

Monday, January 31

A nation has come up into my land, mighty and without number.—Joel 1:6.

The prophet Joel was predicting a military attack. (Joel 2:1, 8, 11) Jehovah said that he would use his “great army” (Babylonian soldiers) to punish the disobedient Israelites. (Joel 2:25) The invading army is rightly called “the northerner” because the Babylonians would invade Israel from the north. (Joel 2:20) That army is likened to a well-organized swarm of locusts. Of them, Joel says: “Each [soldier] advances in his course.... Into the city they rush ... Onto the houses they climb, through the windows they enter like a thief.” (Joel 2:8, 9) Can you picture the scene? There are soldiers everywhere. There is nowhere to hide. No one can escape the sword of the Babylonians! Like locusts, the Babylonians (or, Chaldeans) invaded the city of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E. The Bible reports: “The king of the Chaldeans ... felt no compassion for young man or virgin, old or infirm.”—2 Chronicles 36:17. w20.04 5 paragraphs 11-12

Tuesday, February 1

*With humility consider others superior to you.—
Philippians 2:3.*

Get to know your brothers and sisters better. Talk with them before and after meetings, work with them in the ministry, and if possible, invite them for a meal. When you do, you may learn that a sister who seems unfriendly is actually shy, a brother whom you thought to be materialistic is hospitable, or a family that often comes late to the meetings is enduring opposition. (Job 6:29) Of course, we should not become “meddlers in other people’s affairs.” (1 Timothy 5:13) However, it is good to know something about our brothers and sisters and the circumstances that have shaped their personality. When you get to know the background of a fellow Christian whom you find irritating, you are more likely to feel empathy for that one. It takes effort to get to know your brothers better. Still, when you follow the Bible’s counsel to open your heart wide, you imitate Jehovah, who loves “all sorts of people.”—1 Timothy 2:3, 4; 2 Corinthians 6:11-13. w20.04 16-17 paragraphs 10-12

Wednesday, February 2

No one has love greater than this, that someone should surrender his life in behalf of his friends.—John 15:13.

On the night before he died, Jesus reminded his disciples to love one another. He knew that self-sacrificing love would help them to stay united and to endure the world's hatred. Consider the example of the congregation in Thessalonica. From the time it was formed, its members were persecuted. Yet, the brothers and sisters there became examples of integrity and love. (1 Thessalonians 1:3, 6, 7) Paul encouraged them to continue showing love, even "in fuller measure." (1 Thessalonians 4:9, 10) Love would move them to console the depressed and support the weak. (1 Thessalonians 5:14) They followed Paul's instructions, for in his second letter, written about a year later, Paul could say to them: "The love of each and every one of you is increasing toward one another." (2 Thessalonians 1:3-5) Their love helped them to endure hardship and persecution.

w21.03 22 paragraph 11

Thursday, February 3

Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us.—Hebrews 12:1.

If we want to receive the prize of everlasting life, we must follow the Christian course, or way of life. (Acts 20:24; 1 Peter 2:21) However, Satan and those who follow his example want us to make a different choice; they want us to “continue running with them.” (1 Peter 4:4) They ridicule the course of life we follow and claim that the path they are on is better, that it leads to freedom. But their claim is false. (2 Peter 2:19) How important it is that we choose the right road to follow! Satan wants all of us to stop running on the cramped road that is “leading off into life” and cross over to the spacious road that most people in this world are on. That road is popular and is easier to travel. But it is “leading off into destruction.” (Matthew 7:13, 14) To remain on the right road and not be sidetracked, we must trust in Jehovah and listen to him. *w20.04* 26 paragraph 1; 27 paragraph 5, 7

Friday, February 4

I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions . . . be made . . . so that we may go on leading a calm and quiet life with complete godly devotion.—1 Timothy 2:1, 2.

In recent years, Russia and its allies have also entered into “the land of the Decoration.” (Daniel 11:41) How? In 2017, this current king of the north banned the work of Jehovah’s people and threw some of our brothers and sisters into prison. He also banned our publications, including the *New World Translation*. Further, he confiscated our branch office in Russia as well as Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls. After these actions, in 2018 the Governing Body identified Russia and its allies as the king of the north. However, even when Jehovah’s people are severely persecuted, they refuse to participate in any action to subvert or change human governments. Rather, they follow the Bible’s counsel to pray for “all those who are in high positions,” especially when such ones are making decisions that could affect freedom of worship. w20.05 14 paragraph 9

Saturday, February 5

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

Parents, if your children are to be convinced that they have the truth, they need to have a personal relationship with God and to be convinced of the truthfulness of what the Bible teaches. If you are to teach your children the truth about God, you must set the example by being good students of the Bible. You must take time to meditate on what you learn. Then you will be able to teach your children to do the same. You need to teach your children to use our Bible study tools, just as you teach one of your Bible students. In doing so, you will help your children to appreciate Jehovah and the channel he uses to dispense spiritual food—“the faithful and discreet slave.” (Matthew 24:45-47) Do not settle for teaching your children only basic Bible truths. Help them develop strong faith by teaching them about “the deep things of God” to an extent that is appropriate to their age and ability.—1 Corinthians 2:10.
w20.07 11 paragraph 10, 12-13

Sunday, February 6

Jehovah detests a devious person, but His close friendship is with the upright.—Proverbs 3:32.

