Deborah, rose up, Until I arose as a mother in Israel.

Cover [Image:] The prophetess Deborah sitting under a palm tree, encouraging Barak to help God's people.

Caption: Deborah encourages Barak to help God's people

w15 8/1 13 paragraph 2

Terror reigned for 20 years, until Jehovah saw evidence that his stubborn people were ready to change or, as the inspired record of the song of Deborah and Barak says, "Until I, Deborah, rose up, until I arose as a mother in Israel." We do not know if Deborah, the wife of a man named Lappidoth, was a mother in a literal sense, but this expression was intended figuratively. In effect, Jehovah assigned Deborah to provide the nation with motherly protection. He commissioned her to summon a strong man of faith, Judge Barak, and direct him to rise up against Sisera.—Judges 4:3, 6, 7; 5:7.

Jehovah used Jael to execute Sisera

Judges 4:16, 17: Barak chased after the war chariots and the army as far as Harosheth of the nations. So Sisera's whole army fell by the sword; not even one remained. But Sisera fled on foot to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite.

Judges 4:21: But Jael the wife of Heber took a tent pin and a hammer in her hand. Then while he was fast asleep and exhausted, she stealthily approached him and drove the pin through his temples and beat it into the ground, and he died.

w15 8/1 15 paragraph 2

Jael had to think fast. She offered Sisera a place to rest. He ordered her to conceal his presence from any man who might come looking for him. She covered him when he lay down, and when he asked her for water, she gave him creamy milk. Soon Sisera sank into a deep sleep. Jael then took a pair of household implements that tent-dwelling women used often and skillfully—a tent pin and a mallet. Crouching near Sisera's head, she now faced the terrifying task of acting as an executioner for Jehovah. Even an instant of uncertainty or hesitation could have meant disaster. Did she think of God's people and of how this man had brutalized them for decades? Or did she think of the privilege

of taking her stand for Jehovah? The record does not say. We know only that the deed was soon done. Sisera was dead!—Judges 4:18-21; 5:24-27.

What does this account indicate about Jehovah's regard for women?

[Image:] Collage: 1. Deborah sits under a palm tree and encourages Barak to help God's people. 2. Jael holds a tent pin and a hammer near Sisera, who is fast asleep.

Spiritual Gems

Judges 5:20—How did the stars fight from the heavens in behalf of Barak?

Judges 5:20: From heaven the stars fought; From their orbits they fought against Sisera.

w05 1/15 25 paragraph 5

The Bible does not say whether this involved angelic assistance, meteorite showers that were interpreted ominously by Sisera's wise men, or perhaps astrological predictions for Sisera that proved false. Undoubtedly, however, there was some type of divine intervention.

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 4:1-16 (*th* study 10)

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2021

Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK



Song 137 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Jehovah Uses Two Women to Deliver His People”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Jg 5:20—How did the stars fight from the heavens in behalf of Barak? (w05 1/15 25 ¶15)

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 4:1-16 (10)

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 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 84

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What does this account indicate about Jehovah’s regard for women?





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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Questions From Readers

What did the apostle Paul mean when he stated that women should “keep silent in the congregations”?

Paul wrote to the Christian congregation in Corinth: “As in all the congregations of the holy ones, let the women keep silent in the congregations, for it is not permitted for them to speak.” (1 Corinthians 14:33, 34) In order for us to understand this correctly, it is helpful to consider the context of Paul’s counsel.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 14, Paul discussed matters relating to meetings of the Christian congregation. He described what should be discussed at such meetings and recommended how they should be conducted. (1 Corinthians 14:1-6, 26-34) Further, he stressed the objective of Christian meetings—“that the congregation may receive upbuilding.”—1 Corinthians 14:4, 5, 12, 26.

Paul’s instruction to “keep silent” appears three times in 1 Corinthians chapter 14. Each time, it is addressed to a different group in the congregation, but in all instances, it is given for the same reason—that “all things take place decently and by arrangement.”—1 Corinthians 14:40.

First, Paul said: “If someone speaks in a tongue, let it be limited to two or three at the most, and in turns; and let someone translate. But if there be no translator, let him *keep silent* in the congregation and speak to himself and to God.” (1 Corinthians 14:27, 28) That did not mean that such a person was never to speak at meetings but that there were times when he should be silent. After all, the objective of the meetings—to upbuild one another—would not be attained if he spoke in a language no one understood.

Second, Paul stated: “Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others discern the meaning. But if there is a revelation to another one while sitting there, let the first one *keep silent*.” This meant, not that the first prophet was to refrain from speaking at meetings, but that he had to be silent at times. Then the one having the miraculous revelation could address the congregation, and the objective of the meeting—that “all be encouraged”—would be achieved.—1 Corinthians 14:26, 29-31.

