

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

## STUDY ARTICLES

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## PAPUA NEW GUINEA

**COVER:** Kingdom publishers preaching from house to house in Erap, one of the many isolated mountain-valley villages of Morobe Province in Papua New Guinea

Population: 7,013,829

Average Publishers: 3,770

Average Regular Pioneers: 367

Average Bible Studies: 5,091

Memorial Attendance  
in 2012: 28,909

Translation: 14 languages



On the average, each publisher welcomed about six interested people to the Memorial

## STUDY ARTICLES

### ■ You Have Been Sanctified

As dedicated servants of Jehovah, we have been sanctified, or set apart for sacred service. In this study, we will consider Nehemiah chapter 13. We will examine four factors that can help us to remain holy.

### ■ Never Become “Enraged Against Jehovah”

This article will consider five factors that could lead a loyal Christian to become “enraged against Jehovah.” (Prov. 19:3) Then we will discuss in detail five ways to avoid even starting to blame Jehovah for our problems.

### ■ Consider and Encourage One Another

### ■ Consider What Kind of Person You Ought to Be

The first of these articles discusses how we can help one another to be resolute despite the challenges we face. The second article shows how we can successfully resist temptations used by Satan as he attempts to damage our friendship with God.

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*"You have been washed clean, . . . you have been sanctified."*

—1 COR. 6:11.

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#### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

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Why must we avoid bad associations?

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How can we support theocratic arrangements?

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What will help us to put spiritual things first and preserve our Christian identity?

# YOU HAVE BEEN SANCTIFIED

RESIDENTS of Jerusalem are talking. A notorious foreigner is staying in a temple chamber. Levites are abandoning their assignment. Instead of taking the lead in worship, elders are trading on the Sabbath. Many Israelites are marrying non-Jews. These are just some of the disturbing developments that Nehemiah discovers when he returns to Jerusalem sometime after 443 B.C.E.—Neh. 13:6.

<sup>2</sup> Israel was a nation dedicated to God. In 1513 B.C.E., the Israelites were eager to comply with Jehovah's will. They said: "All the words that Jehovah has spoken we are willing to do." (Ex. 24:3) So God sanctified them, or set them apart as his chosen people. What a privilege that was! Forty years later, Moses reminded them: "You are a holy people to Jehovah your God. It is you Jehovah your God has chosen to become his people, a special property, out of all the peoples that are on the surface of the ground."—Deut. 7:6.

<sup>3</sup> Sadly, Israel's initial enthusiasm about being a holy nation did not last long. Although there were always some individuals who served God, the Jews in general were often more concerned about appearing to be holy, or devout, than they were about doing God's will. By the time that Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem a second time, about a hundred years had passed since a faithful remnant had returned from Babylon to restore true worship. Once again, the nation's zeal for spiritual things was flagging.

<sup>4</sup> Like the Israelites, Witnesses of Jehovah today

1. What disturbing developments did Nehemiah discover when he returned to Jerusalem? (See opening image.)
2. How did Israel become a sanctified nation?
3. What was the spiritual state of the Jews when Nehemiah arrived in Jerusalem a second time?
4. We will consider what factors that can help us to remain a sanctified people?

have been sanctified by God in a general sense. Both anointed Christians and those of the “great crowd” are holy, set apart for sacred service. (Rev. 7:9, 14, 15; 1 Cor. 6:11) None of us want to lose our sanctified standing before God as the Israelites eventually did. What can help us to prevent this from happening so that we can remain holy and useful in Jehovah’s service? In this study, we will consider four factors highlighted in Nehemiah chapter 13: (1) Avoid bad associations; (2) support theocratic arrangements; (3) put spiritual things first; and (4) preserve your Christian identity. Let us now examine each of these points.

### AVOID BAD ASSOCIATIONS

**5 Read Nehemiah 13:4-9.** We are surrounded by unclean influences, so it is not easy for us to remain holy. Consider Eliashib and Tobiah. Eliashib was the high priest, and Tobiah was an Ammonite and likely a petty official in the Persian administration of Judea. Tobiah and his associates had opposed Nehemiah’s efforts to rebuild Jerusalem’s walls. (Neh. 2:10) Ammonites were forbidden to come onto the temple grounds. (Deut. 23:3) So why would the high priest provide space in a temple dining hall for such a man as Tobiah?

**6** Tobiah had become a close associate of Eliashib. Tobiah and his son Jehohanan had married Jewish women, and many Jews spoke highly of Tobiah. (Neh. 6:17-19) One of Eliashib’s grandsons was married to the daughter of Sanballat, governor of Samaria, who was one of Tobiah’s closest associates. (Neh. 13:28) These ties may explain why High Priest Eliashib allowed an unbeliever and op-

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**5, 6.** Who were Eliashib and Tobiah, and why might Eliashib have been associating with Tobiah?

poser to influence him. But Nehemiah showed loyalty to Jehovah by throwing all of Tobiah’s furniture outside the dining hall.

**7** As a people dedicated to God, our first loyalty must always be to Jehovah. Unless we adhere to his righteous standards, we will not remain sanctified before him. We must not let family ties overshadow Bible principles. Christian elders are guided by Jehovah’s thinking, not by their own opinions or feelings. (1 Tim. 5:21) The elders carefully avoid doing anything that might compromise their standing with God.—1 Tim. 2:8.

**8** We do well to remember that “bad associations spoil useful habits.” (1 Cor. 15:33) Some of our relatives might not be a positive influence in our lives. Eliashib had set a good example for the people by fully supporting Nehemiah in the rebuilding of Jerusalem’s walls. (Neh. 3:1) In time, however, the unwholesome influence of Tobiah and others apparently led Eliashib to do things that left him defiled before Jehovah. Good associates encourage us to engage in useful Christian pursuits, such as reading the Bible, attending Christian meetings, and sharing in the field service. Family members who influence us to do what is right are especially loved and appreciated.

### SUPPORT THEOCRATIC ARRANGEMENTS

**9 Read Nehemiah 13:10-13.** It appears that contributions to the temple had all

7. How do elders and others avoid defiling their sanctified position before Jehovah?

8. What should all dedicated servants of Jehovah remember when it comes to their associations?

9. Why were the temple arrangements being disrupted, and whom did Nehemiah blame for this?

but stopped by the time Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem. Not having this support, the Levites were abandoning their assignments and going off to work in their fields. Nehemiah blamed the deputy rulers for the situation. Apparently, they were not caring for their duties. Either they were not collecting the people's tithes or they were not forwarding them to the temple, as they had been assigned to do. (Neh. 12:44) So Nehemiah took steps to have the tithes collected. He appointed trustworthy men to oversee the temple stores and future distributions.

**10** Is there a lesson here for us? Yes, for we are reminded that we have the privilege of honoring Jehovah with our valuable things. (Prov. 3:9) When we make contributions to support his work, we are merely giving to Jehovah what already belongs to him. (1 Chron. 29:14-16) We may not think that we have much to give, but if the desire is there, all of us can have a share.—2 Cor. 8:12.

**11** For many years, one large family invited an elderly special pioneer couple to join them for a meal once each week. Although the parents had eight children, the mother used to say, "What are two more plates at a table set for ten?" A weekly meal may not seem like much, but how thankful those pioneers were for the hospitality shown! They, in turn, proved to be a blessing to their hosts. The encouraging words and experiences of the couple helped to motivate the children to make spiritual progress. All of them later took up the full-time ministry.

**12** Another lesson is this: Like Nehemiah, appointed men today take the

**10, 11.** What privilege do God's people have in supporting true worship?

**12.** What fine example is being set by appointed men in the congregation?



How did Nehemiah show his loyalty to Jehovah?  
(See paragraphs 5, 6)

lead in supporting theocratic arrangements. Others in the congregation benefit from their example. In this, elders also imitate the apostle Paul. He supported true worship and gave helpful direction. For instance, he offered a number of practical suggestions on how to make contributions.—1 Cor. 16:1-3; 2 Cor. 9:5-7.

#### PUT SPIRITUAL THINGS FIRST

**13** *Read Nehemiah 13:15-21.* If we allow ourselves to become preoccupied with material things, our spirituality can gradually be lost. According to

**13.** How were some of the Jews not respecting the Sabbath?

Exodus 31:13, the weekly Sabbath was to remind the Israelites that they were a sanctified people. The Sabbath day was to be set aside for family worship, prayer, and meditation on God's Law. For some of Nehemiah's contemporaries, though, the Sabbath had become just another day—business as usual. Worship was being pushed into the background. Seeing what was happening, Nehemiah had the city gates closed at dusk on the sixth day, chasing the foreign merchants away before the Sabbath began.

**14** What can we learn from Nehemiah's example? One lesson is that we should limit our commercial interests. Otherwise, we might easily become distracted—or even divided in our affections—especially if we enjoy our secular work. Remember Jesus' warning about slaving for two masters. (*Read Matthew 6:24.*) Nehemiah had financial resources, but how did he use his time in Jerusalem? (Neh. 5:14-18) Instead of pursuing business contacts with the Tyrians or others, he devoted himself to helping his brothers and doing things that contributed to the sanctification of Jehovah's name. Likewise today, Christian elders and ministerial servants focus on doing things for the benefit of the congregation, and their fellow believers love them for this spirit. As a result, there is love, peace, and security among God's people.—Ezek. 34:25, 28.