How many imperfect humans today enjoy a close friendship with Jehovah? There are millions. This friendship is possible because of their faith in Jesus' ransom sacrifice. On that basis, Jehovah kindly allows us to dedicate ourselves to him and get baptized. When we take these important steps, we join the millions of dedicated, baptized Christians who are enjoying "close friendship" with the greatest Person in the universe! How can we show that we treasure God's friendship? Like Abraham and Job, who remained faithful to God for well over a hundred years, we must remain faithful—no matter how long we have been serving Jehovah in this old system. Like Daniel, we must value our friendship with God more than life. (Daniel 6:7, 10, 16, 22) With Jehovah's help, we can endure any trials we face and thus keep our close bond with him.—Philippians 4:13. w20.05 27 paragraphs 5-6

Song 39 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Establish and Maintain a Good Reputation”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Ru 4:6—In what way could a repurchaser “ruin” his own inheritance by doing the repurchasing? (w05 3/1 29 ¶3)

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.) Ru 4:7-22 (5)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

“Increase Your Joy in the Ministry—Help Bible Students to Attend Meetings”: (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Help Your Bible Students to Attend Meetings*.

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 03 point 4 (8)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 24

Local Needs: (15 min.)

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)
rr chap. 19 ¶16-21, box 19B



Establish and Maintain a Good Reputation

Ruth acted out of consideration for others (Ru 3:10; w12 10/1 22 ¶5)

Ruth was well-known as “an excellent woman” (Ru 3:11; w12 10/1 23 ¶1)

Jehovah took note of Ruth’s good qualities and blessed her (Ru 4:11-13; w12 10/1 24 ¶3)

List some good qualities that you would like to be known for.



39 *Make a Good Name With God* (Ecclesiastes 7:1)

1. Throughout our lifetime, We want to use each day
 To make a good name And all God's laws obey.
If in Jehovah's sight We strive to do what's right,
 Then we will please him, To his delight.
2. This world may cause us To try to make a name,
 To seek its favor, To bask in its acclaim.
But that is vanity, For if its friend we'll be,
 Jehovah's favor, We will not see.
3. In God's remembrance, We want our name to be
 And have a good name For all eternity.
On him we can depend, So we his truth defend
 And keep our good name Down to the end.

RUTH 3-4

3 Na-o'mi, her mother-in-law, now said to her: "My daughter, should I not look for a home for you, so that it may go well with you? ² Is not Bo'az our relative? He is the one whose young women you were with. Tonight he is winnowing barley at the threshing floor. ³ So wash yourself and rub on some perfumed oil; then dress up and go down to the threshing floor. Do not make your presence known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. ⁴ When he lies down, take note of the place where he lies down; then go and uncover his feet and lie down. He will tell you what you should do."

⁵ At that she replied: "All that you say to me I will do." ⁶ So she went down to the threshing floor and did all that her mother-in-law had instructed her to do. ⁷ Meanwhile, Bo'az ate and drank and was feeling good at heart. Then he went to lie down at the end of the grain heap. After that she quietly came and uncovered his feet and lay down. ⁸ At midnight the man began to shiver, and he leaned forward and saw a woman lying at his feet. ⁹ He said: "Who are you?" She replied: "I am Ruth, your servant. Spread out your garment over your servant, for you are a repurchaser." ¹⁰ At that he said: "May Jehovah bless you, my daughter. You have shown your loyal love more in this last instance than in the first instance, by not going after the young men, whether poor or rich. ¹¹ And now, my daughter, have no fear. I will do for you everything that you say, for everyone in the city knows that you are an excellent woman. ¹² While it is true

that I am a repurchaser, there is a repurchaser more closely related than I am. ¹³ Stay here tonight, and if he will repurchase you in the morning, fine! Let him repurchase you. But if he does not want to repurchase you, I will then repurchase you myself, as surely as Jehovah lives. Lie down here until the morning.”

¹⁴ So she lay at his feet until the morning and then got up before it was light enough for anyone to be recognized. He then said: “Do not let it be known that a woman came to the threshing floor.” ¹⁵ He also said: “Bring the cloak that you are wearing, and hold it out.” So she held it out, and he put six measures of barley in it and put it on her, after which he went into the city.

¹⁶ She went her way to her mother-in-law, who now said: “How did it go for you, my daughter?” She told her everything that the man had done for her. ¹⁷ She added: “He gave me these six measures of barley and said to me, ‘Do not go empty-handed to your mother-in-law.’” ¹⁸ At that she said: “Sit here, my daughter, until you learn how the matter will turn out, for the man will not rest until he settles the matter today.”

4 Now Bo'az went up to the city gate and sat there. And look! the repurchaser whom Bo'az had mentioned passed by. At that Bo'az said: “Come here and sit down, So-and-so.” And he went over and sat down. ² Then Bo'az took ten of the city elders and said: “Sit down here.” So they sat down.

³ Bo'az now said to the repurchaser: “Na-o'mi, who has returned from the fields of Mo'ab, must sell the plot of land

that belonged to our brother E·lim'e·lech. ⁴ So I thought I should disclose it to you and say, 'Buy it in front of the inhabitants and the elders of my people. If you will repurchase it, repurchase it. But if you will not repurchase it, tell me so that I will know, for you have the claim to repurchase it, and I am next in line after you.'" He replied: "I am willing to repurchase it." ⁵ Then Bo'az said: "On the day you buy the field from Na·o'mi, you must also buy it from Ruth the Mo'ab-i-tess, the wife of the dead man, in order to restore the name of the dead man to his inheritance." ⁶ To this the repurchaser said: "I am unable to repurchase it, for I may ruin my own inheritance. Repurchase it for yourself with my right of repurchase, because I am not able to repurchase it."

