

Monday, February 14

Jehovah is on my side; I will not be afraid.—Psalm 118:6.

When you pray for courage and boldness, Jehovah will answer your prayers and never abandon you. (Acts 4:29, 31) He is always there to give you support. Think about how he has helped you overcome challenges and given you the strength to make changes in your lifestyle. Certainly the One who led his people through the Red Sea can help you to be a disciple of Christ. (Exodus 14:13) Maintain the same conviction as did the psalmist who said the words of today's text. Jehovah can also help new publishers to be courageous. Note the experience of a sister named Tomoyo. When she started to preach from house to house, the first householder she met shouted: "I don't want anything to do with Jehovah's Witnesses!" and slammed the door. Tomoyo courageously told her companion: "Did you hear that? I didn't have to say a word, and she recognized me as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. I'm so happy!" Tomoyo now serves as a regular pioneer. w20.09 6 paragraphs 13-14

Tuesday, February 15

Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of Jehovah his God.—2 Chronicles 14:2.

Asa told the people that it was Jehovah who had “given [them] rest all around.” (2 Chronicles 14:6, 7) Asa did not feel that this period of peace was a time to relax. On the contrary, he set out to build cities, walls, towers, and gates. He told the people of Judah: “The land is still at our disposal.” What did Asa mean? He meant that the people could move about freely in their God-given land and build without opposition from enemies. He urged the people to take advantage of this time of peace. Asa also used the time of peace to strengthen his military force. (2 Chronicles 14:8) Does this mean that he did not trust in Jehovah? No. Rather, Asa knew that it was his duty as king to prepare the people for the troubles they might face in the future. Asa knew that the period of peace that Judah enjoyed likely would not last indefinitely, and this proved true. w20.09 15 paragraphs 4-5

Wednesday, February 16

Do not go beyond the things that are written.—1 Corinthians 4:6.

With good intentions, an elder might make rules that he hopes will protect God's sheep. However, there are significant differences between the role of an elder and the role of a family head. For instance, Jehovah has assigned the elders to act as judges, and he has given them the responsibility of removing unrepentant sinners from the congregation. (1 Corinthians 5:11-13) On the other hand, Jehovah has given family heads some authority that he has not given to elders. For instance, he has authorized a family head both to make and to enforce rules for his family. (Romans 7:2) For example, a family head has the right to decide at what time his children should arrive home at night. He also has the authority to discipline his children if they fail to obey that rule. (Ephesians 6:1) Of course, a loving family head consults with his wife before making rules in the household; after all, the two of them are "one flesh."—Matthew 19:6. *w21.02* 16-18 paragraphs 10-13

Thursday, February 17

[Wisdom] is more precious than corals; nothing you desire can compare to it.—Proverbs 3:15.

One reason why the truths found in God's Word are precious is that Jehovah reveals them only to humble ones who are "rightly disposed." (Acts 13:48) Such individuals accept the channel he uses to dispense those truths today. (Matthew 11:25; 24:45) We cannot learn these truths on our own, and nothing else is anywhere near as valuable. (Proverbs 3:13) Jehovah has also entrusted us with the privilege of teaching others the truth about him and his purposes. (Matthew 24:14) The message we bear is invaluable because it helps people become part of Jehovah's family and gives them the opportunity to gain everlasting life. (1 Timothy 4:16) Whether our personal share in the ministry is large or small, we are supporting the most important work being done at this time. (1 Timothy 2:3, 4) What an honor it is to be God's fellow workers!—1 Corinthians 3:9. w20.09 26-27 paragraphs 4-5

Friday, February 18

We found brothers and were urged to remain with them.—Acts 28:14.

During his journey to Rome, the apostle Paul time and again received help that Jehovah provided by means of his fellow believers. For example, two faithful companions of Paul, Aristarchus and Luke, decided to travel with him to Rome. They willingly risked their lives to be with Paul, although it does not appear that either of them had received a personal assurance from Jesus that they would reach Rome. Only later, during the rough voyage, did they learn that their lives would be spared. When they reached the port city of Sidon, Julius permitted Paul “to go to his friends and enjoy their care.” (Acts 27:1-3) And later, in the city of Puteoli, Paul and his companions “found brothers and were urged to remain with them for seven days.” While the Christians in those places cared for the needs of Paul and his companions, Paul no doubt brought great joy to his hosts by sharing upbuilding experiences.—Compare Acts 15:2, 3. w20.11 15-16 paragraphs 15-17

Saturday, February 19

Godly devotion . . . holds promise of the life now and the life that is to come.—1 Timothy 4:8.

Parents, teach your children in word and action that you love Jehovah deeply. Realize that the greatest gift that you can give them is the opportunity to love Jehovah. And one of the most valuable lessons that you can teach them is how to keep a good spiritual routine of study, prayer, meetings, and participation in the ministry. (1 Timothy 6:6) Of course, you must give your children the material things they need. (1 Timothy 5:8) But remember that it will be your children's close relationship with Jehovah, not their material possessions, that will help them to survive the end of this old system and make it into God's new world. (Ezekiel 7:19) How heartwarming it is to see so many Christian parents who are making good spiritual choices for their families! Children who are raised in such families often continue with the good habits they learned, and they have no regrets!—Proverbs 10:22. *w20.10* 28-29 paragraphs 10-11

Sunday, February 20

You will not have this happen to you at all.—Matthew 16:22.

On occasion, the apostle Peter said or did things that he later regretted. For instance, when Jesus told his apostles that he would suffer and die, Peter rebuked him, saying the above. (Matthew 16:21-23) Jesus then corrected Peter. When a mob came to arrest Jesus, Peter acted rashly, cutting off the ear of a slave of the high priest. (John 18:10, 11) Again, Jesus corrected the apostle. In addition, Peter had boasted that while the other apostles might stumble in connection with Christ, he would never do so! (Matthew 26:33) But that overconfidence gave way to fear of man, and Peter denied his Master three times. Deeply discouraged, Peter “went outside and wept bitterly.” (Matthew 26:69-75) He must have wondered if Jesus could ever forgive him. However, Peter did not allow himself to be overwhelmed by discouragement. After stumbling, he recovered, and we later find him with the other apostles.—John 21:1-3; Acts 1:15, 16. w20.12 20 paragraphs 17-18

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

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Jehovah Is Considerate”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

1Sa 3:3—How do we know that Samuel did not sleep in the Most Holy? (w05 3/15 21 ¶6)

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.) 1Sa 3:1-18 (10)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

Initial Call: (3 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Offer a Bible study using the *Enjoy Life Forever!* brochure. (11)

Return Visit: (4 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Offer the *Enjoy Life Forever!* brochure, and start a Bible study in lesson 01. (15)

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 03 point 6 (14)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 30

“Lessons From Samuel’s Life”: (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Learn From Them—Samuel* (video category FAMILY).