**15** Although Christians are not required to observe a weekly Sabbath, Paul tells us that "there remains a sabbath resting for the people of God." He added: "The man that has entered into God's rest has also himself rested from his own works, just as God did from his

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**14, 15.** (a) What can happen to us if we do not limit our commercial interests? (b) How can we enter into God's rest?

own." (Heb. 4:9, 10) As Christians, we can enter into God's rest by obediently working in harmony with his advancing purpose. Are you and your loved ones giving family worship, meeting attendance, and the field ministry first place in your lives? We may have to be resolute with our employer or business associates, especially if they do not respect our theocratic priorities. In effect, we may need 'to close the gates to the city and chase the Tyrians away' in order to give priority and proper attention to sacred things. Because we have been sanctified, we do well to ask ourselves, 'Does the way I live demonstrate that I have been set apart for Jehovah's service?'—Matt. 6:33.

#### PRESERVE YOUR CHRISTIAN IDENTITY

**16** *Read Nehemiah 13:23-27.* In Nehemiah's day, Israelite men were marrying foreign women. During his first visit to Jerusalem, Nehemiah had all the older men sign a written agreement pledging that they would not marry pagans. (Neh. 9:38; 10:30) A few years later, however, he found that not only had Jewish men taken foreign wives but they were about to lose their very identity as God's sanctified people! The children of these foreign women could not read or speak Hebrew. When they got older, would they identify themselves as Israelites? Or would they rather think of themselves as Ashdodites, Ammonites, or Moabites? Without knowing the Hebrew language, was it likely that they would be able to understand God's Law? How could they get to know Jehovah and choose to serve him instead of the false gods their mothers worshipped?

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**16.** How was the very identity of the nation as a sanctified people being threatened in Nehemiah's day?

Swift and decisive action was needed, and Nehemiah took such action.—Neh. 13:28.

**17** Today, we need to take positive action in order to help our children acquire a Christian identity. Parents, ask yourselves, ‘How well do my children speak the “pure language” of Scriptural truth? (Zeph. 3:9) Does my children’s conversation reflect the influence of God’s spirit or that of the world?’ Do not quickly become discouraged if you see room for improvement. It takes time to learn a language, especially when we are surrounded by distractions. Your children are facing tremendous pressures to compromise. Therefore, patiently use your Family Worship sessions and other opportunities to help your children to develop a close relationship with Jehovah. (Deut. 6:6-9) Highlight the benefits of being different from Satan’s world. (John 17:15-17) And work to reach the heart.

**18** Ultimately, each child will make his or her own decision about serving God. Yet, there is much that parents can do. This includes setting a proper example, specifying clear boundaries, and discussing with your children the consequences of decisions. Parents, no one is in a better position than you are to prepare your children for making a dedication to Jehovah. They need your help to acquire and preserve their Christian identity. Of course, all of us need to be on guard so that we do not lose our figurative “outer garments”—the qualities and standards that identify us as Christ’s followers.—Rev. 3:4, 5; 16:15.

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**17.** How can parents help their children to have a personal relationship with Jehovah?

**18.** Why are Christian parents in the best position to prepare their children for making a dedication to Jehovah?



Help your children to develop a close relationship with Jehovah  
(See paragraphs 17, 18)

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#### REMEMBERED “FOR GOOD”

**19** One of Nehemiah’s contemporaries was the prophet Malachi, who revealed that “a book of remembrance began to be written up . . . for those in fear of Jehovah and for those thinking upon his name.” (Mal. 3:16, 17) God will never forget those who have reverential fear of him and love for his name.—Heb. 6:10.

**20** Nehemiah prayed: “Do remember me, O my God, for good.” (Neh. 13:31) Like Nehemiah, our names will be in God’s book of remembrance if we continue to avoid bad associations, support theocratic arrangements, give spiritual matters priority, and safeguard our Christian identity. Let us ‘keep testing whether we are in the faith.’ (2 Cor. 13:5) If we maintain our sanctified relationship with Jehovah, he will remember us “for good.”

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**19, 20.** How can we be remembered by Jehovah “for good”?

## Would it be appropriate for Christian parents to sit with a disfellowshipped child at congregation meetings?

■ There is no reason to be unduly concerned about the seating location of a disfellowshipped person in the Kingdom Hall. This magazine has made every effort to encourage Christian parents to provide spiritual help to their disfellowshipped child who is still living at home if it seems fitting to do so. As indicated on pages 19 and 20 of the November 15, 1988, issue of *The Watchtower*, parents may even study the Bible with a disfellowshipped minor who continues to live with them. It is hoped that the child will thus receive the encouragement necessary to correct his course.\*

When it comes to Kingdom Hall seating arrangements, it would seem reasonable that a disfellowshipped minor could also quietly sit with his parents. Since it is not required that a disfellowshipped person sit at the back of the hall, there should be no objection if a disfellowshipped child sits next to his parents, wherever they are sitting. As the parents care for their child spiritually, they certainly would want to make sure that he is getting the most from the meetings. Having the child sit with them rather than leaving the young person unattended elsewhere may be helpful in this regard.

What, though, if a disfellowshipped child no longer lives with his parents?

Would this circumstance make a difference? In the past, this magazine has clearly stated the proper attitude that a Christian should strive to maintain when it comes to *association* with a disfellowshipped relative who is not living at home.\* However, the situation in which a disfellowshipped person sits quietly in a seat next to his relatives for the duration of a meeting is far different from the situation in which the relatives needlessly seek out his company to associate with him. If the faithful members of the family have the proper attitude toward their disfellowshipped relative and they are endeavoring to honor the Scriptural counsel concerning association with him, there would seem to be no reason for concern.—1 Cor. 5:11, 13; 2 John 11.

Whether a disfellowshipped person sits next to a relative or next to any other member of the congregation should not be a cause for concern as long as he behaves properly. Restricting where a person sits could give rise to various problems, depending on the circumstances. If all present, including faithful relatives, are endeavoring to respect Bible principles relating to disfellowshipping, and it is not becoming a cause for stumbling to the brothers, there is no need to make an issue of the seating arrangements of those attending Christian meetings.#

\* See *The Watchtower*, September 15, 1981, pages 29 and 30.

# This updates what was published in *The Watchtower* of April 1, 1953, page 223.

I was born in 1956 with spina bifida. Because the neural tube in my spine failed to close completely, nerve damage has made it difficult for me to walk and has caused other serious health problems.

Some time before my birth, missionaries of Jehovah's Witnesses started to study the Bible with my parents. During my childhood, only a few isolated publishers lived in my hometown of Usakos, Namibia. Hence, we considered the material for congregation meetings as a family. At age seven, I had a urostomy, an operation performed to create an artificial opening in my body so that I could pass urine. At age 14, I developed epilepsy. Because the nearest high school was far away and I needed special care from my parents, I could not complete my schooling.

Nevertheless, I decided to fortify myself spiritually. Many of our Christian publications were not yet available in Afrikaans, my mother tongue. So I learned to read English in order to study a number of our books. I became a Kingdom publisher and got baptized at age 19. During the following four years, I had many health problems and emotional difficulties. Moreover, in the close-knit community in my hometown, fear of man prevented me from having a zealous share in the ministry.

During my early 20's, we moved from Namibia to South Africa, and for the first time, I was able to associate with a congregation. How wonderful that was! However, I had to undergo surgery again—this time a colostomy.

Some time later, I heard a circuit overseer speak on the subject of pioneering. His remarks touched my heart. I knew that my health was less than ideal, but I had seen how Jehovah had carried me through many difficulties. So I applied to be a regular pioneer. However, because of my health problems, the elders hesitated to approve my application.

Still, I decided to give Kingdom preaching my best effort. With the help of my mother and others, I managed to devote pioneer hours to the ministry over a period of six months. That proved my determination to pioneer and showed that my health problems were manageable. I applied again, and this time my application was approved. On September 1, 1988, I became a regular pioneer.

As a pioneer, I have constantly experienced Jehovah's support. Teaching new ones the truth instead of focusing on my own situation has protected me, nurtured me, and helped me to grow spiritually. I have derived immense joy from helping a number of individuals to dedication and baptism.

My health remains uncertain. But Jehovah 'daily carries the load for me.' (Ps. 68:19) He does more than just make my life bearable; he makes it a pleasure for me to be alive!



Maretha du Raan

## Jehovah 'Daily Carries the Load for Me'

Despite an uncertain health condition that might have seemed unbearable, I have felt the loving support of our dear heavenly Father throughout my life. And for more than 20 years, I have found special joy serving Jehovah as a pioneer.



*"It is the foolishness  
of an earthling man  
that distorts his way,  
and so his heart be-  
comes enraged against  
Jehovah himself."*

—PROV. 19:3.