⁷ Now this was the custom of former times in Israel concerning the right of repurchase and exchange to validate every sort of transaction: A man had to remove his sandal and give it to the other party, and this was the manner of confirming an agreement in Israel. ⁸ So when the repurchaser said to Bo'az, "Buy it for yourself," he removed his sandal. ⁹ Then Bo'az said to the elders and all the people: "You are witnesses today that I am buying from Na·o'mi all that belonged to E·lim'e·lech and all that belonged to Chil'i-on and Mah'lon. ¹⁰ I am also acquiring Ruth the Mo'ab-i-tess, the wife of Mah'lon, as a wife to restore the name of the dead man to his inheritance, so that the name of the dead man will not be cut off from among his brothers and from the city gate of his home. You are witnesses today."

¹¹ At this all the people who were in the city gate and the elders said: “We are witnesses! May Jehovah grant the wife who is entering your house to be like Rachel and like Le'ah, both of whom built the house of Israel. May you prosper in Eph'ra-thah and make a good name in Beth'le-hem. ¹² May your house become like the house of Pe'rez, whom Ta'mar bore to Judah, through the offspring that Jehovah will give you by this young woman.”

¹³ So Bo'az took Ruth and she became his wife. He had relations with her, and Jehovah let her conceive and she gave birth to a son. ¹⁴ Then the women said to Na-o'mi: “Praised be Jehovah, who has not left you without a repurchaser today. May his name be proclaimed in Israel! ¹⁵ He has restored your life and will sustain you in your old age, because he has been born to your daughter-in-law, who loves you and is better to you than seven sons.” ¹⁶ Na-o'mi took the child and held him to her bosom, and she cared for him. ¹⁷ Then the neighbor women gave him a name. They said, “A son has been born to Na-o'mi,” and they named him O'bed. He is the father of Jes'se, David's father.

¹⁸ Now this is the family line of Pe'rez: Pe'rez became father to Hez'ron; ¹⁹ Hez'ron became father to Ram; Ram became father to Am-min'a-dab; ²⁰ Am-min'a-dab became father to Nah'shon; Nah'shon became father to Sal'mon; ²¹ Sal'mon became father to Bo'az; Bo'az became father to O'bed; ²² O'bed became father to Jes'se; and Jes'se became father to David.

Song 39 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Establish and Maintain a Good Reputation”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Ru 4:6—In what way could a repurchaser “ruin” his own inheritance by doing the repurchasing? (w05 3/1 29 ¶3)

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.) Ru 4:7-22 (5)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

“Increase Your Joy in the Ministry—Help Bible Students to Attend Meetings”: (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Help Your Bible Students to Attend Meetings*.

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 03 point 4 (8)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 24

Local Needs: (15 min.)

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr* chap. 19 ¶16-21, box 19B



Establish and Maintain a Good Reputation

Ruth acted out of consideration for others (Ru 3:10; w12 10/1 22 ¶5)

Ruth was well-known as “an excellent woman” (Ru 3:11; w12 10/1 23 ¶1)

Jehovah took note of Ruth’s good qualities and blessed her (Ru 4:11-13; w12 10/1 24 ¶3)

List some good qualities that you would like to be known for.



January 31–February 6 / Ruth 3-4

Song 39 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 minute)

Treasures From God's Word

"Establish and Maintain a Good Reputation": (10 minutes)

Ruth acted out of consideration for others

Ruth 3:10: At that he said: "May Jehovah bless you, my daughter. You have shown your loyal love more in this last instance than in the first instance, by not going after the young men, whether poor or rich.

w12 10/1 22 paragraph 5

Boaz spoke, and no doubt his gentle, soothing tone comforted Ruth. He said: "Blessed may you be of Jehovah, my daughter. You have expressed your loving-kindness better in the last instance than in the first instance, in not going after the young fellows whether lowly or rich." (Ruth 3:10) "The first instance" referred to Ruth's loyal love in accompanying Naomi back to Israel and caring for her. "The

last instance” was the present one. Boaz noted that a young woman like Ruth might easily have sought a husband among much younger men, whether rich or poor. Rather, she wanted to do good not only to Naomi but also to Naomi’s deceased husband, to carry on the dead man’s name in his homeland. It is not hard to see why Boaz was moved by this young woman’s unselfishness.

Ruth was well-known as “an excellent woman”

Ruth 3:11: And now, my daughter, have no fear. I will do for you everything that you say, for everyone in the city knows that you are an excellent woman.

w12 10/1 23 paragraph 1

How satisfying it must have been for Ruth to contemplate what Boaz had said—that she was known among all the people as “an excellent woman”! No doubt her eagerness to get to know Jehovah and to serve him had much to do with that reputation. She had also shown great kindness and sensitivity toward Naomi and her people, willingly adapting

to ways and customs that were surely unfamiliar to her. If we imitate Ruth's faith, we will seek to treat others and their ways and customs with deep respect. If we do, we too may find that we develop a reputation for excellence.

[Image:] Boaz commending Ruth as she gleans in a field.

Jehovah took note of Ruth's good qualities and blessed her

Ruth 4:11-13: At this all the people who were in the city gate and the elders said: "We are witnesses! May Jehovah grant the wife who is entering your house to be like Rachel and like Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel. May you prosper in Ephrathah and make a good name in Bethlehem. May your house become like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah, through the offspring that Jehovah will give you by this young woman." So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. He had relations with her, and Jehovah let her conceive and she gave birth to a son.

w12 10/1 24 paragraph 3

Boaz married Ruth. Thereafter, we read: "Jehovah granted her conception and she bore a son." The women of Bethlehem blessed Naomi and praised Ruth for being better to Naomi than seven sons would have been. Later, we learn, Ruth's son became an ancestor of the great King David. (Ruth 4:11-22) David, in turn, was an ancestor of Jesus Christ.—Matthew 1:1.

List some good qualities that you would like to be known for.