Third, Paul addressed Christian women only, stating: “Let the women *keep silent* in the congregations, for it is not permitted for them to speak, but let them be in subjection.” (1 Corinthians 14:34) Why did Paul give this command to sisters? To preserve order in the congregation. He says: “If, then, they want to learn something, let them question their own husbands at home, for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in a congregation.”—1 Corinthians 14:35.

Perhaps some sisters were challenging what was said in the congregation. Paul’s counsel helped sisters to shun such a disorderly spirit and humbly accept their position within Jehovah’s headship arrangement, particularly with regard to their husbands. (1 Corinthians 11:3) In addition, by keeping silent, sisters would show that they did not aspire to be teachers in the congregation. When he wrote to Timothy, Paul showed that it would be improper for a woman to assume the role of teacher: “I do not permit a woman to teach, or to exercise authority over a man, but to be in silence.”—1 Timothy 2:12.

Does that mean that a Christian woman must never speak during a congregation meeting? No. In Paul’s day, there were occasions when Christian women, perhaps impelled by holy spirit, prayed or prophesied in the congregation. On such occasions, they acknowledged their position by wearing a head covering. (1 Corinthians 11:5) Further, in Paul’s day and today, sisters along with brothers are urged to make a public declaration of their hope. (Hebrews 10:23-25) Besides doing this in the field ministry, sisters declare their hope and encourage others during congregation meetings by giving

well-thought-out comments when invited to do so and by accepting assignments to share in demonstrations or student talks.

Hence, Christian women “keep silent” by refraining from trying to assume the role of a male and instruct the congregation. They do not raise argumentative questions that could challenge the authority of those who teach. By fulfilling their proper role in the congregation, Christian sisters greatly contribute toward an atmosphere of peace in which “all things [at congregation meetings] take place for upbuilding.”—1 Corinthians 14:26, 33.

[Footnote]

In modern times, mature sisters follow that example when, because of circumstances, they have to substitute for a baptized man in a congregation setting.—See *The Watchtower*, July 15, 2002, page 26.

Reaching Out

(Matthew 9:37, 38)

E_b

Je - ho - vah knows just what we
There's work to do in ev - 'ry
And here at home, in towns near -

A_badd9 *Cm7*

need To bring us joy and to suc -
land. Where there's a need, we lend a
by, We plan, we build, new skills we

D_badd9 *E_b*

ceed. So he pro - vides so man - y
hand. By reach - ing out, we show we
try. We learn to speak a for - eign

A_badd9 *Cm*

ways In which to serve and spend our
care. We want to help and want to
tongue And bring good news to ev - 'ry -

Reaching Out

Chorus

Bbsus4 Bb Ab Bb Eb Cm7 Eb/Bb Ab

days.
share.
one.

Reach - ing out, giv - ing all,

Eb/G Ab Fm7 Cm7 Bbsus4 Bb Gm7

for our God a - bove. And where the

Ab Bb Eb Cm7 Eb/Bb Ab

need is great, there we'll be,

Eb/G Ab Fm7 Bb13 Ab Eb

reach - ing out in love.

(See also John 4:35; Acts 2:8; Rom. 10:14.)

Song 137 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

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How Can Sisters Reach Out?



Sisters make valuable contributions to the Kingdom work. (Ps 68:11) They conduct many of the home Bible studies and make up a large percentage of the regular pioneers. Thousands of hardworking sisters serve as Bethelites, missionaries, construction volunteers or servants, and translators. Mature sisters build up their families and congregations. (Pr 14:1) Although sisters cannot serve as elders or ministerial servants, they can still set goals in the congregation. If you are a sister, what are some ways that you can reach out?

- Cultivate spiritual qualities. —1Ti 3:11; 1Pe 3:3-6
- Help sisters in the congregation who have less experience.—Tit 2:3-5
- Improve the quality and quantity of your ministry
- Learn another language
- Move where the need is greater
- Apply to work at Bethel or to assist with the construction of theocratic facilities
- Apply for the School for Kingdom Evangelizers

WATCH THE VIDEO “WOMEN WHO ARE WORKING HARD IN THE LORD,” AND THEN ANSWER THIS QUESTION:

- How did the comments of each sister encourage you?



"Women Who Are Working Hard in the Lord"

Sister 1: I work as a legal secretary. I was quite happy with the work I was doing, but I was just coasting along, and I didn't really have that burning desire, at the time, to pioneer. I specifically remember a talk about young ones—what they were doing with their lives—and it really did make me think.

Sister 2: I work three days a week as a nanny. It's a good job for me. It helps me to do something that I love but also have the freedom to do things for Jehovah. I really love construction and particularly wanted to get involved with the project going on at Chelmsford. But at the time, I lived in the northeast of England, which would have been way too far to commute.

Sister 3: My work consists of supporting people in the community with mental health issues. My husband was involved in construction—that was his work—but also, he made himself available to be involved in any Kingdom Hall build, any construction. So in the beginning I thought: 'Yeah, that's his thing, not my thing. 'I'll stay home and pioneer. My construction skill is nonexistent.'

