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# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
AUGUST 3-30, 2020

## SONG 10

Praise Jehovah Our God!

## PREVIEW

What important issue is facing all intelligent creation? What makes that issue so vital, and what role do we play in settling it? Understanding the answers to those and related questions will help us to strengthen our relationship with Jehovah.

## “Let Your Name Be Sanctified”

*“O Jehovah, your name endures forever.”—PS. 135:13.*

VERY important issues are facing us today—sovereignty and vindication. As Jehovah’s Witnesses, we love discussing those fascinating subjects. However, it is not as if we would have to contrast God’s sovereignty and the sanctification of his name—as if they were separate matters.

<sup>2</sup> All of us have come to see that God’s name must be cleared of reproach. We have also learned that Jehovah’s sovereignty, or way of ruling, must be proved to be the best. Both issues merit our respect and attention.

<sup>3</sup> Actually, the name Jehovah involves everything about our God, *including* his way of ruling. So if we say that clearing Jehovah’s name of all reproach is the most important issue, we are also saying that Jehovah’s way of ruling must be proved to be the best way. Jehovah’s name is closely tied to the way he rules as the almighty Sovereign.—See the box “Facets of a Great Issue.”

<sup>4</sup> The name Jehovah is unique. **(Read Psalm 135:13.)** What makes God’s name so important? How was it first slandered? How does God sanctify it? And how can we help to defend his name? Let us address those questions.

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1-2. What subjects fascinate Jehovah’s Witnesses?

3. What does the name Jehovah include?

4. How does Psalm 135:13 describe God’s name, and what questions will we answer in this article?

## THE IMPORTANCE OF A NAME

<sup>5</sup> “Let your name be sanctified.” (Matt. 6:9) That is what Jesus stated as a priority in prayer. But what do Jesus’ words mean? To sanctify something means to make it holy, clean, or pure. Some might wonder, though, ‘Is not Jehovah’s name already holy, clean, and pure?’ To answer, we need to think about what a name involves.

<sup>6</sup> A name is more than a collection of letters written on a page or spoken aloud. Notice what the Bible says: “A good name is to be chosen rather than great wealth.” (Prov. 22:1; Eccl. 7:1) Why does a name have such value? Because it involves a reputation, what others think of the one bearing that name. So the way a name appears on a page—or even the way it is pronounced—is not what matters most; what truly matters is whom and what that name stands for in the minds and hearts of others.

<sup>7</sup> When people tell lies about Jehovah, they are attacking his reputation. When they attack his reputation, they are trying to damage his name. The first attack on God’s name and reputation happened near the dawn of human history. Consider what we learn from this attack.

### HOW THE NAME WAS FIRST SLANDERED

<sup>8</sup> Adam and Eve knew Jehovah’s name, as well as vital truths about the One

5. What might we wonder about when considering the sanctifying of God’s name?

6. What makes a name valuable?

7. How have people attacked God’s name?

8. What did Adam and Eve know, and what questions arise?

## Facets of a Great Issue

There is a very great issue facing everyone: The **sanctification of the name Jehovah**. (Ezek. 36:23; Matt. 6:9) Is the one who bears the name Jehovah truly beyond all reproach? In other words, is he really holy, good, righteous, and loving in all his ways? There are related facets. Because Satan led a rebellion against God’s rule, this question must be settled: Is Jehovah the **rightful Sovereign**, the one whose way of ruling is truly best? And because Adam, Eve, many of their descendants, and even some angels joined Satan in rebellion, another related issue must be settled: Who of Jehovah’s intelligent creatures will **maintain integrity**, that is, will loyally defend God’s holy name and serve Jehovah out of love for him? That last facet of the great issue came into sharp focus in the days of Job.—Job 2:3, 4; 27:5.

bearing that name. They knew him as the Creator, the One who gave them life, their lovely Paradise home, and a perfect mate. (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:18) However, would they continue to use their perfect minds to meditate on all that Jehovah had done for them? Would they keep building up their love and appreciation for the Person represented by that name? The answers became clear when God’s enemy tested them.