Spiritual Gems

Ruth 4:6—In what way could a repurchaser "ruin" his own inheritance by doing the repurchasing?

Ruth 4:6: To this the repurchaser said: "I am unable to repurchase it, for I may ruin my own inheritance. Repurchase it for yourself with my right of repurchase, because I am not able to repurchase it."

w05 3/1 29 paragraph 3

First of all, if the one falling into poverty had sold his land inheritance, a repurchaser would have to put out money to

buy the land at a price determined by the number of years remaining till the next Jubilee. (Leviticus 25:25-27) Doing so would reduce the value of his own estate. Moreover, should a son be born to Ruth, that son, rather than any of the repurchaser's current near relatives, would inherit the purchased field.

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) Ruth 4:7-22 (*th* study 5)

Song 39 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Establish and Maintain a Good Reputation”:
(10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Ru 4:6—In what way could a repurchaser “ruin” his own inheritance by doing the repurchasing? (w05 3/1 29 ¶3)

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.) Ru 4:7-22 (5)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

“Increase Your Joy in the Ministry—Help Bible Students to Attend Meetings”:
(10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Help Your Bible Students to Attend Meetings*.

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 03 point 4 (8)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 24

Local Needs: (15 min.)

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)
rr chap. 19 ¶16-21, box 19B



Establish and Maintain a Good Reputation

Ruth acted out of consideration for others
(Ru 3:10; w12 10/1 22 ¶5)

Ruth was well-known as “an excellent woman” (Ru 3:11; w12 10/1 23 ¶1)

Jehovah took note of Ruth’s good qualities and blessed her (Ru 4:11-13; w12 10/1 24 ¶3)

List some good qualities that you would like to be known for.





INCREASE YOUR JOY IN THE MINISTRY
Help Bible Students to Attend Meetings

Congregation meetings are a vital part of pure worship. (Ps 22:22) All who gather to worship Jehovah find joy and blessings. (Ps 65:4) Bible students usually progress more rapidly when they attend meetings regularly.

How can you help your Bible students to attend meetings? Keep inviting them to attend. Show them the video *What Happens at a Kingdom Hall?* Explain the benefits of the meetings. (*Iff*

lesson 10) You might share a specific point that you have learned at a meeting or preview what will be discussed at an upcoming meeting. Give your students the publications that will be used. Also, offer practical help. Maybe they need a ride. Any effort you make will be well worth it when your student attends a meeting for the first time.—1Co 14:24, 25.

WATCH THE VIDEO DRAMATIZATION *HELP YOUR BIBLE STUDENTS TO ATTEND MEETINGS*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- What opportunity did Neeta use to invite Jade to a congregation meeting?



- Why do we find joy when a Bible student attends meetings?



- What did Jade experience when she attended her first meeting?



“God is really among you”

Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry

Bible Study: (5 minutes) *lffi* lesson 03 point 4 (*th* study 8)

4. Science agrees with the Bible

In ancient times, most people believed that the earth rested upon something. Play the video *The Earth Hangs Upon Nothing* (1:13).

Notice what was recorded in the book of Job some 3,500 years ago. **Read Job 26:7**, and then discuss this question:

- Why is the statement that the earth is suspended “upon nothing” surprising?

Job 26:7: He stretches out the northern sky over empty space, Suspending the earth upon nothing;

It was not until the 1800's that the earth's water cycle was well understood. Yet, notice what the Bible stated thousands of years ago. **Read Job 36:27, 28,** and then discuss these questions:

- Why is this simple description of the water cycle remarkable?
- Do the scriptures you just read strengthen your trust in the Bible?

Job 36:27, 28: He draws up the drops of water; They condense into rain from his mist; Then the clouds pour it down; They shower down upon mankind.

page 12 [Image:] The Bible describes earth's water cycle. Arrows point in a clockwise circle showing water movement between the earth and the atmosphere.

24 *Come to Jehovah's Mountain*

(Isaiah 2:2-4)

1. Raise your eyes up and see,
Far above the highest hill.
There stands Jehovah's mountain
Lifted up in this day.

People come from afar,
Ev'rywhere from sea to sea,
Calling to one another,
'Come serve God and obey.'

Now the time has arrived
For the small, a great nation to be.
As we grow and we thrive,
God's direction and blessing we see.

Millions now come to God
And accept his sov'reignty.
Loyal they vow to be
And from his side never stray.

2. Jesus gave the command
 To go forth and preach the word.
Good news about the Kingdom
 Reaches all men today.

Christ now rules from above,
 Urging all to take his side.
Meek ones who hear his voice
 Let God's Word show them the way.

 It brings joy to the heart,
 As the great crowd continues to grow.
And we all have a part,
 As we strive to let ev'ryone know.

Let us lift up the voice,
 Calling out for all to hear,
'Come to Jehovah's mountain,
 Here forever to stay.'

(See also Ps. 43:3; 99:9; Isa. 60:22; Acts 16:5.)

Song 39 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Establish and Maintain a Good Reputation”:
(10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Ru 4:6—In what way could a repurchaser “ruin” his own inheritance by doing the repurchasing? (w05 3/1 29 ¶3)

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.) Ru 4:7-22 (5)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

“Increase Your Joy in the Ministry—Help Bible Students to Attend Meetings”:
(10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Help Your Bible Students to Attend Meetings*.

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 03 point 4 (8)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 24

Local Needs: (15 min.)