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr* chap. 20 ¶9-17, box 20A

 Jehovah Is Considerate

Samuel thought that Eli was calling him (1Sa 3:4-7; w18.09 24 ¶3)

Jehovah made it clear that He was calling Samuel (1Sa 3:8, 9)

Jehovah showed kind consideration for young Samuel (1Sa 3:15-18; w18.09 24 ¶4)

ASK YOURSELF: ‘In what ways can I show consideration for younger ones and older ones? How can I show consideration for others at Christian meetings?’



1

Jehovah's Attributes

(Revelation 4:11)

1. Jehovah our God, exalted in might,
Creator of life and Provider of light.
Creation speaks of your power so grand;
The heavens and earth forever stand.
2. Your heavenly throne, on justice it stands.
To us you make known all your righteous commands.
And as we turn to your Word, we can see
Your wisdom revealed so brilliantly.
3. The greatest of all is your perfect love.
Beyond all compare are your gifts from above.
Your attributes and your glorious name,
With joy and with zeal, we will proclaim.

1 SAMUEL 3-5

3 Meanwhile, the boy Samuel was ministering to Jehovah before E'li, but word from Jehovah had become rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

2 One day E'li was lying down in his usual place, and his eyes had grown dim; he was not able to see. **3** The lamp of God had not yet been extinguished, and Samuel was lying in the temple of Jehovah, where the Ark of God was. **4** Jehovah then called Samuel. He answered: "Here I am." **5** He ran to E'li and said: "Here I am, for you called me." But he said: "I did not call. Lie down again." So he went and lay down.

6 Jehovah called once again: "Samuel!" At this Samuel got up and went to E'li and said: "Here I am, for you called me." But he said: "I did not call, my son. Lie down again." **7** (Now Samuel had not yet come to know Jehovah, and the word of Jehovah had not yet been revealed to him.) **8** So Jehovah called again, a third time: "Samuel!" At that he got up and went to E'li and said: "Here I am, for you called me."

E'li then realized that it was Jehovah who was calling the boy. **9** So E'li said to Samuel: "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you should say, 'Speak, Jehovah, for your servant is listening.'" And Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 Jehovah came and stood there, and he called as at the other times: "Samuel, Samuel!" At this Samuel said: "Speak, for your servant is listening." **11** Jehovah said to Samuel: "Look! I am doing something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears about it tingle. **12** On that day I will

carry out toward E'li all that I said about his house, from start to finish. ¹³ You must tell him that I am bringing a lasting judgment on his house for the error that he has known about, for his sons are cursing God, but he has not rebuked them. ¹⁴ That is why I have sworn to the house of E'li that the error of the house of E'li will never be atoned for by sacrifices or by offerings.”

¹⁵ Samuel lay down until the morning; then he opened the doors of Jehovah's house. Samuel was afraid to tell E'li of the vision. ¹⁶ But E'li called for Samuel: “Samuel, my son!” At this he said: “Here I am.” ¹⁷ He asked: “What message did he speak to you? Please, do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and add to it if you hide from me a single word of all that he said to you.” ¹⁸ So Samuel told him everything, and he did not hide anything from him. E'li said: “It is Jehovah. Let him do what is good in his eyes.”

¹⁹ Samuel continued growing up, and Jehovah himself was with him and did not let any of all his words go unfulfilled. ²⁰ All Israel from Dan to Be'er-she'ba became aware that Samuel had been confirmed as Jehovah's prophet. ²¹ And Jehovah continued to appear in Shi'loh, for Jehovah revealed himself to Samuel in Shi'loh by the word of Jehovah.

4 And the word of Samuel went out to all Israel.

Then Israel went out to meet the Phi-lis'tines in battle; they camped beside Eb-en-e'zer, and the Phi-lis'tines were encamped at A'phek. ² The Phi-lis'tines drew up in battle formation to meet Israel, but the battle went badly and Israel

was defeated by the Phi-lis'tines, who struck down about 4,000 men from the battle line in the field. ³ When the people returned to the camp, the elders of Israel said: "Why did Jehovah allow us to be defeated today by the Phi-lis'tines? Let us take the ark of Jehovah's covenant with us from Shi'loh, so that it may be with us and save us from the hand of our enemies." ⁴ So the people sent men to Shi'loh, and they carried from there the ark of the covenant of Jehovah of armies, who sits enthroned above the cherubs. The two sons of E'li, Hoph'ni and Phin'e-has, were also there with the ark of the covenant of the true God.

⁵ As soon as the ark of the covenant of Jehovah came into the camp, all the Israelites broke out into loud shouting, so that the earth shook. ⁶ When the Phi-lis'tines heard the sound of the shouting, they said: "Why is there such loud shouting in the camp of the Hebrews?" Finally they learned that the Ark of Jehovah had come into the camp. ⁷ The Phi-lis'tines became afraid, for they said: "God has come into the camp!" So they said: "Too bad for us, for nothing like this has ever happened before! ⁸ Too bad for us! Who will save us from the hand of this majestic God? This is the God who struck Egypt with every sort of slaughter in the wilderness. ⁹ Be courageous and act like men, you Phi-lis'tines, so that you may not serve the Hebrews just as they have served you. Act like men and fight!" ¹⁰ So the Phi-lis'tines fought and Israel was defeated, and each one fled to his tent. The slaughter was very great; on Israel's side, 30,000 foot soldiers fell. ¹¹ Moreover, the Ark of God was captured, and the two sons of E'li, Hoph'ni and Phin'e-has, died.