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#### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

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What might cause us to become  
“enraged against Jehovah”?

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What are five factors that can help us to avoid becoming enraged against God?

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We should remember what when faced with difficult problems?

## NEVER BECOME “ENRAGED AGAINST JEHOVAH”

LET us say that you have been a happily married man for many years. But one day when you return home, you find that everything in your house has been turned upside down. The furniture has been smashed, the crockery shattered, the carpet ruined beyond repair. Your treasured home has become a disaster zone. Would you blurt out, “Why did my wife do this?” Or would you be more likely to ask, “Who did this?” No doubt the second question would immediately come to your mind. Why? Because you know that your cherished mate would not be the cause of such a wanton act of vandalism.

<sup>2</sup> Today, we see mankind’s home marred by pollution, violence, and immorality. As Bible students, we know that Jehovah cannot possibly be the cause of all these problems. He created this planet to be a delightful paradise. (Gen. 2:8, 15) Jehovah is a God of love. (1 John 4:8) Our study of the Scriptures has helped us to identify the real cause of many of the world’s difficulties. It is none other than Satan the Devil, “the ruler of the world.”—John 14:30; 2 Cor. 4:4.

<sup>3</sup> However, we cannot blame Satan for all our woes. Why not? Because some of our problems are the result of our own mistakes. (*Read Deuteronomy 32:4-6.*) Even though we might admit that fact, our imperfect nature can distort our thinking and cause us to go down a path that eventually leads to disaster. (Prov. 14:12) In what way? Instead of blaming ourselves or Satan for a problem, we could start to blame Jehovah. We might even become “enraged against Jehovah himself.”—Prov. 19:3.

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**1, 2.** Why should we not blame Jehovah for mankind’s problems? Illustrate.

**3.** How may our thinking become distorted?

**4** Is it really possible that we could become “enraged against Jehovah”? Surely to do so would be futile. (Isa. 41:11) What would we hope to gain? A poet once said: “Your arm’s too short to box with God.” We may never go so far as to vocalize a complaint against Jehovah. But Proverbs 19:3 says that a man’s foolishness “distorts his way, and so his heart becomes enraged against Jehovah himself.” Yes, a person can become enraged against God in *his heart*. This attitude could manifest itself in subtle ways. An individual could, as it were, hold a grudge against Jehovah. As a result, that person might withdraw from the congregation or not fully support arrangements for Jehovah’s worship.

**5** What could prompt us to be “enraged against Jehovah”? How can we avoid that trap? It is vital that we know the answers to these questions. Why, our very relationship with Jehovah God is involved!

#### **WHAT COULD PROMPT US TO BECOME “ENRAGED AGAINST JEHOVAH”?**

**6** What could cause the heart of a faithful servant of Jehovah to start to complain about his God? Let us consider five factors and analyze Bible examples that highlight how some in the past fell into this trap.—1 Cor. 10:11, 12.

**7 The negative speech of others can influence us. (Read Deuteronomy 1:26-28.)** The Israelites had just been delivered from slavery in Egypt. Jehovah had miraculously brought ten plagues on that oppressive nation and thereafter destroyed Pharaoh and his military force in the Red Sea. (Ex. 12:29-32, 51; 14:29-

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**4, 5.** How could a Christian become “enraged against Jehovah”?

**6, 7.** Why did the Israelites in Moses’ time start to complain about Jehovah?

31; Ps. 136:15) God’s people were poised to enter the Promised Land. Yet, at that crucial moment, the Israelites started to complain about Jehovah. What caused this lack of faith? Their hearts melted because of the negative report of some who had been sent to spy out the land. (Num. 14:1-4) What resulted? A whole generation was not allowed to enter into that “good land.” (Deut. 1:34, 35) Could we at times allow the negative speech of others to weaken our faith and cause us to grumble about Jehovah’s dealings with us?

**8 Hardships and difficulties may discourage us. (Read Isaiah 8:21, 22.)** In Isaiah’s day, the nation of Judah found themselves in dire straits. They were surrounded by enemies. Food was scarce. Many were hungry. But more important, there was a spiritual famine. (Amos 8: 11) Instead of looking to Jehovah for help in dealing with these hardships, however, they started to “call down evil” on their king and on their God. Yes, they blamed Jehovah for their problems. If we are beset by tragedy or personal problems, might we likewise say in our heart, ‘Where was Jehovah when I needed him?’

**9 We do not know all the facts.** Because of not having all the facts, the Israelites in Ezekiel’s day felt that Jehovah’s way was “not adjusted right.” (Ezek. 18: 29) It was as if they had set themselves up as judges of God, putting their own standards of justice above Jehovah’s and judging him based on their own limited understanding of events. If we at times do not fully understand a Bible account or the way events develop in our own

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**8.** What caused God’s people in Isaiah’s day to start to blame Jehovah for their situation?

**9.** Why did the Israelites in Ezekiel’s day develop a wrong viewpoint?



Listening to negative talk can have a bad effect on you  
(See paragraph 7)

life, could we perhaps feel in our heart that the way of Jehovah is unfair, “not adjusted right”?—Job 35:2.

**10 We shift the blame for our own sins and mistakes.** Right at the beginning of human history, Adam blamed God for his own sin. (Gen. 3:12) Although Adam deliberately and with full knowledge of the consequences broke God’s law, he blamed Jehovah. In effect, he said that Jehovah had given him a bad wife. Since that time, others have followed Adam’s example of blaming God for their own mistakes. We do well to ask, ‘Could disappointment and frustration over my mistakes cause me to be dissatisfied with Jehovah’s standards?’

**11 We become too self-centered.** The prophet Jonah had a problem with Jehovah’s merciful decision regarding Nineveh. (Jonah 4:1-3) Why? He apparently became too concerned about losing face when his proclamation of destruction

did not come true. Jonah allowed concern over his reputation to overshadow any compassion he should have felt for the repentant Ninevites. Could we likewise become so self-centered that we become “enraged against Jehovah” for not bringing the end sooner? If we have been preaching for decades that Jehovah’s day is close, could we start to become impatient with Jehovah when others criticize us for proclaiming what the Bible says?—2 Pet. 3:3, 4, 9.

#### HOW TO AVOID BECOMING “ENRAGED AGAINST JEHOVAH”

**12** What can we do if our sinful heart starts to question some of Jehovah’s activities? Remember that it is unwise to do so. Another translation of Proverbs 19:3 says: “A man’s ignorance muddles his affairs and he flies out against Jehovah.” (Byington) With that in mind, let us now consider five factors that will help

**10.** How could someone follow Adam’s wrong example?

**11.** What lesson can we learn from Jonah?

**12, 13.** If in our heart we start to question some of Jehovah’s activities, what must we not neglect?

us never to allow the frustrations of life to make us blame Jehovah.

**13 Do not neglect your relationship with Jehovah.** We can avoid the imperfect tendency to become enraged against God if we maintain a close relationship with him. (*Read Proverbs 3:5, 6.*) We need to trust in Jehovah. We also need to avoid becoming wise in our own eyes or becoming self-centered. (Prov. 3:7; Eccl. 7:16) We will then be less likely to blame Jehovah when bad things happen.

**14 Do not allow negative speech to affect you.** The Israelites in Moses' day had ample reason to believe that Jehovah would successfully usher them into the Promised Land. (Ps. 78:43-53) But when faced with the negative report of the ten unfaithful spies, they did not "remember his hand." (Ps. 78:42) If we meditate on Jehovah's activities, remembering all the good things he has done for us, we will strengthen our relationship with him. As a result, we will not allow the negative ideas of others to drive a wedge between us and Jehovah.—Ps. 77:11, 12.

**15** What if we have a negative attitude toward our fellow worshippers? Under such circumstances, our relationship with Jehovah can be affected. (1 John 4: 20) When the Israelites questioned Aaron's appointment and position, Jehovah viewed that action as murmuring against Him. (Num. 17:10) Similarly, if we were to start grumbling and murmuring about those whom Jehovah is using to direct the earthly part of his organization, we could by inference be complaining about Jehovah.—Heb. 13:7, 17.

**16 Remember that Jehovah does not cause our problems.** Though the Israel-

ites in Isaiah's day had turned away from Jehovah, He still wanted to help them. (Isa. 1:16-19) No matter what problem we may face, we can find comfort in knowing that Jehovah cares for us and wants to help us. (1 Pet. 5:7) In fact, he promises to provide us with the strength needed to keep on enduring.—1 Cor. 10:13.

**17** If we are suffering some form of injustice—even as the faithful man Job did—we need to remind ourselves that Jehovah is not the cause of the unfairness. Jehovah hates injustice; he loves righteousness. (Ps. 33:5) May we, like Job's friend Elihu, acknowledge: "Far be it from the true God to act wickedly, and the Almighty to act unjustly!" (Job 34:10) Rather than causing our problems, Jehovah gives us "every good gift and every perfect present."—Jas. 1:13, 17.

