

Monday, December 27

Do not abandon me when my strength fails.—Ps. 71:9.

Jesus taught us that no matter how limited our abilities or how small our efforts seem to us as we get older, Jehovah treasures whatever we can do in his service. (Ps. 92:12-15; Luke 21:2-4) So focus on what you can do. You can, for example, speak about Jehovah, pray for your brothers, and encourage others to stay faithful. Jehovah considers you to be his fellow worker, not because of what you accomplish, but because of your willing obedience to him. (1 Cor. 3:5-9) How grateful we are to worship Jehovah, a God who truly values those who serve him! He created us to do his will, and it is true worship that adds real meaning to our lives. (Rev. 4:11) Though the world may view us as worthless, Jehovah is not ashamed of us. (Heb. 11:16, 38) When we feel weighed down by illness, economic hardship, or old age, let us remember that nothing can separate us from the love of our heavenly Father.—Rom. 8:38, 39. *w20.01 18 ¶16; 19 ¶18-19*

Tuesday, December 28

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and put within me a new spirit, a steadfast one.—Ps. 51:10.

We can fight envy by cultivating humility and contentment. When our heart is full of these good qualities, envy will have no room to grow. Humility will help us not to think too highly of ourselves. A humble person does not feel that he deserves more than everyone else. (Gal. 6:3, 4) Someone who is content is satisfied with what he has

and does not compare himself with others. (1 Tim. 6:7, 8) When a person who is humble and content sees someone receive something good, he is happy for him. We need the help of God's holy spirit if we are to avoid the fleshly trait of envy and instead cultivate humility and contentment. (Gal. 5:16; Phil. 2:3, 4) Jehovah's holy spirit can help us to examine our innermost thoughts and motives. With God's help, we can replace harmful thoughts and feelings with upbuilding ones.—Ps. 26:2. *w20.02 15 ¶8-9*

Wednesday, December 29

Pay constant attention to yourself and to your teaching.—1 Tim. 4:16.

Dedication is a vow that Jehovah expects you to keep. So stay close to your congregation. Your brothers and sisters in the congregation are your spiritual family. By regularly attending the meetings, you will strengthen your bond with them. Read God's Word and meditate on it every day. (Ps. 1:1, 2) Take some time to think deeply about what you have read. Then the words will reach your heart. "Pray continually." (Matt. 26:41) Your sincere prayers will draw you closer to Jehovah. "Keep on . . . seeking first the Kingdom." (Matt. 6:33) You can do that by making the preaching work a priority in your life. By sharing regularly in the ministry, you will keep your faith strong. Any hardships you may face in this old world are "momentary and light." (2 Cor. 4:17) In contrast, your dedication and baptism will open the way to a more satisfying life now and "the real life" to come. Is it worth the expense? Absolutely!—1 Tim. 6:19. *w20.03 13 ¶19-21*

Thursday, December 30

The time left is reduced.

—1 Cor. 7:29.

If your Bible student is not making steady progress, at some point you will have to ask yourself, ‘Should I stop the study?’ In analyzing the situation, ask yourself: ‘Is my student progressing at a reasonable pace for his situation?’ ‘Is he beginning “to observe,” or apply, the things he is learning?’ (Matt. 28:20) Sad to say, some students are like the Israelites of Ezekiel’s day. Of them, Jehovah told Ezekiel: “Look! You are to them like a romantic love song, sung with a beautiful voice and skillfully played on a stringed instrument. They will hear your words, but no one will act on them.” (Ezek. 33:32) We may find it hard to tell a person that we will stop studying with him. However, “the time left is reduced.” Rather than spend more time conducting an unproductive study, we need to find someone who gives evidence that he is “rightly disposed for everlasting life.”—Acts 13:48. *w20.01*
6 ¶17; 7 ¶20

Friday, December 31

Let your Kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also on earth.—Matt. 6:10.

Christendom generally does not teach the Scriptural truth that one day obedient humans will live forever on earth. (2 Cor. 4:3, 4) Today, most religions in Christendom teach that all good people go to heaven when they die. It was different, however, with the small group of Bible Students who were publishing the *Watch Tower* in the late 1800’s. They understood that God would restore Paradise on earth and that millions of obedient humans would live here on earth—not in heaven. However, it took time for them to discern clearly who these obedient humans would be. Of course, the Bible Students also discerned from the Scriptures that some would be “bought from the earth” to rule with Jesus in heaven. (Rev. 14:3) That group would be made up of 144,000 zealous and dedicated Christians who had served God faithfully while on earth. *w19.09*
27 ¶4-5

Saturday, January 1

From infancy you have known the holy writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

—2 Tim. 3:15.

Timothy's faith was built on facts that drew him closer to Jehovah. You too must logically reason on what you have learned about Jehovah from reading the Bible. To start with, you need to prove to yourself at least three basic truths. First, you need to be convinced that Jehovah God is the Creator of all things. (Ex. 3:14, 15; Heb. 3:4; Rev. 4:11) Second, you must prove to yourself that the Bible is God's inspired message to mankind. (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) And third, you need to confirm that Jehovah has an organized group of people who are worshipping him under Christ's headship and that Jehovah's Witnesses are that group. (Isa. 43:10-12; John 14:6; Acts 15:14) This does not require that you become a walking encyclopedia of Bible knowledge. Your goal should be to use your "power of reason" to strengthen your conviction that you have the truth.—Rom. 12:1. *w20.07* 10 ¶8-9

Sunday, January 2

It was granted the locusts, not to kill them, but to torment them five months.—Rev. 9:5.

This prophecy describes a swarm of locusts that have human faces and 'what seem to be crowns of gold' on their heads. (Rev. 9:7) They torment "those people [God's enemies] who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads" for a period of five months, the average life span of a locust. (Rev. 9:4) This does indeed appear to be a description of Jehovah's

anointed servants. They boldly proclaim God's judgments against this wicked system of things and, as a result, make its supporters very uncomfortable. Are we saying that the locusts described at Joel 2:7-9 are not the same as the locusts presented in the book of Revelation? Yes. In the Bible, it is not unusual for a symbol to convey different meanings in different settings. For example, at Revelation 5:5, Jesus is called "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," whereas at 1 Peter 5:8, the Devil is described as "a roaring lion." *w20.04* 3 ¶8; 5 ¶10

Monday, January 3

The eyes of Jehovah are everywhere, watching both the bad and the good.—Prov. 15:3.

Hagar, the maidservant of Sarai, acted foolishly after she was given as a wife to Abram. Hagar became pregnant and then began to look down on Sarai, who had no children of her own. The situation became so bad that Sarai chased Hagar away. (Gen. 16:4-6) From our imperfect viewpoint, Hagar might appear to be no more than a spiteful woman who got what she deserved. But Jehovah saw more in Hagar. He sent his angel to her. When the angel found her, he helped her to adjust her attitude and blessed her. Hagar sensed that Jehovah had been watching her and knew all about her situation. She was moved to call him "a God of sight, . . . the one who sees me." (Gen. 16:7-13) What did Jehovah see in Hagar? He was fully aware of her background and everything she had been through. While Jehovah did not excuse Hagar's disrespect for Sarai, we can be sure that he took Hagar's background and her situation into account. *w20.04* 16 ¶8-9

Song 134 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“What Parents Can Learn From Manoah and His Wife”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Jg 14:2, 3—In what way was this Philistine woman “the right one” for Samson? (w05 3/15 26 ¶1)

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 14:5-20 (5)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

“Increase Your Joy in the Ministry—Teach Bible Students to Feed Themselves Spiritually”: (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Help Your Bible Students to Feed Themselves Spiritually*.

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 02 summary, review, and goal (17)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 110

“Are You Prepared for a Medical Emergency?” (15 min.)

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr* chap. 18 ¶1-8, intro video



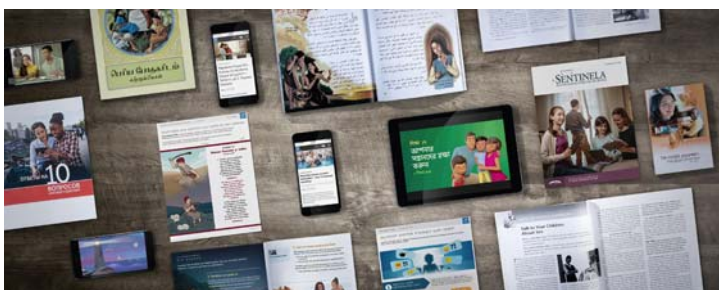
What Parents Can Learn From Manoah and His Wife

Be a good example of faithfulness to the true God (Jg 13:1, 2, 6)

Seek Jehovah’s direction (Jg 13:8; w13 8/15 16 ¶1)

Do not hold back from giving your children correction (Jg 14:1-4; w05 3/15 25-26)

What tools to help parents raise their children are available in your language?