¹² A man of Benjamin ran from the battle line and arrived at Shi'loh on that day with his garments ripped apart and dirt on his head. ¹³ When the man arrived, E'li was sitting on the seat by the roadside watching, because his heart was trembling over the Ark of the true God. The man went into the city to report the news, and the whole city began crying out. ¹⁴ When E'li heard the sound of the outcry, he asked: "What does the sound of this turmoil mean?" The same man hurried in and reported the news to E'li. ¹⁵ (Now E'li was 98 years old, and his eyes stared straight ahead, and he could not see.) ¹⁶ Then the man said to E'li: "I am the one who came from the battle line! Just today I fled from the battle line." At this he asked: "What happened, my son?" ¹⁷ So the bearer of the news related: "Israel has fled from the Phi-lis'tines, and there was a great defeat among the people; also your own two sons, Hoph'ni and Phin'e-has, have died, and the Ark of the true God has been captured."

¹⁸ At the moment he mentioned the Ark of the true God, E'li fell backward from his seat beside the gate, and his neck was broken and he died, for he was old and heavy. He had judged Israel for 40 years. ¹⁹ His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phin'e-has, was pregnant and close to giving birth. When she heard the report that the Ark of the true God had been captured and that her father-in-law and her husband had died, she doubled over and unexpectedly went into labor and gave birth. ²⁰ As she was dying, the women standing by her said: "Do not be afraid, for you have given birth to a son." She did not answer and did not pay attention to it. ²¹ But she named the boy Ich'a-bod, saying: "Glory has gone away from

Israel into exile,” referring to the capture of the Ark of the true God and what happened to her father-in-law and her husband. ²² She said: “Glory has gone away from Israel into exile, because the Ark of the true God has been captured.”

5 When the Phi-lis'tines captured the Ark of the true God, they brought it from Eb-en-e'zer to Ash'dod. ² The Phi-lis'tines took the Ark of the true God and brought it into the house of Da'gon and set it beside Da'gon. ³ When the Ash'dod-ites got up early the next day, there was Da'gon fallen facedown on the ground before the Ark of Jehovah. So they took Da'gon and returned him to his place. ⁴ When they got up early in the morning on the following day, there was Da'gon fallen facedown on the ground before the Ark of Jehovah. The head of Da'gon and the palms of both his hands were cut off and were lying on the threshold. Only the fish part had been left intact. ⁵ That is why to this day, the priests of Da'gon and all those who enter the house of Da'gon do not walk on the threshold of Da'gon in Ash'dod.

⁶ The hand of Jehovah was heavy against the Ash'dod-ites, and he devastated them by striking Ash'dod and its territories with piles. ⁷ When the men of Ash'dod saw what was happening, they said: “Do not let the Ark of the God of Israel remain with us, for his hand has dealt harshly with us and our god Da'gon.” ⁸ So they sent for and gathered all the lords of the Phi-lis'tines and asked them: “What should we do with the Ark of the God of Israel?” They replied: “Let the Ark of the God of Israel be moved to Gath.” So they moved the Ark of the God of Israel there.

⁹ After they moved it there, the hand of Jehovah came against the city, bringing great panic. He struck the men of the city, from small to great, and piles broke out on them.

¹⁰ So they sent the Ark of the true God to Ek'ron, but as soon as the Ark of the true God came to Ek'ron, the Ek'ron-ites began to cry out: "They have brought the Ark of the God of Israel to us to put us and our people to death!" ¹¹ Then they sent for and gathered all the lords of the Phi-lis'tines and said: "Send the Ark of the God of Israel away; let it return to its place so that we and our people may not be put to death." For the terror of death had spread through the whole city; the hand of the true God had been very heavy there, ¹² and the men who did not die had been struck with piles. And the city's cry for help ascended to the heavens.

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

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Jehovah Is Considerate”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

1Sa 3:3—How do we know that Samuel did not sleep in the Most Holy? (w05 3/15 21 ¶6)

What spiritual gems from this week’s Bible reading would you like to share regarding Jehovah, the field ministry, or something else?

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Samuel thought that Eli was calling him (1Sa 3:4-7; w18.09 24 ¶3)

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February 14-20 / 1 Samuel 3-5

Song 1 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 minute)

Treasures From God's Word

"Jehovah Is Considerate"': (10 minutes)

Samuel thought that Eli was calling him

1 Samuel 3:4-7: Jehovah then called Samuel. He answered: "Here I am." He ran to Eli and said: "Here I am, for you called me." But he said: "I did not call. Lie down again." So he went and lay down. Jehovah called once again: "Samuel!" At this Samuel got up and went to Eli and said: "Here I am, for you called me." But he said: "I did not call, my son. Lie down again." (Now Samuel had not yet come to know Jehovah, and the word of Jehovah had not yet been revealed to him.)

w18.09 24 paragraph 3

Samuel began "ministering to Jehovah" at the tabernacle at a very early age. (1 Samuel 3:1) One night after Samuel had retired, something most unusual happened. (Read 1 Samuel 3:2-10.) He heard a voice call him by name. Thinking that it

was the voice of the aged High Priest Eli, Samuel obediently ran to him and said: "Here I am, for you called me." Eli denied doing so. When the same thing happened two more times, Eli realized that it was God who was calling Samuel. So he told the boy how to respond, and Samuel obeyed. Why did Jehovah, by means of his angel, not reveal himself to Samuel on the first occasion? The Bible does not say, but the way events unfolded suggests that consideration for young Samuel was an important factor. How so?