**18 Never doubt Jehovah.** God is perfect, and his thoughts are higher than ours. (Isa. 55:8, 9) So humility and modesty should help us to admit that we are limited in our understanding. (Rom. 9: 20) Rarely do we have all the facts about a certain situation. No doubt, you have experienced the truthfulness of this proverb: "The first to present his case seems right, till another comes forward and questions him."—Prov. 18:17, *New International Version*.

**19** If we have a trusted friend who does something that we might not at first understand or that we feel is unusual, will we be quick to accuse him of some wrongdoing? Or will we be inclined to give our friend the benefit of the doubt, especially if we have known that person for many years? If we deal with our imperfect friends in such a

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**14, 15.** What will help us not to be affected by the negative speech of others?

**16, 17.** What do we need to remember when we are having problems?

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**18, 19.** Why should we never doubt Jehovah? Illustrate.



Joshua and Caleb were blessed for their trust in Jehovah  
(See paragraph 22)

loving manner, how much more should we be inclined to trust our heavenly Father, whose ways and thoughts are much higher than ours!

**20 Lay the blame where it belongs.** Why should we do so? Well, we may be responsible for some of our problems. If we are, we need to acknowledge that fact. (Gal. 6:7) Do not try to blame Jehovah for the problems. Why would such a course be unreasonable? Consider this example: A car may be capable of traveling at a high speed. Imagine that a driver greatly exceeds the recommended speed limit when traveling around a sharp curve and he crashes. Should the manufacturer of the car be held accountable for the accident? No, of course not! Similarly, Jehovah has created us with free will. But he has also provided us with guidelines on how to make wise

**20, 21.** Why is it important for us to lay the blame where it belongs?

decisions. So why would we blame our Creator for our own mistakes?

**21** Of course, not all our problems are a result of our personal mistakes and wrong actions. Some events take place as a result of “time and unforeseen occurrence.” (Eccl. 9:11) Ultimately, though, let us never lose sight of the fact that Satan the Devil is the primary cause of wickedness. (1 John 5:19; Rev. 12:9) He is the enemy—not Jehovah! —1 Pet. 5:8.

#### TREASURE YOUR PRECIOUS RELATIONSHIP WITH JEHOVAH

**22** When you are undergoing hardship and difficulties, remember the example of Joshua and Caleb. Unlike the ten other spies, these two faithful men brought back a positive report. (Num. 14:6-9) They showed faith in Jehovah. Even so, they had to wander in the wilderness for 40 years along with the rest of the Israelites. Did Joshua and Caleb complain or become bitter, feeling that this was unfair? No. They trusted in Jehovah. Were they blessed? Absolutely! Whereas a whole generation died in the wilderness, both of these men eventually entered the Promised Land. (Num. 14:30) Similarly, we will receive Jehovah’s blessing if we do not “tire out” in doing his will.—Gal. 6:9; Heb. 6:10.

**23** If you are discouraged because of problems, the imperfections of others, or your own imperfections, what should you do? Focus on Jehovah’s marvelous qualities. Visualize the hope that Jehovah has given you. Ask yourself, ‘Where would I be without Jehovah?’ Always remain close to him, and never allow your heart to become enraged against him!

**22, 23.** What should we remember if we become discouraged because of our problems?

"LOOK! Sons are an inheritance from Jehovah; the fruitage of the belly is a reward," states the Bible. (Ps. 127:3) It is no surprise, then, when Christian parents greet the arrival of a newborn with great joy.

Along with joy, the birth of a child brings serious responsibilities. If a child is to grow up to become a healthy adult, he needs nutritious food on a regular basis. If the child is to take a firm stand for true worship, he needs spiritual nourishment and the guidance of parents who endeavor to instill in him godly principles. (Prov. 1:8) When should such training begin, and what should it include?

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# Parents

## Train Your Children From Their Infancy



## PARENTS NEED INSTRUCTION

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

How early should child training begin? "From infancy" Timothy was trained in "the holy writings" by his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother Lois. (2 Tim. 1:5; 3:15) Yes, Timothy's training in the Scriptures began in his early childhood.

It is wise for Christian parents to pray for direction and to plan ahead so that they can begin to train their child "from infancy." "The plans of the diligent one surely make for advantage," states Proverbs 21:5. Before the arrival of their baby, the parents will no doubt prepare carefully. They may even have a checklist of items that the baby will need. It is also important for them to plan for spiritual activities. Their goal should be to start such training early in the baby's life.

The book *Early Childhood Counts—A Programming Guide on Early Childhood Care for Development* states: "The months immediately after birth are critical in terms of brain maturation. During this time the number of synapses—the connections that allow learning to take place—increase twenty-fold." How wise it is for parents to take advantage of this brief period in their child's mental development to begin the process of implanting spiritual ideas and values in his mind!

Regarding her young daughter, a mother and regular pioneer said: "I have been taking her along with me in the ministry since she was only one month old. Although she could not understand what was going on, I believe that this early exposure had a beneficial effect on her. By the time she was two years old, she was confidently offering tracts to those we met in the field service."

Early child training produces good fruitage. However, parents find that providing spiritual instruction for their children is not without its challenges.

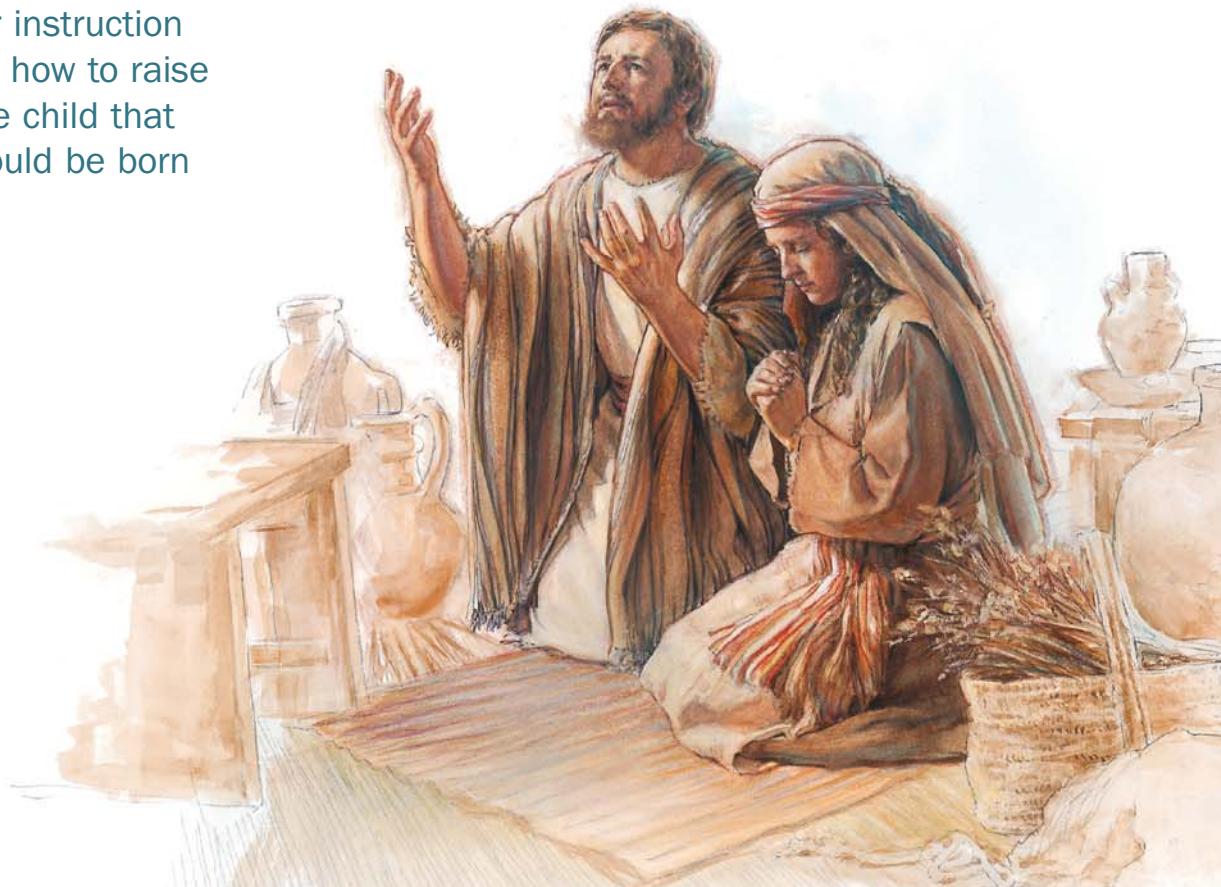
## 'BUY OUT THE OPPORTUNE TIME'

A child's restlessness or short attention span can be a major challenge for parents. The attention of young children may move quickly from one thing to another. After all, they are curious and are trying to explore the world around them. What can parents do to help their child to concentrate on what they are trying to teach him?

Consider what Moses said. Deuteronomy 6: 6, 7 states: "These words that I am commanding you today must prove to be on your heart; and you must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up." The word "inculcate" conveys the idea of teaching through frequent repetition. A small child is like a sapling that needs watering at regular intervals. Since repetition helps adults to remember important matters, it will surely help young children!