Sister 1: The talk just helped me to see that if I didn't have a desire to pioneer, then I should pray. I really felt motivated to want to change my life, so I started regular pioneering. Seeing young sisters and brothers, as well, that were getting involved with doing different aspects of worship and seeing their joy in what they were doing construction wise really spurred me on to want to apply as well.

Sister 2: I prayed to Jehovah that I really wanted to be involved somehow in the project and that he would work things out. I started looking for accommodations and started looking for work. And within days, I had a job and somewhere to live; and two weeks later, I moved to London.

Sister 3: I knew my husband loved it so much, so I thought, 'I'll come with him.' Losing my husband in death is just something that happened very suddenly and very quickly. Initially, I had to go back home, but the avenue was opened for me to come back again if I wished to. After a period of time, I decided I would come back. The brothers were very conscious of my circumstance. This is my family. This is Jehovah's organization without a doubt. The brothers have given me all the support I need. It's always best to be busy in Jehovah's work; that's part of healing. When I came on-site and the brothers said, "We'd like you to drive one our machines," I'd never driven construction machinery before. But I was able to be trained and felt confident after that.

Sister 1: I was invited to work on the Home Cleaning Team. It was not what I thought I would be doing in construction, but it's fun, and I really love knowing that Jehovah is happy with the work we do.

Sister 2: Very quickly after I moved, I was invited to commute to the branch relocation project. The first half of my week is working with children and playing with toy trucks, and then the second half of my week, I am driving this huge machine on a building site. There's really good emphasis on training, so you never feel completely out of your depth.

Brother 1: I really enjoy training; it's a very rewarding assignment. Sisters pay attention to detail; they don't get overconfident because they have a healthy respect for the machines that they're driving.

Brother 2: We have many positive comments from contractors and various authorities about the proactive training and use of women on our construction site. They're amazed at what they see because it's not normal in the industry. It reminds me of what it says in Romans chapter 16, where the apostle Paul mentions women by name "working hard in the Lord," and here on this site, we have lots of women doing just that.

Sister 1: Having no construction skills hasn't stopped me from being used at all. You're seeing sisters being used for things that they would never have pictured themselves doing, but they're doing it, and it's because they've been trained, and it's because Jehovah is behind it.

Sister 3: Being here has drawn me closer to Jehovah in a sense that you rely on him, that I rely on him daily.

Sister 2: If you had told me three years ago that I'd be commuting to the project every week and driving a massive truck around on-site, I probably wouldn't have believed you. I absolutely love coming here; it's like a dream come true. I just don't want it to end.

Sister 1: Looking back to when I first heard that talk at the convention, I'm really pleased that I used my time in these last days to serve Jehovah. I would encourage anybody to be in full-time service because it's such a joyful way of life.

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 Anti-typical Jerusalem?”)

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

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 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. (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

FOOTNOTE

[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.”

The six men with weapons
for smashing will soon have
a work to do
SEE PARAGRAPHS 12, 13



SIGHING AND GROANING, MARKING, SMASHING WHEN AND HOW?

SEE PARAGRAPHS 17-19

The vision recorded in Ezekiel chapter 9 has a modern-day fulfillment. Our understanding of how events will unfold can help us to face the end of this system of things with confidence

“Sighing and groaning”



WHEN: During the last days, *before* the great tribulation

HOW: Righthearted individuals show by their words and actions that they detest the wickedness of this world. Such ones respond favorably to the preaching work, continue putting on a Christlike personality, get baptized in symbol of their dedication to Jehovah, and loyally support Christ's brothers

16. Do we as Jehovah's people mark those who will survive? Explain.

17. What do individuals need to do now in order to put themselves in line to be marked in the future?

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.

¹⁶ *Jehovah's people do not mark those who will survive.* Recall that Ezekiel was *not* told to go through Jerusalem himself and mark others for survival. Similarly, Jehovah's people today are *not* commissioned to mark worthy ones for survival. Rather, as domestics in Christ's spiritual household, we are commissioned to preach. We show that we take this commission seriously by zealously sharing the good news of God's Kingdom and by eagerly sounding the warning that this wicked world is rapidly nearing its end. (Matt. 24:14; 28:18-20) We thus have a share in helping honesthearted ones to embrace pure worship.—1 Tim. 4:16.