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)
rr chap. 19 ¶16-21, box 19B



Establish and Maintain a Good Reputation

Ruth acted out of consideration for others
(Ru 3:10; w12 10/1 22 ¶5)

Ruth was well-known as “an excellent woman” (Ru 3:11; w12 10/1 23 ¶1)

Jehovah took note of Ruth’s good qualities and blessed her (Ru 4:11-13; w12 10/1 24 ¶3)

List some good qualities that you would like to be known for.



to refuse to let Jehovah's blessings flow into our life. It would be tragic to remain unhealed, like so many in this sick world. (Matt. 13:15) Rather, we are delighted to benefit from the river of blessings. When we eagerly drink in the pure waters of truth from God's Word, when we share such truths with others by means of the preaching work, when we receive loving guidance, comfort, and help from elders who have been trained by the faithful slave, we may think of Ezekiel's visionary river. That river promotes life and healing wherever it goes!

¹⁵ What, though, about a future fulfillment of this visionary river? As we will see, the river will flow in the greatest possible sense in the Paradise to come.

What the Vision Will Mean in Paradise

¹⁶ Do you picture yourself in Paradise, surrounded by friends and family, enjoying life to the full? Studying Ezekiel's visionary river can help you to make that picture more vivid. How so? Consider once more the three clear, loving aspects of the vision.

16, 17. (a) In what way will the water of life be even more expansive in Paradise? (b) How will we benefit from that river of blessings in Paradise?

¹⁷ *A river of blessings.* The symbolic river will, in a sense, be far more expansive in Paradise, for its benefits will be not only spiritual but also physical. During Jesus' Thousand Year Reign, God's Kingdom will help faithful ones to benefit from the ransom in a much greater way. Gradually, they will be lifted to perfection! No more diseases, doctors, nurses, hospitals, health insurance! That water of life will flow to the millions of Armageddon survivors, "a great crowd" who will emerge from "the great tribulation." (Rev. 7:9, 14) However, that initial flow of the river of blessings, impressive though it will be, will be only a trickle compared to what will come later. As in Ezekiel's vision, the river will expand to meet greater needs.

¹⁸ *Life-giving water.* During the Millennium, the "river of water of life" will become a torrent. (Rev. 22:1) Countless millions, even billions, will be resurrected from the dead and offered the opportunity to live forever in Paradise! Jehovah's blessings through the Kingdom will include bringing life to vast numbers of

18. In what sense will the "river of water of life" become a mighty torrent during the Millennium?

the dead, humans who have long lain powerless in the dust of the earth. (Isa. 26:19) However, will all those resurrected ones remain alive forever?

¹⁹ Each one must choose. You see, new scrolls will be opened during that time. So the refreshing waters from Jehovah will include newly revealed truths, new spiritual instructions. Is it not thrilling to think of that prospect? Nonetheless, some will refuse that blessing, choosing instead to disobey Jehovah. Some individuals may rebel during the Millennium, but they will not be allowed to disrupt Paradise. (Isa. 65: 20) We may be reminded of Ezekiel's vision and think of those marshy places that remained barren, "abandoned to salt." How foolish are those who stubbornly refuse to drink from the precious water of life! After the Millennium, a group of rebels will side with Satan. All who reject Jehovah's righteous rule will face the same end: eternal death.—Rev. 20:7-12.

²⁰ *Trees for food and healing.* Jehovah does not want

19. (a) What indicates that new waters of divine truth will be made available in Paradise? (b) In what sense will some be "abandoned to salt" in the future?

20. What arrangement for our benefit during the Millennium reminds us of the trees that Ezekiel saw?

any of us to lose out on eternal life. To help us take hold of the marvelous opportunity he is offering, he will again make sure that there will be an arrangement like those trees that Ezekiel saw. In Paradise, though, the benefits from Jehovah will be physical as well as spiritual. In heaven, Jesus Christ and his 144,000 corulers with him will rule as kings for the Millennium. As a priestly class, the 144,000 will administer the benefits of Christ's ransom sacrifice, helping to lift faithful humans to perfection. (Rev. 20:6) This arrangement for physical and spiritual healing reminds us of those trees that Ezekiel saw along the riverbanks, trees that bear nourishing fruit and have leaves that heal. Ezekiel's vision parallels another beautiful prophetic passage, as recorded by the apostle John. (**Read Revelation 22:1, 2.**) The leaves of the trees John saw are "for the healing of the nations." Countless millions of faithful humans will benefit from the priestly services of the 144,000.

²¹ As you contemplate Ezekiel's visionary river, is **21. How does contemplating Ezekiel's visionary river affect you, and what will we consider next? (See the box "A Trickle Becomes a Torrent!")**

your heart not filled with peace and hope? What marvelous times lie ahead of us! And just think—Jehovah painted striking word pictures of that time thousands of years ago, patiently inviting us to be there to see the great fulfillment, the reality promised in the pictures. Will you be there? You might wonder if there will really be a place for you in Paradise. Let us consider next how the closing passages of Ezekiel's prophecy give us reassurance.

YOUR PLACE IN PURE WORSHIP

- 1** How was Ezekiel's vision of the river fulfilled in ancient times?
- 2** In what ways are we seeing a fulfillment of that vision today?
- 3** How will Ezekiel's visionary river flow in the greatest sense during Christ's Millennial Reign?

A TRICKLE BECOMES A TORRENT!

SEE PARAGRAPHS 4-21

Ezekiel follows a stream as it trickles from Jehovah’s sanctuary and miraculously becomes a deep torrent in just over a mile! Along the riverbanks, he sees luxuriant trees that offer nourishment and healing. What does it all mean?