Teaching children God's truth requires that parents spend time with them. In today's fast-moving world, setting aside such time can indeed be a challenge. But the apostle Paul recommended "buying out the opportune time" for essential Christian activities. (Eph. 5:15, 16) How may this be done? Striking a balance between training a child, caring for theocratic responsibilities, and doing secular work posed a challenge for one

Manoah prayed  
for instruction  
on how to raise  
the child that  
would be born



Christian overseer whose wife has a busy schedule as a regular pioneer. How could they make time to train their daughter? The father says: "Every morning before I go to work, my wife and I read to her from *My Book of Bible Stories* or the booklet *Examining the Scriptures Daily*. In the evening, we make sure that we read to her before she goes to bed, and when we go in the ministry, we take her with us. We do not want to miss out on these first years of her life."

#### **'SONS ARE LIKE ARROWS'**

We certainly want our children to grow up to be responsible individuals. However, our primary reason for training them is to foster love for God in their heart.—Mark 12:28-30.

Psalm 127:4 states: "Like arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the sons of youth." Children are thus likened to arrows that should be accurately aimed at the target. An archer can never recall an arrow once it leaves his bow. Parents have "arrows"—their children—for only a comparatively brief period of time. That time should be used to instill godly principles in the mind and heart of their children.

Regarding his spiritual children, the apostle John wrote: "No greater cause for thankfulness do I have than these things, that I should be hearing that my children go on walking in the truth." (3 John 4) Christian parents can express similar gratitude when they see their children "go on walking in the truth."



*"Let us consider one another to incite to love and fine works."*

—HEB. 10:24.

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#### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

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What does it mean to “consider one another”?

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How can we ‘incite one another to love and fine works’?

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How can we ‘encourage one another’?

## CONSIDER AND ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER

AS THE Nazi regime collapsed at the end of World War II, an order was given to eliminate thousands who remained in concentration camps. The inmates of the Sachsenhausen camp were to be evacuated to seaports where they would be loaded on ships and sunk at sea. This was part of a strategy later known as the death marches.

<sup>2</sup> Thirty-three thousand of the prisoners from Sachsenhausen concentration camp were due to march 155 miles (250 km) to Lübeck, a port city in Germany. Among them were 230 of Jehovah’s Witnesses from six countries, who were ordered to march together. All had been weakened by starvation and disease. How were our brothers able to survive the march? “We continually encouraged one another to keep going,” said one of them. Along with God-given “power beyond what is normal,” their love for one another helped them survive the ordeal.

—2 Cor. 4:7.

<sup>3</sup> Today, we are not on such a death march, but we do face many challenges. After the establishment of God’s Kingdom in 1914, Satan was ousted from heaven and confined to the vicinity of the earth, having “great anger, knowing he has a short period of time.” (Rev. 12:7-9, 12) As this world approaches Armageddon, Satan is using trials and pressures in an attempt to weaken us spiritually. Added to this are the stresses of day-to-day life. (Job 14:1; Eccl. 2: 23) Sometimes the cumulative effect of our difficulties can wear us down so much that whatever emotional and spiritual strength we muster up may not be enough for us to cope with the discouragement.

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**1, 2.** What helped 230 of Jehovah’s Witnesses to survive the death march at the end of World War II?

**3.** Why do we need to encourage one another?

Consider the case of a brother who over many decades had helped scores of people spiritually. In his later years, he and his wife experienced ill health, and he began to feel very discouraged. Like that brother, all of us need "power beyond what is normal" from Jehovah as well as encouragement from one another.

**4** If we are to be a source of encouragement to others, we must take to heart the exhortation that the apostle Paul gave to the Hebrew Christians. He said: "Let us consider one another to incite to love and fine works, not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together, as some have the custom, but encouraging one another, and all the more so as you behold the day drawing near." (Heb. 10:24, 25) How can we apply the counsel contained in these meaningful words?

#### **"CONSIDER ONE ANOTHER"**

5 To "consider one another" means "to take into account the needs of others, to think about them." Can we closely consider the needs of others if we limit our conversations with them to a quick greeting at the Kingdom Hall or a discussion of only trivial matters? Not really. We, of course, want to be careful to 'mind our own business' and not to 'meddle in other people's affairs.' (1 Thess. 4:11; 1 Tim. 5:13) Nevertheless, if we want to encourage our brothers, we truly need to get to know them—their situation in life, their qualities, their spirituality, their strengths, and their weaknesses. They need to view us as their friends and be assured of our love for them. This requires spending time with them—not just when they face

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4. If we are to encourage others, what counsel of the apostle Paul must we take to heart?
  5. What does it mean to "consider one another," and what effort does doing so require?

problems and get discouraged but at other times too.—Rom. 12:13.

**6** The older men in the congregation are exhorted to 'shepherd the flock of God in their care,' doing so willingly and eagerly. (1 Pet. 5:1-3) How can they carry out the shepherding work effectively unless they really know the sheep in their care? (*Read Proverbs 27:23.*) If elders make themselves available to fellow believers and enjoy being with them, the sheep will be more likely to ask for assistance when needed. The brothers and sisters will also be more inclined to reveal their true feelings and concerns, enabling elders to "consider" those in their care and render needed help.

**7** When addressing the congregation in Thessalonica, Paul said: "Support the weak." (*Read 1 Thessalonians 5:14.*) "Depressed souls" are weak, in a sense, and so are discouraged ones. Proverbs 24:10 says: "Have you shown yourself discouraged in the day of distress? Your power will be scanty." The words of a deeply discouraged person may become "wild talk." (Job 6:2, 3) When 'considering' such ones, we need to keep in mind that what they say may not be a true reflection of what they really are at heart. Rachelle, whose mother became severely depressed, learned this from personal experience. Rachelle says: "Many times Mom would say something very hateful. Most of these times, I tried to remind myself of the kind of person Mom *really* is—loving, kind, and generous. I learned that depressed people say many things they do not mean. The worst thing that one can do is to return evil words or

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6. What will help an elder to "consider" those in his care?
  7. How should we view the "wild talk" of those who are discouraged?



Share with others in the field service



Incite to love and fine works

actions.” Proverbs 19:11 states: “The insight of a man certainly slows down his anger, and it is beauty on his part to pass over transgression.”

8 How can we “consider” someone who feels downhearted because of the shame and despair that he still experiences as a result of a past transgression, even though he has taken steps to correct matters? Concerning a repentant wrongdoer in Corinth, Paul wrote: “You should kindly forgive and comfort him, that somehow such a man may not be swallowed up by his being overly sad. Therefore I exhort you to confirm your love for him.” (2 Cor. 2:7, 8) According to one lexicon, the term rendered “confirm” means to “ratify, validate, make legally binding.” We simply cannot assume that the person understands our love and concern for him. He needs to see it demonstrated by our attitude and actions.

8. For whom do we especially need to “confirm” our love, and why?

#### “INCITE TO LOVE AND FINE WORKS”

9 “Let us consider one another to incite to love and fine works,” wrote Paul. We need to motivate fellow believers to display love and engage in fine works. When a fire is about to die down, we may need to stir the coals and fan the flames. (2 Tim. 1:6) In the same way, we can lovingly incite our brothers to show their love for God and for neighbor. Appropriate commendation is essential to incite others to fine works.

10 All of us need commendation, whether we are discouraged or not. “My father never once said I did anything well,” one elder wrote. “So I grew up lacking self-esteem. . . . Although I am now 50 years old, I still appreciate being reassured by my friends that I am doing a good job as an elder. . . . My own experience has taught me how important it is

9. What does it mean to “incite to love and fine works”?

10, 11. (a) Who among us need commendation? (b) Illustrate how commendation can help a person who has ‘taken a false step.’



Enjoy wholesome association

to give encouragement to others, and I go out of my way to give it." Commendation can stimulate all—including pioneers, elderly ones, and those who may be discouraged.—Rom. 12:10.

11 When 'those who have spiritual qualifications try to readjust a man who has taken a false step,' loving counsel and appropriate commendation may motivate the wrongdoer to return to the course of fine works. (Gal. 6:1) This proved to be true for a sister named Miriam. She writes: "I went through a traumatic period in my life when some close friends left the congregation and, at the same time, my father suffered a brain hemorrhage. I became very depressed. In an attempt to overcome my depression, I began to go out with a worldly boyfriend." This made her feel unworthy of Jehovah's love, and she contemplated leaving the truth. When an elder reminded her of her past faithful service, her emotions were stirred. She allowed the elders an opportunity to reassure her of Jehovah's love. In turn, her love was

rekindled. She ended her relationship with the unbeliever and continued serving Jehovah.

