

## Sunday, May 1

*He continued subject to them.*

—*Luke 2:51.*

Early in his human life, Jesus chose to be submissive to his parents. He never rejected his parents' direction, reasoning that he knew more than they did. Jesus no doubt took his responsibility as the oldest son seriously. He surely worked hard to learn a trade from his adoptive father so that he could help support his family. Jesus' parents likely told him about his miraculous birth and what God's messengers had said about him. (Luke 2: 8-19, 25-38) Jesus was not satisfied with what he was told; he also studied the Scriptures for himself. How do we know that Jesus was a good student of God's Word? Because while he was still a boy, the teachers in Jerusalem were "in constant amazement at his understanding and his answers." (Luke 2:46, 47) And at only 12 years of age, Jesus had already proved to himself that Jehovah was his Father.—Luke 2:42, 43, 49. *w20.10* 29-30 ¶13-14

## Monday, May 2

*Christ has been raised from the dead.—1 Cor. 15:12.*

Belief in the resurrection of Jesus is central to our Christian hope. Early in the apostle Paul's discussion of the resurrection, he brought up three realities. They are (1) "Christ died for our sins." (2) He "was buried." (3) He "was raised up on the third day according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. 15:3, 4) What do Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection mean for us? The prophet Isaiah foretold that the Messi-

ah would be "cut off from the land of the living" and be "given a burial place with the wicked." More was involved, though. Isaiah added that the Messiah would carry "the sin of many people." Jesus did this by providing the ransom. (Isa. 53:8, 9, 12; Matt. 20:28; Rom. 5:8) So the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus provide a solid basis for our hope of being set free from sin and death and being reunited with our loved ones who have died. *w20.12* 2-3 ¶4-6; 5 ¶11

## Tuesday, May 3

*I, if anyone, do have grounds for confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinks he has grounds for confidence in the flesh, I have more.*  
—*Phil. 3:4.*

The apostle Paul preached often in Jewish synagogues. In the synagogue in Thessalonica, for example, "for three sabbaths he reasoned with [the Jews] from the Scriptures." (Acts 17:1, 2) Paul likely felt comfortable in the synagogue. He was raised as a Jew. (Acts 26:4, 5) Paul could relate to the Jews, so he was able to preach to them with confidence. (Phil. 3:5) After Paul was forced by persecutors to flee Thessalonica and then Beroea, he arrived in Athens. Once again, "he began to reason in the synagogue with the Jews and the other people who worshipped God." (Acts 17:17) While preaching in the marketplace, however, Paul now had a different audience. Among his listeners were philosophers and other Gentiles who viewed Paul's message as a "new teaching." They said to him: "You are introducing some things that are strange to our ears."—Acts 17:18-20. *w20.04* 9 ¶5-6

### Wednesday, May 4

*When I wish to do what is right,  
what is bad is present with me.*

—Rom. 7:21.

Do not condemn yourself if you are struggling with a weakness. Remember that none of us can earn a righteous standing before God. We all need God's undeserved kindness by means of the ransom. (Eph. 1:7; 1 John 4:10) And we can turn to our brothers and sisters—our spiritual family—for encouragement! They may provide a listening ear when we need to talk and offer reassuring words that can cheer us up. (Prov. 12:25; 1 Thess. 5:14) Joy, a sister in Nigeria who has battled with discouragement, says: "Where would I be without the brotherhood? My brothers and sisters are proof that Jehovah answers my prayers. I have even learned from them how to encourage others who are downhearted." We need to keep in mind, though, that our brothers and sisters may not always know when we need encouragement. So we may need to take the initiative to approach a mature fellow believer and open up about our need for help. *w20.12 23-24 ¶7-8*

### Thursday, May 5

*I have called you friends.*

—John 15:15.

Usually, the first step in building a close friendship with someone you meet is to spend time with the person. As you talk to each other, sharing thoughts and experiences, you become friends. When it comes to building a close friendship with Jesus, however, we face challenges. One of them is that we have not met Jesus personally. Many Christians in the first century faced the same

challenge. Even so, the apostle Peter observed: "Though you never saw him, you love him. Though you do not see him now, yet you exercise faith in him." (1 Pet. 1:8) So it is possible to form a close relationship with Jesus without having met him personally. Also, we are not able to speak to Jesus. When we pray, we direct our thoughts to Jehovah. True, we do pray in Jesus' name, but we do not talk directly to him. In fact, Jesus does not want us to pray to him. Why not? Because prayer is a form of worship, and only Jehovah should be worshipped. (Matt. 4:10) Even so, we can express our love for Jesus. *w20.04 20 ¶1-3*

### Friday, May 6

*[God] will make you firm, he will  
make you strong.—1 Pet. 5:10.*

The runners in the Greek games had to overcome challenges, such as tiredness and pain. But all they had to rely on was their training and their own strength. We are like those runners in that we receive training in how to run the race we are in. But we have an advantage over the literal runners. We can draw on an unlimited source of power. If we rely on Jehovah, he promises not only to train us but also to make us strong! The apostle Paul had to deal with many challenges. In addition to being insulted and persecuted by others, he at times felt weak and he had to cope with what he called "a thorn in the flesh." (2 Cor. 12:7) But rather than view those challenges as a reason for giving up, he saw them as an opportunity to rely on Jehovah. (2 Cor. 12:9, 10) Because Paul adopted this viewpoint, Jehovah helped him through all his trials. *w20.04 29 ¶13-14*

## Saturday, May 7

*No man can come to me unless the Father . . . draws him.—John 6:44.*

We have the unseen treasure of “working together” with Jehovah and the heavenly part of his organization. (2 Cor. 6:1) We do so whenever we share in the disciple-making work. Paul said of himself and those who share in this work: “We are God’s fellow workers.” (1 Cor. 3:9) When we participate in the Christian ministry, we are also Jesus’ fellow workers. Recall that after commanding his followers to “make disciples of people of all the nations,” Jesus said: “I am with you.” (Matt. 28:19, 20) And what about the angels? What a blessing it is to be directed by angels as we declare “everlasting good news . . . to those who dwell on the earth”! (Rev. 14:6) With such heavenly support, what is being accomplished? As we sow the Kingdom message, some seeds fall on receptive hearts and grow. (Matt. 13:18, 23) Who causes those seeds of truth to grow and become fruitful? Jesus explains that in today’s text. *w20.05 30 ¶14-15*

## Sunday, May 8

*Stop being molded by this system of things.—Rom. 12:2.*

Millions of families today have been divided by divorce. Even families who stay in the same house may become virtual strangers. “Mom, dad, and the kids are all disconnected from each other and connected to a computer screen, tablet, smartphone, or video game console,” says one family counselor. “Although these families live under the same roof, they barely know each other.” We do not want to be molded by the world’s loveless spirit. Instead, we

need to cultivate tender affection not only for our family members but also for those who are related to us in the faith. (Rom. 12:10) What is tender affection? It is a term that specifically describes the warm friendship between close family members. That is the kind of love we should cultivate for our spiritual family, our Christian brothers and sisters. When we show tender affection, we help maintain the unity that is a vital part of true worship.—Mic. 2:12. *w21.01 20 ¶1-2*

## Monday, May 9

*Unify my heart to fear your name.—Ps. 86:11.*

A sports team that is united is more likely to have success than one that is not. Your heart can be like that successful team if your thoughts, desires, and emotions are united in serving Jehovah. Remember, Satan would love to divide your heart. He wants your thoughts, desires, and emotions to be at odds and in conflict with Jehovah’s standards. You, however, need your heart to be whole in order for you to serve Jehovah. (Matt. 22:36-38) Never let Satan divide your heart! Pray to Jehovah as did David: “Unify my heart to fear your name.” Make it your aim to live up to that prayer. Each day, be determined that your decisions, from small to great, show that you hold Jehovah’s holy name in profound awe. In so doing, as one of Jehovah’s Witnesses, you will reflect well on that name. (Prov. 27:11) And all of us will be able to say, along with the prophet Micah: “We will walk in the name of Jehovah our God forever and ever.”—Mic. 4:5. *w20.06 13 ¶17-18*

## Song 71 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)


**TREASURES  
FROM GOD'S WORD**

“David’s War Strategy”: (10 min.)

**Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)

1Sa 28:15—Whom did Saul “see” on this occasion? (w10 1/1 20 ¶5-6)

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 27:1-12 (5)


**APPLY YOURSELF  
TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

**Initial Call Video:** (5 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Initial Call: Suffering—Jas 1:13* (video category OUR MEETINGS AND MINISTRY).

Stop the video at each pause, and ask the audience the questions that appear in the video.

**Initial Call:** (3 min.) Use the sample conversation. (1)

**Initial Call:** (5 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer the *Enjoy Life Forever!* brochure, and introduce (but do not play) the video *Why Study the Bible?* (6)


**LIVING  
AS CHRISTIANS**

**Song 129**

**Firm Under Opposition:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video (video category OUR ORGANIZATION). Then ask the audience: What do we learn from the example of our brothers in Nazi Germany? What do we learn from the example of our brothers in Russia and the former Soviet Union?

**Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.)  
*lff* lesson 02


**David’s War Strategy**

David sought escape from Saul (1Sa 27:5-7; *it-1* 41)

David protected Judah’s boundaries (1Sa 27:8, 9; w21.03 4 ¶8)

David did not reveal complete details to Achish (1Sa 27:10-12; *it-2* 245 ¶6)

In our day, the authorities may restrict our Kingdom activity and question us about our brothers. At such times, it is wise to remain silent so as not to put our brothers at risk.—Pr 10:19; 11:12; Ec 3:7.



# We Are Jehovah's Army!

(Joel 2:7)

E $\flat$  Gm7 F $\sharp$ ° Fm7 B $\flat$ 7 E $\flat$  F $\sharp$ °

We are Je - ho - vah's ar - my, Un - der Christ, his  
 We are Je - ho - vah's ser - vants, Search - ing for his  
 We are Je - ho - vah's ar - my, Un - der Christ's com -

E $\flat$ /G E $\flat$  Gm7 F $\sharp$ ° Gm C $\sharp$ °

Son. Though we're op - posed by Sa - tan,  
 sheep, Those who are lost and scat - tered,  
 mand, Ful - ly e - quipped for bat - tle,

B $\flat$ /D C $\sharp$ ° F/C F7sus4 F7 B $\flat$  Fm7 Gm/B $\flat$  B $\flat$ 7/A $\flat$

We are march - ing as one. We keep serv - ing  
 Those who sigh and who weep. These we try to  
 Each one firm - ly will stand. Cau - tious though we

E $\flat$ /G Cm Fm/A $\flat$  Cm/G G Cm

faith - ful - ly, Preach - ing far and near;  
 find and feed With re - peat - ed calls;  
 need to be, Up - right we re - main.

# We Are Jehovah's Army!

B $\flat$ /D C $\sharp$ ° F7/C B $\flat$  Cm/E $\flat$  E° B $\flat$ /F F7

We re - main de - ter - mined With no hint of  
 These we keep in - vit - ing To our King - dom  
 In the face of dan - ger, Truth we will main -

*Chorus*  
 B $\flat$  B $\flat$ 7 E $\flat$  Gm7 F $\sharp$ ° Fm7 B $\flat$ 7

fear.  
 Halls.  
 tain.

We are Je - ho - vah's ar - my;

E $\flat$  F $\sharp$ ° E $\flat$ /G B $\flat$ m/F C7/E C7 Fm/D C7/E

With his Christ we're one, Joy - ful - ly de -

Fm A $\flat$ m6 E $\flat$ /G E $\flat$ /B $\flat$  B $\flat$ 7 B $\flat$ 7sus4 E $\flat$

clar - ing, "God's rule has be - gun."

precious to me this day, so may my life\* be precious in the eyes of Jehovah, and may he rescue me out of all distress.”<sup>a</sup> **25** Saul replied to David: “May you be blessed, my son David. You will surely do great things, and you will surely prevail.”<sup>b</sup> Then David went on his way, and Saul returned to his place.<sup>c</sup>

**27** However, David said in his heart: “One day I will perish by Saul’s hand. The best thing for me is to escape<sup>d</sup> to the land of the Phi-lis’tines; then Saul will give up looking for me in all the territory of Israel,<sup>e</sup> and I will escape from his hand.”

**2** So David rose up with the 600 men<sup>f</sup> who were with him and went over to A’chish<sup>g</sup> the son of Ma’och, the king of Gath. **3** David stayed with A’chish in Gath, he and his men, each man with his household. With David were his two wives, A-hin’o-am<sup>h</sup> of Jez’re-el and Ab’i-gail’ the Car’mel-ite, Na’bal’s widow. **4** When report was made to Saul that David had run away to Gath, he stopped searching for him.<sup>i</sup>

**5** Then David said to A’chish: “If I have found favor in your eyes, let them give me a place in one of the cities of the countryside, so that I may live there. Why should your servant live in the royal city with you?” **6** So A’chish gave him Zik’lag<sup>k</sup> on that day. That is why Zik’lag belongs to the kings of Judah down to this day.

**7** The length of time\* that David lived in the countryside of the Phi-lis’tines was a year and four months.<sup>l</sup> **8** David would go up with his men to raid the Gesh’ur-ites,<sup>m</sup> the Gir’zites, and the A-mal’ek-ites,<sup>n</sup> for they were inhabiting the land that extended from Te’lam as far as

26:24 \*Or “soul.” 27:7 \*Lit., “number of days.”

## CHAP. 26

- a Ps 34:19  
b 1Sa 24:19  
c 1Sa 24:22  
1Sa 27:4

## CHAP. 27

- d 1Sa 19:18  
1Sa 22:1, 5  
e 1Sa 18:29  
1Sa 23:23  
f 1Sa 25:13  
1Sa 30:9  
g 1Sa 21:10, 14  
1Sa 27:12  
h 1Sa 25:43  
i 1Sa 25:39, 42  
j 1Sa 23:14  
1Sa 26:25  
k Jos 19:1, 5  
1Sa 30:1  
2Sa 1:1  
1Ch 12:1, 20  
l 1Sa 29:3  
m Jos 13:1, 2  
n Ge 36:12  
Ex 17:8, 14  
Nu 13:29  
1Sa 15:2  
2Sa 1:1

## Second Col.

- a Ge 25:17, 18  
Ex 15:22  
1Sa 15:7  
b De 25:19  
1Sa 15:3  
c Jos 15:1, 2  
d 1Ch 2:9  
e Nu 24:21  
1Sa 15:6

## CHAP. 28

- f 1Sa 14:52  
g 1Sa 27:12  
1Sa 29:3  
h 1Sa 29:2  
i 1Sa 25:1  
j Ex 22:18  
Le 19:31  
Le 20:6, 27  
De 18:10, 11  
Re 21:8  
k Jos 19:17, 18  
2Ki 4:8  
l 1Sa 31:1  
2Sa 1:21  
2Sa 21:12

Shur<sup>a</sup> and down to the land of Egypt. **9** When David would attack the land, he preserved neither man nor woman alive,<sup>b</sup> but he took the flocks, herds, donkeys, camels, and clothing, after which he would return to A’chish. **10** Then A’chish would ask: “Where did you make a raid today?” David would reply: “Against the south<sup>c</sup> of Judah”<sup>c</sup> or “Against the south of the Je-rah-me-el-ites”<sup>d</sup> or “Against the south of the Ken’ites.”<sup>e</sup> **11** David did not spare alive any man or woman to be brought to Gath, saying: “That they may not tell them about us and say, ‘This is what David did.’” (And that was his practice the whole time he lived in the countryside of the Phi-lis’tines.) **12** So A’chish believed David, saying to himself: ‘He has certainly become a stench among his people Israel, so he will always be my servant.’