ANCIENT

The River Brings Blessings

Once the exiles returned to their homeland, blessings flowed to them as they took part in the restoration of pure worship at the temple

Life-Giving Water

Jehovah richly blessed his obedient people, even as their numbers increased, making them thrive spiritually

Trees for Food and Healing

In a spiritual sense, Jehovah fed his faithful people in their restored land; he also healed them of the spiritual sickness that had long plagued them

MODERN

In 1919 pure worship was restored, opening the way for an unprecedented flow of spiritual blessings to God’s faithful servants

In the developing spiritual paradise, ever-growing numbers have benefited from the expanding flow of Jehovah’s spiritual blessings and have come to life in a spiritual sense

Ample supplies of spiritual food are helping people to counteract the pervasive spiritual sickness and starvation of today’s world

FUTURE

After Armageddon, the flow of blessings from Jehovah will be physical as well as spiritual in nature

Armageddon survivors will be joined by untold millions of resurrected ones, and Jehovah’s blessings will be abundant for all

Christ and his 144,000 corulers will help all obedient mankind to reach perfection and to enjoy health and vitality forever!

144 *Keep Your Eyes on the Prize!*

(2 Corinthians 4:18)

1. When the eyes of blind ones see again
 And the ears of deaf ones hear again,
When the songs of children fill the air
 And joy and peace are ev'rywhere,
When our loved ones will return to life,
 To an earth that's free from sin and strife,

(CHORUS)

*You will see how God these things supplies,
If you keep your eyes on the prize.*

2. When the wolves and lambs will feed as one,
 When the bears and calves bask in the sun,
Then a mere young boy will lead them all,
 And they will heed his childish call.
When our tears belong to yesterday,
 When our fears and pain have passed away,

(Chorus)

DECEMBER 2021

THE  **WATCHTOWER**
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
JANUARY 31–FEBRUARY 27, 2022

Study Article 48: January 31–February 6 “You Must Be Holy”	2
Study Article 49: February 7-13 What Leviticus Teaches Us About How to Treat Others	16
QUESTIONS FROM READERS	29
Study Article 50: February 14-20 Listen to the Voice of the Fine Shepherd	32
Study Article 51: February 21-27 Continue to “Listen to Him”	44
Are You a Good Fellow Worker?	57

COVER PICTURE:

The statement “Holiness belongs to Jehovah” appeared on a gold plate on the turban of the high priest (See study article 48, paragraphs 6-7)

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. To make a donation, please visit donate.jw.org.

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

The Watchtower (ISSN 0043-1087) December 2021 is published by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; Harold L. Corkern, President; Mark L. Questell, Secretary-Treasurer; 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299, and by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada, PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. © 2021 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. Printed in Canada.

Visit the [jw.org](https://www.jw.org) website,
or scan code



Walking in Integrity

(Psalm 26)

1. Please judge me, Lord, observe my loyalty;
Observe my trust in you and my integrity.
Examine me, and put me to the test;
My mind and heart refine, that my soul might be blessed.

(CHORUS)

*But as for me, Determined I will be
to walk eternally In my integrity.*

2. I do not sit with wicked men of lies.
I hate the company of those who truth despise.
Jehovah, please, don't take away my life
With men who take delight in bribery and strife.

(Chorus)

3. For I have loved the dwelling of your house.
Your worship, oh, so pure, I daily will espouse.
And I will march around your altar grand,
To make thanksgiving heard aloud throughout the land.

(Chorus)

“You Must Be Holy”

“Become holy yourselves in all your conduct.”—1 PET. 1:15.

SONG 34

Walking in Integrity

PREVIEW

We love Jehovah very much, and we want to please him. Jehovah is holy, and he expects his worshippers to be holy. Is that really possible for imperfect humans? Yes, it is. A careful consideration of the apostle Peter’s counsel to fellow believers and of Jehovah’s instructions to ancient Israel will help us learn how we can become holy in all our conduct.

WHETHER our hope is heavenly or earthly, we can benefit from considering the counsel that the apostle Peter gave anointed Christians in the first century. Peter wrote: “Like the Holy One who called you, become holy yourselves in all your conduct, for it is written: ‘You must be holy, because I am holy.’” (1 Pet. 1:15, 16) From these words, we learn that we can imitate Jehovah, who is the supreme example of holiness. We can and must be holy in our conduct. That may seem impossible because we are imperfect. Peter himself made a number of mistakes; yet, his example shows that we can “become holy.”

² In this article, we will consider the following questions: What is holiness? What does the Bible teach us about Jehovah’s holiness? How can we become holy in our conduct? And what connection is there between holiness and our relationship with Jehovah?

WHAT IS HOLINESS?

³ When people think of someone who is holy,

-
1. What counsel did the apostle Peter give fellow believers, and why might his advice seem impossible to apply?
 2. What questions will we consider in this article?
 3. What concept do many people have of holiness, but where can we find accurate information?

many imagine a joyless person who wears religious garments and always has a pious look on his face. But that cannot be accurate. Jehovah, who is holy, is described as “the happy God.” (1 Tim. 1:11) Those who worship him are called “happy.” (Ps. 144:15) Jesus condemned those who wore distinctive garments and practiced their righteousness in front of men. (Matt. 6:1; Mark 12:38) As Christians, we shape our view of holiness by what we have learned from the Bible. We are convinced that our holy and loving God would never give us a command that we could not possibly obey. So when Jehovah tells us: “*You* must be holy,” we have no doubt that this is possible. Of course, before we can become holy in our conduct, we need to understand what holiness is.

⁴ What is holiness? In the Bible, the words “holy” and “holiness” basically refer to moral and religious cleanness or sacredness. The terms can also convey the idea of being set aside to serve God. In other words, we will be considered holy if we are morally clean, if we worship Jehovah acceptably, and if we have a close personal relationship with him. The very thought that we can have a personal relationship with our holy God is enough to take our breath

4. What do the words “holy” and “holiness” mean?

away, especially when we consider what the Bible teaches us about Jehovah’s holiness.