Children Are a Trust From God

(Psalm 127:3-5)

C Am Em G7/D C Am

When a man be-comes a fa - ther And a wom-an has a child of her
All the words God has com-mand - ed— They must al-ways prove to be on your

F F/G G7 C Dm11 G7/D C/E Fma7 F6

own, They share a trust, they must re - mem - ber, That is not
heart. These words you'll speak to sons and daugh-ters; This is your

Dm Dm/C G/B F/A E/G# Am Cma7/G F

theirs, not theirs a - lone. The gift they share is from Je -
trust, this is your part. To them you'll speak a - long your

Em Dm11 G7 C C/E F

ho - vah; Of life and love he is the one true Source. To par-ents
road - way, When you rise up and when you are at rest. In years to

Children Are a Trust From God

C/E F6 C/E Dm7 C/G G7 F/G

he gives sure di - rec - tion That they may fol - low the wis - est
 come, may they re - mem - ber, May they be faith - ful, may they be

Chorus
 C Cma7/E F G7 C Am

course. A sa - cred trust you have been giv - en; A pre - cious
 blessed.

Dm7 F/G G7 C C/E F G7

life is in your hands. You can be - stow the great - est

C/E Am Dm7 F/G C

fa - vor; In - struct your child in God's com - mands.

were trying to escape, they would say, "Let me cross over"; then the men of Gil'e-ad would ask each one, "Are you an E'phra-im-ite?" When he would reply, "No!" **6** they would say to him, "Please say Shib'bo-leth." But he would say, "Sib'bo-leth," as he was unable to say the word correctly. Then they would seize him and slay him at the fords of the Jordan. So 42,000 E'phra-im-ites fell at that time.

7 Jeph'thah judged Israel for six years, after which Jeph'thah the Gil'e-ad-ite died and was buried in his city in Gil'e-ad.

8 Ib'zan from Beth'le-hem judged Israel after him.^a **9** He had 30 sons and 30 daughters. He sent his daughters to marry men outside his clan, and he brought in 30 women to marry his sons. He judged Israel for seven years. **10** Then Ib'zan died and was buried in Beth'le-hem.

11 After him E'lou the Ze-bu'lu-nite judged Israel; he judged Israel for ten years. **12** Then E'lou the Ze-bu'lu-nite died and was buried in Ai'ja-lou in the land of Zeb'u-lou.

13 After him Ab'don the son of Hil'lel the Pir'a-thon-ite judged Israel. **14** He had 40 sons and 30 grandsons who rode on 70 donkeys. He judged Israel for eight years. **15** Then Ab'don the son of Hil'lel the Pir'a-thon-ite died and was buried in Pir'a-thon in the land of E'phra-im in the mountain of the A-mal'ek-ite.^b

13 Again the Israelites did what was bad in Jehovah's eyes,^c and Jehovah gave them into the hand of the Phi-lis'tines^d for 40 years.

2 Meanwhile, there was a man of Zo'rah^e of the family of the Dan'ites,^f whose name was Ma-no'ah.^g His wife was barren and childless.^h **3** In time Jehovah's

CHAP. 12
a Jg 2:16

b Ge 36:12
Ex 17:16
Nu 13:29
1Sa 15:2

CHAP. 13
c Jg 2:11, 19
Jg 10:6

d Jos 13:1-3
Jg 10:7

e Jos 15:20, 33
Jos 19:41, 48

f Ge 49:16

g Jg 16:31

h Ge 30:22, 23

Second Col.

a Ge 18:10
1Sa 1:20
Lu 1:11, 13

b Nu 6:2, 3
Lu 1:15

c Le 11:26, 27

d Nu 6:2, 5

e Jg 2:16
Jg 13:1
Ne 9:27

f Jg 13:17, 18

g Jg 13:3

angel appeared to the woman and said to her: "Look, you are barren and childless. But you will conceive and give birth to a son.^a **4** Now be careful not to drink wine or anything alcoholic,^b and do not eat anything unclean.^c **5** Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son, and no razor should touch his head,^d because the child will be a Naz'i-rite of God from birth,^e and he will take the lead in saving Israel out of the hand of the Phi-lis'tines."^e

6 Then the woman went and told her husband: "A man of the true God came to me, and his appearance was like an angel of the true God, very awe-inspiring. I did not ask him where he was from, nor did he tell me his name.^f **7** But he said to me, 'Look! You will conceive and give birth to a son. Now do not drink wine or anything alcoholic, and do not eat anything unclean, because the child will be a Naz'i-rite of God from birth* until the day of his death.'^g

8 Ma-no'ah pleaded with Jehovah and said: "Pardon me, Jehovah. Please let the man of the true God whom you just sent come again to instruct us about what we should do with the child who will be born."^g **9** So the true God listened to Ma-no'ah, and the angel of the true God came again to the woman while she was sitting in the field; her husband Ma-no'ah was not with her. **10** The woman quickly ran and told her husband: "Look! The man who came to me the other day has appeared to me."^g

11 Then Ma-no'ah got up and went with his wife. He came to the man and said to him: "Are you the man who spoke to my wife?" He said: "I am."^g **12** Then Ma-no'ah said: "May your words come true! What will be the

^{*}13:5, 7 *Lit., "from the womb."

child's manner of life, and what will be his work?"^a **13** So Jehovah's angel said to Ma-no'ah: "Your wife should keep herself from everything that I mentioned to her.^b **14** She should not eat anything that the grapevine produces, she should not drink wine or anything alcoholic,^c and she should not eat anything unclean.^d Everything that I commanded her, let her observe."

15 Ma-no'ah now said to Jehovah's angel: "Please stay, and let us prepare a young goat for you."^e **16** But Jehovah's angel said to Ma-no'ah: "If I stay, I will not eat your food; but if you wish to present a burnt offering to Jehovah, you may offer it up." Ma-no'ah did not know that he was Jehovah's angel. **17** Then Ma-no'ah said to Jehovah's angel: "What is your name,^f so that we may honor you when your word comes true?" **18** However, Jehovah's angel said to him: "Why are you asking about my name, seeing that it is a wonderful one?"

19 Then Ma-no'ah took the young goat and the grain offering and offered them on the rock to Jehovah. And He was doing something amazing while Ma-no'ah and his wife were looking on. **20** As the flame ascended from the altar heavenward, Jehovah's angel ascended in the flame from the altar while Ma-no'ah and his wife were looking on. At once they fell with their faces to the ground. **21** Jehovah's angel did not appear again to Ma-no'ah and his wife. Then Ma-no'ah realized that he was Jehovah's angel.^g **22** Ma-no'ah then said to his wife: "We are sure to die, because it is God whom we have seen."^h **23** But his wife said to him: "If Jehovah wanted to put us to death, he would not have accepted a burnt offeringⁱ and a

CHAP. 13

a Jg 13:8

b Jg 13:4

c Nu 6:2, 3

d Le 11:26, 27

e Ge 18:5, 7
Jg 6:18, 19
Heb 13:2f Ge 32:29
Jg 13:6

g Jg 6:22, 23

h Ex 33:20
Joh 1:18

i Jg 13:16

Second Col.

a Heb 11:32

b Jg 3:9, 10
Jg 6:34
Jg 11:29
1Sa 11:6

c Jg 18:11, 12

d Jos 15:20, 33

CHAP. 14

e De 7:3

f Jg 13:1

g Jg 13:24, 25

h Jg 14:2

grain offering from our hand, he would not have shown us all these things, and he would not have told us any of these things."

24 The woman later gave birth to a son and named him Samson;^a and as the boy grew, Jehovah continued to bless him. **25** In time Jehovah's spirit started to impel him^b in Ma'ha-neh-dan,^c between Zo'rah and Esh'ta-ol.^d

14 Then Samson went down to Tim'nah, and in Tim'nah he saw a Phi-lis'tine woman.* **2** So he went up and told his father and mother: "In Tim'nah a Phi-lis'tine woman caught my eye, and I want you to get her for me as a wife." **3** But his father and mother said to him: "Can you not find a woman among your relatives and among all our people?^e Must you go and take a wife from among the uncircumcised Phi-lis'tines?" But Samson said to his father: "Get her for me, because she is the right one for me."^{*} **4** His father and mother did not realize that this was from Jehovah, for He was looking for an opportunity against the Phi-lis'tines, as the Phi-lis'tines were ruling over Israel at that time.^f

5 So Samson went down with his father and mother to Tim'nah. When he reached the vineyards of Tim'nah, why look! a lion* came roaring at him. **6** Then Jehovah's spirit empowered him,^g and he tore it in two, just as someone tears a young goat in two with his bare hands. But he did not tell his father or mother what he had done. **7** Then he went down and spoke to the woman, and she was still the right one in Samson's eyes.^h

14:1 *Lit., "a woman of the daughters of the Philistines." **14:3** *Lit., "she is right in my eyes." **14:5** *Or "a maned young lion."