Jehovah made it clear that He was calling Samuel

1 Samuel 3:8, 9: So Jehovah called again, a third time: "Samuel!" At that he got up and went to Eli and said: "Here I am, for you called me." Eli then realized that it was Jehovah who was calling the boy. So Eli said to Samuel: "Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you should say, 'Speak, Jehovah, for your servant is listening.'" And Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Jehovah showed kind consideration for young Samuel

1 Samuel 3:15-18: Samuel lay down until the morning; then he opened the doors of Jehovah's house. Samuel was afraid to tell Eli of the vision. But Eli called for Samuel: "Samuel, my son!" At this he said: "Here I am." He asked: "What message did he speak to you? Please, do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and add to it if you hide from me a single word of all that he said to you." So Samuel told him everything, and he did not hide anything from him. Eli said: "It is Jehovah. Let him do what is good in his eyes."

w18.09 24 paragraph 4

Read 1 Samuel 3:11-18. Jehovah's Law commanded children to respect the aged, especially a chieftain. (Exodus 22:28; Leviticus 19:32) Can you imagine Samuel going up to Eli in the morning and boldly telling him God's stinging judgment message? Of course not! Indeed, the account tells us that Samuel "was afraid to tell Eli of the vision." However, God made clear to Eli that He was calling Samuel. As a result, Eli took charge of the situation and told Samuel to speak. "[Do not] hide from me a single word of all that he said to you," Eli commanded. Samuel obediently "told him everything."

[Image:] Collage: 1. Young Samuel listens as Jehovah speaks to him. 2. Samuel delivers Jehovah's message to Eli.

Ask Yourself: 'In what ways can I show consideration for younger ones and older ones? How can I show consideration for others at Christian meetings?'

Spiritual Gems

1 Samuel 3:3—How do we know that Samuel did not sleep in the Most Holy?

1 Samuel 3:3: The lamp of God had not yet been extinguished, and Samuel was lying in the temple of Jehovah, where the Ark of God was.

w05 3/15 21 paragraph 6

Did Samuel actually sleep in the Most Holy? No, he did not. Samuel was a Levite of the nonpriestly family of the Kohathites. (1 Chronicles 6:33-38) As such, he was not permitted to "come in to see the holy things." (Numbers 4:17-20) The only part of the sanctuary that Samuel had access to was the tabernacle courtyard. That is where he must have slept. Apparently, Eli also slept

somewhere in the courtyard. The expression “where the ark of God was” evidently refers to the tabernacle area.

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) 1 Samuel 3:1-18 (*th* study 10)

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

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

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INCREASE YOUR JOY IN THE MINISTRY

Help Bible Students to Avoid Bad Associations

To gain Jehovah’s friendship, Bible students must select good associates. (Ps 15:1, 4) Good associates will influence them to do what is right.—Pr 13:20; *Iff* lesson 48.

When helping your Bible students to avoid bad associations, be empathetic. They may struggle to give up friends in the world. Therefore, show genuine personal interest in them between Bible studies. This may involve a text message, a phone call, or a short visit. As your students progress, you can include them in association with God’s people. Then they will clearly see that they are gaining far more than they are losing. (Mr 10:29, 30) You too will find joy as you see Jehovah’s family increase.

WATCH THE VIDEO DRAMATIZATION *HELP YOUR BIBLE STUDENTS TO AVOID BAD ASSOCIATIONS*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- What are bad associations?—1Co 15:33

- How did Jade imagine what a Christian gathering would be like?

- How did Neeta help Jade to replace bad associations?



SAMPLE CONVERSATIONS

Initial Call*

Question: How do we know that God cares about us as individuals?

Scripture: Mt 10:29-31

Link: How does God help us to cope with present problems?

▶ FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



• wp18.3 4

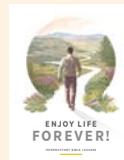
Return Visit*

Question: How does God help us to cope with present problems?

Scripture: Jer 29:11

Link: How can the Bible guide us?

▶ FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



• lffi 7

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



Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry

Bible Study: (5 minutes) *lffi* lesson 03 point 6 (*th* study 14)

6. The Bible foretold things we see today

The Bible refers to our time as “the last days.” (2 Timothy 3:1)
Notice what the Bible foretold about this time period.

Read Matthew 24:6, 7, and then discuss this question:

- What significant conditions did the Bible say would exist during the last days?

Matthew 24:6, 7: You are going to hear of wars and reports of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for these things must take place, but the end is not yet. “For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be food shortages and earthquakes in one place after another.

Read 2 Timothy 3:1-5, and then discuss these questions:

- What common attitudes of people during the last days did the Bible describe?
- Which of these attitudes have you observed?

2 Timothy 3:1-5: But know this, that in the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God, having an appearance of godliness but proving false to its power; and from these turn away.

30 *My Father, My God and Friend* (Hebrews 6:10)

1. Life in this world can be hard.

Life in this world can bring tears and pain.
Still ev'ry day I will say,
"My life is not in vain."

(CHORUS)

*For God is not unrighteous,
And he remembers the love I've shown.
So he is ever near me;
With Jehovah, I'm not alone.
Yes, God is my provider
and my protector down to the end.
Yes, Jehovah is my Father,
My God and Friend.*

2. Gone are the days of my youth;
Days of calamity now are here.
Still through the eyes of my faith,
My hope is bright and clear.

(Chorus)

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

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

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Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

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Initial Call: (3 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Offer a Bible study using the *Enjoy Life Forever!* brochure. (11)

Return Visit: (4 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Offer the *Enjoy Life Forever!* brochure, and start a Bible study in lesson 01. (15)

Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 03 point 6 (14)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 30

“Lessons From Samuel’s Life”: (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Learn From Them—Samuel* (video category FAMILY).

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr* chap. 20 ¶9-17, box 20A

 Jehovah Is Considerate

Samuel thought that Eli was calling him (1Sa 3:4-7; w18.09 24 ¶3)

Jehovah made it clear that He was calling Samuel (1Sa 3:8, 9)

Jehovah showed kind consideration for young Samuel (1Sa 3:15-18; w18.09 24 ¶4)

ASK YOURSELF: ‘In what ways can I show consideration for younger ones and older ones? How can I show consideration for others at Christian meetings?’





Lessons From Samuel's Life



Samuel remained faithful to Jehovah throughout his life. As a boy, he refused to become corrupt like Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas. (1Sa 2:22-26) Samuel continued growing up, and Jehovah remained with him. (1Sa 3:19) As an older man, he continued to walk in Jehovah's way, even though his sons did not.—1Sa 8:1-5.