**<sup>9</sup> Read Genesis 2:16, 17 and 3:1-5.**

Using a serpent as his mouthpiece, Satan asked Eve a question: “Did God really say that you must not eat from every tree of the garden?” That question contained a subtle lie that was like hidden poison. What God had actually said was that they could eat from every tree, with one exception. The variety available to Adam and Eve must have been tremendous. (Gen. 2:9) Yes, Jehovah certainly is generous. However, God had forbidden Adam and Eve to eat the fruit of one tree that He had designated. So Satan’s question twisted the truth. Satan made it seem as if God were not generous. Eve may have wondered, ‘Is God withholding something good?’

<sup>10</sup> At that point, Eve still saw Jehovah as her Ruler. She answered Satan by reciting God’s clear direction. She added that they should not even touch the tree. She knew of God’s warning that disobedience would lead to death. But Satan replied: “You certainly will not die.” (Gen. 3:2-4) Satan was no longer subtle. He was now directly slandering God’s name, in effect telling Eve that Jehovah is a liar. Satan thus became a devil, or slanderer. Eve was thoroughly deceived; she believed Satan. (1 Tim. 2:14) She put more trust in him than in Jehovah. That made it easier for Eve to make the worst possible decision. She decided to disobey Jehovah. She began eating of the fruit that Jehovah had forbidden her to



eat. Afterward, she gave some to Adam. —Gen. 3:6.

<sup>11</sup> Think for a moment about what Eve should have said to Satan. Imagine that she had said something like this: “I do not know who you are, but I know my Father, Jehovah, and I love and trust him. He has given Adam and me everything we have. How dare you say anything bad about him? Go away!” How delighted Jehovah would have been to hear such loyal words from a loving daughter! (Prov. 27:11) But Eve did not have loyal love for Jehovah; neither was Adam guided by that quality. Lacking such love for their Father, Adam and Eve failed to defend his name against slander.

<sup>12</sup> As we have noted, Satan started by sowing doubts in the mind of Eve. He got her to question the kind of Person who

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9. According to Genesis 2:16, 17 and 3:1-5, what did Jehovah tell the first couple, and how did Satan twist the truth?

10. How did Satan directly slander God’s name, and with what effect?

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11. What could our first parents have done, but what did they fail to do?

12. How did Satan sow doubts in the mind of Eve, and what did Adam and Eve fail to do?





Satan lied to Eve about Jehovah, and over the centuries the Devil has continued to slander God  
(See paragraphs 9-10, 15)

was represented by the name Jehovah. Then Adam and Eve failed to defend Jehovah's name and reputation. They left themselves open to Satan's suggestion to rebel against their Father. Satan uses similar tactics today. He attacks Jehovah's name by slandering it. People who believe Satan's lies are easily influenced to reject Jehovah's righteous rule.

#### JEHOVAH SANCTIFIES HIS NAME

<sup>13</sup> Does Jehovah accept such slander without defending himself? No, he does not! The entire Bible record focuses on how Jehovah has acted to clear his name of the reproach heaped on it in Eden. (Gen. 3:15) In fact, we may summarize the core message of the Bible this way: Jehovah sanctifies his name by means of the Kingdom ruled by his Son and restores righteousness and peace to the earth. The Bible contains information that helps us to understand how Jeho-

vah accomplishes the sanctifying of his name.—**Read Ezekiel 36:23.**

<sup>14</sup> Satan has done all he can to stop Jehovah from achieving His purpose. But Satan has failed again and again. The Bible record shows how Jehovah has acted, and it proves that there is no one like Jehovah God. True, the rebellion of Satan and all who take his side has caused Jehovah great pain. (Ps. 78:40) He has, though, handled this challenge with wisdom, patience, and justice. He has also shown his almighty power in countless ways. Above all, his love shines through in all that he does. (1 John 4:8) Jehovah has worked unceasingly to sanctify his name.

<sup>15</sup> Satan is still slandering God's name today. He fools people into doubting that God is powerful, just, wise, and loving. For example, Satan tries to convince

13. How does Ezekiel 36:23 highlight the core message of the Bible?

14. How has Jehovah's response to the rebellion in Eden sanctified his name?

15. How is Satan slandering God's name today, and with what effect?

We want to help our Bible students come to understand Jehovah's kind, loving personality (See paragraphs 18-19)



people that Jehovah is not the Creator. And if people do accept that God exists, Satan attempts to make them believe that God and His standards are restrictive and unfair. He even teaches people that Jehovah is a heartless and cruel God who burns people in a fiery hell. When they believe such slander, they are more likely to take the next step—rejecting Jehovah's righteous rule. Until Satan is completely defeated, he will continue his campaign of slander, and he will target you as well. Will he succeed?