8 Later when he was going back to take her home,^a he turned aside to look at the dead body of the lion, and there in the lion's carcass was a swarm of bees and honey. 9 So he scraped the honey out into his hands and ate it as he walked along. When he rejoined his father and mother, he gave them some to eat. But he did not tell them that he had scraped the honey out of the carcass of a lion.

10 His father went down to the woman, and Samson held a banquet there, for that was what the young men used to do. 11 When they saw him, they brought 30 groomsmen to accompany him. 12 Then Samson said to them: "Please let me tell you a riddle. If during the seven days of the banquet you solve it and tell me the answer, I will have to give you 30 linen garments and 30 outfits of clothing. 13 But if you are unable to tell me the answer, you must give me 30 linen garments and 30 outfits of clothing." They said: "Tell us your riddle; we want to hear it." 14 So he said to them:

"Out of the eater came something to eat,
And out of the strong came something sweet."^b

They were unable to solve the riddle for three days. 15 On the fourth day, they said to Samson's wife: "Trick your husband^c so that he will tell us the answer to the riddle. Otherwise, we will burn you and your father's house with fire. Did you invite us here to take our possessions?" 16 So Samson's wife wept over him and said: "You must hate me; you do not love me.^d You told a riddle to my people, but you have not told the answer to me." At this he said to her: "Why, I have not told it even to my own father and mother!

CHAP. 14

a Ge 24:67
Mt 1:24

b Jg 14:8, 9

c Jg 16:5

d Jg 16:15

Second Col.

a Jg 16:16, 18

b Jg 14:14

c Jg 14:15

d Jg 13:24, 25
Jg 14:6
Jg 15:14

e Jos 13:2, 3
Jg 1:18

f Jg 14:12

g Jg 14:2

h Jg 14:11
Jg 15:1, 2

CHAP. 15

i Jg 14:17

j Jg 14:11, 20

Should I tell it to you?" 17 But she kept weeping over him the rest of the seven-day banquet. He finally told her on the seventh day, because she had pressured him. Then she told her people the answer to the riddle.^a 18 So on the seventh day before the sun set,^{*} the men of the city said to him:

"What is sweeter than honey,
And what is stronger than a lion?"^b

He replied to them:

"If you had not plowed with
my young cow,^c
You would not have solved
my riddle."

19 Then Jehovah's spirit empowered him,^d and he went down to Ash'ke-lon^e and struck down 30 of their men and took their clothing and gave the outfits to those who had answered the riddle.^f He was furious as he went back up to his father's house.

20 Samson's wife^g was then given to one of his groomsmen who had accompanied him.^h

15 After a while, in the days of the wheat harvest, Samson went to visit his wife, bringing a young goat. He said: "I wish to go in to my wife in the bedroom."^{*} But her father did not allow him to go in. 2 Her father said: "I thought, 'You must surely hate her.'ⁱ So I gave her to your groomsman.^j Is not her younger sister more attractive than she is? Please, take her instead." 3 However, Samson said to them: "This time I cannot be blamed by the Philis'tines for harming them."

4 So Samson went and caught 300 foxes. Then he took torches, turned the foxes tail to

14:18 *Or possibly, "before he went into the interior room." 15:1 *Or "the interior room."

Song 134 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

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Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

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Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 02 summary, review, and goal (17)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 110

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Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr* chap. 18 ¶1-8, intro video



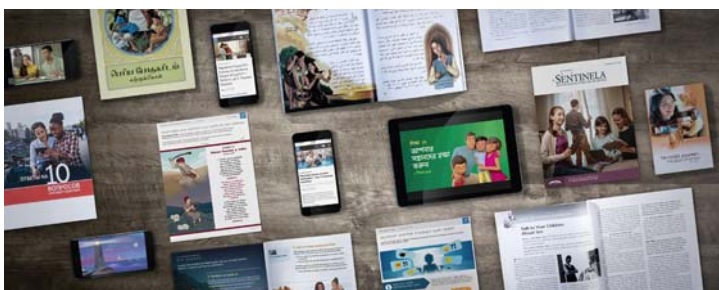
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Seek Jehovah’s direction (Jg 13:8; w13 8/15 16 ¶1)

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What tools to help parents raise their children are available in your language?



December 27–January 2 / Judges 13-14

Song 134 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 minute)

Treasures From God's Word

"What Parents Can Learn From Manoah and His Wife": (10 minutes)

Be a good example of faithfulness to the true God

Judges 13:1, 2: Again the Israelites did what was bad in Jehovah's eyes, and Jehovah gave them into the hand of the Philistines for 40 years. Meanwhile, there was a man of Zorah of the family of the Danites, whose name was Manoah. His wife was barren and childless.

Judges 13:6: Then the woman went and told her husband: "A man of the true God came to me, and his appearance was like an angel of the true God, very awe-inspiring. I did not ask him where he was from, nor did he tell me his name.

Seek Jehovah's direction

Judges 13:8: Manoah pleaded with Jehovah and said: "Pardon me, Jehovah. Please let the man of the true God whom you just sent come again to instruct us about what we should do with the child who will be born."

w13 8/15 16 paragraph 1

Consider the case of the Danite named Manoah, who lived in the town of Zorah in ancient Israel. Jehovah's angel informed Manoah's barren wife that she would give birth to a son. (Judges 13:2, 3) Faithful Manoah and his wife were no doubt overjoyed by that prospect. However, they also had serious concerns. So Manoah prayed: "Excuse me, Jehovah. The man of the true God that you just sent, let him, please, come again to us and instruct us as to what we ought to do to the child that will be born." (Judges 13:8) Manoah and his wife were concerned about their child's upbringing. They undoubtedly taught their son, Samson, God's law, and their efforts evidently met with success. "In time Jehovah's spirit started to impel [Samson]," says the Bible. As a result, Samson performed many powerful works as one of Israel's judges.—Judges 13:25; 14:5, 6; 15:14, 15.

Do not hold back from giving your children correction

Judges 14:1-4: Then Samson went down to Timnah, and in Timnah he saw a Philistine woman. So he went up and told his father and mother: "In Timnah a Philistine woman caught my eye, and I want you to get her for me as a wife." But his father and mother said to him: "Can you not find a woman among your relatives and among all our people? Must you go and take a wife from among the uncircumcised Philistines?" But Samson said to his father: "Get her for me, because she is the right one for me." His father and mother did not realize that this was from Jehovah, for He was looking for an opportunity against the Philistines, as the Philistines were ruling over Israel at that time.

w05 3/15 25-26

As Samson kept growing, "Jehovah continued to bless him." (Judges 13:24) One day Samson came to his father and mother and said: "There is a woman that I have seen in Timnah of the daughters of the Philistines, and now get her for me as a wife." (Judges 14:2) Imagine their surprise. Instead of freeing Israel from the hands of the oppressors, their son wanted to form a marriage alliance with them. Taking a wife from among worshipers of pagan gods was against God's Law. (Exodus 34:11-16) Hence, the parents objected: "Is there not among the daughters of your brothers and among all my people a woman, so that you are going to take a wife from the uncircumcised Philistines?" Still, Samson insisted: "Get just her for me, because she is the one just right in my eyes."—Judges 14:3.

What tools to help parents raise their children are available in your language?

[Image:] Parents using the book *Learn From the Great Teacher* to study with their children.

[Image:] A variety of publications and videos available to help parents teach their children.

Spiritual Gems

Judges 14:2, 3—In what way was this Philistine woman “the right one” for Samson?