**28** In those days the Phi-lis’tines assembled their armies for war against Israel.<sup>f</sup> So A’chish said to David: “You know, of course, that you and your men will go out into battle with me.”<sup>g</sup> **2** At that David said to A’chish: “You surely know what your servant will do.” A’chish said to David: “That is why I will appoint you as my permanent bodyguard.”<sup>h</sup>

**3** Now Samuel had died, and all Israel had mourned him and had buried him in Ra’mah, his own city.<sup>i</sup> And Saul had removed the spirit mediums and the fortune-tellers from the land.<sup>j</sup>

**4** The Phi-lis’tines assembled and went and set up camp in Shu’nem.<sup>k</sup> So Saul assembled all Israel, and they set up camp in Gil-bo’a.<sup>l</sup> **5** When Saul saw the camp of the Phi-lis’tines,

27:10 \*Or “the Negeb.” 28:2 \*Lit., “as guardian of my head all the days.”

he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly.<sup>a</sup> **6** Although Saul would inquire of Jehovah,<sup>b</sup> Jehovah never answered him, either in dreams or by the U'rim<sup>c</sup> or through the prophets. **7** Finally Saul said to his servants: "Find me a woman who is a spirit medium,<sup>d</sup> and I will go and consult her." His servants replied: "Look! There is a woman who is a spirit medium in Endor."<sup>e</sup>

**8** So Saul disguised himself and put on other garments and went to the woman by night with two of his men. He said: "Use divination, please, by acting as a spirit medium,<sup>f</sup> and bring up for me the one whom I designate to you." **9** However, the woman said to him: "You must know what Saul did, how he removed the spirit mediums and the fortune-tellers from the land.<sup>g</sup> Why, then, are you trying to trap me\* to have me put to death?"<sup>h</sup> **10** Saul then swore to her by Jehovah, saying: "As surely as Jehovah is alive, you will not incur any guilt in this matter!" **11** At this the woman said: "Whom should I bring up for you?" He replied: "Bring up Samuel for me." **12** When the woman saw "Samuel,"<sup>i</sup> she cried out at the top of her voice and said to Saul: "Why did you trick me? You are Saul!" **13** The king said to her: "Do not be afraid, but what do you see?" The woman replied to Saul: "I see one like a god coming up out of the earth." **14** At once he asked her: "What does he look like?" to which she said: "It is an old man coming up, and he is clothed in a sleeveless coat."<sup>j</sup> At that Saul realized that it was "Samuel," and he bowed low with his face to the ground and prostrated himself.

28:9 \*Or "my soul." 28:12 \*Or "what appeared to be Samuel."

CHAP. 28

a 1Sa 28:20

b 1Sa 14:37

c Ex 28:30  
Nu 27:21

d Ex 22:18  
Le 19:31  
Le 20:6  
1Sa 15:23  
1Sa 28:3

e Jos 17:11

f De 18:10,11  
1Ch 10:13

g 1Sa 28:3

h Ex 22:18  
Le 20:27

i 1Sa 28:3

j 1Sa 15:27

Second Col.

a 1Sa 28:6

b Le 19:31

c 1Sa 15:23  
1Sa 16:14

d 1Sa 13:14  
1Sa 15:28  
1Sa 16:13  
1Sa 24:20

e 1Sa 15:9  
1Ch 10:13

f 1Sa 28:1  
1Sa 31:1

g 1Sa 31:5

h 1Sa 31:2  
2Sa 2:8

i 1Sa 31:7

j Le 20:27

**15** Then "Samuel" said to Saul: "Why have you disturbed me by having me brought up?" Saul replied: "I am in great trouble. The Phi-lis'tines are fighting against me, and God has departed from me and no longer answers me, either through the prophets or in dreams;<sup>a</sup> so that is why I am calling on you to let me know what I should do."<sup>b</sup>

**16** And "Samuel" said: "Why do you inquire of me now that Jehovah has departed from you<sup>c</sup> and has become your adversary? **17** Jehovah will do for himself what he foretold through me: Jehovah will rip the kingdom out of your hands and give it to one of your fellow men, David."<sup>d</sup> **18** Because you did not obey the voice of Jehovah and you did not execute his burning anger against the A-mal'ek-ites,<sup>e</sup> that is why Jehovah is doing this to you this day. **19** Jehovah will also give both Israel and you into the hand of the Phi-lis'tines,<sup>f</sup> and tomorrow you<sup>g</sup> and your sons<sup>h</sup> will be with me. Jehovah will also give the army of Israel into the hands of the Phi-lis'tines."<sup>i</sup>

**20** At once Saul fell full length on the ground and became very much afraid because of "Samuel's" words. And there was no strength left in him, because he had not eaten food all day and all night. **21** When the woman came to Saul and saw that he had been greatly disturbed, she said to him: "Here your servant has obeyed what you said, and I risked my life<sup>j</sup> and did what you told me to do. **22** Now, please, listen to what your servant has to say. Let me set before you a piece of bread; then eat so that you will have some strength to go on your way." **23** But he refused and said: "I am not going to

28:21 \*Or "took my soul in my hand."



eat.” However, his servants and also the woman kept urging him. Finally he listened to them and got up from the ground and sat on the bed. **24** The woman had a fattened calf in the house, so she quickly slaughtered\* it and took flour and kneaded dough and baked it into unleavened bread. **25** She served them to Saul and his servants, and they ate. After that they rose up and left during the night.<sup>a</sup>

**29** The Phi-lis'tines<sup>b</sup> assembled all their armies at A'phek, while the Israelites were camping by the spring in Jez're-el.<sup>c</sup> **2** And the lords of the Phi-lis'tines were passing by with their hundreds and their thousands, and David and his men were marching at the rear with A'chish.<sup>d</sup> **3** But the princes of the Phi-lis'tines said: “Why are these Hebrews here?” A'chish replied to the princes of the Phi-lis'tines: “This is David, the servant of King Saul of Israel, who has been with me for a year or more.<sup>e</sup> I have not found any fault in him from the day he deserted to me until today.” **4** But the princes of the Phi-lis'tines became indignant at him, and they said to him: “Make the man go back.<sup>f</sup> Let him return to the place where you assigned him. Do not let him go down with us into the battle, so that he will not turn against us during the battle.<sup>g</sup> For what better way to put himself in favor with his lord than with the heads of our men? **5** Is this not the David about whom they sang when they danced, saying:

‘Saul has struck down his thousands,  
And David his tens of thousands?’<sup>h</sup>

**6** So A'chish<sup>i</sup> summoned David and said to him: “As surely

CHAP. 28  
a 1Sa 28:8

CHAP. 29  
b 1Sa 28:1

c Jos 19:17, 18  
1Sa 29:11

d 1Sa 28:2

e 1Sa 27:7, 12

f 1Ch 12:19

g 1Sa 14:21

h 1Sa 18:7  
1Sa 21:11

i 1Sa 21:10  
1Sa 27:2

Second Col.

a 1Sa 28:2

b 1Sa 27:11, 12

c 1Sa 29:3, 9

d 1Sa 27:12

e Jos 19:17, 18  
1Sa 29:1

CHAP. 30

f Jos 15:21, 31  
1Sa 27:5, 6

g Ge 36:12  
Ex 17:14  
1Sa 15:2  
1Sa 27:8

h 1Sa 27:3

as Jehovah is living, you are upright, and I am pleased to have you go on the campaign with my army,<sup>a</sup> for I have not found any fault with you from the day you came to me until today.<sup>b</sup> But the lords do not trust you.<sup>c</sup> **7** So return in peace, and do not do anything to displease the lords of the Phi-lis'tines.” **8** However, David said to A'chish: “Why, what have I done? What fault have you found in your servant from the day that I came to you until today? Why should I not come with you and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?” **9** A'chish answered David: “From my standpoint, you have been as good as an angel of God.<sup>d</sup> But the princes of the Phi-lis'tines have said, ‘Do not let him go up with us into the battle.’ **10** Now get up early in the morning with the servants of your lord who came with you; rise up and leave early in the morning as soon as it is light.”

**11** So David and his men rose up early in the morning to return to the land of the Phi-lis'tines, and the Phi-lis'tines went up to Jez're-el.<sup>e</sup>

**30** When David and his men came to Zik'lag<sup>f</sup> on the third day, the A-mal'ek-ites<sup>g</sup> had made a raid on the south\* and on Zik'lag, and they had attacked Zik'lag and burned it with fire. **2** They had taken captive the women<sup>h</sup> and all who were in it, from the smallest to the greatest. They had not killed anyone, but they had carried them off and gone on their way. **3** When David and his men came to the city, they found it burned down, and their wives and their sons and their daughters had been carried off captive. **4** So David and the men with him began

**30:1** \*Or “the Negeb.”

**28:24** \*Or “sacrificed.”

## Song 71 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)


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FROM GOD'S WORD**

“David’s War Strategy”: (10 min.)

**Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)

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**May 2-8 /** 1 Samuel 27-29

## **Song 71 and Prayer**

**Opening Comments** (1 minute)

## **Treasures From God's Word**

**"David's War Strategy":** (10 minutes)

### **David sought escape from Saul**

**1 Samuel 27:5-7:** Then David said to Achish: "If I have found favor in your eyes, let them give me a place in one of the cities of the countryside, so that I may live there. Why should your servant live in the royal city with you?" So Achish gave him Ziklag on that day. That is why Ziklag belongs to the kings of Judah down to this day. The length of time that David lived in the countryside of the Philistines was a year and four months.

#### ***it-1* 41**

Twice when David was in flight from Saul he found refuge in the domain of King Achish. On the first occasion, when suspected of being an enemy, David feigned insanity, and Achish let him go as a harmless idiot. (1 Samuel 21:10-15; Psalm 34: Superscription; 56: Superscription) On the second visit David was accompanied by 600 warriors and their families, and so Achish assigned them to live in Ziklag. During the year and four months that they were there Achish believed that David's band was making raids on Judean towns, whereas David was actually pillaging the Geshurites, Girzites, and Amalekites. (1 Samuel 27:1-12) So successful was the deception that Achish actually made David his personal bodyguard when the Philistines were organizing an attack on King Saul, and only at the last moment, upon the insistence of the other "axis lords" of the Philistines, were David and his men sent back to Ziklag. (1 Samuel 28:2; 29:1-11) When David became king and warred against Gath, Achish apparently was not killed. He lived into Solomon's reign.—1 Kings 2:39-41; see GATH.

### **David protected Judah's boundaries**

**1 Samuel 27:8, 9:** David would go up with his men to raid the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites, for they were inhabiting the land that extended from Telam as far as Shur and down to the land of Egypt. When David would attack the land, he preserved neither man nor woman alive, but

he took the flocks, herds, donkeys, camels, and clothing, after which he would return to Achish.

### **w21.03 4 paragraph 8**

Consider another challenge that David faced. After he was anointed to be king, David had to wait many years before he was officially enthroned as king of Judah. (1 Samuel 16:13; 2 Samuel 2:3, 4) During that interval, what helped him to wait patiently? Instead of becoming paralyzed by discouragement, David focused on what he could do. For example, while living as a fugitive in Philistine territory, David seized the opportunity to fight against Israel's enemies. In doing so, he protected the boundaries of the territory of Judah.—1 Samuel 27:1-12.

### **David did not reveal complete details to Achish**

**1 Samuel 27:10-12:** Then Achish would ask: "Where did you make a raid today?" David would reply: "Against the south of Judah" or "Against the south of the Jerahmeelites" or "Against the south of the Kenites." David did not spare alive any man or woman to be brought to Gath, saying: "That they may not tell them about us and say, 'This is what David did.'" (And that was his practice the whole time he lived in the countryside of the Philistines.) So Achish believed David, saying to himself: 'He has certainly become a stench among his people Israel, so he will always be my servant.'

### **it-2 245 paragraph 6**

While malicious lying is definitely condemned in the Bible, this does not mean that a person is under obligation to divulge truthful information to people who are not entitled to it. Jesus Christ counseled: "Do not give what is holy to dogs, neither throw your pearls before swine, that they may never trample them under their feet and turn around and rip you open." (Matthew 7:6) That is why Jesus on certain occasions refrained from giving full information or direct answers to certain questions when doing so could have brought unnecessary harm. (Matthew 15:1-6; 21:23-27; John 7:3-10) Evidently the course of Abraham, Isaac, Rahab, and Elisha in misdirecting or in withholding full facts from nonworshippers of Jehovah must be viewed in the same light.—Genesis 12:10-19; chapter 20; 26:1-10; Joshua 2:1-6; James 2:25; 2 Kings 6:11-23.

In our day, the authorities may restrict our Kingdom activity and question us about our brothers. At such times, it is wise to remain silent so as not to put our brothers at risk.—Proverbs 10:19; 11:12; Ecclesiastes 3:7.

[Image:] A brother remaining silent while police officers interrogate him.

## Spiritual Gems

### 1 Samuel 28:15—Whom did Saul “see” on this occasion?

**1 Samuel 28:15:** Then “Samuel” said to Saul: “Why have you disturbed me by having me brought up?” Saul replied: “I am in great trouble. The Philistines are fighting against me, and God has departed from me and no longer answers me, either through the prophets or in dreams; so that is why I am calling on you to let me know what I should do.”

### w10 1/1 20 paragraphs 5-6

Think about it. The Bible states that at death a person “goes back to his ground” and that “his thoughts do perish.” (Psalm 146:4) Both Saul and Samuel knew that God condemned contact with spirit mediums. Why, Saul had earlier taken the lead in ridding the land of spiritistic practices!—Leviticus 19:31.

Reason on the matter. If faithful Samuel were still alive as a spirit, would he violate God’s law and cooperate with a spirit medium in order to meet Saul? Jehovah had refused to talk with Saul. Could a medium, in effect, force God Almighty to communicate with Saul by means of dead Samuel? No. Clearly, this “Samuel” was not God’s faithful prophet in any form. It was a spirit—a wicked demon pretending to be dead Samuel.

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 27:1-12 (*th* study 5)

## Song 71 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)


**TREASURES  
FROM GOD'S WORD**

“David’s War Strategy”: (10 min.)

**Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)

1Sa 28:15—Whom did Saul “see” on this occasion? (w10 1/1 20 ¶5-6)

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 27:1-12 (5)


**APPLY YOURSELF  
TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

**Initial Call Video:** (5 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Initial Call: Suffering—Jas 1:13* (video category OUR MEETINGS AND MINISTRY).

Stop the video at each pause, and ask the audience the questions that appear in the video.

**Initial Call:** (3 min.) Use the sample conversation. (1)

**Initial Call:** (5 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer the *Enjoy Life Forever!* brochure, and introduce (but do not play) the video *Why Study the Bible?* (6)


**LIVING  
AS CHRISTIANS**

**Song 129**

**Firm Under Opposition:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video (video category OUR ORGANIZATION). Then ask the audience: What do we learn from the example of our brothers in Nazi Germany? What do we learn from the example of our brothers in Russia and the former Soviet Union?

**Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.)  
*lff* lesson 02


**David’s War Strategy**

David sought escape from Saul (1Sa 27:5-7; *it-1* 41)

David protected Judah’s boundaries (1Sa 27:8, 9; w21.03 4 ¶8)

David did not reveal complete details to Achish (1Sa 27:10-12; *it-2* 245 ¶6)

In our day, the authorities may restrict our Kingdom activity and question us about our brothers. At such times, it is wise to remain silent so as not to put our brothers at risk.—Pr 10:19; 11:12; Ec 3:7.



### **Initial Call: Suffering—Jas 1:13**

Good morning. My name is Francisco, and this is Shane. May I ask your name? Ian. It's nice to meet you, Ian. We're discussing a question that many people ask about God. God? I don't think I believe in God. You're certainly not alone in questioning whether God exists. But may I ask, Have you always felt that way? Well, I used to believe in God. I was raised that way, but then everything fell apart. My mother got sick, and my father left us. It was just me and my brother trying to take care of Mom until she died. I'm very sorry to hear that, Ian. Me too. I can relate in some ways. My family went through a similar situation. I just don't understand why God would do that to us. We're good people. We went to church every Sunday. We never hurt anyone. Let me assure you, you're certainly not the first to feel that way. Many people have struggled to understand why bad things happen. The Bible's answer may surprise you. In fact, that's one of the reasons we're here today. The question we've been discussing from the Bible is, How do we know that our suffering is not punishment from God? Really? Yes. Please notice what we read here at James 1:13: "When under trial, let no one say: 'I am being tried by God.' "For with evil things God cannot be tried, nor does he himself try anyone." Notice the first part of this verse. When we face trials, we may feel like we're being tried, or tested, by God. But is that really the case? Notice the second part of the verse. Would you agree that if God exists, he cannot be tested by evil? Of course. That would be impossible! We agree. And what comforting assurance do we find in the end of the verse? That God does not try us with evil? Exactly! Of course, a logical question is, If God isn't the cause of our suffering, who or what is? Next time we're here, let's discuss the principal reason why we suffer. OK.