#### YOUR ROLE IN THE GREAT ISSUE

<sup>16</sup> Jehovah allows imperfect humans to have a share in sanctifying his name. In effect, you can do what Adam and Eve failed to do. Despite being in a world full of people who slander and blaspheme Jehovah's name, you have the opportunity to stand up and speak the truth—that Jehovah is holy, righteous, good, and loving. (Isa. 29:23) You can support

his rule. You can promote it as the only way of ruling that is truly righteous and that will bring peace and happiness to all creation.—Ps. 37:9, 37; 146:5, 6, 10.

<sup>17</sup> When we defend Jehovah's name, we follow the example of Jesus Christ. (John 17:26) Jesus made his Father's name known not only by using that name but also by defending Jehovah's reputation. For example, he contradicted the Pharisees, who in various ways painted Jehovah as harsh, demanding, distant, and merciless. Jesus helped people to see his Father as being reasonable, patient, loving, and forgiving. He also helped people to see Jehovah by the way he perfectly imitated his Father's qualities in his daily life.—John 14:9.

<sup>18</sup> Like Jesus, we can share what we know about Jehovah, teaching people what a loving and kind God He is. As we do so, we overturn lies and slander about Jehovah. We sanctify Jehovah's

16. What can you do that Adam and Eve failed to do?

17. How did Jesus make his Father's name known?

18. How can we overturn lies and slander about Jehovah?

name, making it holy in the minds and hearts of people. We can also imitate Jehovah. That is possible even though we are imperfect. (Eph. 5:1, 2) When our words and actions show people what Jehovah is truly like, we help to sanctify his name. We vindicate that name by helping to free people from the misconceptions they may have about it.\* We also prove that imperfect humans can maintain integrity.—Job 27:5.

<sup>19</sup> Consider another valuable lesson we may apply. When we teach Bible truths to others, we often emphasize God's sovereignty, that Jehovah has the right to rule the universe, and this is perfectly

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\* On occasion our publications have taught that Jehovah's name does not need to be vindicated because no one has called into question his right to bear that name. However, a clarified understanding was presented at the 2017 annual meeting. The chairman stated: "Simply put, it's not wrong to say that we pray for the vindication of Jehovah's name because his reputation certainly needs to be exonerated."—See the January 2018 program on [jw.org](http://jw.org)®. Look under LIBRARY > JW BROADCASTING®.

19. How does Isaiah 63:7 help us to see what the main purpose of our teaching should be?

true. However, while it is important to focus on God's laws, our main goal is that of helping others come to love Jehovah, our Father, and to be loyal to him. We thus need to highlight Jehovah's appealing qualities, emphasizing the kind of Person that the name Jehovah represents. **(Read Isaiah 63:7.)** As we teach in that way, we will help others to love Jehovah and to obey him because they want to be loyal to him.

<sup>20</sup> How, then, can we make sure that our conduct and our teaching reflect properly on Jehovah's name and draw others to him? The following article will take up that question.

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20. What will we consider in the following article?

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**PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Pages 4-5:** The Devil slandered God, telling Eve that God is a liar. Over the centuries, Satan has promoted false ideas, such as the teaching that God is cruel and that He did not create humans. **Page 6:** As he conducts a Bible study, a brother emphasizes God's personality.

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## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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|--|---|---|
| ■ How do we know that the sanctification of Jehovah's name is vitally important? | ■ Why does something as holy as God's name need to be sanctified? | ■ What role can you play in sanctifying Jehovah's name? |
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## SONG 7

Jehovah, Our Strength

## PREVIEW

In this article, we will focus on the portion of King David's prayer recorded at Psalm 86:11, 12. What does it mean to fear the name of Jehovah? What basis do we have for being in awe of that great name? And how can the fear of God be a protection against giving in to temptation?