Judges 14:2, 3: So he went up and told his father and mother: “In Timnah a Philistine woman caught my eye, and I want you to get her for me as a wife.” But his father and mother said to him: “Can you not find a woman among your relatives and among all our people? Must you go and take a wife from among the uncircumcised Philistines?” But Samson said to his father: “Get her for me, because she is the right one for me.”

w05 3/15 26 paragraph 1

In what way was this particular Philistine woman “just right” for Samson? Not in the sense that she was “beautiful, engaging, attractive,” suggests McClintock and Strong’s *Cyclopedia*, “but right relative to an end, purpose, or object.” Relative to what end? Judges 14:4 explains that Samson “was looking for an opportunity against the Philistines.” Samson was interested in the woman for that purpose. As Samson grew to adulthood, “Jehovah’s spirit started to impel him,” or stir him to action. (Judges 13:25) So the spirit of Jehovah was the driving force behind Samson’s unusual request for a wife as well as his entire career as judge over Israel. Did Samson get the opportunity he was seeking? Let us first consider how Jehovah assured him of divine backing.

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 14:5-20 (*th* study 5)

Song 134 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“What Parents Can Learn From Manoah and His Wife”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Jg 14:2, 3—In what way was this Philistine woman “the right one” for Samson? (w05 3/15 26 ¶1)

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 14:5-20 (5)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

“Increase Your Joy in the Ministry—Teach Bible Students to Feed Themselves Spiritually”: (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Help Your Bible Students to Feed Themselves Spiritually*.

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 02 summary, review, and goal (17)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 110

“Are You Prepared for a Medical Emergency?” (15 min.)

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr* chap. 18 ¶1-8, intro video



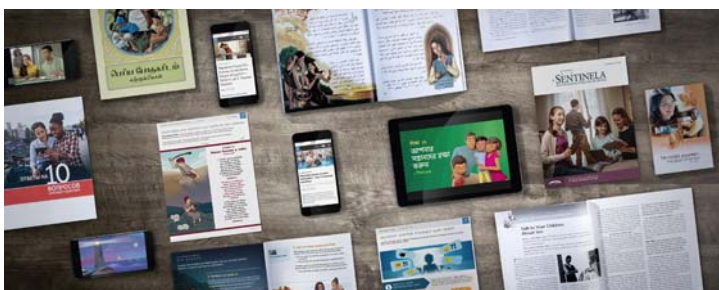
What Parents Can Learn From Manoah and His Wife

Be a good example of faithfulness to the true God (Jg 13:1, 2, 6)

Seek Jehovah’s direction (Jg 13:8; w13 8/15 16 ¶1)

Do not hold back from giving your children correction (Jg 14:1-4; w05 3/15 25-26)

What tools to help parents raise their children are available in your language?



Help Your Bible Students to . . . Feed Themselves Spiritually by Mark Sanderson

Brother Sanderson:

Before our Lord Jesus returned to heaven, he gave what has been called the great commission. He said: “Go, therefore, and make disciples “of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit.”

No doubt you have those words in your mind as well. Jesus was not satisfied that people should just come to know his teachings. Jesus wanted people to come to love his teachings so that they would act on them, so that they would live by them, and so that they would become his true disciples.

Now, why did Jesus want people to become his disciples and live by his teachings? Well, it’s because of something that we read here at John 13:17. Now, notice what Jesus said here: “If you know these things, happy you are if you do them.” What’s the point? Jesus was saying that people would find real happiness, they would find the way of salvation, they would have a relationship with his precious heavenly Father if they would just come to know and do the things that he had taught.

Well, brothers and sisters, in this symposium, we are going to discuss five different things that our Bible students need to do, that they need to progress in, if they are going to become true disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let’s talk about the first. What is the most basic need that our Bible students have? Well, it’s what Jesus talked about here in Matthew chapter 5. Let’s read it together. Matthew 5:3—Jesus said: “Happy are those conscious “of their [notice] spiritual need, since the Kingdom of the heavens belongs to them.” What’s the point?

Well, Jesus showed that honest-hearted people have a spiritual need. They have a need to come to know God and to have a relationship with him if they are really going to be happy. Therefore, we need to teach our Bible students the very first thing: how they can fill that spiritual need by learning about their heavenly Father, Jehovah. As they fill that need, as they come to have that relationship with God, that is the way to true happiness. That means more than just feeding people information. You know, there is a saying that’s very familiar to most of us. It says, “Give a man a fish, feed him for a day; teach him how to fish, feed him for a lifetime.” What’s the point? If we can teach our Bible students how to feed themselves spiritually, then they have the way in front of them to a close relationship with God, to strong faith, and to becoming real disciples of Jesus Christ.

Well, in the following demonstration that you’ll see on video, just notice how our Bible teacher helps her student to be able to do this. . . .

Neeta: just sum up the whole article.

Jade: Got it. I find the answers in all that.

Neeta: It’s more than just the answers.

Jade: I’m with it; I’m all about study.

Neeta: Which do you remember more from our studies, the answers or the things that touch your heart?

Jade: Mm.

Neeta: Yeah, like, when we talked about immorality, you knew the answer, but you didn't seem totally convinced in here. Let's try and find that answer. Chapter 6?

Jade: Mm-hm. "But whoever practices sexual immorality is sinning against his own body." (*Neeta meditating- I'm not sure why, but it made me think of Mum and Dad (his constant cheating, actually), Mum's humiliation, the divorce, all the misery. I didn't want that. I began to realize how right Jehovah is because of what Neeta called meditation. It's not about clearing your mind to find inner peace; it's totally different. It's asking how Jehovah feels about something and then asking what that means for me*).

Brother Sanderson:

What did you notice in the video? It's true that Neeta showed her Bible student the tools. But what more did she do? She also helped her to see that the answers were not the most important thing. The most important thing was having the information come to touch her heart so that she would be moved to act on what she learned.

Well, how can we help our students to be able to feed themselves spiritually? Well, from the very beginning, once the study has been established, we want to teach our students how to prepare each week for the study. Now, this might be something very new to them, so we're going to have to go through it step-by-step, showing them how to prepare. It might also involve having to help them see how they can buy out time from their schedule so that they can do what's necessary to prepare. And then don't forget to commend them. Because this might be very new for many of our students, when they make the effort to prepare, make sure you give appropriate commendation.

But then what's the next thing? This is something that we sometimes forget, brothers. It's the need to teach our students to pray before every single study session. Now, why is this important? Well, once again, we want our students not just to be thinking in terms of acquiring information—not to take an academic approach to their study—but instead to be always thinking about how what they're studying connects them with their heavenly Father, Jehovah, so that they're building up a relationship with him. As Proverbs chapter 2 says, if we call out to Jehovah for knowledge, for wisdom, for understanding, Jehovah will help us. He'll help our student to gain that knowledge that they need to build up a good relationship with him. And then we want to do practical things.

We want to help our students to become familiar with the digital tools that we have at our disposal for study. That means helping them to install on their phone, on their tablet, or whatever device they have JW Library® and showing them how to use Watchtower ONLINE LIBRARY™ so that they can get the answers that they need to their questions. Do you know, as of February of this year, Watchtower ONLINE LIBRARY is now available in more than 700 languages? So people virtually all over the world have access to these wonderful tools. Don't forget also to show them jw.org® and JW Broadcasting® and show them how they can keep up-to-date with these wonderful provisions from Jehovah.

Well, now, we've shown them how to prepare for their lesson, we've shown them how to use the online tools, but what are the next progressive steps we want to take so that they can feed themselves spiritually?

Well, of course, as Psalm 1 tells us, if we want to be truly happy and truly well-fed spiritually, we have to “read [God’s] law in an undertone day and night.” So we want to teach our students to get into that good habit of reading God’s Word, the Bible, every day.

And then what about the next step?

We want our students also to be able to prepare for congregation meetings. Now, if we’ve shown them how to use JW Library, this is really easy, isn’t it? All we have to do is basically hit that Meetings tab, and when we do, well, all the information for our midweek meeting and our weekend meeting is all there for us. It will help our student to see that this program of spiritual feeding is something they can access and something they can benefit from.

And what about research questions? Now, brothers and sisters, if you have a good student, they’re going to be asking lots of questions. And this is where it’s sometimes difficult for us as teachers. We would like to be able to just rush in, open our Bible, and answer every question that our student has. But what’s the better course?

Well, we want to be modest. And instead of answering all the questions for them, how much better it is to go back to those tools! Go back to JW Library, go back to Watchtower ONLINE LIBRARY, and show the student how they can find the answers to their own Bible questions. As we do that, we’re helping them to build for the future.

Well, brothers, if we can do this —if we can accomplish this goal of teaching our students how to feed themselves spiritually—we are not just feeding them today. We’re not just handing them a fish, as it were. Instead, we’re teaching them how to fish. We’re teaching them how to feed themselves spiritually for a lifetime.

Even more important, we’re fulfilling the commission that Jesus gave us. We are making real disciples of Christ Jesus, who are well-fed spiritually. And, as a result, they will not wither up or they will not blow away, but instead they will stand firm as true disciples of Christ Jesus.