## Use Current Events in Your Ministry

In his ministry, Jesus drew lessons from current events. (Lu 13:1-5) You too can use current events to stir people's interest in the Kingdom message. After mentioning the high cost of living, a natural disaster, civil unrest, drug addiction, or something similar, ask a thought-provoking question. You might ask: "Do you think we'll ever see an end to . . . ?" or "What do you think is the solution to . . . ?" Then, share a Bible verse related to the topic. If the person shows interest, direct his attention to a video or a publication in our Teaching Toolbox. As we strive to touch the hearts of people in our territory, may we "do all things for the sake of the good news." —1Co 9:22, 23.

What topics may appeal to people in *your* territory?

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## SAMPLE CONVERSATIONS

### Initial Call\*

**Question:** How do we know that our suffering is not punishment from God?

**Scripture:** **Jas 1:13**

**Link:** Why do we suffer?

### Return Visit\*

**Question:** Why do we suffer?

**Scripture:** **1Jo 5:19**

**Link:** How does God feel about our suffering?

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





# We Will Keep Enduring

(Matthew 24:13)

G C/G Gma7 C/G G/D Bm7

How can we en - dure When tri - als come, as Je - sus  
 Though the pass - ing years May bring us sor - row, bring us  
 We will not give up Nor see the need for doubt or

C G6/B Am Bm11 Am/C Am/G

said?  
 pain;  
 fear.

Through his pain he saw The joy of  
 There be - yond the tears, We see the  
 Faith - ful - ly we'll serve Un - til Je -

Am/F# Am/B B7 Cadd9 C

bet - ter things a - head. God's prom - ise, God's  
 life that we can gain. To be there, feel  
 ho - vah's day is here. Let's keep on en -

Am11 Am7 C/D D7sus4 D7 Chorus

jus - tice, Were thoughts on which he fed.  
 free there, De - ter - mined we re - main. We  
 dur - ing. That time is ver - y near.

# We Will Keep Enduring

Musical notation for the first system. The treble clef staff contains a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass clef staff contains a bass line with notes G2, B2, D3, E3, F#3, G3. Chords are indicated above the staff: G, D/F#, Em7, Bm/D, Em/D, C, D7sus4. The lyrics are: need to have en - dur - ance. Our faith we must de -

Musical notation for the second system. The treble clef staff contains a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass clef staff contains a bass line with notes G2, B2, D3, E3, F#3, G3. Chords are indicated above the staff: G, D/F#, Em, D, Cadd9, G/B. The lyrics are: fend. His love is our as - sur - ance. So

Musical notation for the third system. The treble clef staff contains a melody with notes G4, A4, B4, C5, B4, A4, G4. The bass clef staff contains a bass line with notes G2, B2, D3, E3, F#3, G3. Chords are indicated above the staff: Am7, G6/B, C, C/D, G. The lyrics are: we will keep en - dur - ing to the end.

## Song 71 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)


**TREASURES  
FROM GOD'S WORD**

“David’s War Strategy”: (10 min.)

**Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)

1Sa 28:15—Whom did Saul “see” on this occasion? (w10 1/1 20 ¶5-6)

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 27:1-12 (5)


**APPLY YOURSELF  
TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

**Initial Call Video:** (5 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Initial Call: Suffering—Jas 1:13* (video category OUR MEETINGS AND MINISTRY).

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**Initial Call:** (3 min.) Use the sample conversation. (1)

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**LIVING  
AS CHRISTIANS**

**Song 129**

**Firm Under Opposition:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video (video category OUR ORGANIZATION). Then ask the audience: What do we learn from the example of our brothers in Nazi Germany? What do we learn from the example of our brothers in Russia and the former Soviet Union?

**Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.)  
*lff* lesson 02


**David’s War Strategy**

David sought escape from Saul (1Sa 27:5-7; *it-1* 41)

David protected Judah’s boundaries (1Sa 27:8, 9; w21.03 4 ¶8)

David did not reveal complete details to Achish (1Sa 27:10-12; *it-2* 245 ¶6)

In our day, the authorities may restrict our Kingdom activity and question us about our brothers. At such times, it is wise to remain silent so as not to put our brothers at risk.—Pr 10:19; 11:12; Ec 3:7.



## Firm Under Opposition

At John 15:20, Jesus said: “A slave is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.” How will we react when we are mistreated? How will we find the strength to endure? We have a record of faithful servants of old. We know that Jehovah’s people can endure. But we also have the record of Jehovah’s Witnesses in modern times. The following video draws on footage from two previously released videos by the organization. It highlights two outstanding examples: our brothers in Germany during World War II and our brothers in the former Soviet Union in the years that followed the war. It also reveals the tactics that enemies of the truth consistently use—to no avail—against Jehovah’s people. Reviewing and meditating on the examples of these faithful brothers and sisters will prepare us for what lies ahead, will fill us with courage, and will strengthen our faith. On January 30, 1933, Adolf Hitler comes to power. Hitler gave the people jobs. He restored their faith in the fatherland. He is hailed as their savior. But the Witnesses could not give to a man what they believed belonged to God. Thus, a battle line was drawn over a simple greeting—“Heil Hitler.” Jehovah’s Witnesses refused to say “Heil Hitler” because it meant “Salvation comes from Hitler.” At his job in a steel mill, one Witness faced this test. I was the only one among 2,000 who did not raise my hand and did not return the German salute—every day running the gauntlet, since I was required to give the German salute, and I simply said, “Good day.” Children were drawn into the battle. Six-year-old Paul Gerhard Kusserow, like other Witness children, was pressured by students and teachers. As soon as I entered school, the head teacher and the pupils confronted me and tried to make me say, “Heil Hitler.” More than 800 children were taken away from their Witness parents by the Gestapo. In one German state after another, the police shut down meetings of the Witnesses and prohibit their door-to-door preaching. At first, there were nasty words, sometimes a beating, but soon enough, it led to the first arrests. Starting in 1937, Jehovah’s Witnesses were given a purple triangle as a sign. Jehovah’s Witnesses were the only religious group that made up a separate category of inmates. The Jehovah’s Witnesses received especially severe treatment. The goal was to destroy this religious group; there were to be no more Witnesses in Germany. The Nazis, obsessed with breaking the Witnesses’ stubborn commitment, made them an extraordinary offer. Each Witness could buy his freedom for a price: his signature and his faith. Witnesses in prisons and camps were repeatedly handed a piece of paper and a pen. Very few signed. When I was to be released from prison, I was given a paper to sign. It required that I give up my faith and recognize the German government as the highest authority, place myself under the Hitler government, and consider the Bible as a false doctrine. I said, “That’s out of the question!” The unity among the sisters and the brothers—that gave us so much strength. It was our aim to endure under all circumstances. We never prayed to be set free. We prayed for strength to endure. Everything else was unimportant. What mattered was standing up for Jehovah’s name. On February 19, 1951, the head of the security police presented a secret plan to Stalin. All of Jehovah’s Witnesses—including infants and pregnant women—would be exiled. The plan was code-named “Operation North.” Stalin approved it. Interestingly, the Witnesses were offered a way to avoid deportation. The man in charge of the deportation of our family tried to persuade Father to sign a paper renouncing the organization of Jehovah’s Witnesses. Few Witnesses, if any, accepted this offer. Once in Siberia, the Witnesses were dropped off at settlements