What can Samuel's example teach us? If you are a young person, be confident that Jehovah understands the challenges you face and how you feel. He can help you to be courageous. (Isa 41:10, 13) If you are a parent whose child has gone astray, find comfort in knowing that Samuel could not force his adult sons to remain loyal to Jehovah's standards. While leaving the matter in Jehovah's hands, he maintained his own integrity and pleased his heavenly Father, Jehovah. Perhaps your good example will move your child to return to Jehovah.

WATCH THE VIDEO *LEARN FROM THEM—SAMUEL*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- How did Samuel show courage as a boy?

- How did Danny show courage?

- How did Samuel set a good example as an older man?

- How did Danny's parents set a good example?



Jehovah supports those who remain firm for what is right ►

Learn From Them—Samuel

[Younger brother speaks]

Samuel was only my age when Jehovah spoke to him. He respected Eli, but he had to stand up for what was right.

I never thought that I'd have to do something similar. I loved my brother, and I always wanted to be like him. But those pictures of him partying with kids from school showed he was living a double life.

I didn't want to get him in trouble. But I knew I had to say something.

I told him he had to tell Mom and Dad. He warned me not to tell. But Samuel was courageous and "did not hide anything," and "Jehovah himself was with him."

I couldn't hide this.

Talking to my parents wasn't easy, but I knew it was the right thing to do.

[Father] Of course, we were proud of Danny.

[Mother] But at the time, we were a little distracted.

[Father] Maybe, somehow it was all just a misunderstanding. We needed to know what was going on.

[Mother] We just wanted to help him.

[Father] We couldn't help but blame ourselves for what was happening. Then we thought back to Samuel's example.

[Video about Samuel] Samuel, you need to listen to us. You're getting old, Samuel, and your sons are not like you. They cheat, and they take bribes. They bend Jehovah's rules any way they please.

[Mother] Even faithful Samuel had sons who deviated from Jehovah's standards.

[Father] We wanted to help our son. Just as Samuel didn't alter his course and Jehovah stood by him, we knew that if we did things His way, He'd stand by us.

natural nation of Israel with a spiritual nation but also the physical land of Israel with a spiritual land, or paradise. (Isa. 66:8) As we saw in Chapter 17 of this publication, the spiritual land is the secure spiritual environment, or realm of activity, in which the remnant of the anointed ones have been worshipping Jehovah since 1919. (See box 9B, “Why 1919?”) As time progressed, those with an earthly hope, the “other sheep,” also began to settle in this spiritual land. (John 10:16) While the spiritual paradise continues to develop and expand today, its blessings will be experienced to the fullest extent only after Armageddon.

Dividing the Land Evenly and Precisely

9 **Read Ezekiel 48:1, 28.** After having established the outer boundaries of the land, Jehovah described in detail how to allot the land itself. He directed that the 12 tribal inheritances be laid out evenly and precisely from north to south, starting with the tribe of Dan at the northern tip of the land and ending with the tribe of Gad at the southernmost boundary. Each of the 12 inheritances consisted of a horizontal strip

9. What detailed instructions did Jehovah give about the allotment of the land itself?

of territory stretching from the land's outer boundary in the east to the Great Sea, or the Mediterranean Sea, in the west.—Ezek. 47:20.

¹⁰ What assurances did this part of the vision likely convey to the exiles? The detailed description that Ezekiel gave of the land allotment must have impressed on the exiles that the dividing of the land would be a well-organized project. Moreover, the precise division of the land among all 12 tribes underlined that every one of the returned exiles would receive a secure inheritance in the restored land. No one would return only to end up landless or homeless.

¹¹ What strengthening lessons can we draw from this vision today? The restored Promised Land had a place not only for the priests, the Levites, and the chieftains but also for all other members of the 12 tribes. (Ezek. 45:4, 5, 7, 8) Similarly today, the spiritual paradise has a place not only for the anointed remnant and for those among the “great crowd” who

10. What assurances did this part of the vision likely convey to the exiles?

11. What lessons can we draw from the prophetic vision of the land allotment? (See the box “The Allotment of the Land.”)

take the lead but also for all other members of the great crowd.*^[1] (Rev. 7:9) No matter how modest our role in the organization may be, we have a secure place and a valuable assignment in the spiritual land. What a heartwarming assurance!

Two Significant Differences—What Do They Mean for Us?

¹² Some of Jehovah’s instructions about the allotting of land might have puzzled Ezekiel because they differed from those that God had given Moses. Consider two such differences. One has to do with the land; the other, with its inhabitants.

¹³ *First, the land.* Moses had been instructed to give the larger tribes more land than the smaller ones. (Num. 26:52-54) However, in Ezekiel’s vision, Jehovah gave specific instructions to assign all tribes “*equal shares* [“each like his brother,” ftn.]” (Ezek. 47:14) Thus, the distance from the northern border to the southern border in a tribal inheritance was to be ex-

*[1] For a consideration of the special place and assignment that Jehovah has set apart for the priesthood and the chieftain in the spiritual land, see Chapter 14 of this publication.

12, 13. What specific instructions did Jehovah give about assigning the tribes shares in the land?

actly the same in each of the 12 allotments. All Israelites—no matter which tribe they belonged to—would have equal access to the natural bounty that the well-watered Promised Land was capable of producing.

¹⁴ *Second, the inhabitants.* The Mosaic Law protected foreigners and allowed them to share in worshipping Jehovah, but they had no share in the land. (Lev. 19:33, 34) However, what Jehovah now told Ezekiel went beyond what He had stated in the Law. Jehovah instructed him: “Give the foreign resident an *inheritance* in the territory of the tribe where he has taken up residence.” With that command, Jehovah swept away a major difference between the “native-born Israelites” and the foreign residents in the land. (Ezek. 47:22, 23) In the restored land that Ezekiel saw in vision, he observed among its inhabitants equality and unity in worship.—Lev. 25:23.