Brother Ronald Curzan, a helper with the Teaching Committee, will now consider the next talk in this symposium, “Help Your Bible Students to . . . Attend Meetings.”

source: https://www.jw.org/en/library/videos/#en/mediaitems/2020Convention/pub-co-r20_131_VIDEO

SUMMARY

The Bible gives us hope and helps us to cope with challenges by promising a future filled with happiness.

Review

- Why do people need hope?
- What does the Bible say about the future?
- How can having a hope for the future help you now?

Lesson completed on

Goal

- Become more familiar with the Bible's promises by reading the verses listed in this lesson.
- Other:

EXPLORE



Learn more about the power of hope.

“Hope—Where Can You Find It?” (*Awake!*, April 22, 2004)



Discover how hope for the future can help those who are living with chronic illness.

“Living With Chronic Illness—Can the Bible Help?”
(Web article)



When you watch this music video, picture yourself and your family enjoying life in the Bible's promised future Paradise.

Imagine the Time



Read how a social activist's life changed once he learned the Bible's hope for the future.

“I No Longer Feel That I Have to Change the World”
(*The Watchtower*, July 1, 2013)



To find all media for LESSON 02,
scan code or go to the publication
Enjoy Life Forever! on jw.org

"The Joy of Jehovah"

(Nehemiah 8:10)

C C/B F/A C/G G/F C/E Am7

Signs of the times are point - ing to the King - dom. Good news we tell for
 Look to our God, you lov - ers of Je - ho - vah. No need to fear, for

Dm7 Dm/G G/F E E/D# A/C# E/B C°

all to hear. Lift up your heads, and look to your sal - va - tion;
 he is strong. Stand up and shout with voic - es loud as thun - der;

Chorus
 C#m Am/C E/B B/A E/G# B7/F# E G7/D C G/B F/A G7

Time for de - liv - er - ance is near! The joy of Je - ho - vah is our
 Sing to our God a joy - ful song!

C Dm7 C/E F Am7 Dm7 C/E Dm/F D7/F# Gsus4 G G#°

strong - hold. Sing loud, and raise a joy - ful cry. Re -

“The Joy of Jehovah”

Am D9 C/D D7 G D7/A G/B Em/C# G/D D7sus4 D7

joyce in the hope, and show a grate - ful heart, All give praise and laud our God on

G G/F C/E G7/D C G/B F/A G7 C Dm7 C/E

high. The joy of Je - ho - vah is our strong - hold. His

F Am7 Dm7 C/E Dm/F D7/F# Gsus4 G G#° Am C/G

great - ness all must come to know. With con - stant de - vo - tion to our

F E7 Am Fm/D C/G G7sus4 C

God and King, God - ly joy in ser - vice we will show.

Song 134 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 **TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD**

“What Parents Can Learn From Manoah and His Wife”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Jg 14:2, 3—In what way was this Philistine woman “the right one” for Samson? (w05 3/15 26 ¶1)

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 14:5-20 (5)

 **APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

“Increase Your Joy in the Ministry—Teach Bible Students to Feed Themselves Spiritually”: (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Help Your Bible Students to Feed Themselves Spiritually*.

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 02 summary, review, and goal (17)

 **LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

Song 110

“Are You Prepared for a Medical Emergency?” (15 min.)

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr* chap. 18 ¶1-8, intro video



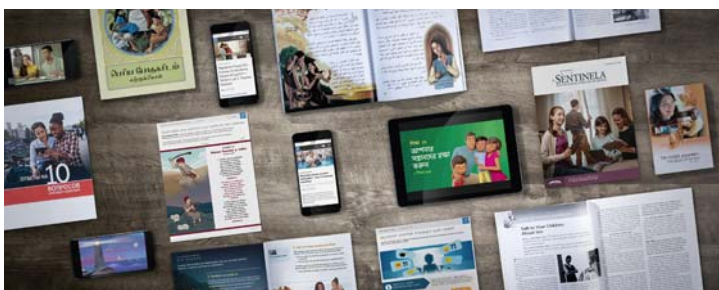
What Parents Can Learn From Manoah and His Wife

Be a good example of faithfulness to the true God (Jg 13:1, 2, 6)

Seek Jehovah’s direction (Jg 13:8; w13 8/15 16 ¶1)

Do not hold back from giving your children correction (Jg 14:1-4; w05 3/15 25-26)

What tools to help parents raise their children are available in your language?



Are You Prepared for a Medical Emergency?

PLEASE NOTE: As you emphasize the need to be prepared for a medical emergency, build appreciation for the resources and support that Jehovah's organization has provided

PREPARE NOW FOR A MEDICAL EMERGENCY (12 min.)

Since a medical emergency can occur at any time, usually when we least expect it, we must take steps now to safeguard ourselves and our children from the misuse of blood (Pr 22:3)

Lesson 39 of the *Enjoy Life Forever!* book is an excellent resource to help us understand God's view of blood and make medical decisions that please Jehovah

Please watch the following video, *How to Make Health-Care Decisions Regarding Blood*, which is included in lesson 39 **[Play video (approx. 6 min.)]**

Advance preparation involves prayerfully considering the Bible's law regarding blood (Ac 15:28, 29)

Four basic steps will help you make important decisions in advance

- (1) Carefully and prayerfully fill out a durable power of attorney (DPA) card. Baptized publishers may obtain a DPA card at any time from the literature servant. They may also obtain an *Identity Card* (ic) for their minor children
- (2) If you are pregnant, request a copy of *Information for Expectant Mothers* (S-401) from the elders. This document will help you to make good decisions about medical issues that occur during and after pregnancy (Pr 16:16)
- (3) When you anticipate a surgery or hospital stay, seek the assistance of the Hospital Liaison Committee (HLC) through your local elders. Brothers serving on the HLC are specially trained to help those in the medical and legal communities understand our religious position regarding blood. The HLC can assist with
 - Finding a cooperative doctor (either for you or for your children)
 - Speaking to physicians regarding medical alternatives to blood
- (4) If you expect to be hospitalized, inform your elders in advance and inform the hospital that you would welcome a visit from a minister of Jehovah's Witnesses

[There is no need to develop points from the following articles, but you may mention key points that apply to your area: *g15.07* 14-15; *g15.06* 2-7; *g01* 11/22 27]

HOW ELDERS CAN HELP (2 min.)

Elders are interested in the physical and spiritual needs of each one in the congregation

Your field service group overseer can assist you if you have special medical needs or are facing a situation that may involve the blood issue

The elders can assist you if you have questions about filling out your DPA card

The elders will promptly contact the HLC on your behalf if you need medical care that may involve the blood issue

However, they will not make medical decisions for you or express their personal views on matters of individual choice (Ro 14:12; Ga 6:5)

CONCLUSION (1 min.)

It is possible to adhere to God's law regarding blood and receive quality nonblood medical care

Be prepared before an emergency arises

Take time to study prayerfully lesson 39 of the *Enjoy Life Forever!* book and review the video *How to Make Health-Care Decisions Regarding Blood*

With advance preparation, we can make medical decisions that please Jehovah and avoid the misuse of blood (Pr 27:11)

Pure Worship book - Chapter Eighteen - Video Transcript

In chapter 17, we learned about Gog's attack on Jehovah's people. We're grateful that Jehovah has warned us about what the coalition of nations will do. But that's not the end of the story. Ezekiel's prophecy goes on to tell us what will happen to this enemy of pure worship.

Chapter 18 of the Pure Worship book is entitled "My Great Rage Will Flare Up." That title comes from Ezekiel 38:18:

"On that day, the day when Gog invades the land of Israel,' declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, 'my great rage will flare up.'"

As we study this thrilling information, look for these key points:

- 1) What provokes Jehovah's great rage?
- 2) Why will his enemies not have valid cause to be surprised when he unleashes his wrath?
- 3) When will Jehovah's rage flare up, and how will he express it?

Just think: During the great tribulation just ahead, pure worshippers will witness something truly spectacular—how Jehovah will stand up for his people and sanctify his holy name.

May this chapter move you to do all you can to promote pure worship now.



“MY GREAT RAGE WILL FLARE UP”

EZEKIEL 38:18

18

FOCUS: *Gog’s attack provokes Jehovah’s anger; Jehovah defends his people during the war of Armageddon*

THE men, women, and children stand together, singing a Kingdom song. An elder then offers a heartfelt prayer, begging Jehovah for His protection. The members of the congregation are confident that Jehovah will care for them, but they still need comfort and reassurance. Outside, the sounds of battle split the air. Armageddon has begun!—Rev. 16:14, 16.