along the rail lines. The majority of the Witnesses were forced to cut trees. We recalled the time when the Israelites lived in Egypt and how they were forced to work. We prayed, “God, make our faith stronger so that this work, which is beyond our strength, will not shake us.” Stalin’s death in 1953 brought hope of relief. But relief would be a long time in coming. The new regime went on in the same course. They arrested and sentenced us. Most arrested Witnesses were sentenced to labor camps. In court, they could not expect a fair trial. Guilty verdicts had already been decided upon. Under the Khrushchev administration, special “reeducation” camps were set up, designed to turn inmates from their beliefs. During this period, propaganda films designed to discredit Jehovah’s Witnesses were distributed throughout the USSR. Whoever has studied persecution in the past has seen that in one way or another, persecution is always built on a lie. The victim is slandered. Besides using propaganda, for many years, the KGB recruited informers to infiltrate Witness congregations. For instance, in 1968, the KGB district director offered Nikolai Bychkov an assignment. He requested me to spy on Jehovah’s Witnesses. One Witness booklet that compared the teaching of evolution with the Bible changed the KGB informer’s viewpoint. No one could answer that question: how life appeared. In the Bible, I could find answers to those questions. In Khabarovsk in 1984, Nikolai Bychkov, now a baptized Witness, and several fellow believers were accused of anti-Soviet activities. But the all-out attack on the Witnesses’ faith backfired on the persecutors. In Germany and in Soviet times, they thought that you could get rid of an idea by using extreme violence. But it turned out that when an idea is strong, it makes people strong. So the outcome was just the opposite of what was expected. In March 1991, Jehovah’s Witnesses were legally registered in Russia. I think it is frightening only if you’ve never faced difficulties. But once you face them, you know that special strength. When we rely on Jehovah—we ask for his guidance; we ask for his help—we will always get it. In addition to horrible physical treatment, God’s people faced slander, outright lies, and fabrications, even in the form of propaganda films. Opposers attempted to infiltrate our brotherhood with informants. But as we saw in the example of Nikolai Bychkov, such devious plans are in vain when pitted against the truth from God’s Word. As Professor Nikolai Gordienko noted, “When an idea is strong, it makes people strong.” What idea can be stronger than the reality of our Father, Jehovah; his reigning King, Jesus Christ; and his Kingdom, now poised to thwart all opposition? And so, what people can possibly be stronger than Jehovah’s people? As our brothers in Russia and other areas of the earth face renewed opposition and as we all face the prospect of being mistreated just as our Master, Jesus, was, we are determined to stand firm and remain faithful no matter what the enemies of truth attempt.

source: [https://www.jw.org/en/library/videos/#en/mediaitems/VODOrgHistory/pub-fmo\\_x\\_VIDEO](https://www.jw.org/en/library/videos/#en/mediaitems/VODOrgHistory/pub-fmo_x_VIDEO)

# The Bible Gives Hope

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

## 1. How does the Bible give hope?

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

## 2. What kind of future does the Bible describe?

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

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

Many people hope for good things to happen, but they cannot be sure that their hopes will ever be fulfilled. What the Bible promises is different. We can build up our trust in what it says by **"carefully examining the Scriptures."** (Acts 17:11) As you study the Bible, you will be able to decide for yourself whether you can believe what it says about the future.

## DIG DEEPER

Examine some of the conditions that the Bible promises for the future. See how the hope the Bible gives is helping people today.



### 4. The Bible offers the hope of everlasting life in perfect conditions

Look at the following list of promises found in the Bible. Which ones especially appeal to you? Why?

**Read the scriptures** cited next to those promises, and consider these questions:

- Do you feel that these scriptures give hope? Could they give hope to your family and friends?

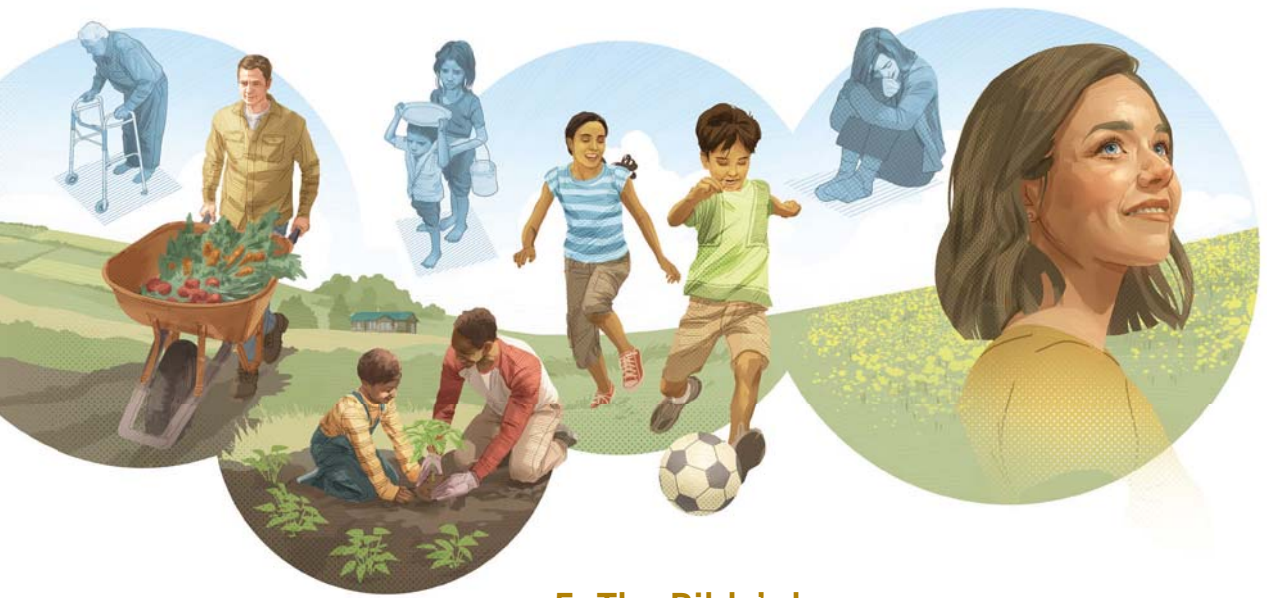
Picture living in a world where

#### NO ONE WILL . . .

- feel pain, weaken with age, or have to die.—Isaiah 25:8.
- get sick or live with a disability.—Isaiah 33:24; 35:5, 6.
- experience injustice.—Isaiah 32:16, 17.
- suffer as a result of war.—Psalm 46:9.
- be plagued by troubling thoughts or memories.—Isaiah 65:17.

#### EVERYONE WILL . . .

- see dead loved ones resurrected, brought back to life on earth.—John 5:28, 29.
- enjoy good health and youthful energy.—Job 33:25.
- have plenty to eat, a comfortable home, and satisfying work.—Psalm 72:16; Isaiah 65:21, 22.
- experience complete peace.—Psalm 37:11.
- live forever in ideal conditions.—Psalm 37:29.




## 5. The Bible's hope can make a difference

Many people are discouraged or even angered by the problems they see around them. Some fight to try to change things for the better. See how the Bible's promise that things will get better helps people now. [Play the VIDEO](#), and then discuss the questions that follow.


- In the video, what injustice troubled Rafika?
- Although the injustice that she saw did not go away, how did the Bible help her?

The hope that the Bible offers for the future can help us to battle discouragement and cope with our problems successfully. [Read Proverbs 17:22 and Romans 12:12](#), and then discuss these questions:

- Do you think that the message of hope found in the Bible could make a difference in your life now? Why?



**VIDEO: *I Wanted to Fight Injustice***  
(4:07)



**SOME PEOPLE SAY:** “The Bible’s promises for the future are too good to be true.”

- Why do you think it is important to examine the evidence?



## SUMMARY

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

## Review

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

Lesson completed on

## Goal

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

## EXPLORE



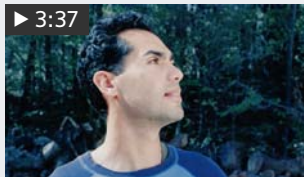
Learn more about the power of hope.

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



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

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



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

***Imagine the Time***



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

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



To find all media for LESSON 02,  
scan code or go to the publication  
*Enjoy Life Forever!* on [jw.org](http://jw.org)

# Grateful for God's Word

(Philippians 2:16)

F F/A B $\flat$  C7 B $\flat$ /C C7 F

Je - ho - vah, our Fa - ther, we want to ex - press  
Your Word has the pow - er to reach deep in - side.  
Your Word, O Je - ho - vah, has hu - man ap - peal.