¹⁷ *To survive the coming destruction, individuals need to prove their faith now.* As we saw earlier, those who survived Jerusalem's destruction in 607 B.C.E. demonstrated *beforehand* their heartfelt rejection of wickedness and their devotion to pure worship. It is similar today. *Before the destruction comes*, individuals need to be “sighing and groaning”—deeply grieved

“Marking”



WHEN: During the great tribulation

HOW: The man with the secretary’s inkhorn represents Jesus Christ when he comes as Judge of all the nations. Those of the great crowd will be favorably judged, or marked, as sheep, thus indicating that they will survive Armageddon

“Smashing”



WHEN: At Armageddon

HOW: Jesus Christ and his heavenly armies, which will include the angels and his 144,000 corulers, will utterly destroy this wicked world and deliver pure worshippers into a righteous new world

at heart—over the wickedness of this world. And rather than hide their feelings, they must demonstrate by words and actions their devotion to pure worship. How can they do so? They need to react favorably to the preaching work that is being done today, to continue putting on a Christlike personality, to get baptized in symbol of their dedication to Jehovah, and to support Christ’s brothers loyally. (Ezek. 9:4; Matt. 25:34-40; Eph. 4:22-24; 1 Pet. 3:21) Only those who pursue such a course now—and who enter the great tribulation as pure worshippers—will be in a position to be marked for survival.

¹⁸ *The marking of deserving ones will take place in the heavenly realm.* In Ezekiel’s day, angels had a role in marking faithful ones for survival. In the modern-day fulfillment, the man with the secretary’s inkhorn represents Jesus Christ when he “comes in his glory” as Judge of all the nations. (Matt. 25:31-33) That coming of Jesus will take place during the great tribulation, after the destruction of false religion.^[3] At that crucial time, just before Armageddon begins, Jesus will judge people as sheep or goats. Those of the “great crowd” will be judged, or marked, as sheep, which thus indicates that they

18. (a) How and when will Jesus Christ mark deserving ones? (b) Do faithful anointed ones need to be marked? Explain.

FOOTNOTE

[3] Apparently, the destruction of Babylon the Great will not mean the death of all members of false religion. At that time, even some clergymen may abandon false religion and claim that they were never a part of it.—Zech. 13:3-6.

19. Who will accompany Jesus in executing judgment on this system of things? (See the box “Sighing and Groaning, Marking, Smashing—When and How?”)

20. What reassuring lessons have we learned from Ezekiel’s vision of the man with the secretary’s inkhorn?

will “depart . . . into everlasting life.” (Rev. 7:9-14; Matt. 25:34-40, 46) What about faithful anointed ones? They do not need to be marked for survival through Armageddon. Rather, they will receive their final sealing either before they die or before the outbreak of the great tribulation. Then, at some point before Armageddon begins, they will be raised to heaven.—Rev. 7:1-3.

¹⁹ *The heavenly King, Jesus Christ, and his heavenly armies will execute judgment on this system of things.* In Ezekiel’s vision, the six men with weapons for smashing did not begin the destruction until after the man in linen completed his marking work. (Ezek. 9:4-7) Likewise, the coming destruction will begin after Jesus judges people of all the nations and marks the sheep for survival. Then, during the war of Armageddon, Jesus will lead the heavenly executional forces, which will include the holy angels and all his 144,000 corulers, against this wicked world, destroying it utterly and delivering pure worshippers into a righteous new world.—Re 16:14-16; 19:11-21.

²⁰ How thankful we are for the reassuring lessons we learn from Ezekiel’s vision of the man with the secretary’s inkhorn! We can have complete confidence that Jehovah will not destroy the righteous with the wicked. (Ps. 97:10) We know what we need to do now in order to be marked in the future for survival. As worshippers of Jehovah, we are determined to have the fullest possible share in declaring the good news and in sounding the warning to those who are sighing and groaning over the wickedness in Satan’s world. We thus may have the privilege of helping those who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life” to join us in pure worship and thereby put themselves in line to be marked for survival into God’s righteous new world.—Acts 13:48.

YOUR PLACE IN PURE WORSHIP

- 1 How does Ezekiel’s vision of the man with the secretary’s inkhorn highlight Jehovah’s mercy?
- 2 What do you need to do now in order to be marked in the future for survival?

- 3 After considering Ezekiel’s vision of the man with the inkhorn, what are you determined to do?

The Revealing of God's Sons

(Romans 8:19)

Verse 1

C Eb6/9 Fadd9 Gsus4 Abma7 Bbadd9

The time is near when God re - veals His faith - ful cho - sen ones.

G7sus4 Ab6/9 Bb/D Eb Fadd9 G

In heav - en they will rule with Christ As might - y

Abma7 Bbadd9 Csus4 C *Chorus* Ab Bb

spir - it sons. The sons of God will

Csus4 C Ab Bb Csus4 C

be re - vealed A - long with Christ, their Lord. They'll

The Revealing of God's Sons

Fm9 Ebadd9/G Abadd9 Bbadd9 Gm11 C Bb/C

join him in his vic - to - ry And share in his re - ward.

Detailed description: This system contains the first two lines of music. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). It features a melody line with eighth and quarter notes, and a chord line with complex chords: Fm9, Ebadd9/G, Abadd9, Bbadd9, Gm11, C, and Bb/C. The bottom staff is in bass clef, providing a bass line with eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are: "join him in his vic - to - ry And share in his re - ward."