² During the war of Armageddon, Jehovah will execute people, not in a cold, clinical manner, but in a “great rage.” (Read Ezekiel 38:18.) He will direct the explosive force of his anger, not against one army or one nation, but against countless individuals living across the globe. On that day, those slain by Jehovah “will be from one end of the earth clear to the other end of the earth.”—Jer. 25:29, 33.

³ What causes Jehovah, the God of love, the one described as “merciful and compassionate” and “slow to anger,” to take such an action, flaring up in a “great rage”? (Ex. 34:6; 1 John 4:16) Let us see how the answer to that question can bring

1-3. (a) In what will Jehovah’s “great rage” result? (See opening picture.) (b) What will we now consider?

4, 5. How is God's anger different from that of imperfect humans?

6. How does Jehovah react when his name is profaned?

7, 8. What lessons do we learn from Jehovah's dealings with Israel?

Jehovah's
anger is always
controlled and
predictable

us great comfort, fill us with courage, and motivate us in our preaching work today.

What Provokes Jehovah's "Great Rage"?

⁴ We first need to recognize that Jehovah's anger is not like that of imperfect humans. When man's anger boils over into rage and spills over into action, the results are often uncontrolled and are seldom good. For example, Cain, the first son of Adam, became "hot with anger" because Jehovah rejected his sacrifice but approved of the gift offered by Abel. The outcome? Cain murdered his righteous brother. (Gen. 4: 3-8; Heb. 11:4) Think, too, of David, described as a man agreeable to Jehovah's heart. (Acts 13:22) Even this good man almost committed a terrible crime when he heard that the rich landowner Nabal screamed insults at him and his men. Boiling with rage, David and his soldiers "strapped on their swords," intending to kill not only ungrateful Nabal but also every male in his household. Fortunately, Nabal's wife, Abigail, was able to convince David and his men not to take revenge. (1 Sam. 25:9-14, 32, 33) With good reason, Jehovah inspired James to write: "Man's anger does not bring about God's righteousness."—Jas. 1:20.

⁵ In contrast with man's temper, which is often misdirected, Jehovah's disposition is always controlled and predictable. Even when motivated by great rage, Jehovah acts righteously. When he fights an enemy, he never sweeps away "the righteous with the wicked." (Gen. 18:22-25) In addition, Jehovah's anger is ignited only for righteous reasons. Consider two reasons and the lessons we can learn from them.

⁶ *Reason: Jehovah's name is profaned.* Those who claim to represent Jehovah but who act wickedly damage his reputation and rightly provoke his anger. (Ezek. 36:23) As discussed in the preceding chapters of this publication, the nation of Israel brought great reproach on Jehovah's name. Understandably, the nation's attitudes and actions made Jehovah angry. But he never lost control of his rage—he punished his people only to the proper degree, never beyond it. (Jer. 30:11) And once Jehovah's anger accomplished its purpose, it ended with no residual resentment.—Ps. 103:9.

⁷ *Lessons:* Jehovah's dealings with the Israelites provide a sobering warning for us. Like the ancient Israelites, we have the privilege of bearing Jehovah's name. We are Jehovah's

Witnesses. (Isa. 43:10) Our speech and actions reflect directly on the God we represent. Never would we want to become brazen in doing wrong and bring reproach on Jehovah's name. Such a hypocritical course *will* spark Jehovah's anger, and sooner or later, he *will* act to protect his reputation.—Heb. 3:13, 15; 2 Pet. 2:1, 2.

⁸ Should the warning that Jehovah is capable of “great rage” prevent us from drawing close to him? No. We know that Jehovah is patient and forgiving. (Isa. 55:7; Rom. 2:4) But we also recognize that he is not weakly sentimental. In fact, we develop a healthy respect for him, knowing that his anger will blaze against those who become hardened in a course of sin and that he will not allow them to remain among his people. (1 Cor. 5:11-13) Jehovah has clearly told us what makes him angry. It is up to us to avoid the attitudes and actions that provoke him.—John 3:36; Rom. 1:26-32; Jas. 4:8.

⁹ *Reason: Jehovah's faithful people are threatened.* Jehovah is provoked to anger when enemies attack those who loyally seek shelter under his protective care. For example, after the Israelites left Egypt, Pharaoh and his mighty army descended on the seemingly helpless people huddled on the shore of the Red Sea. But when that powerful military force chased the Israelites across the dry seabed, Jehovah took the wheels off the war chariots and shook the Egyptians off into the sea. “Not so much as one among them was allowed to survive.” (Ex. 14:25-28) Jehovah's anger blazed against the Egyptians because of his “loyal love” for his people.—**Read Exodus 15:9-13.**

¹⁰ Likewise, Jehovah's love for his people prompted him to act in the days of King Hezekiah. The Assyrians, the most powerful and brutal military force of the day, had marched on the city of Jerusalem. Jehovah's loyal servants were threatened with a siege that would lead to a slow, horrible death. (2 Ki. 18:27) In response, Jehovah sent just one angel; he killed 185,000 enemy soldiers in a single night! (2 Ki. 19:34, 35) Imagine the scene in the Assyrian camp the following morning. Spears, shields, and swords lie untouched. No trumpets wake the men. No orders rally the troops. An eerie silence hangs over still tents and an encampment strewn with corpses.

¹¹ *Lessons:* Those examples of how Jehovah reacts when his people are threatened provide a graphic warning to our

9, 10. How does Jehovah respond when his faithful people are threatened? Give examples.

11. What comfort and courage do we gain from Scriptural examples of how Jehovah reacts when his people are threatened?



Just as an angel in the days of Hezekiah protected God's people from the Assyrians, angels will protect us
SEE PARAGRAPHS 10, 23

Jehovah Provides Escape

(2 Samuel 22:1-8)

A Dm Gm/B \flat A Dm Gm6/B \flat A7+5 Dm A Dm

The liv - ing God, Je - ho - vah, you have proved to be;
 Though ropes of death en - cir - cle me, I call to you,
 From heav - en you will thun - der and give forth your voice.

Dm/F E \flat /G Gm7 A A(b9) A A7 Dm A

Your might - y works a - bound in earth and sky and
 "Je - ho - vah, give me strength, and give me cour - age
 Your en - e - mies will quake; your ser - vants will re -

Dm Gm D7/F \sharp Cadd9/E D/F \sharp D7 Gm Cm7 Cm6 Gm/B \flat D/A Gm

sea. No ri - val god can e - qual what you have done—
 too." From your own tem - ple dwell - ing, you hear my plea,
 joice. You prove to be what - ev - er you need to be;

Gm6 B \flat /F Gm6/EA7 Dm Gm/B \flat Dm/A B \flat 7 \flat 5 B \flat 7 A Bm7 A/C \sharp A/C \sharp *Chorus*

there is none. Our foes will be con - sumed.
 "Shel - ter me; Res - cue me, O my God." Je -
 all will see How you pro - vide es - cape.

Jehovah Provides Escape

D A/C# G A A7 D D7/C G/B D/A

ho - vah pro - vides es - cape for the loy - al. His ser - vants will

G6 D/A G/B D/A Bm6/G# A D D7 G Em6/G

see what a might - y Crag is he. So with cour - age and

R.H. R.H.

D/F# F#/A# Bm D7/A G A9/G D/F# D Em11 D/F#

faith in our God, we spread the fame Of Je -

G Em7 G D/F# F#/A# Bm D7/A Em/G A7 D

ho - vah, our Source of es - cape, and praise his name.

R.H.

OCTOBER 2021

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
DECEMBER 6, 2021–JANUARY 2, 2022

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A Blind Woman's Prayers Are Answered

Mingjie prayed to find true Christians. What made her feel that her prayers were answered?

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COVER PICTURE:

Although Noah preached faithfully for many years, no one joined him in the ark except for his immediate family. Even so, Noah was successful in obeying God! (See study article 43, paragraph 11)

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Sowing Kingdom Seed

(Matthew 13:4-8)

E \flat *A \flat /*E \flat* *E \flat ma7/*E \flat* *A \flat /*E \flat****

Come share in the work of our Mas - ter; Re -
How much of your work is suc - cess - ful May

E \flat *Gm* *A \flat* *C7/G*

spond to his call and o - bey. He
of - ten de - pend much on you. Those

Fm *D \flat /F* *Fm6* *Fm7*

of - fers to help and to guide you; His
hear - ing will need your as - sis - tance To

B \flat 7 *B \flat 9/*A \flat* *E \flat /G* *B \flat 7/F**

teach - ing will show you the way. The
learn and to love what is true. So

Sowing Kingdom Seed

E \flat *E \flat +5* *Cm*

seed of the truth has pow - er to grow In
help them to deal with pres - sures and doubts They're

D \flat *Fm7* *B \flat 7*

hearts that are hon - est and true. So
cer - tain to face on their way. The

E \flat *Fm7* *E \flat /G* *A \flat*

give of your best as you faith - ful - ly share In the
seed of the truth will bring joy when you see How it

E \flat /B \flat *B \flat 7sus4* *B \flat 7* *E \flat*

work you've been giv - en to do.
grows in their heart day by day.