## “Unify My Heart to Fear Your Name”

*“Unify my heart to fear your name. I praise you, O Jehovah my God, with all my heart.”—PS. 86:11, 12.*

CHRISTIANS love God, and they also fear him. To some, that might seem like a contradiction. However, we are not referring to the type of fear that terrifies you. We are going to discuss a special type of fear. People who have this type of fear are in awe of God and have sincere respect for him. They do not want to displease their heavenly Father because they do not want to harm their friendship with him.—Ps. 111:10; Prov. 8:13.

<sup>2</sup> **Read Psalm 86:11.** As you think about those words, you can tell that faithful King David understood the importance of godly fear. Let us consider how we may apply David's inspired words. First, we will examine some reasons for holding God's name in awe. Second, we will discuss how to show that we are in awe of God's name in our daily life.

### WHY DOES JEHOVAH'S NAME INSPIRE AWE?

<sup>3</sup> Think of how Moses felt when he was huddled in a rocky crevice and he saw a vision of Jehovah's glory passing by. *Insight on the Scriptures* notes that it “was probably the most awe-inspiring experience of any man prior to

1. What is godly fear, and why is it necessary for those who love Jehovah?
2. Based on King David's words recorded at Psalm 86:11, what two things will we discuss?
3. What experience may have helped Moses to remain in awe of God's name?





Moses' teaching was refreshing. It focused on the name and person of Jehovah God  
(See paragraph 8)

the coming of Jesus Christ.” Moses heard the following words, evidently spoken by an angel: “Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and compassionate, slow to anger and abundant in loyal love and truth, showing loyal love to thousands, pardoning error and transgression and sin.” (Ex. 33:17-23; 34:5-7) Memory of that event possibly came back to Moses when he used the name Jehovah. It is no wonder that Moses later warned God’s people Israel to “fear this glorious and awe-inspiring name.”—Deut. 28:58.

<sup>4</sup> When we think about the name Jehovah, we do well to meditate on the one who bears that name. We should remember his qualities, such as his power, his wisdom, his justice, and his love. Reflecting on those qualities and others can fill us with awe for him.—Ps. 77:11-15.

4. Meditating on what qualities can fill us with awe for Jehovah?

<sup>5</sup> What do we know about the meaning of God’s name? Many scholars agree that the name Jehovah seems to mean “He Causes to Become.” That meaning reminds us that Jehovah has an unstoppable will, and he can make things happen. How so?

<sup>6</sup> Jehovah makes things happen by becoming whatever is needed in order to fulfill his purpose. **(Read Exodus 3:13, 14.)** We have often been encouraged to contemplate that awe-inspiring aspect of God’s personality. Jehovah can also cause his imperfect human servants to become what is needed in order to serve him and fulfill his purpose. **(Read Isaiah 64:8.)** In these ways, Jehovah causes his will to be carried out. Nothing can stop him from causing his purposes to be fulfilled.—Isa. 46:10, 11.

5-6. (a) What is the meaning of God’s name?  
(b) According to Exodus 3:13, 14 and Isaiah 64:8, in what ways does Jehovah make things happen?

<sup>7</sup> We can build our appreciation for our heavenly Father by meditating on what he has done and what he has enabled us to do. For instance, when we meditate on the wonders of creation, we are filled with awe at what Jehovah has accomplished, what he has caused to come into existence. (Ps. 8:3, 4) And when we meditate on what Jehovah has caused us to become so that we can do his will, we develop deep respect for him. The name Jehovah really is awe-inspiring! It includes all that our Father is, all that he has done, and all that he will do.—Ps. 89:7, 8.

#### **“I WILL DECLARE THE NAME OF JEHOVAH”**

<sup>8</sup> Just before the Israelites entered the Promised Land, Jehovah taught Moses the words of a song. (Deut. 31:19) Moses, in turn, was to teach the song to the people. **(Read Deuteronomy 32:2, 3.)** As we meditate on verses 2 and 3, it is clear that Jehovah does not want his name to be hidden, treated as if it were too sacred to pronounce. He wants his name to be known by all his intelligent creation! What a privilege it was for people to hear Moses teach them about Jehovah and His glorious name! What Moses taught them nourished and refreshed them, like gentle rain on vegetation. How can we make sure that our teaching is like that?