C Bb/C Verse 2 C Eb6/9 Fadd9 Gsus4

And soon the last re - main - ing ones Will hear his

Detailed description: This system contains the third and fourth lines of music. The top staff is in treble clef. It begins with a double bar line and the label "Verse 2". The melody continues with quarter and eighth notes. Chords above the staff are C, Bb/C, C, Eb6/9, Fadd9, and Gsus4. The bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are: "And soon the last re - main - ing ones Will hear his"

Abma7 Bbadd9 G7sus4 Ab6/9 Bb/D Eb

fi - nal call. The King of kings and Lord of

Detailed description: This system contains the fifth and sixth lines of music. The top staff is in treble clef. The melody features a long, sweeping line with a slur over several notes. Chords above the staff are Abma7, Bbadd9, G7sus4, Ab6/9, Bb/D, and Eb. The bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are: "fi - nal call. The King of kings and Lord of"

Fadd9 G Abma7 Bbadd9 Csus4 C Chorus Ab Bb

lords Will then col - lect them all. The sons of God will

Detailed description: This system contains the seventh and eighth lines of music. The top staff is in treble clef. The melody continues with quarter and eighth notes. Chords above the staff are Fadd9, G, Abma7, Bbadd9, Csus4, C, and then "Chorus" with Ab and Bb. The bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are: "lords Will then col - lect them all. The sons of God will"

The Revealing of God's Sons

Csus4 C Ab Bb Csus4 C

be re - vealed A - long with Christ, their Lord. They'll

Detailed description: This system contains the first two lines of music. The treble staff has a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb) and a common time signature. The melody starts on a whole note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, Bb4, and C5. The bass staff provides accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The lyrics are: "be re - vealed A - long with Christ, their Lord. They'll".

Fm9 Ebadd9/G Abadd9 Bbadd9 Gm11 C Bb/C

join him in his vic - to - ry And share in his re - ward.

Detailed description: This system contains the next two lines of music. The treble staff continues the melody with notes like G4, A4, Bb4, and C5. The bass staff features more complex chords such as Fm9, Ebadd9/G, Abadd9, Bbadd9, Gm11, C, and Bb/C. The lyrics are: "join him in his vic - to - ry And share in his re - ward."

C Bb/C *Bridge* Ab/C Bb/C Ab/C Bb/C

And then with Christ, these sons of God Will wage the

Detailed description: This system contains the third line of music, which is the start of a bridge section. The treble staff has a whole rest followed by a quarter note G4, then quarter notes A4, Bb4, and C5. The bass staff has a quarter note G3, then chords Bb/C, Ab/C, Bb/C, Ab/C, and Bb/C. The lyrics are: "And then with Christ, these sons of God Will wage the".

C Bb/C C Bb/C Ab/C Bb/C

fi - nal war. The joy - ous mar - riage

Detailed description: This system contains the final line of music. The treble staff has a whole note G4, then a half note A4, and a half note Bb4. The bass staff has chords Bb/C, C, Bb/C, Ab/C, and Bb/C. The lyrics are: "fi - nal war. The joy - ous mar - riage".

The Revealing of God's Sons

to the Lamb Will last for - ev - er - more.

Ab/C Bb/C C Bb/C

The sons of God will be re - vealed a -

C Bb/C *Chorus* Ab Bb Csus4 C

long with Christ, their Lord. They'll join him in his

Ab Bb Csus4 C Fm9 Ebadd9/G

vic - to - ry And share in his re - ward.

Abadd9 Bbadd9 Gm11 C

SEPTEMBER 2021

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



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NOVEMBER 1–DECEMBER 5, 2021

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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)

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“Assist Those Who Are Weak”

(Acts 20:35)

E \flat B \flat 7 E \flat 6 B \flat A \flat /E \flat B \flat A \flat B \flat A \flat /E \flat G \flat /B \flat A \flat B \flat E \flat

Man - y are the weak - ness - es That we all pos - sess.
Some at times are weak in faith, Strong though they ap - pear.
Rath - er than con-demn the weak, We should bear in mind

E \flat B \flat 7 E \flat 6 B \flat A \flat /E \flat B \flat A \flat B \flat A \flat /E \flat G \flat /B \flat A \flat A \flat /B \flat E \flat

Still Je - ho - vah cares for us, Loves us none - the - less.
By our re - as - sur - ing words, We can calm their fears.
How much we can strength - en them By our be - ing kind.

F \flat m7 G \flat /B \flat B \flat 7/A \flat G \flat C \flat C \flat /A D7+5 \flat 9 D7 G \flat F \flat m7 B \flat 7

He is so mer - ci - ful; His love, so pow - er - ful.
Weak ones to God be - long; His spir - it makes them strong.
May we be dil - i - gent, Give them en - cour - age - ment.