¹⁵ These two remarkable instructions that Ezekiel received about the land and its people must have reassured the exiles. They knew that Jehovah would

14. How did Jehovah’s instructions regarding the foreign residents go beyond what had been stated in the Mosaic Law?

15. What eternal truth about Jehovah was confirmed by his instructions about the land and its inhabitants?

allot an equal place to them, whether they were Israelites by birth or were foreigners who worshipped Jehovah. (Ezra 8:20; Neh. 3:26; 7:6, 25; Isa. 56:3, 8) These instructions also confirmed the uplifting and eternal truth that to Jehovah, all his servants are equally precious. **(Read Haggai 2:7.)** Today, whether we have a heavenly hope or an earthly one, we cherish that same truth.

¹⁶ How do we benefit from considering these details about the land and the inhabitants? We are reminded that equality and unity need to be outstanding features of our worldwide brotherhood today. Jehovah is not partial. We need to ask ourselves: ‘Do I reflect Jehovah’s impartiality? Do I treat each fellow worshipper with heartfelt respect, no matter what his racial background or circumstances in life may be?’ (Rom. 12:10) We rejoice that Jehovah has given all of us equal access to the spiritual paradise, where we render whole-souled sacred service to our heavenly Father and enjoy his blessings.—Gal. 3:26-29; Rev. 7:9.

16, 17. (a) How do we benefit from considering the details about the land and the inhabitants? (b) What will we consider in the following chapter?

¹⁷ Let us now consider the fourth assurance given in the final part of Ezekiel’s last vision—the promise that Jehovah would be with the exiles. What lessons can we learn from that promise? We will find the answer in the following chapter.

YOUR PLACE IN PURE WORSHIP

- 1** Why do you believe that a spiritual paradise exists today?
- 2** Why can you be sure that you have a secure place and a valuable assignment in the spiritual paradise?
- 3** What does the prophetic vision of the land allotment teach you about Jehovah?

THE ALLOTMENT OF THE LAND

.....
SEE PARAGRAPHS 5-11

The description of the precisely measured boundaries reassured the exiles that their beloved land would definitely be restored. What lessons can we today draw from this vision? Consider two aspects of the vision:

A secure place and a valuable assignment

Each individual among the returned exiles would have an inheritance in the restored Promised Land. Similarly today, the spiritual paradise has a place for all of Jehovah's servants. No matter how modest our role in the organization may be, we have a secure place and a valuable assignment in the spiritual land. To Jehovah, all his servants are equally precious.

Equal allotments

In Ezekiel's vision, each territory in the restored Promised Land provided its inhabitants equal access to the bounty of the land. Similarly today, Jehovah has given all his servants equal access to the blessings of the spiritual paradise.

DAN

ASHER

NAPHTALI

MANASSEH

EPHRAIM

REUBEN

JUDAH

THE CONTRIBUTION

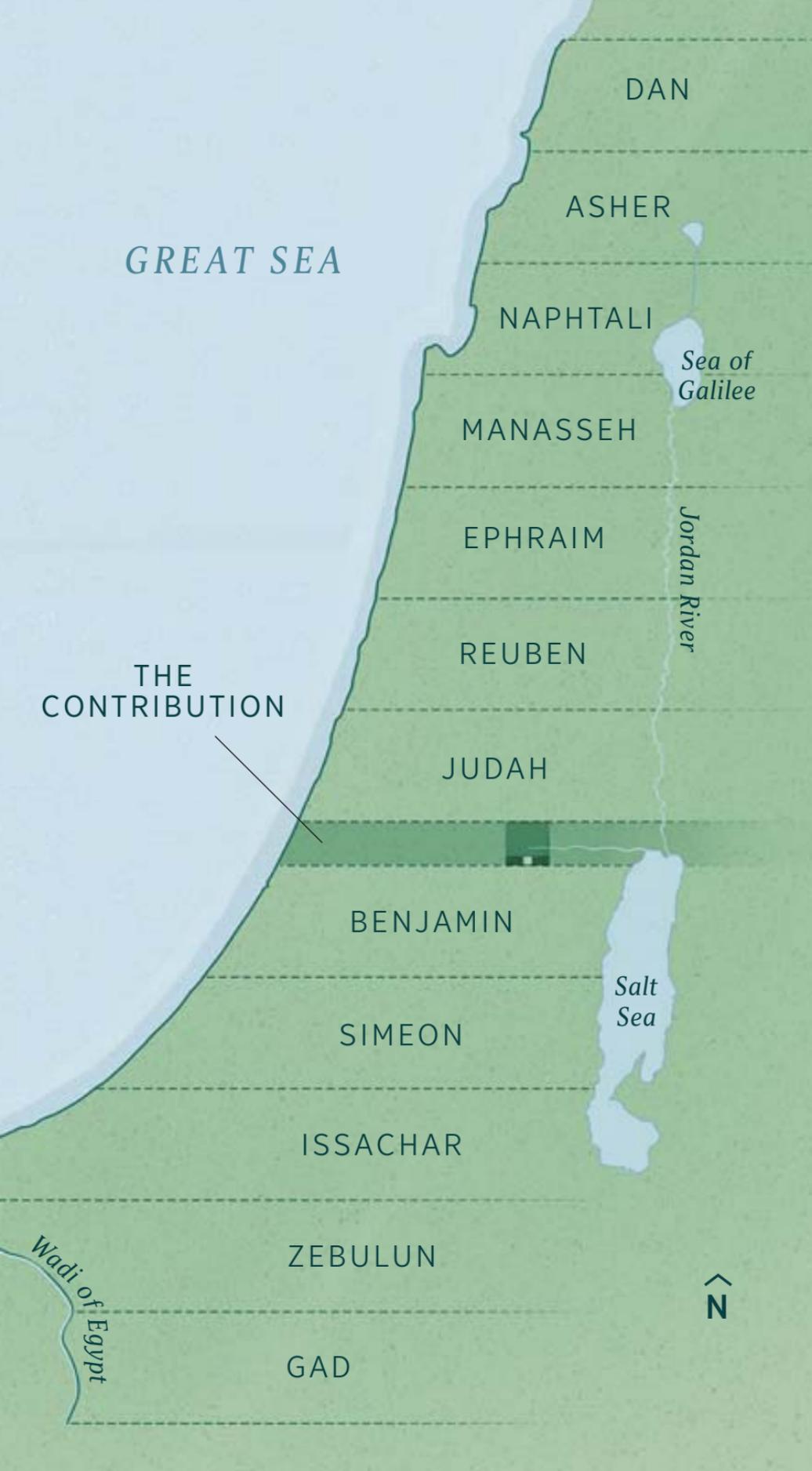
BENJAMIN

SIMEON

ISSACHAR

ZEBULUN

GAD



DAN

ASHER

GREAT SEA

NAPHTALI

Sea of Galilee

MANASSEH

Jordan River

EPHRAIM

REUBEN

THE CONTRIBUTION

JUDAH

BENJAMIN

Salt Sea

SIMEON

ISSACHAR

ZEBULUN

GAD

Wadi of Egypt



Myriads of Brothers

(Revelation 7:9, 10)