C7/E Gm/D A7/C $\sharp$  Dm C $\sharp$ 7 $\flat$ 5 F/C Gm9 Gm B $\flat$ ma7 C7

How grate - ful we are that your Word we pos - sess!  
Our thoughts and in - ten - tions, it helps to di - vide.  
Your proph - ets were like us; they felt what we feel.

F/A C F C/B $\flat$  B $\flat$  D/C Gm/B $\flat$  D/A Gm/B $\flat$  G7/B C

All Scrip - ture is in - spir - ed; its truth has set us free.  
Your laws are clear and per - fect, your judg - ments ev - er true.  
Please help us build a strong faith that fol - lows what is heard.

F/A C/G F B $\flat$  D7/A Gm Gm/B $\flat$  F/C C7sus4 C7 F

Its light gives us knowl - edge; the truth we can see.  
Your prin - ci - ples guide us in all that we do.  
We thank you, Je - ho - vah, for your pre - cious Word!

MARCH 2022

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
MAY 2–JUNE 5, 2022

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### COVER PICTURE:

Zechariah saw a vision of two olive trees supplying oil to a lampstand that had seven lamps (See study article 12, paragraph 6)

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# Living Up to Our Name

(Isaiah 43:10-12)

F C7 Bb/F F Gm/E A7 Dm9 Dm

Glo - rious Je - ho - vah, al - might - y, e - ter - nal,  
Work - ing to - geth - er in your sa - cred ser - vice

Bb Bb6 D7/A Gm C G7/D C7/E

Per - fect in jus - tice, in pow - er, in love.  
Binds us as broth - ers in love and in peace.

F C7 Bb/F F Gm/E A7 Dm9 Dm

Source of all truth and of in - fi - nite wis - dom,  
Teach - ing the truth and re - flect - ing your glo - ry

B° E7/B B° F/C Gm C7 C7sus4 F

You rule as Sov - 'reign in heav - en a - bove.  
Fill us with joy as your prais - es in - crease.

# Living Up to Our Name

C C/E Dm7 Em/G G7 G#° E/G# G#° Asus4 Am

We as your peo - ple de - light in your ser - vice;  
Known by your name, O Je - ho - vah, our Fa - ther,

F C/E F/A Ab7b5 C/G G7 C7sus4 C7

Your King - dom truth we de - light to pro - claim.  
We have the hon - or to add to your fame.

## Chorus

F F° F Bb/F F C7/G F/A Bb

Be - ing your Wit - ness - es, great is our priv - 'lege.

Gm D/A Gm/Bb F/C Gm7 C7 C7sus4 F

Oh, may we ev - er live up to our name!

## SONG 29

Living Up to Our Name

## PREVIEW

To qualify for baptism, we must be willing to make changes in our personality. This article will help us to see **what** traits make up the old personality, **why** we need to strip off those traits, and **how** we can do it. The next article will examine how we can continue putting on the new personality even after we get baptized.

## You Can “Strip Off the Old Personality”

*“Strip off the old personality with its practices.”—COL. 3:9.*

WHAT was your life like before you began studying the Bible with Jehovah’s Witnesses? Many of us would be frightened to think about it. Our outlook and personality were likely shaped by the values of this system of things—by the world’s standards of right and wrong. If so, we “had no hope and were without God in the world.” (Eph. 2:12) A Bible study changed all of that!

<sup>2</sup> As you studied the Bible, you discovered that you have a heavenly Father who loves you very much. You realized that if you wanted to please Jehovah and become part of his family of worshippers, you would have to make significant changes in your lifestyle, outlook, and thinking. You would have to learn to live by his high standards.—Eph. 5:3-5.

<sup>3</sup> Our Creator and heavenly Father, Jehovah, has the right to determine how members of his family should behave. And he requires that before we get baptized, we put forth effort to “strip off the old personality with its practices.”\* (Read Colossians 3:9, 10.) This article will help those who want to get baptized to answer three questions: (1) What is “the old personality”? (2) Why does Jehovah urge us to strip it off? (3) How can we do

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\* **EXPRESSION EXPLAINED:** To “strip off the old personality” means to get rid of attitudes and tendencies that displease Jehovah. That should begin before baptism.—Eph. 4:22.

1. What was your life like before you began studying the Bible?
2. What did you discover as you studied the Bible?
3. According to Colossians 3:9, 10, what does Jehovah want us to do, and what will we discuss in this article?

so? For those of us who are already baptized, this study will help us to prevent characteristics of the old personality from reappearing.

### WHAT IS “THE OLD PERSONALITY”?

<sup>4</sup> A person who is controlled by “the old personality” generally thinks and acts in a fleshly way. He may be selfish, prone to anger, unthankful, and proud. He may enjoy viewing pornographic material and watching immoral or violent movies. No doubt he has some good qualities, and he may feel guilty about the bad things he says or does. But he lacks the motivation to change his thinking and conduct.—Gal. 5:19-21; 2 Tim. 3:2-5.

<sup>5</sup> We are imperfect, so none of us can completely remove all bad thoughts and

4. How does a person act when he is controlled by “the old personality”?

5. What reasonable view should we have when it comes to stripping off the old personality? (Acts 3:19)

desires from our heart and mind. At times, we will do or say something that we will regret. (Jer. 17:9; Jas. 3:2) But when we strip off the old personality, fleshly attitudes and practices no longer control us. They no longer identify who we are as a person.—Isa. 55:7; **read Acts 3:19.**

<sup>6</sup> Jehovah urges us to get rid of wrong thinking and bad habits because he loves us very much and wants us to enjoy life. (Isa. 48:17, 18) He knows that those who give in to wrong desires hurt themselves and those around them. It pains him to see us hurt ourselves and others.

<sup>7</sup> Some of our friends and family may at first ridicule us for trying to make changes to our personality. (1 Pet. 4:3, 4) They may say that we have the right to do whatever we want and that we should not allow others to tell us what

6. Why does Jehovah urge us to strip off the wrong thinking and bad habits of the old personality?

7. According to Romans 12:1, 2, what choices do we have?



When we strip off  
“the old personality,”  
fleshly attitudes and  
practices no longer  
control us  
(See paragraph 5)



to do. But those who reject Jehovah's standards are not actually being independent. In reality, they are allowing the world dominated by Satan to mold them. **(Read Romans 12:1, 2.)** We all face a choice: Either we keep our old personality, which is shaped by sin and Satan's world, or we allow Jehovah to transform us into the best person we can be at present.—Isa. 64:8.

#### HOW CAN YOU "STRIP OFF" THE OLD PERSONALITY?

<sup>8</sup> Jehovah knows that it will take time and effort for us to avoid wrong thinking and bad habits. (Ps. 103:13, 14) However, through his Word, his spirit, and his organization, Jehovah gives us the wisdom, strength, and support that we need to change who we are. No doubt he has already helped you. Let us now consider some of the practical steps you can take that will allow you to make further progress in stripping off the old personality and qualifying for baptism.

<sup>9</sup> *Use the Bible to examine yourself closely.* God's Word acts like a mirror; it can help you to analyze the way that you think, speak, and act. (Jas. 1:22-25) Your Bible teacher and other mature Christians can offer you guidance. For instance, they can use the Scriptures to help you identify your strengths and your weaknesses. They can teach you how to find Bible-based information that offers practical advice on how to overcome bad habits. And Jehovah is always ready to come to your aid. He

8. What help can we count on to avoid wrong thinking and bad habits?

9. What can God's Word help you to do?

knows best how to help you; he knows what is in your heart. (Prov. 14:10; 15:11) So get into the habit of praying to him and studying his Word each day.

<sup>10</sup> *Be convinced that Jehovah's standards are best.* We can benefit from everything that Jehovah asks us to do. Those who live by his standards gain self-respect, a purpose in life, and genuine happiness. (Ps. 19:7-11) In contrast, those who ignore Jehovah's standards suffer the consequences that come from practicing the works of the flesh. Note what a man named Elie says about rejecting God's standards. He was raised by parents who love Jehovah. But while in his teens, Elie chose bad associates. He was drawn into a lifestyle that included drug abuse, immorality, and theft. Elie says that he found himself becoming increasingly angry and violent. "Basically, I did everything that I had been taught not to do as a Christian," he admits. However, Elie did not forget what he had learned in his youth. Eventually, he began studying the Bible again. He worked hard to get rid of his bad habits and got baptized in 2000. How has living by Jehovah's standards benefited him? Elie says: "I now have peace of mind and a clean conscience."\* As this experience shows, those who reject Jehovah's standards hurt themselves. Even then, Jehovah is willing to help them to change.