E \flat B \flat 7 E \flat 6 B \flat A \flat /E \flat B \flat A \flat B \flat A \flat /E \flat G \flat /B \flat A \flat A \flat /B \flat E \flat

May we show this kind of love, Help those in dis - tress.
May we feel their pain and cares, Help them dry their tears.
As we lend our kind sup - port, Com - fort they will find.

(See also Isa. 35:3, 4; 2 Cor. 11:29; Gal. 6:2.)

SONG 102

“Assist Those
Who Are Weak”

PREVIEW

How distressing it is when a loved one leaves Jehovah! This article considers how our God feels when this happens. It discusses practical things faithful family members can do to cope with the pain and to remain spiritually strong. This article will also discuss how all in the congregation can offer comfort and support to the family.

When a Loved One Leaves Jehovah

“How often they . . . made him feel hurt.”—PS. 78:40.

HAS one of your loved ones been disfellowshipped from the congregation? That can be heartbreaking! “When my faithful spouse died after 41 years of marriage,” says a sister named Hilda, “I thought it was the worst thing I could ever experience.* But when my son left the congregation, his wife, and his children, it was far, far worse for me.”

² Think how heartbroken Jehovah must have been when members of his own angelic family turned their back on him! (Jude 6) And imagine how hurt he was at seeing his beloved people, the Israelites, rebel against him time and again. (**Read Psalm 78:40, 41.**) Be assured that our loving heavenly Father is also hurt when someone you love leaves him. He understands the grief you are experiencing. He will compassionately provide you with the encouragement and the support you need.

³ In this article, we will discuss what we can do to receive Jehovah’s help when we are coping with such a loss. We will also examine how we can help others in the congregation who are facing this challenge. But first, let us consider a negative pattern of thinking that we must avoid.

AVOID BLAMING YOURSELF

⁴ When a precious son or daughter leaves Jehovah, it is common for the parents to wonder what more they could

* Some names in this article have been changed.

1. How might the disfellowshipping of a loved one affect some?
- 2-3. According to Psalm 78:40, 41, how does Jehovah feel when his servants leave him?
4. How do many parents feel when a son or a daughter leaves Jehovah?

have done to help their young one stay in the truth. After his son was disfellowshipped, a brother named Luke admitted: “I blamed myself. I had nightmares about it. Sometimes I would cry and my heart ached.” Elizabeth, a sister who faced a similar situation, agonized: “What did I do wrong as a mother? I felt that I must have failed to inculcate the truth in my son.”

⁵ We need to remember that Jehovah has given each of us the gift of free will. This means that we can choose whether we will obey him or not. Some young ones whose upbringing was far from ideal choose to serve Jehovah, and they make a success of their service. Others whose parents did their very best to bring them up in harmony with Scriptural principles turn their back on the truth once they get older. In the final analysis, we must personally decide whether we will serve Jehovah. (Josh. 24:15) So, grieving parents, fight the tendency to think that this tragedy must be your fault!

⁶ At times, a parent abandons the truth and even the family. (Ps. 27:10) This can be devastating for children who had looked up to the parent as a role model. Esther, whose father was disfellowshipped, says: “I cried often because I realized that he was not just drifting away from the truth. He was making a deliberate choice to leave Jehovah altogether. I love my father, so when he was disfellowshipped, I constantly worried about his well-being. I even had panic attacks.”

5. Who is responsible when a person leaves Jehovah?

6. How might a young person be affected when a parent leaves God?



Jehovah understands how devastating the spiritual loss of a loved one can be (See paragraphs 2-3)

⁷ Young ones, if one of your parents has been disfellowshipped, our heart aches for you! Please be assured that Jehovah is also keenly aware of your pain. He loves you and appreciates your loyalty, and so do we—your brothers and sisters. Remember, too, that you are *not* responsible for your parent’s decisions. As mentioned earlier, Jehovah has put a choice before every human. And each dedicated and baptized individual must “carry his own load of responsibility.” —Gal. 6:5, *ftn.*

⁸ When someone you love leaves Jehovah, you understandably hold on to the hope that one day he will return to Him. What can you do in the meantime? You can look after your own spiritual health. By doing so, you will set a good example for other family members and perhaps even for the disfellowshipped one. You will also gain the needed strength to cope with your painful emotions. Let us discuss some practical steps you can take.

7. What are Jehovah’s feelings toward a young person whose parent is disfellowshipped?

8. What can faithful family members do while waiting for their loved one to return to Jehovah? (See also the box “Return to Jehovah.”)



Return to Jehovah

One mother says: “My hope for my disfellowshipped son is summed up in the words of Isaiah 55:7: ‘Let him return to Jehovah, who will have mercy on him, to our God, for he will forgive in a large way.’” If you have left Jehovah, the sooner you return, the happier you will be. As you look at world events, it becomes evident that Armageddon is swiftly approaching and can come at any time. Also, life in this system is short and uncertain. None of us can know if we will be alive tomorrow.—Jas. 4:13, 14.