12 Shaming an individual by making unfair comparisons with others, criticizing him by setting up rigid standards, or making him feel guilty about not doing more may motivate him to a spurt of activity, but the results are only temporary. On the other hand, giving a fellow believer commendation and appealing to his love for God can have a lasting, positive effect.—*Read Philippians 2:1-4.*

### 'ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER'

13 We need to 'encourage one another all the more as we behold the day drawing near.' Encouraging others involves motivating them to continue moving forward in their service to God. Just as inciting to love and fine works can be likened to stirring up a fire that is about to go out, encouraging others can be likened to putting fuel on the fire to keep it burning or to increase its intensity. Encouraging others calls for strengthening and comforting the downhearted. When given an opportunity to encourage such a person, we must speak in a warm and gentle manner. (Prov. 12:18) Moreover, let us "be swift about hearing" and "slow about speaking." (Jas. 1:19) If we listen empathetically, we may be able to identify situations that discourage a fellow Christian and say something to help him deal with those circumstances.

14 Consider how one compassionate elder was able to help a brother who had been inactive for several years. As the elder listened to him, it became clear

12. What can be said about using shame, criticism, or guilt to motivate others?
13. Encouraging others involves what? (See opening image.)
14. How was one discouraged brother helped?



Listen patiently to a person who needs encouragement  
(See paragraphs 14, 15)

that the brother still had a deep love for Jehovah. He diligently studied every issue of *The Watchtower* and was making an effort to attend meetings regularly. However, the actions of some in the congregation had made him feel disappointed and somewhat bitter. The elder listened empathetically without being judgmental and expressed loving concern for the brother and his family. Gradually, the brother came to realize that he was allowing bad experiences of the past to prevent him from serving the God he loved. The elder invited the brother to join him in the preaching work. With the elder's help, the brother resumed his ministry and eventually qualified to serve again as an elder.

**15** A discouraged person may not immediately feel better or respond quickly to the help we offer. We may need to keep on supporting him. Paul said: "Keep hold of the weak, be patient with

**15.** What can we learn from Jehovah about encouraging the downhearted?

everybody." (1 Thess. 5:14, *An American Translation*) Rather than quickly giving up on the weak, let us "keep hold" of them, as it were, and continue supporting them. In the past, Jehovah dealt patiently with those of his servants who at times were discouraged. For instance, God was very gracious with Elijah, considering his feelings. Jehovah provided what the prophet needed to carry on in his service. (1 Ki. 19:1-18) Because David was genuinely repentant, Jehovah kindly forgave him. (Ps. 51:7, 17) God also helped the writer of Psalm 73, who almost gave up serving Him. (Ps. 73:13, 16, 17) Jehovah is gracious and kind to us, especially when we are downhearted and discouraged. (Ex. 34:6) His mercies are "new each morning," and they "will certainly not come to an end." (Lam. 3: 22, 23) Jehovah expects us to follow his example and treat the depressed ones with tenderness.

#### ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER TO REMAIN ON THE ROAD TO LIFE

**16** Of the 33,000 prisoners who left Sachsenhausen concentration camp, thousands died. However, every one of the 230 Witnesses of Jehovah who had left the camp came through that ordeal alive. The encouragement and support they received from one another played a key role in turning that death march into a march of survival for them.

**17** Today, we are on "the road leading off into life." (Matt. 7:14) Soon, all of Jehovah's worshippers will unitedly walk into the new world of righteousness. (2 Pet. 3:13) May we be determined to help one another along the path that leads to everlasting life.

**16, 17.** As the end of this system draws near, what must we be determined to do, and why?



*"What sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion!"—2 PET. 3:11.*

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#### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

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What sort of person must you be to gain God's approval?

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How does Satan deceive people?

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What can you do to protect your relationship with Jehovah?

## CONSIDER WHAT KIND OF PERSON YOU OUGHT TO BE

IT IS not unusual to care about what others think of us. As Christians, though, should we not be more concerned about Jehovah's opinion of us? After all, he is the greatest Personage in the universe, and with him is "the source of life."—Ps. 36:9.

<sup>2</sup> Emphasizing the 'sort of persons we ought to be' from Jehovah's viewpoint, the apostle Peter urges us to engage in "holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion." (*Read 2 Peter 3:11.*) For us to gain God's approval, our "acts of conduct" must be holy, that is, clean—morally, mentally, and spiritually. Moreover, we need to perform "deeds of godly devotion" with reverence for God and loyal attachment to him. Seeking his approval, then, involves not only our conduct but also our inner person. Since Jehovah is the "examiner of the heart," he knows whether we are holy in conduct and are exclusively devoted to him or not.—1 Chron. 29:17.

<sup>3</sup> Satan the Devil does not want us to seek God's approval. In fact, he does all he can to get us to abandon our relationship with Jehovah. Satan does not hesitate to use lies and deceit to seduce us and draw us away from the God we worship. (John 8:44; 2 Cor. 11:13-15) Therefore, we are wise to ask ourselves: 'How does Satan deceive people? What can I do to protect my relationship with Jehovah?'

#### HOW DOES SATAN DECEIVE PEOPLE?

<sup>4</sup> "Each one is tried by being drawn out and enticed by his own desire," writes the disciple James.

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**1, 2.** 'What sort of persons ought we to be' to gain God's approval?

**3.** Concerning our relationship with God, what questions should we consider?

**4.** In an attempt to destroy our relationship with God, what does Satan target, and why?



"The desire of the flesh" was Eve's downfall  
(See paragraph 7)

"Then the desire, when it has become fertile, gives birth to sin; in turn, sin, when it has been accomplished, brings forth death." (Jas. 1:14, 15) In an attempt to break our attachment to God, Satan targets the source of our desires—our heart.

5 By what means does Satan make our heart his target? "The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one," states the Bible. (1 John 5:19) Satan's weapons include "the things in the world." (*Read 1 John 2:15, 16.*) Over thousands of years, the Devil has carefully crafted the environment surrounding us. Since we live in this world, we need to guard against his subtle tactics.  
—John 17:15.

6 Satan uses methods designed to cor-

5, 6. (a) By what means does Satan make us his target? (b) What enticements does Satan employ in an effort to corrupt the desires of our heart, and how experienced is he in using them?

rupt the desires of the heart. The apostle John identifies three enticements that Satan employs: (1) "the desire of the flesh," (2) "the desire of the eyes," and (3) "the showy display of one's means of life." Satan used them to tempt Jesus in the wilderness. Having had years of practice using such traps, Satan today uses them effectively, adapting his approach to each person's inclinations. Before considering measures we can take to protect ourselves in this regard, let us see how the Devil successfully used certain enticements with Eve but unsuccessfully with the Son of God.

#### "THE DESIRE OF THE FLESH"

7 Humans have a fundamental requirement for sustaining the body—the need for food. The Creator designed the earth to produce food bountifully. Satan may try to appeal to the natural desire for food in an effort to turn us away from doing God's will. Consider how he did that with Eve. (*Read Genesis 3: 1-6.*) Satan told Eve that she could eat of the fruit of "the tree of the knowledge of good and bad" without having to die, saying that on the day of her eating from it, she would be like God. (Gen. 2:9) The Devil thus insinuated that Eve did not need to be obedient to God in order to live. What a blatant lie that was! Once the idea was planted in Eve's mind, she had two options: She could reject the idea, or she could keep dwelling on it, allowing her desire for the fruit to grow. Despite the fact that all the other trees of the garden were at her disposal, she chose to dwell on what Satan had said concerning the tree in the middle of the garden, and she "began taking of its fruit and eating it." Satan thus created

7. How did Satan use "the desire of the flesh" to tempt Eve?

within her a desire for something that was forbidden by her Creator.

**8** Satan used the same tactic when he tried to tempt Jesus in the wilderness. After Jesus had fasted for 40 days and 40 nights, Satan attempted to appeal to Jesus' desire for food. "If you are a son of God," said Satan, "tell this stone to become a loaf of bread." (Luke 4:1-3) Jesus had two options: He could choose not to use his miraculous power to satisfy the need for food, or he could choose to use it. Jesus knew that he should not use such power for selfish purposes. Though he was hungry, satisfying the hunger did not take priority over maintaining his relationship with Jehovah. "It is written," Jesus replied, "'Man must not live by bread alone but by everything proceeding from Jehovah's mouth.'"—Luke 4:4, ftn.

#### **"THE DESIRE OF THE EYES"**

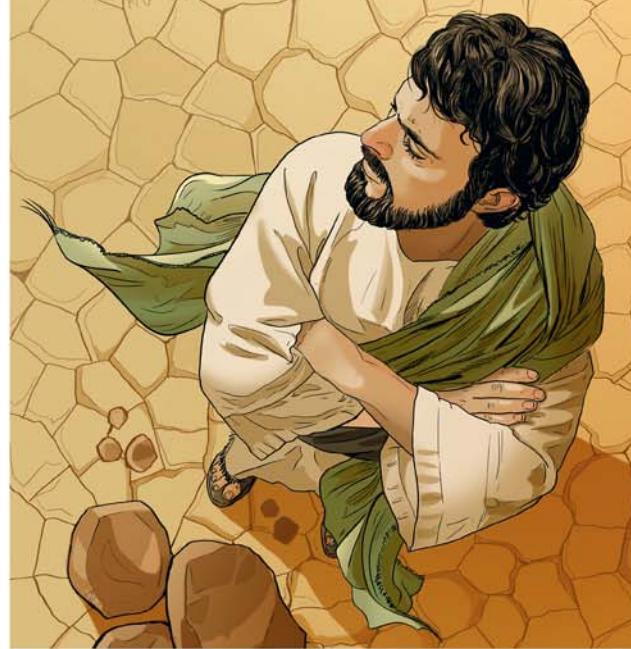
**9** John also mentioned "the desire of the eyes" as an enticement. The expression suggests that one can begin desiring something by simply looking at it. In the case of Eve, Satan appealed to this desire, saying: "Your eyes are bound to be opened." The more Eve looked at it, the more the forbidden fruit became attractive to her. Eve saw that the tree "was something to be longed for to the eyes."