“HOLY, HOLY, HOLY IS JEHOVAH”

⁵ Jehovah is pure and clean in every way. We learn this from a description of him that was given by seraphs—angelic creatures who are close to his throne. Some of them testified: “Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of armies.” (Isa. 6:3) Of course, in order to have a close relationship with their holy God, the angels themselves must be holy—and they are. In fact, the mere presence of an angel of Jehovah could render a place on earth holy. That is what happened when Moses was at the burning thornbush.—Ex. 3:2-5; Josh. 5:15.

⁶ After Moses led the Israelites through the Red Sea, he emphasized to them that their God, Jehovah, is holy. (Read Exodus 15:1, 11.) The conduct of the worshippers of the gods of Egypt was far from holy. The same was true of those who worshipped the gods of Canaan. Their worship included child sacrifices and depraved sexual practices. (Lev. 18:3,

5. What can we learn about Jehovah from faithful angels?

6-7. (a) According to Exodus 15:1, 11, how did Moses emphasize God’s holiness? (b) How was God’s holiness called to the attention of all Israelites? (See cover picture.)

4, 21-24; Deut. 18:9, 10) In contrast, Jehovah would never require his worshippers to do anything that would degrade them. He is the essence of holiness. This was made clear by the inscription found on a gold plate on the turban of the high priest. Engraved on this plate was the statement: “Holiness belongs to Jehovah.”—Ex. 28:36-38.

⁷ The message on that plate would assure anyone seeing it that Jehovah is truly holy. What, though, of an Israelite who was not able to see the plate because he could not approach the high priest? Would he miss this vital message? No! Every Israelite heard that message as the Law was read before men, women, and children. (Deut. 31:9-12) If you had been present, you would have heard these statements: “I am Jehovah your God, and you must . . . be holy, because I am holy.” “You must be holy to me, because I, Jehovah, am holy.”—Lev. 11:44, 45; 20:7, 26.

⁸ Let us focus on one statement recorded at Leviticus 19:2 that was read to all. Jehovah told Moses: “Speak to the entire assembly of the Israelites and tell them, ‘You should be holy, because I, Jehovah your God, am holy.’” Peter may have been quoting from that statement when he urged Chris-

8. Why should we be interested in considering Leviticus 19:2 and 1 Peter 1:14-16?

tians to “become holy.” (Read 1 Peter 1:14-16.) Of course, we are not under the Mosaic Law. Still, what Peter wrote confirms what we learn from Leviticus 19:2, that is, Jehovah is holy and those who love him should strive to be holy. This is true whether we hope to live in heaven or on a paradise earth.—1 Pet. 1:4; 2 Pet. 3:13.

“BECOME HOLY . . . IN ALL YOUR CONDUCT”

⁹ Because we want to please our holy God, we are eager to learn how we can become holy. Jehovah provides some practical advice on how we can do so. An excellent source of this advice is Leviticus chapter 19. Hebrew scholar Marcus Kalisch wrote: “This remarkable chapter is perhaps the most comprehensive, the most varied, and in some respects the most important section of Leviticus, if not of the Pentateuch.” Let us note some verses from this chapter that contain valuable lessons about aspects of our daily life. As we do so, remember that these lessons follow the opening statement: “You should be holy.”

¹⁰ After stating that the Israelites should be holy,

9. How will we benefit from considering Leviticus chapter 19?

10-11. What aspect of holy conduct is highlighted in the opening words of Leviticus chapter 19, and how should we view this direction?

Jehovah added: “Each of you should *respect his mother and his father . . .* I am Jehovah your God.”
—Lev. 19:2, 3.

¹¹ Clearly, we ought to take to heart God’s direction to honor our parents. Recall the occasion when a man asked Jesus: “What good must I do to gain everlasting life?” Part of Jesus’ answer was that the man needed to honor his father and his mother. (Matt. 19:16-19) Jesus even denounced the Pharisees and scribes for scheming to avoid giving that honor. Thus, they “made the word of God invalid.” (Matt. 15:3-6) “The word of God” included the fifth of the Ten Commandments as well as what we read at Leviticus 19:3. (Ex. 20:12) Once again, bear in mind that the direction found at Leviticus 19:3—to respect one’s mother and father—comes right after the statement: “You should be holy, because I, Jehovah your God, am holy.”

¹² In harmony with Jehovah’s counsel to honor our parents, we might ask ourselves, ‘How am I doing in this regard?’ If you feel that you should have done more in the past, you could decide now to make improvements. You cannot change the past,

12. In harmony with the counsel found at Leviticus 19:3, what question might we ask ourselves?



The comment about parents found at Leviticus 19:3 should move Christians to consider what?

(See paragraphs 10-12)

but you can be resolved from this point on to do more with and for your parents. Perhaps you could arrange to spend more time with them. Or what about offering them more support materially, spiritually, or emotionally? Doing so is in line with what Leviticus 19:3 says.

¹³ Leviticus 19:3 teaches us something else about becoming holy. It mentions keeping the Sabbath. Christians are not under the Law, so we need not observe a weekly Sabbath. Still, we can learn much

13. (a) What further counsel do we find at Leviticus 19:3? (b) How can we today imitate Jesus' example, as recorded at Luke 4:16-18?

from how the Israelites kept the Sabbath and how they benefited from doing so. The Sabbath was a time to rest from normal labors and give attention to spiritual matters.* Fittingly, on that day Jesus would go to the synagogue in his hometown and read from God’s Word. (Ex. 31:12-15; read Luke 4:16-18.) God’s exhortation recorded at Leviticus 19:3 to “keep [his] sabbaths” should move us to buy out some time from our day-to-day activities so that we can give more attention to spiritual matters. Do you feel that you should make some adjustments in that respect? If you regularly set aside time to focus on spiritual matters, you will develop a warm, personal relationship with Jehovah, which is essential to become holy.