<sup>9</sup> When we are in the door-to-door work or the public ministry, we can use our Bible to show people God’s personal

name, Jehovah. We can offer them beautiful literature, excellent videos, and material on our website that honor Jehovah. At work, at school, or while traveling, we may find opportunities to talk about our beloved God and what he is like. When we tell those we meet about Jehovah’s loving purpose for mankind and the earth, we are giving them a view of Jehovah that may well be completely new to them. As we tell others the truth about our loving Father, we are adding to the sanctifying of God’s name. We are clearing up some of the lies and slander about Jehovah that others may have been taught. We offer people the most nourishing, refreshing teachings available.—Isa. 65:13, 14.

<sup>10</sup> When we conduct Bible studies, we want to help our students come to know and use Jehovah’s name. In addition, we want to help them to see what his name stands for. Will we accomplish that if we simply convey instructions, divine standards, and rules of conduct? A good student may learn about God’s laws, even admire them. But will the student obey Jehovah out of love for him as a Person? Remember, Eve knew God’s law, but she did not truly love the Lawgiver; nor did Adam. (Gen. 3:1-6) So we must do more than teach others about God’s righteous requirements and standards.

<sup>11</sup> Jehovah’s requirements and standards are appealing and beautiful. (Ps. 119:97, 111, 112) But our students may

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7. How can we build our appreciation for our heavenly Father?

8. What does Deuteronomy 32:2, 3 reveal about Jehovah’s view of his name?

9. How can we help to sanctify Jehovah’s name?

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10. When we conduct Bible studies, why do we need to do more than teach God’s requirements and standards?

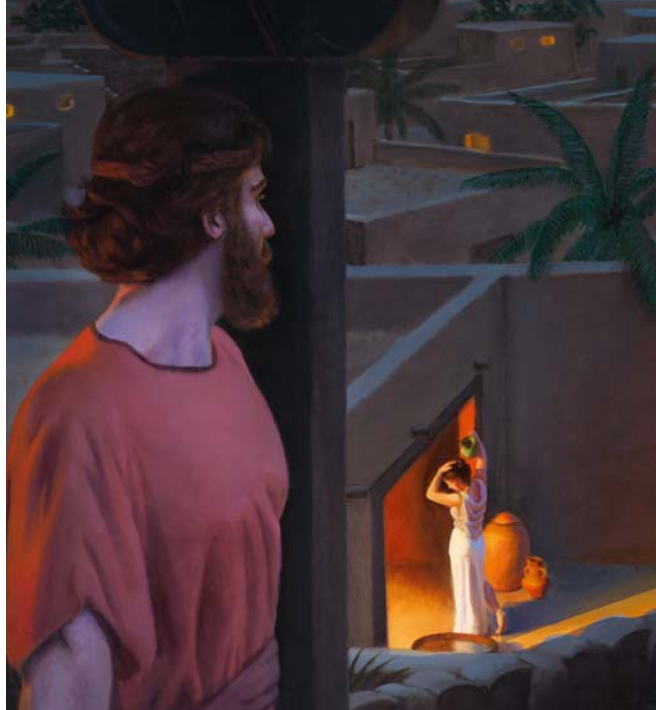
11. When teaching about God’s laws and standards, how may we help our students come to love the Lawgiver?

not see them that way unless they see Jehovah's love behind those laws. So we might ask our students: "Why do you think God asks his servants to do this or to refrain from doing this? What does that tell us about him as a Person?" If we help our students to think about Jehovah and to develop real love for his glorious name, we are more likely to reach their heart. Our students will come to love not only the laws but also the Law-giver. (Ps. 119:68) They will grow in faith and will be helped to endure fiery tests to come.—1 Cor. 3:12-15.

**"WE WILL WALK IN THE NAME  
OF JEHOVAH"**

<sup>12</sup> A vital phrase found at Psalm 86:11 is "unify my heart." King David was inspired to write those words. During his life, he saw how easy it is to allow the heart to become divided. On one occasion, he was on his roof and he saw another man's wife bathing. At that moment, was David's heart unified or divided? He knew Jehovah's standard: "You must not desire your fellow man's wife." (Ex. 20:17) Yet, evidently he kept looking. His heart became divided between his desire for the woman, Bathsheba, and his desire to please Jehovah. Although David had long loved and feared Jehovah, he gave in to his selfish desire. In that instance, David pursued a very bad course. He brought reproach on Jehovah's name. David also brought terrible harm to innocent people, including his own family.—2 Sam. 11:1-5, 14-17; 12:7-12.