**10** What about in Jesus' case? Satan "showed [Jesus] all the kingdoms of the inhabited earth in an instant of time;

**8.** Using "the desire of the flesh," how did Satan try to entice Jesus, and why did this temptation not succeed?

**9.** What does the expression "the desire of the eyes" suggest, and how did Satan appeal to this desire in Eve's case?

**10.** In what way did Satan use "the desire of the eyes" to tempt Jesus, and how did Jesus respond?



Jesus allowed nothing to make him lose his focus  
(See paragraph 8)

and the Devil said to him: 'I will give you all this authority and the glory of them.' " (Luke 4:5, 6) Jesus would not with his literal eyes see all the kingdoms in an instant, but Satan must have felt that the glory of these kingdoms, as presented in a vision, would hold some attraction for Jesus. Shamelessly, Satan suggested: "If you do an act of worship before me, it will all be yours." (Luke 4:7) In no way did Jesus want to be the kind of person Satan wanted him to be. His response was immediate. He said: "It is written, 'It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service.'"—Luke 4:8.

#### **"THE SHOWY DISPLAY OF ONE'S MEANS OF LIFE"**

**11** In citing the things of the world, John mentioned "the showy display of one's means of life." When Adam and

**11.** How was Eve enticed by Satan?



What Scriptural principles should come to your mind under these circumstances?  
(See paragraphs 13, 14)

Eve were the only humans on earth, they could of course not make a 'showy display of their means of life' before other people. But they did manifest pride. When tempting Eve, Satan insinuated that God withheld something wonderful from her. The Devil told her that in the very day of her eating from "the tree of the knowledge of good and bad," she was "bound to be like God, knowing good and bad." (Gen. 2:17; 3:5) Satan thus suggested that Eve could gain independence from Jehovah. Pride was apparently a factor that caused her to accept the lie. She partook of the forbidden fruit, believing that she would not really die. How wrong she was!

12 In contrast with Eve, what a wonderful example of humility Jesus set! Satan tried to tempt him in another way, but Jesus rejected even the very thought of doing something dramatic that would put God to the test. That would have been an act of pride! Instead, Jesus' reply was clear and direct: "It is said, 'You must not put Jehovah your God to the test.'"—*Read Luke 4:9-12.*

12. What was another way that Satan tried to tempt Jesus, and how did Jesus respond?

### HOW CAN WE PROTECT OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JEHOVAH?

13 Today, Satan uses enticements similar to those that he used with Eve and Jesus. Appealing to "the desire of the flesh," the Devil uses his world to promote immorality and overindulgence in eating and drinking. By means of pornography, especially on the Internet, he can catch the attention of an unwary viewer and appeal to "the desire of the eyes." And what temptation materialism, power, and fame hold for the proud and for those inclined to make 'a showy display of their means of life'!

14 "The things in the world" are like the lures of a fisherman. They are attractive, but attached to each lure is a hook. Satan uses what people may regard as normal everyday needs to make them want to do what is contrary to the laws of God. Such subtle temptations, though, are designed to influence our desires and corrupt our heart. They are really an attempt to make us believe that taking care of our personal needs

13, 14. Explain how Satan uses certain enticements today.

and comforts takes priority over doing the will of God. Will such enticements work on us?

**15** Though Eve succumbed to Satan's temptations, Jesus successfully resisted them. Each time, he gave a Scriptural answer, saying: "It is written" or, "It is said." If we are diligent students of the Bible, we will be well-acquainted with the Scriptures and be able to bring to mind the verses that can help us to keep our thinking straight in the face of temptation. (Ps. 1:1, 2) Remembering Scriptural examples of faithful individuals who were loyal to God will help us to imitate them. (Rom. 15:4) Having true reverence for Jehovah, loving what he loves and hating what he hates, will safeguard us.—Ps. 97:10.

**16** The apostle Paul encourages us to use our "power of reason" to become the kind of person who is molded by God's thinking, not by that of the world. (Rom. 12:1, 2) Stressing the need to have tight control over what we allow ourselves to think about, Paul stated: "We are overturning reasonings and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God; and we are bringing every thought into captivity to make it obedient to the Christ." (2 Cor. 10:5) Our thoughts have a powerful effect on the kind of person we are, so we need to "continue considering" upbuilding things.—Phil. 4:8.

**17** We cannot expect to be holy if we are feeding on improper thoughts and desires. We must love Jehovah with "a clean heart." (1 Tim. 1:5) But the

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**15.** How can we imitate Jesus in resisting Satan's temptations?

**16, 17.** What effect can our "power of reason" have on the type of person we are?

heart is treacherous, and we may not even realize how deeply "the things in the world" are affecting us. (Jer. 17:9) Therefore, should we not 'keep testing whether we are in the faith, keep proving what we ourselves are' by honest self-examination in light of what we study in the Bible?—2 Cor. 13:5.

**18** Another factor that helps us to resist "the things in the world" is that we keep in mind John's inspired words: "The world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever." (1 John 2:17) Satan's system seems to be permanent and real. Nevertheless, one day it will come to an end. Nothing that Satan's world has to offer has permanence. Remembering that fact will help us not to be seduced by the Devil's enticements.

**19** The apostle Peter exhorts us to be the sort of person God approves of as we are "awaiting and keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah, through which the heavens being on fire will be dissolved and the elements being intensely hot will melt!" (2 Pet. 3:12) Very soon now, that day will be here, and Jehovah will destroy every part of Satan's world. Until then, Satan will continue to use "the things in the world" to tempt us, as he tempted both Eve and Jesus. We must not be like Eve and seek to satisfy our own desires. Doing so would be tantamount to acknowledging Satan as our god. We need to be like Jesus and resist such enticements, regardless of how appealing and attractive they are made to appear. May each of us be determined to be the kind of person Jehovah wants us to be.

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**18, 19.** Why should we be determined to be the kind of person Jehovah wants us to be?



## Elisha Saw Fiery Chariots DO YOU?

The king of Syria was hunting for God's prophet Elisha and tracked him to the walled hill-city of Dothan. By night, the Syrian ruler sent horses, war chariots, and troops to Dothan. By daybreak, his forces had closed in on the city.—2 Ki. 6:13, 14.

When Elisha's attendant arose and went outside, he saw the prophet's would-be captors. "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" he cried. "Do not be afraid," said Elisha, "for there are more who are with us than those who are with them." Then the prophet prayed: "O Jehovah, open his eyes, please, that he may see." The account goes on to say: "Immediately Jehovah opened the attendant's eyes, so that he saw; and, look! the mountainous region was full of horses and war chariots of fire all around Elisha." (2 Ki. 6:15-17) What can we learn from this and other events in Elisha's life?

Elisha was calm in the face of the Syrian siege because he trusted in Jehovah and saw God's pro-

tective power in action. We do not expect miracles today, but we do discern that Jehovah is protecting his people as a group. In a sense, we too are surrounded by fiery horses and chariots. If we "see" them with our eyes of faith and if we always rely on God, we will "dwell in security" and will experience Jehovah's blessing. (Ps. 4:8) Let us consider how we can benefit from other incidents in Elisha's life.

### ELISHA BEGINS SERVING ELIJAH

On one occasion, when Elisha was plowing a field, the prophet Elijah approached him and threw his own official garment upon him. Elisha knew what that meant. He held a feast, said goodbye to his father and mother, and left home to minister to Elijah. (1 Ki. 19:16, 19-21) Because Elisha readily made himself available to serve God as fully as possible, he became an instrument in Jehovah's hand and eventually served as prophet in place of Elijah.

Elisha served Elijah for perhaps six years. During that time, Elisha was the one ‘who poured out water upon Elijah’s hands.’ (2 Ki. 3:11) In those days, people customarily ate with their hands, without forks, knives, or other eating utensils. After a meal, a servant poured water on his master’s hands to cleanse them. So at least some of Elisha’s tasks were menial. Nevertheless, he considered it a privilege to be Elijah’s attendant.

Today, many Christians likewise take up various forms of full-time service. In doing so, they are motivated by faith and a desire to use their energies as fully as possible in serving Jehovah. Some of the assignments require that they leave home and do work—at Bethel, on construction projects, and so forth—that many might consider menial. No Christian should consider such service insignificant or demeaning, for Jehovah values it highly.—Heb. 6:10.