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

DECEMBER 2021

THE  **WATCHTOWER**
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



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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)

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3

Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

(Proverbs 14:26)

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

(CHORUS)

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

Whatever we lack, you supply.

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

because it's on you we rely.

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

(Chorus)

Listen to the Voice of the Fine Shepherd

“They will listen to my voice.”—JOHN 10:16.

SONG 3

Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

PREVIEW

When Jesus said that his sheep would listen to his voice, he meant that his disciples would listen to his teachings and apply them in their life. In this article, we will consider two outstanding teachings of Jesus, namely, to stop being anxious about material things and to stop judging others. We will discuss how we can apply his counsel.

JESUS compared his relationship with his followers to the close bond between a shepherd and his sheep. (John 10:14) That comparison is appropriate. The sheep know their shepherd and respond to his voice. A traveler experienced this firsthand. He reported: “We wanted to film some sheep and tried to make them come near. But they did not follow us because they did not know our voices. Then a small shepherd boy came along; hardly had he called them when they followed along.”

² The experience of that traveler reminds us of Jesus’ words regarding his sheep—his disciples. He said: “They will listen to my voice.” (John 10:16) But Jesus is in heaven. How can we say that we are listening to him? A key way we show that we are listening to our Master’s voice is by applying his teachings in our life.—Matt. 7:24, 25.

³ In this article and in the next, we will consider some of Jesus’ teachings. As we will see, Jesus taught us that we *should stop doing* certain things and that we *should do* other things. We will first

1. What is one reason why Jesus may have likened his followers to sheep?

2-3. (a) How do Jesus’ followers show that they are listening to his voice? (b) What will we consider in this article and in the next?

consider two things in particular that the fine shepherd instructs us to stop doing.

“STOP BEING IN ANXIOUS SUSPENSE”

⁴ **Read Luke 12:29.** Jesus urged his followers to “stop being in anxious suspense” about their material needs. We know that Jesus’ counsel is always wise and right. We want to apply it, but at times we might find it quite challenging to do so. Why?

⁵ Some may be anxious about their material needs—food, clothing, and shelter. They may live in a country with poor economic conditions. It may be difficult for them to earn enough money to care for their family. Or the breadwinner in the family may have died, leaving the rest of the family without financial support. The COVID-19 pandemic may have resulted in the loss of jobs and income. (Eccl. 9:11) If we have experienced any of these or other challenges, how can we follow Jesus’ direction to *stop* being anxious?

⁶ On one occasion, the apostle Peter and the other apostles were in a boat on the Sea of Galilee during a windstorm when they saw Jesus walking on

-
4. According to Luke 12:29, what can cause “anxious suspense”?
 5. Why may some become anxious about their material needs?
 6. Describe what happened to the apostle Peter on one occasion.

the surface of the water. Peter said: “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you over the waters.” After Jesus invited him to “come,” Peter got out of the boat and “walked over the waters and went toward Jesus.” Notice what happened next. “Looking at the windstorm, he became afraid. And when he started to sink, he cried out: ‘Lord, save me!’” Jesus stretched out his hand and saved him. Significantly, Peter was able to walk on turbulent waters as long as he kept his focus on Jesus. But when Peter looked at the storm, he became

Rather than figuratively sink into anxiety
over material things, build confidence in Jehovah
(See paragraphs 6-8)



overwhelmed with fear and doubt and began to sink.—Matt. 14:24-31.

⁷ We can learn from Peter's example. When Peter stepped out of the boat and onto the sea, he did not expect to get distracted and start sinking. He wanted to stay on top of the waters until he reached his Master. But he failed to remain focused on that goal. Granted, we cannot walk on water, but we do face tests of faith. If we lose sight of Jehovah and his promises, we will begin to sink spiritually. No matter what figurative storms come up in our life, we must keep our mind focused on Jehovah and his ability to help us. How can we do that?

⁸ We will benefit from replacing anxiety with confidence. Remember that our loving Father, Jehovah, guarantees that he will care for our material needs if we put spiritual things first. (Matt. 6:32, 33) He has a perfect record of fulfilling that promise. (Deut. 8:4, 15, 16; Ps. 37:25) If Jehovah provides for the birds and the flowers, surely we do not have to be anxious about what we will eat or wear! (Matt. 6:26-30; Phil. 4:6, 7) Just as love impels caring parents to provide materially for their children,

7. What can we learn from Peter's example?

8. What can help us to avoid becoming overly distracted by our material needs?

love motivates our heavenly Father to care for the material needs of his people. Yes, we can be certain that Jehovah will look after us!

⁹ Consider an experience that illustrates how Jehovah can care for our material needs. A couple in full-time service drove over an hour in their old car to pick up some sisters living at a refugee center and take them to a Christian meeting. The brother explained: “After the meeting, we invited the sisters for a meal, but then we realized that we had nothing to offer them.” What would the couple do? The brother continued: “When we arrived home, there sat two big shopping bags of food in front of our door. We did not know who had left them there. Jehovah took care of us.” Sometime later, the couple’s car broke down. They needed it for their ministry; however, they had no money to repair it. While the car was being looked over at a nearby garage, a man came in and asked: “Whose car is that?” The brother said that it was his and that it needed repair. The man replied: “That does not matter. My wife wants this type of car and exactly in that color. How much do you want for it?” The brother ended up with enough money to buy another car. He concluded: “I do not need to explain how

9. What can you learn from the experience of one couple?

we felt at the end of the day. We knew that this was no coincidence. It was Jehovah's hand."