<sup>11</sup> *Learn to hate what Jehovah hates.*

\* For more details, see the article "The Bible Changes Lives—'I Needed to Return to Jehovah,'" published in the April 1, 2012, issue of *The Watchtower*.

10. What did you learn from Elie's experience?

11. What things does Jehovah hate?



Doing something that Jehovah says is bad should be as repulsive as eating rotten food (See paragraphs 11-12)

(Ps. 97:10) The Bible reveals that Jehovah hates “haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood.” (Prov. 6:16, 17) He also “detests violent and deceptive people.” (Ps. 5:6) Jehovah hates these attitudes and actions so much that he wiped out all the wicked in Noah’s day because they had filled the earth with violence. (Gen. 6:13) Consider another example. Through the prophet Malachi, Jehovah said that He hates those who treacherously scheme to divorce their innocent marriage partner. God rejects their worship and will call them to account for their conduct. —Mal. 2:13-16; Heb. 13:4.

<sup>12</sup> Jehovah wants us to “abhor what is wicked.” (Rom. 12:9) The word “abhor” describes a strong emotional response; it means to hate something intensely, to be disgusted by it. Imagine the strong response you would have if you were asked to eat a plate of rotten food. The very thought might make you feel sick. In a similar way, even the thought of do-

12. What does it mean to “abhor what is wicked”?

ing something that Jehovah says is bad should be repulsive to us.

<sup>13</sup> **Safeguard your thinking.** Our thoughts influence our actions. That is why Jesus taught us to reject thoughts that can lead us to commit a serious sin. (Matt. 5:21, 22, 28, 29) We want to be pleasing to our heavenly Father, do we not? How important it is, then, that we immediately reject any bad thoughts that come to our mind!

<sup>14</sup> **Control your speech.** Jesus said: “Whatever comes out of the mouth comes from the heart.” (Matt. 15:18) Yes, our speech reveals a lot about who we are on the inside. So ask yourself these questions: ‘Do I refuse to lie, even if telling the truth will cause me trouble? As a married person, am I careful not to flirt with those of the opposite sex? Do I avoid immoral speech like the plague? Do I reply in a calm manner when someone upsets me?’ You will find

13. Why must we safeguard our thinking?

14. What does our speech reveal, and what questions should we answer?

## The Bible Changes Lives

In 2008, *The Watchtower* began publishing a series entitled “The Bible Changes Lives.” These articles relate real-life accounts of people who made major changes to qualify for baptism. Many similar articles and video interviews can now be found on [jw.org](http://jw.org). If you are struggling to overcome a bad habit or to change an aspect of your personality, these experiences can encourage you. In this series, you will likely find a story about someone who overcame challenges similar to the ones that you face. You can locate these articles by looking in the *Research Guide for Jehovah’s Witnesses* under the subject “The Bible,” then “Practical Value,” and then “‘The Bible Changes Lives’ (*Watchtower* series).” Or you can type “The Bible Changes Lives” in the search box on [jw.org](http://jw.org).

it helpful to reflect on those questions. Your speech might be likened to seams in a garment. If you try your best to remove abusive, lying, and immoral speech from your conversation, you will find it easier to strip off the old personality.

**15 *Be willing to take decisive action.*** The apostle Paul used a powerful word picture to teach us just how serious we must be about changing our lifestyle. He wrote that we must nail our old personality “to

15. What does it mean to nail our old personality “to the stake”?

the stake.” (Rom. 6:6) In other words, we want to follow Christ’s example. We need to kill off attitudes and practices that Jehovah hates. Only if we take these steps will we gain a clean conscience and have the prospect of enjoying everlasting life. (John 17:3; 1 Pet. 3:21) Remember that Jehovah will not change his standards to suit us. Instead, we need to change who we are and conform to his standards.—Isa. 1:16-18; 55:9.

**16 *Continue to fight fleshly weaknesses.*** Even after you get baptized, you will need to continue to fight fleshly desires. Note the experience of a man named Maurício. While young, he started living a homosexual lifestyle. Eventually, he met Jehovah’s people and began studying the Bible. After making changes in his life, he got baptized in 2002. Even though he has now served Jehovah for many years, Maurício says: “I must admit that I have had to fight improper desires at times.” He does not let this discourage him. Instead, he says: “I take courage in knowing that by choosing not to act on those desires, I can be pleasing to Jehovah.”\*

**17 *Pray for Jehovah’s help, and rely on his spirit, not on your own strength.*** (Gal. 5:22; Phil. 4:6) We must be determined if we are to strip off the old personality and keep it off. Consider the experience of a woman named Nabiha.

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\* For more details, see the article “The Bible Changes Lives—‘They Were Very Kind to Me,’” published in the May 1, 2012, issue of *The Watchtower*.

16. Why must you be determined to continue fighting fleshly weaknesses?

17. What did you find encouraging about Nabiha’s experience?

Her father abandoned her when she was just six years old. “It caused me tremendous emotional pain,” she says. As she grew up, Nabiha became increasingly angry and aggressive. She got involved in drug trafficking, was arrested, and spent some years in prison. Witnesses who visited the prison began studying the Bible with her. Nabiha started to make serious changes. “Some of my vices were easy for me to give up,” she says. “But quitting smoking was another story.” Nabiha struggled for more than a year and was eventually able to break the addiction. How did she do it? “Above all,” she says, “it was incessant prayer to Jehovah that enabled me to quit.” She now tells others: “I’m confident that if I could make changes in order to please Jehovah, *anyone* can!”\*

### YOU CAN QUALIFY FOR BAPTISM!

**18** In the first century, some of the men

\* For more details, see the article “The Bible Changes Lives—‘I Became an Angry, Aggressive Young Woman,’” published in the October 1, 2012, issue of *The Watchtower*.

18. According to 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, what have many of God’s servants been able to do?

and women whom Jehovah chose to be corulers with Christ had once been dominated by bad practices. For example, they had been adulterers, homosexuals, and thieves. With the help of God’s holy spirit, however, they were able to change their personalities. **(Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.)** Similarly today, the Bible has helped millions of people to make changes in their lives.\* They have overcome deeply entrenched bad habits. Their example proves that you too can make changes in your personality and overcome bad habits so that you can qualify for baptism.

<sup>19</sup> In addition to working to strip off the old personality, those who want to get baptized must make an effort to put on the new personality. The next article will discuss how we can do that and how others can help us.

\* See the box “The Bible Changes Lives.”

19. What will the next article discuss?

**PICTURE DESCRIPTION Page 3:** Removing undesirable attitudes and practices is like stripping off an old garment.

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## DO YOU REMEMBER?

- What is “the old personality”?
- Why should we “strip off the old personality”?
- How can we “strip off” the old personality and keep it off?

# Please Hear My Prayer

(Psalm 54)

F B $\flat$ /D C/E B $\flat$ /D Gm9 C F

Heav - en - ly Fa - ther, please hear my song.  
 Thank you, O God, for grant - ing this day,  
 Oh, how I long to do what is right!

R.H.

B $\flat$ /D C/E B $\flat$ /D Gm6 A7 Dm

You are my God; to you I be - long.  
 Giv - ing me life, and show - ing the way.  
 Help me, O Lord, to walk in the light.

R.H.

B $\flat$  C/B $\flat$  B $\flat$  F/A F/C C/B $\flat$  Gm7 Gm/E A

Great is your name, be - yond all com - pare.  
 How I de - light in your ten - der care.  
 Give me the strength all bur - dens to bear.

R.H.

*Chorus*  
 F F/E B $\flat$ /D Fadd9/C Dm Gm7 Gm C13 F

Gra - cious Je - ho - vah, please hear my prayer.

R.H.