STRENGTHEN YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JEHOVAH

14 Leviticus chapter 19 repeatedly mentions a fundamental truth that can help us to remain holy. Verse 4 concludes with the words: “I am Jehovah

* For a discussion of the Sabbath and the lessons we can draw from it, see the article “‘There Is an Appointed Time’ for Work and for Rest” in the December 2019 issue of *The Watchtower*.

14. What fundamental truth is emphasized throughout Leviticus chapter 19?

your God.” That phrase or similar wording is found 16 times in this chapter. This calls to mind the first commandment: “I am Jehovah your God . . . You must not have any other gods besides me.” (Ex. 20: 2, 3) Every Christian who wants to become holy must ensure that nothing or no one comes between him and his relationship with his God. And because we bear the name Jehovah’s Witnesses, we are determined to avoid any actions that would disgrace or profane his holy name.—Lev. 19:12; Isa. 57:15.

¹⁵ For the Israelites, recognizing Jehovah as their God involved keeping many laws. Leviticus 18:4 says: “You should carry out my judicial decisions, and you should keep my statutes and walk in them. I am Jehovah your God.” Chapter 19 includes some of those “statutes” for Israel. For example, verses 5-8, 21, 22 deal with animal sacrifices. Those were to be made in a way that would not ‘profane a holy thing of Jehovah.’ Reading those verses should move us to want to please Jehovah and to offer him acceptable sacrifices of praise, as Hebrews 13:15 urges us to do.

15. The verses found in Leviticus chapter 19 dealing with sacrifices should move us to do what?

¹⁶ To become holy, we must be willing to stand out as different. That can be a challenge. Sometimes schoolmates, business associates, unbelieving relatives, and others may pressure us to get involved in activities that would interfere with our worship. When they do, we have an important decision to make. What can help us make the right choice? Consider an interesting principle found at Leviticus 19:19, which says in part: “You must not wear a garment made with two sorts of thread mixed together.” That law helped to distinguish Israel from the surrounding nations. Today, we do not object to garments of mixed materials, such as cotton and polyester or wool and rayon. But we do object to being like people whose beliefs and practices conflict with Bible teachings, even if these individuals are schoolmates, business associates, or relatives. Of course, we have natural affection for our relatives, and we show love for our neighbors. Yet, when it comes to important aspects of life, we are willing to be separate as Jehovah’s people. Recall that being set aside for God is part of being holy. That is vital if we are striving to become holy.—2 Cor. 6:14-16; 1 Pet. 4:3, 4.

16. What may remind us of the distinction between those serving God and those not serving him?



What point should God's people have learned from Leviticus 19:23-25, and what lesson do you learn from those verses?
(See paragraphs 17-18)

¹⁷ The phrase “I am Jehovah your God” should have helped the Israelites to give priority to their relationship with Jehovah. How? Leviticus 19:23-25 reveals one way. (Read.) Consider what these words would mean for the Israelites once they entered the Promised Land. If a man planted trees for food, he was not to eat the fruit from these trees for three years. In the fourth year, the fruit was set aside for use at God’s sanctuary. It was only in the fifth year that the owner could eat the fruit. This law should have helped the Israelites to understand that their

17-18. We can draw what valuable lesson from Leviticus 19:23-25?

interests were not to come first. They were to trust in Jehovah as their Provider and give priority to supporting his worship. He would make sure that they had enough to eat. And God encouraged them to make generous gifts at the sanctuary, the center of his worship.

¹⁸ The law recorded at Leviticus 19:23-25 reminds us of Jesus' words in the Sermon on the Mount. He said: "Stop being anxious about . . . what you will eat or what you will drink." Jesus continued: "Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things." God will provide for us, as he does even for the birds. (Matt. 6:25, 26, 32) We trust in Jehovah as our Provider. And we discreetly make "gifts of mercy" to help those in need. We are also quick to contribute toward congregation expenses. Jehovah takes notice of such generosity and will repay us. (Matt. 6:2-4) We are thus showing that we understand the lessons from Leviticus 19:23-25.

¹⁹ We have examined just a few portions of Leviticus chapter 19, noting ways in which we can be like our holy God. By imitating him, we strive to 'become holy in all our conduct.' (1 Pet. 1:15) Many

19. How have you benefited from considering this portion of Leviticus?

who do not serve Jehovah have been eyewitnesses of that fine conduct. In fact, it has moved some to glorify Jehovah. (1 Pet. 2:12) But there is much more that we can learn from Leviticus chapter 19. The following article will address additional verses in that chapter and will help us to discern other areas of our life in which we can “become holy,” as Peter urged.

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Page 9: An adult son spends time with his parents, brings his wife and child to visit them, and makes it a point to keep in contact with them. **Page 13:** An Israelite farmer examines some fruit on the trees that he planted.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- What is holiness?
- How can lessons from Leviticus chapter 19 help us to become holy in our conduct?
- What steps should we take to strengthen our relationship with Jehovah?

*“Taste and See That
Jehovah Is Good”*
(Psalm 34:8)

1. Our service to God we cherish;
We value our priv’lege to preach.
We buy out the time and give God our best,
For many we still need to reach.

(CHORUS)

*God’s Word invites us: ‘Come taste and see—
See that Jehovah is good.’
Godly devotion brings greatest gain,
We know we’ve done all we could.*

2. For those in the full-time service,
Rich blessings and treasures abound.
By trusting in God to care for our needs,
In all things contentment is found.

(Chorus)