The brochure *Return to Jehovah** says: “Be assured that Jehovah will be there for you as you return to him. He will help you to deal with anxiety, to resolve hurt feelings, and to find the peace of mind and heart that comes from having a clean conscience. Then you may once again feel moved to serve Jehovah along with fellow worshippers.”—1 Pet. 2:25.

* Published by Jehovah’s Witnesses and available in many languages on jw.org.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO STAY SPIRITUALLY STRONG

⁹ Stick to a good spiritual routine. It is vital that you continue strengthening yourself and other family members. How can you do so? Draw strength from Jehovah by maintaining a routine of reading God’s Word and meditating on it as well as attending Christian meetings. Joanna, whose father and sister left the truth, says: “I feel a calm come over me when I read about such Bible characters as Abigail, Esther, Job, Joseph, and Jesus. Their examples feed my heart and mind with positive thoughts that soothe the pain. I have also found our original songs to be very encouraging.”

¹⁰ Pour out your concerns to Jehovah. When you experience distressing feelings, do not stop praying to him. Beg our loving God to help you view the situation from his perspective and to “give you insight and instruct you in the way you should go.” (**Read Psalm 32:6-8.**) Of course, it may be very painful to tell Jehovah how you really feel. But Jehovah fully understands your pain of heart. He loves you very much and urges you to pour out your heart to him.—Ex. 34:6; Ps. 62:7, 8.

¹¹ Support the decision. Disfellowshipping is part of Jehovah’s arrangement. His loving correction is in the best inter-

9. In what ways can you draw strength from Jehovah? (See also the box “Comforting Scriptures if Your Loved One Has Left Jehovah.”)

10. What does Psalm 32:6-8 reveal about how to cope with distressing feelings?

11. According to Hebrews 12:11, why should we trust in Jehovah’s loving discipline? (See also the box “Disfellowshipping—Jehovah’s Loving Discipline at Work.”)

ests of everyone, including the wrongdoer. **(Read Hebrews 12:11.)** Any negative comments about the way a disciplinary matter was handled by the elders have likely been initiated by someone who did not mention details that would put the wrongdoer in a bad light. We simply do not have all the facts. It is wise, then, to trust that the elders who took judicial action made every effort to follow Scriptural principles and to judge “for Jehovah.” —2 Chron. 19:6.

¹² By supporting the elders’ decision to disfellowship your loved one, you may actually help him to return to Jehovah. “Severing family association with our adult son was extremely difficult,” admits Elizabeth, quoted earlier. “But after he returned to Jehovah, he admitted that he deserved to be disfellowshipped. In time, he expressed appreciation for the lessons he learned. I came to value Jehovah’s discipline,” she says. Her husband, Mark, adds: “Much later, our son told me that he wanted to come back in part because we did exactly what we had to do. I’m so glad Jehovah helped us to be obedient.”

¹³ Confide in understanding friends. Associate with mature Christians who can help you to maintain a positive attitude. (Prov. 12:25; 17:17) Joanna, mentioned earlier, says: “In my heart, I felt alone. But talking to trustworthy friends helped me to cope.” What, though, if it seems that some in the congregation say things to you that make you feel worse?

12. What benefits have some experienced because they supported Jehovah’s arrangement for discipline?

13. What can help you to deal with painful emotions?

Comforting Scriptures if Your Loved One Has Left Jehovah

- Psalm 30:10
- Psalm 34:4, 6, 18, 19
- Psalm 39:12
- Psalm 61:1, 2
- Psalm 94:17-19
- Ephesians 3:20
- Philippians 4:6, 7

¹⁴ Be patient with your brothers and sisters. Realistically, not everyone will respond in an ideal way. (Jas. 3:2) We are all imperfect, so do not be surprised if some struggle with what to say or even unintentionally make comments that cause you pain. Remember the apostle Paul’s admonition: “Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely even if anyone has a cause for complaint against another.” (Col. 3:13) One sister whose relative was disfellowshipped explains: “Jehovah has helped me to forgive brothers who tried to do the right thing in an imperfect way.” What can the congregation do to help faithful family members?

THE CONGREGATION CAN HELP

¹⁵ Warmly welcome faithful family members. A sister named Miriam admits that she was anxious about going to the meetings after her brother was

14. Why do we need to “continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely”?

15. What can help family members whose loved one was recently disfellowshipped?

Disfellowshipping—Jehovah’s Loving Discipline at Work

How does the disfellowshipping arrangement reflect God’s love?