¹⁰ When we listen to the fine shepherd and stop being unduly anxious about material needs, we can be sure that Jehovah will provide for us. (Read Psalm 37:5; 1 Pet. 5:7) Consider the situations mentioned in paragraph 5. Until now, Jehovah may have used a family head or an employer to help us care for our daily needs. If the family head is no longer able to do so or if we lose our job, Jehovah will take care of us in some other way. He will provide. Let us now consider something else that the fine shepherd urges us to *stop* doing.

“STOP JUDGING”

¹¹ Read Matthew 7:1, 2. Jesus knew that his imperfect listeners tended to be critical of others. Note that he said: “*Stop* judging.” We may try hard not to judge fellow believers. Yet, we are all imperfect. If we find that at times we are being critical, what should we do? Listen to Jesus, and work hard to *stop* judging.

10. How does Psalm 37:5 encourage us not to be anxious about our material needs?

11. According to Matthew 7:1, 2, what did Jesus tell us to stop doing, and why can this be a challenge?

¹² We can benefit from meditating on Jehovah's example. He focuses on the good in people. We see this in his dealings with King David, a man who made serious mistakes. For example, he committed adultery with Bath-sheba, and he even had her husband killed. (2 Sam. 11:2-4, 14, 15, 24) As a result, David hurt not only himself but also his family, including his other wives. (2 Sam. 12:10, 11) On another occasion, David failed to manifest full reliance on Jehovah when he ordered an illegal registration of Israel's army. He may have been motivated by pride and trust in the size of his army. What was the outcome? Some 70,000 Israelites died from pestilence!—2 Sam. 24:1-4, 10-15.

¹³ If you had lived in Israel at that time, how would you have viewed David? Would you have judged him to be unworthy of Jehovah's mercy? Jehovah did not. He focused on David's overall record of faithfulness and his sincere repentance. As a result, Jehovah forgave David for these serious sins. Jehovah knew that David loved him very much and wanted to do what was right. Are you not grateful that our God looks for the good in us?—1 Ki. 9:4; 1 Chron. 29:10, 17.

12-13. How can meditating on Jehovah's view of King David help us to stop judging others?



Looking beyond appearances can help us to stop judging
(See paragraphs 11, 14-16)



14 If Jehovah makes allowances for imperfect humans, surely we can make allowances for one another and look for the good in others. It is usually quite easy to pick out the imperfections of others and to be critical. However, a spiritual person may see those imperfections and still work along well with others. A rough diamond may be unsightly, but a perceptive person will look beyond its rough exterior and see the value it will have once it is cut

14. What outlook has helped Christians to stop judging others?

and polished. Like Jehovah and Jesus, we need to look beyond appearances and see people's good qualities.

¹⁵ In addition to focusing on others' good qualities, what can help us not to judge them harshly? Try to imagine what their life is like. Consider this example. One day at the temple, Jesus saw a needy widow drop two coins of little value into a treasury chest. He did not ask: "Why did she not put in more?" Instead of focusing on the amount the widow gave, Jesus considered her motives and circumstances and praised her for doing all she could. —Luke 21:1-4.

¹⁶ We can illustrate the value of considering the circumstances of others by examining the experience of a sister named Veronica. In the congregation where she served were a single mother and her son. Veronica admitted: "It seemed to me that they were not very involved in congregation activities. Because of this, I viewed them negatively. But then I shared in the ministry with the mother. She explained the difficulties she was facing with her autistic son. She was doing her best to care for their

15. How can considering people's circumstances help us not to judge them harshly?

16. What can you learn from Veronica's experience?

physical and spiritual needs. At times, because of her son's health, she found it necessary to attend a meeting of another congregation." Veronica concluded: "I never realized that it was such a challenge for her. I now appreciate and respect this sister so much for all that she does to serve Jehovah."

¹⁷ What should we do if we detect that we have judged a fellow believer? We must remember that we are to love our brothers. (Read James 2:8.) We should also earnestly pray to Jehovah, begging him to help us to stop judging. We can work in harmony with our prayers by taking the initiative to speak with the person we have been critical of. That may allow us to get to know him. We might ask him to work with us in the field ministry or to join us for a meal. As we get to know our brother better, we can try to follow the example of Jehovah and Jesus by looking for the good in him. In this way, we show that we are listening to the fine shepherd's command to *stop* judging.

¹⁸ Just as literal sheep listen to the voice of their shepherd, Jesus' followers listen to his voice. If we strive to stop being anxious about our material

17. What does James 2:8 instruct us to do, and how can we do so?

18. How can we show that we are listening to the voice of the fine shepherd?

needs and to stop judging others, Jehovah and Jesus will bless our efforts. Whether we are part of the “little flock” or the “other sheep,” may we continue to listen to and obey the voice of the fine shepherd. (Luke 12:32; John 10:11, 14, 16) In the next article, we will consider two things that Jesus told his followers they should do.

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Page 35: A brother has lost his employment, is short of money for the family, and needs to find housing. He could easily become so anxious that he loses sight of his worship of God.

Page 40: A brother arrives late for the meeting. But he shows fine qualities as he witnesses informally, offers practical help to an older person, and works to keep the Kingdom Hall presentable.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- How can we stop being anxious about our material needs?
- What can help us to stop judging others?
- How have you benefited from considering this article?

101 *Working Together in Unity*

(Ephesians 4:3)

1. From a world divided and cold,
 God has brought us into his fold.
 Unity and peace we possess,
 Bringing us happiness.
 Unity we cherish;
 Harmony is sweet.
 In God's work there's much to be done.
 He directs us now through his Son.
 May we serve obediently,
 Working in harmony.
2. As we pray to be of one mind,
 Always tender, loving, and kind,
 Love will grow and praise will increase,
 Giving us joy and peace.
 Peace is so refreshing,
 Bringing such delight.
 As we show true brotherly love,
 God will grant us peace from above.
 With his help, united we'll be,
 Serving him endlessly.