### ELISHA STUCK TO HIS ASSIGNMENT

Before God ‘took Elijah up to the heavens in a windstorm,’ he sent the prophet from Gilgal to Bethel. Elijah suggested that his companion not accompany him, but Elisha replied: “I will not leave you.” As the trip continued, two more times Elijah urged Elisha to stay behind but to no avail. (2 Ki. 2:1-6) Just as Ruth had clung to Naomi, so Elisha stuck with Elijah. (Ruth 1:8, 16, 17) Why? Evidently because Elisha appreciated his God-given privilege of ministering to Elijah.

Elisha set a fine example for us. If we receive some privilege of service in God’s organization, we will value it highly if we bear in mind that we are serving Jehovah. No greater honor exists.—Ps. 65:4; 84:10.

### “ASK WHAT I SHOULD DO FOR YOU”

As the two men were traveling, Elijah said to Elisha: “Ask what I should do for you before I am taken from you.” Just as Solomon’s request made years earlier was of a spiritual nature, so was Elisha’s. He asked that ‘two parts of Elijah’s spirit might come to him.’ (1 Ki. 3:5, 9; 2 Ki. 2:9) In Israel, a man’s firstborn son was to receive a

double portion of an inheritance. (Deut. 21:15-17) In effect, then, Elisha asked to be recognized as Elijah’s spiritual heir. Moreover, Elisha evidently wanted to have the same courageous spirit as that of Elijah, who was “absolutely jealous for Jehovah.”—1 Ki. 19:13, 14.

How did Elijah respond to his attendant’s request? “You have asked a difficult thing,” said the prophet. “If you see me when taken from you, it will happen to you that way; but if you do not, it will not happen.” (2 Ki. 2:10) Elijah’s answer apparently had a twofold significance. First, only God could determine whether Elisha would receive what he had requested. Second, if Elisha was to receive it, he had to maintain his resolve to stay with Elijah, come what may.

### WHAT ELISHA SAW

How did God view Elisha’s request for two parts of Elijah’s spirit? The account says: “It came about that as they were walking along, speaking as they walked, why, look! a fiery war chariot and fiery horses, and they proceeded to make a separation between them both; and Elijah went ascending in the windstorm to the heavens. All the while Elisha was seeing it.”\* That was Jehovah’s answer to Elisha’s request. Elisha saw Elijah taken from him, received a double portion of Elijah’s spirit, and became the prophet’s spiritual heir.—2 Ki. 2:11-14.

Elisha picked up the official garment that had fallen off Elijah and put it on. That garment now identified Elisha as God’s prophet. Further proof of his appointment was evident when he later performed a miracle by dividing the waters of the Jordan River.

What he saw when Elijah ascended in the windstorm undoubtedly made a very great impression on Elisha. After all, a person does not see a fiery war chariot and fiery horses every day! They provided proof of Jehovah’s positive response to Elisha’s request. When God answers our prayers, we do not have a vision of a flaming war chariot

\* Elijah did not ascend to the heavens that are the spiritual dwelling place of Jehovah and his angelic sons. See *The Watchtower* of September 15, 1997, page 15.

and fiery horses. But we can discern that God uses great power to ensure that his will is done. And when we observe that Jehovah is blessing the earthly part of his organization, in effect we “see” his celestial chariot in action.—Ezek. 10:9-13.

Elisha had many experiences that convinced him of Jehovah’s tremendous power. In fact, God’s holy spirit enabled the prophet to perform 16 miracles—twice as many as those attributed to Elijah.\* The second time that Elisha saw horses and war chariots of fire was during the crisis at Dothan described in the introduction of this article.

### ELISHA TRUSTED IN JEHOVAH

Though surrounded by enemies at Dothan, Elisha remained calm. Why? Because he had developed strong faith in Jehovah. We too need such faith. Therefore, let us pray for God’s holy spirit so

\* See *The Watchtower* of August 1, 2005, page 10.

that we can display faith and other aspects of the spirit’s fruitage.—Luke 11:13; Gal. 5:22, 23.

The incident at Dothan also gave Elisha sound reason for trusting in Jehovah and his invisible protective armies. The prophet realized that God had deployed angelic hosts to surround the city and its besiegers. By striking the enemy with blindness, God miraculously saved Elisha and his servant. (2 Ki. 6:17-23) At that critical time, as in other situations, Elisha exercised faith and put his complete trust in Jehovah.

Like Elisha, let us trust in Jehovah God. (Prov. 3: 5, 6) If we do so, “God himself will show us favor and bless us.” (Ps. 67:1) True, we are not literally surrounded by fiery chariots and horses. During the coming “great tribulation,” however, Jehovah will protect us as a worldwide brotherhood. (Matt. 24:21; Rev. 7:9, 14) Until then, let us always remember that “God is a refuge for us.”—Ps. 62:8.

## SOME RECENT LEGAL VICTORIES



243

Current number of **high court victories** Jehovah’s Witnesses have received throughout the world



20

Cases won in the European Court of Human Rights since April 2000



### France — \$8.2 Million Repaid

**Total (in U.S. funds) repaid** to Jehovah’s Witnesses on December 11, 2012, by the government of France, after a 15-year legal battle



### Greece — Council of State

**The Council of State** recognized on November 2, 2012, that Jehovah’s Witnesses, a widely known Christian religion, have the right to own houses of worship

### South Korea — U.N. Human Rights Committee Ruling

**October 25, 2012** - South Korea is obligated to provide adequate compensation to 388 conscientious objectors among Jehovah’s Witnesses for violating their rights

# The King Was Delighted!

IT HAPPENED in August 1936. The location was the Swaziland Royal Kraal, or compound. From a sound car, Robert and George Nisbet had just played music recordings followed by recorded talks of Brother J. F. Rutherford. King Sobhuza II was delighted. "Much to our embarrassment," explained George, "he wanted to buy the transcription machine, records, and Kingdom-message loudspeaker!"

Robert said apologetically that these things were not for sale. Why? Because the equipment belonged to someone else. The King wanted to know who that was.

Robert's reply was, "It all belongs to another King." Then Sobhuza asked who this King was. "He is Jesus Christ, the King of God's Kingdom," said Robert.

"Oh, he's a great King," Sobhuza acknowledged with deep respect. "I don't want to take anything that belongs to him."

Robert wrote: 'I was very much struck with the nature of the Paramount Chief, King Sobhuza. He spoke perfect English without any swank or pride and was absolutely straightforward and approachable. I sat with him in his office for about 45 minutes, while George played music outside.'

'Later that day,' continued Robert, 'we called at The Swazi National School where we had the most interesting experience of all. We witnessed to the principal, and he listened readily. When we mentioned the machine and offered to let the whole school hear the recordings, he was delighted and summoned almost a hundred students to sit on the grass to listen. We were told that the high school taught agriculture, gardening, carpentry, building, English, and arithmetic to the boys; the girls were taught nursing, household work, and other useful occupations.' The Paramount Chief's grandmother had founded the school.\*

As early as 1933, King Sobhuza listened with pleasure to pioneers who visited the Royal Kraal. On one occasion, he had even assembled his personal bodyguard of 100 warriors



King Sobhuza II taken in 1936 by Robert Nisbet and bequeathed to the Watch Tower Society

\* *The Golden Age*, June 30, 1937, page 629.



(Above) High school students who attended a public talk in Swaziland in 1936

(Right) George Nisbet with his sound car

to hear the recorded Kingdom message. He subscribed to our magazines and accepted literature. It was not long before the King had an almost complete theocratic library! Moreover, he kept it intact despite a ban placed on our literature by the British colonial government during the second world war.

King Sobhuza II continued to welcome the Witnesses into the Royal Kraal at Lobamba, even calling clergymen to come to listen to their Bible talks. While a local Witness named Helvie Mashazi was discussing Matthew chapter 23, a group of clergymen angrily jumped up and tried to force him to sit down. But the King intervened, asking Brother Mashazi to continue. Furthermore, the King told the audience to write down all the Bible verses mentioned in the talk!

After listening to a talk given by a pioneer brother on another occasion, four clergymen who were present turned their collars around and declared: "We are no longer clergymen but are now Jehovah's Witnesses." They then asked the pioneer if he had any books like the ones that the Paramount Chief had.



From the 1930's until his death in 1982, the Paramount Chief showed respect for Jehovah's Witnesses and did not allow them to be persecuted for not observing Swazi rituals. Therefore, the Witnesses had good reason for being grateful to him, and they sincerely mourned his death.

By the beginning of 2013, there were more than 3,000 Kingdom proclaimers in Swaziland. With just over one million inhabitants, this country had a ratio of 1 publisher to every 384 of the population. More than 260 pioneers were busy in 90 congregations, and 7,496 attended the Memorial in 2012. Clearly, there is great potential for further growth. A solid foundation certainly was laid during those early visits to Swaziland in the 1930's.—From our archives in South Africa.