1. Love motivates elders to make every effort to help wrongdoers. A Christian is disfellowshipped only if two factors coincide: He has committed a serious sin, and he is not repentant.—Heb. 12:7, 9-11.
2. Disfellowshipping protects the congregation. An unrepentant sinner is like a person who has a highly contagious viral infection and needs to be quarantined in order to protect others from getting sick.—1 Cor. 5:6, 7, 11-13.
3. Disfellowshipping may move a sinner to repent. Many who got disfellowshipped were jolted to their senses and in time returned to Jehovah.—Luke 15:11-24.
4. When a repentant wrongdoer returns, the heavens rejoice and the congregation welcomes him back.—Luke 15:7.

disfellowshipped. “I was afraid of what people would say. But there were wonderful friends who shared my sadness without showing resentment toward my disfellowshipped brother. Thanks to them, I did not feel alone in my grief.” Another sister recalls: “After our son was

disfellowshipped, dear friends came to comfort us. Some admitted that they did not know what to say. They shed a tear with me or wrote me a note. What they did helped me tremendously!”

¹⁶ Continue to support faithful family members. They need your love and encouragement now more than ever. (Heb. 10:24, 25) At times, family members of disfellowshipped ones have felt that they too have been excluded from association with the congregation. Do not let that happen! Young people whose parents have left the truth especially need commendation and encouragement. Maria, whose husband was disfellowshipped and left the family, says: “Some of my friends came to my house and cooked food and helped us with the family study. They felt my pain and cried with me. They defended me when false rumors circulated. They really lifted my spirits!”—Rom. 12:13, 15.

¹⁷ Elders, use opportunities available to strengthen faithful family members. You have a special responsibility to console fellow worshippers whose loved ones have left Jehovah. (1 Thess. 5:14) Take the initiative to encourage them before and after Christian meetings. Visit them and pray for them. Work with them in the ministry, or at times invite them to join you for family worship. Spiritual shepherds need to show Jehovah’s grieving sheep the compassion, love, and attention they need.—1 Thess. 2:7, 8.

16. How can the congregation provide ongoing support?

17. How can elders provide compassionate support?



The congregation can give loving support to faithful family members (See paragraph 17)

REMAIN HOPEFUL AND CONTINUE TO TRUST IN JEHOVAH

¹⁸ Jehovah “does not desire anyone to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance.” (Read **2 Peter 3:9**.) Although a person may commit a serious sin, his life is still precious to God. Think of the high price Jehovah has paid—the ransom sacrifice of his own beloved Son—for the lives of sinners. Jehovah compassionately reaches out to help such ones return to him. He hopes they will choose to do so, as we can see from Jesus’ illustration of the lost son. (Luke 15:11-32) Many

18. According to 2 Peter 3:9, what does God desire for wrongdoers?

who left the truth returned later to their loving heavenly Father. And the congregation welcomed them with open arms. Elizabeth, quoted earlier, experienced the joy of seeing her son reinstated. Thinking back, she says, “I really appreciated those who encouraged us not to give up hope.”

¹⁹ We can always trust in Jehovah. He never gives us direction that will cause us harm. He is a generous and compassionate Father who has deep love for all who love and worship him. Be assured that Jehovah will not abandon you in your time of anguish. (Heb. 13:5, 6) “Jehovah never abandoned us,” says Mark, mentioned earlier. “He is never far from us when we go through difficulties.” Jehovah will continue to give you “the power beyond what is normal.” (2 Cor. 4:7) Yes, you *can* remain faithful and hopeful even when a loved one leaves Jehovah.

19. Why can we continue to trust in Jehovah?

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Page 27: When a brother abandons his family and Jehovah, his wife and their children suffer. Page 31: Two elders come to provide spiritual encouragement to a family in the congregation.

WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE FOLLOWING SCRIPTURES?

■ Psalm 78:40, 41

■ Psalm 32:6-8

■ Hebrews 12:11

A Prayer of the Lowly One

(Psalm 4:1)

Gm Am11 D7 Gm9/Bb Gm/Bb Am7#5 D7#9/A

Je - ho - vah God, I call to you and ask you: "Hear my prayer." My
Your Word has been my com - fort and a ref - uge when I'm weak, Ex -

Gm Dm/F Ebma7 Cm6/Eb Dm7 Bb/D

wounds are deep and slow to heal; my load is hard to bear. De -
press - ing feel - ings dear to me in words I can - not speak. Please

Cm Cm/Bb Cm/A A° Gm9/Bb Gm/Bb

spont - ent thoughts and dis - ap - point - ed hopes have left me weak. O
build in me the faith and trust that your Word does im - part. And

Ebma7 F9/Eb Dm7 Bb/D Cm Eb/F

God of com - fort, care for me; your fa - vor I do seek.
help me al - ways know your love is great - er than my heart.

A Prayer of the Lowly One

Chorus F7 Bb Fm/Ab G7sus4 G7

Do raise me up; help me en - dure. When I'm in

Cm Cm/Bb Cm6/A D7 C/E D7/F#

doubt, make my hope sure. From deep de -

Gm Gm/F Cm/Eb Ebm/Gb

spair, I turn to you. Je - ho - vah

Bb/F F13sus4 F7 Bb

God, my strength re - new.

(See also Ps. 42:6; 119:28; Rom. 8:26; 2 Cor. 4:16; 1 John 3:20.)