SONG 68

Sowing Kingdom Seed

PREVIEW

We are happy when people respond favorably to the good news, and we are disappointed when they fail to do so. What if a Bible student whom you are helping does not progress? Or what if you have never directly helped someone to the point of baptism? Should you conclude that you have failed at disciple-making? In this article, we will see why we can succeed in our ministry and find joy regardless of the response to our efforts.

Do Not Give Up!

“Let us not give up in doing what is fine.”—GAL. 6:9.

WHAT joy and honor we have as Jehovah’s Witnesses! We bear God’s name and live up to that name by sharing in the work of preaching and making disciples. We rejoice when we can help someone who is “rightly disposed for everlasting life” to become a believer. (Acts 13:48) We share the feelings of Jesus, who “became overjoyed in the holy spirit” when his disciples returned from a successful preaching campaign.—Luke 10:1, 17, 21.

² We take our ministry seriously. The apostle Paul urged Timothy: “Pay constant attention to yourself and to your teaching.” Paul added: “By doing this you will save both yourself and those who listen to you.” (1 Tim. 4:16) So lives are at stake. We pay constant attention to ourselves because we are subjects of God’s Kingdom. We always want to act in a way that brings praise to Jehovah and is in harmony with the good news that we preach. (Phil. 1:27) We show that we are ‘paying attention to our teaching’ by preparing well for the ministry and by asking for Jehovah’s blessing before we witness to others.

³ Even when we do our utmost, though, we may find little or no positive response to the Kingdom message in our territory. Consider the experience of Brother Georg Lindal, who preached alone throughout Iceland from 1929 to 1947. He placed tens of thousands of publications; yet, not one person accepted the truth. He wrote: “Some seem to have taken their stand against the

1. What joy and honor do we have?
2. How can we show that we take our ministry seriously?
3. What response might we find to the Kingdom message? Give an example.



Jehovah values our efforts, whether we preach in person, by letter, or over the phone (See paragraph 6)

truth, but the majority remain entirely indifferent.” Even after Gilead-trained missionaries arrived and expanded the work, another nine years passed before some Icelanders dedicated themselves to Jehovah and got baptized.*

⁴ We are disappointed when people do not respond favorably. We might feel as did Paul, who experienced “great grief and unceasing pain” because the Jews as a whole refused to accept Jesus as the promised Messiah. (Rom. 9:1-3) What if in spite of your earnest efforts and prayers in his behalf, a Bible student fails to make progress and the study needs to be discontinued? Or what if you have never directly helped someone to the point of baptism? Should you feel guilty, perhaps thinking that Jehovah has not blessed your ministry? In this article, we will answer two questions: (1) What marks a successful ministry? (2) What realistic expectations should we have?

WHAT MARKS A SUCCESSFUL MINISTRY?

⁵ The Bible says of the person who does God’s will: “Everything he does

* See the 2005 Yearbook of Jehovah’s Witnesses, pp. 205-211.

4. How might we feel when people do not respond favorably to the good news?
5. Why may our work for Jehovah not always produce the outcome we had hoped for?

will succeed.” (Ps. 1:3) However, that does not mean that everything we do for Jehovah will turn out as we wish. Human life is “filled with trouble” because of imperfection—both ours and that of others. (Job 14:1) Further, opposers may temporarily succeed in interfering with our efforts to carry out our ministry in the usual way. (1 Cor. 16:9; 1 Thess. 2:18) How, then, does Jehovah measure our success? Consider some Bible principles that help to answer this question.

⁶ **Jehovah looks at our efforts and endurance.** In Jehovah’s eyes, our work for him is successful when we carry it out with diligence and love, regardless of how others respond. Paul wrote: “God is not unrighteous so as to forget *your work* and *the love you showed for his name* by ministering and continuing to minister to the holy ones.” (Heb. 6:10) Jehovah remembers our efforts and our love, even if those efforts do not lead to positive results. Thus, you may apply to yourself what Paul told the Corinthians: “*Your labor* is not in vain in connection with the Lord,” regardless of whether that labor produced the outcome you had hoped for. —1 Cor. 15:58.

6. How does Jehovah measure the success of our work for him?

⁷ The apostle Paul was an outstanding missionary, forming new congregations in multiple cities. Yet, when he felt he needed to defend his qualifications as a minister of Christ, he did not emphasize the number of people he had helped to become believers. Rather, refuting the claims of those who sought to exalt themselves over him, Paul wrote: “I have done more *work*.” (2 Cor. 11:23) Like Paul, remember that efforts and endurance are what Jehovah values most.

⁸ *Our ministry pleases Jehovah.* Jesus sent out 70 disciples to preach the Kingdom message, and at the end of their witnessing campaign, they “returned with joy.” What was the source of their joy? They said: “Even the demons are made subject to us by the use of your name.” However, Jesus corrected their thinking when he told them: “Do not rejoice because the spirits are made subject to you, but rejoice because your names have been written in the heavens.” (Luke 10:17-20) Jesus knew that they would not always have such outstanding experiences in their ministry. In fact, we do not know how many of those who initially listened to the disciples became believers. The disciples needed to find joy not just through their accomplishments but, more important, from knowing that Jehovah was pleased with their diligent efforts.

⁹ *If we endure in our ministry, we will gain everlasting life.* As we wholeheart-

7. What can we learn from the way the apostle Paul described his ministry?

8. What should we remember about our ministry?

9. According to Galatians 6:7-9, what will be the outcome for us if we endure in our ministry?

edly sow and cultivate seeds of Kingdom truth, we are also “sowing with a view to the spirit” by allowing God’s holy spirit to operate freely in our life. As long as we do not “give up” or “tire out,” Jehovah guarantees that we will reap everlasting life, regardless of whether we help a new disciple to dedicate himself to God.—**Read Galatians 6:7-9.**

WHAT REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS SHOULD WE HAVE?

¹⁰ *The response depends primarily on the heart condition of our listeners.* Jesus explained this truth in his illustration of the sower who cast seed on different types of soil, only one of which produced fruitage. (Luke 8:5-8) Jesus said that the various soils represent people whose hearts respond in different ways to “the word of God.” (Luke 8:11-15) Like the sower, we cannot control the fruitage of our work, since it depends on the heart condition of our listeners. Our responsibility is to keep sowing the fine seed of the Kingdom message. As the apostle Paul put it, “each person will receive his own reward according to his own *work*,” not according to the *results* of his work.—1 Cor. 3:8.

¹¹ Early witnesses of Jehovah faced unresponsive listeners. For example, Noah was “a preacher of righteousness,” likely for decades. (2 Pet. 2:5) No doubt, he hoped that others would respond favorably to his preaching, but Jehovah gave no such indication. Rather, when

10. What determines people’s response to our ministry?

11. Why was Noah successful as “a preacher of righteousness”? (See cover picture.)

instructing Noah to build the ark, God said: “You must go into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons’ wives with you.” (Gen. 6:18) And considering the dimensions and capacity of the ark that God told him to build, Noah may have realized that any response to his preaching would be limited. (Gen. 6:15) As matters turned out, not one person from that violent world responded to Noah’s preaching. (Gen. 7:7) Did Jehovah view Noah as a failure? Not at all! In God’s eyes, Noah was a successful preacher because he faithfully did what Jehovah had asked him to do.—Gen. 6:22.

¹² The prophet Jeremiah likewise preached for decades in the face of apathy and opposition. He became so discouraged by the “insults and jeering” of opposers that he thought of giving up his assignment. (Jer. 20:8, 9) But Jeremiah did not give up! What enabled him to overcome his negative thoughts and find joy in his ministry? He focused on two important facts. First, God’s message that Jeremiah took to the people involved “a future and a hope.” (Jer. 29:11) Second, Jehovah had placed his name on Jeremiah. (Jer. 15:16) We too bring a message of hope in a bleak world, and we bear Jehovah’s name as his Witnesses. When we focus our attention on these two important facts, we can find joy regardless of the response of the people.

¹³ *Spiritual growth occurs gradually.*

12. How did the prophet Jeremiah find joy in his ministry in the face of apathy and opposition?

13. What do we learn from Jesus’ illustration recorded at Mark 4:26-29?

Jesus taught this truth in his illustration of the sower who sleeps. **(Read Mark 4:26-29.)** The fruitage of the sower’s efforts came gradually and was largely out of his control. You too may not see results from your disciple-making for some time because the growth takes place gradually and in stages. Just as a farmer cannot force his crops to grow at the pace he desires, we cannot force our Bible students to make spiritual progress at the rate we would like to see. So do not get discouraged or give up if their progress is taking longer than you expected. Like farming, making disciples requires patience.—Jas. 5:7, 8.

¹⁴ In some territories, the results of our ministry might not be evident for years. Consider the experience of Gladys and Ruby Allen, fleshly sisters who in 1959 were assigned as regular pioneers to a town in the Canadian province of Quebec.* Because of community pressure and the influence of the Catholic church, people were unwilling to hear the Kingdom message. Gladys recalled: “We went from door to door eight hours a day for two years without getting anyone to answer! The people simply came to the door and pulled the blinds down. But we didn’t give up.” In time, the people’s attitude softened and the territory became more productive. There are now three congregations in that town.—Isa. 60:22.

* See Gladys Allen’s life story, “I Would Not Change a Thing!,” in the September 1, 2002, issue of *The Watchtower*.

14. What example shows that the results of our ministry might occur gradually?

¹⁵ **Disciple-making is a collective effort.** It has been said that it takes a congregation to help someone to the point of baptism. (Read 1 Corinthians 3:6, 7.) A publisher leaves a tract or a magazine with an interested person. The brother then finds that his personal schedule will not allow him to return to further the interest, so he asks another publisher to make a return visit. That publisher is able to start a Bible study. He, in turn, invites a number of brothers and sisters to attend the study, and each one encourages the student in a different way. Every brother or sister whom the student meets will help to water the seed of truth. In that way, as Jesus said, the sower and the reaper may rejoice together in the spiritual harvest.—John 4:35-38.

¹⁶ What if your share in preaching and teaching the good news is limited by your failing health or stamina? You can

15. What does 1 Corinthians 3:6, 7 teach us about the disciple-making work?

16. Why can you find joy in your ministry even if you are limited by failing health or stamina?

still find joy in your role in the harvest. Consider the experience of King David when he and his men rescued their families and belongings from marauding Amalekites. Two hundred of the men were too exhausted to fight, so they stayed behind to guard the baggage. After the battle was won, David ordered that the spoil be shared equally by all of them. (1 Sam. 30:21-25) It is similar with our worldwide disciple-making work. Everyone who does his best can share equally in the joy over each new one who is rescued and helped to start on the road to life.

¹⁷ We thank Jehovah for the loving way in which he views our service to him. He knows that we cannot control the outcome of our personal efforts. Even so, he notices our diligence and good motives, and he rewards us. He also teaches us how to find joy in the part we play in the great harvest. (John 14:12) We can be assured of God's approval as long as we do not give up!

17. For what should we thank Jehovah?

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

■ How might we feel when people do not respond favorably to our ministry?

■ What makes our ministry successful?

■ Why should we not focus on how many people we have personally helped into the truth?

"Preach the Word"

(2 Timothy 4:2)

C C/B F/A G7sus4 G7 C F/G G7

God has com - mand - ed us this day; He has
 Sea - sons of trou - ble we will face; Op - po -
 Sea - sons of fa - vor we will see, And the

C C/E F G Am

giv - en us a charge to o - bey. At
 si - tion may bring shame and dis - grace. Though
 need for us to teach, there will be. The

C/D D/C Bm7 Em7

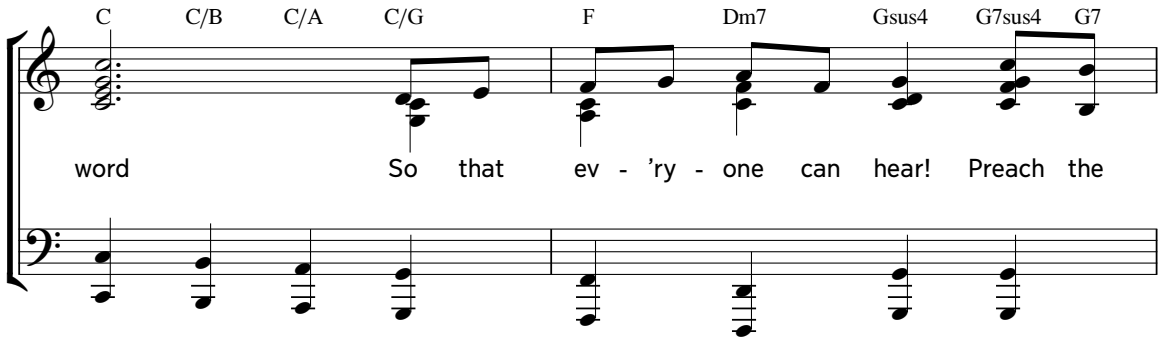
all times, be read - y to im - part The
 preach - ing may out of sea - son seem, Our
 way to sal - va - tion we pro - claim And

Am7 D7 G G/F C/E *Chorus* Dm11 G7/D

rea - son for the hope with - in your heart.
 trust is in our God, who is su - preme. So preach the
 help to sanc - ti - fy Je - ho - vah's name.

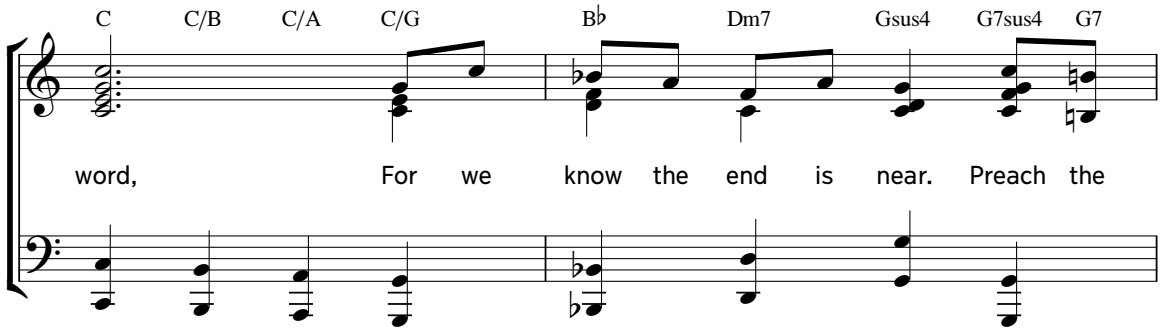
"Preach the Word"

C C/B C/A C/G F Dm7 Gsus4 G7sus4 G7



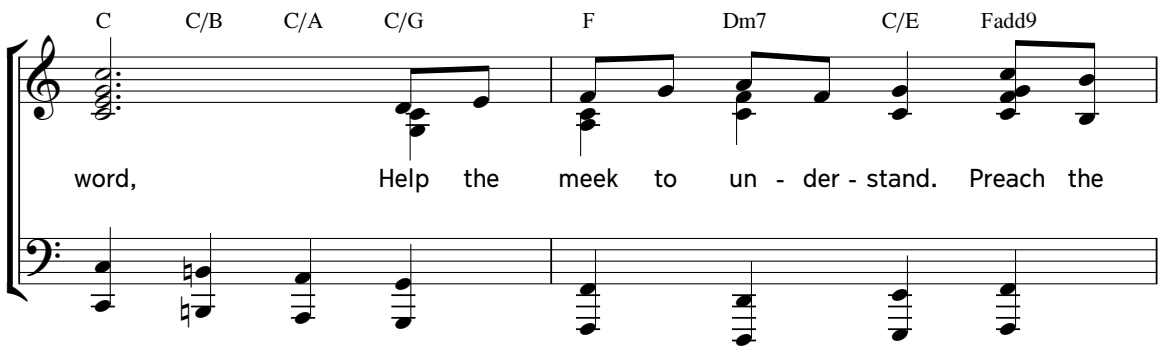
word So that ev - 'ry - one can hear! Preach the

C C/B C/A C/G Bb Dm7 Gsus4 G7sus4 G7



word, For we know the end is near. Preach the

C C/B C/A C/G F Dm7 C/E Fadd9



word, Help the meek to un - der - stand. Preach the

Gsus4 C



word Through - out the land!

(See also Matt. 10:7; 24:14; Acts 10:42; 1 Pet. 3:15.)