12. How did David once fail to maintain a unified heart, and with what result?



David once allowed his heart  
to become divided  
(See paragraph 12)

<sup>13</sup> Jehovah disciplined David, and he recovered. (2 Sam. 12:13; Ps. 51:2-4, 17) David remembered the trouble and misery that resulted when he let his heart become divided. His words recorded at Psalm 86:11 may also be rendered: "Give me an undivided heart." Did Jehovah help David make his heart whole, or undivided? Yes, for Jehovah's Word later refers to David as a man whose "heart was . . . complete with Jehovah his God."—1 Ki. 11:4; 15:3.

<sup>14</sup> David's example is both encouraging and sobering. His fall into serious sin

13. How do we know that David's heart again became unified?

14. What do we need to ask ourselves, and why?



**Satan will try anything to divide your heart. Do not let him!**  
(See paragraphs 15-16)

stands as a warning to God’s servants today. Whether we have recently begun to serve Jehovah or have done so for many years, we need to ask ourselves, ‘Am I resisting Satan’s attempts to divide my heart?’

<sup>15</sup> For instance, if you see an image on TV or the Internet that could arouse sensual desires, how do you respond? It might be easy to rationalize that the picture or movie is not exactly pornographic. But might it represent an effort by Satan to divide your heart? (2 Cor. 2: 11) That image can be like a little metal wedge that a man uses to split a big log. At first he drives the thin, sharp edge of the wedge into the log. Then as he drives the wedge deeper, the log splits apart. Could suggestive imagery in the media

15. How might godly fear protect us when we are exposed to sensual images?

be like the thin part of that wedge? What may start off as small and seemingly harmless can quickly lead a person to commit sins that divide his heart and break his integrity. So refuse to give anything improper entry into your heart! Keep it unified to fear Jehovah’s name!

<sup>16</sup> Besides seductive imagery, Satan presents us with many other temptations to do wrong. How do we respond? It is easy to rationalize. For example, we might reason: ‘Well, I would not be disfellowshipped for doing this, so it must not be that serious.’ Such reasoning is deeply flawed. We do better to ask ourselves such questions as these: ‘Is Satan trying to use this temptation to divide my heart? If I give in to wrong desires, would I bring reproach on Jeho-

16. When faced with temptation, what questions should we ask ourselves?



vah's name? Would this action draw me closer to my God, or might it distance me from him?' Meditate on such questions. Pray for wisdom to answer them honestly, without self-deception. (Jas. 1:5) Doing so can be a real protection. It can help you to reject temptation firmly, as Jesus did when he said: "Go away, Satan!"—Matt. 4:10.

<sup>17</sup> A divided heart is of little value. Imagine that a sports team has members who do not get along with one another. Some want glory only for themselves, a few do not want to play by the rules, and a number treat the coach with contempt. A team like that is unlikely to win a match. In contrast, a team that is united is more likely to have success. 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,

17. Why is a divided heart of little value? Illustrate.

however, need your heart to be whole in order for you to serve Jehovah. (Matt. 22:36-38) Never let Satan divide your heart!

<sup>18</sup> 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.

18. In harmony with the words of Micah 4:5, what is your resolve?

**PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS** Page 9: Moses taught God's people a song that honored Jehovah.

**Page 12:** Eve did not reject wrong desires. In contrast, we reject images or messages that might encourage wrong desires and bring reproach on God's name.

## WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- What are some reasons for being in awe of Jehovah's name?
- How can we teach our Bible students in a way that shows our deep love for God's name?
- What does it mean to have a unified heart?

# SELF-CONTROL

## Essential for Jehovah's Approval

LOVE  
JOY  
PEACE  
PATIENCE  
KINDNESS  
GOODNESS  
FAITH  
MILDNESS  
**SELF-CONTROL**

“When my cousin started a fight with me, I got hold of his throat and began to choke him. I wanted to kill him.”—Paul.

“At home I lashed out at the slightest provocation. I would smash furniture, toys, whatever I found on hand.”—Marco.

We may not go to such extremes. Yet, all of us have difficulty controlling ourselves at times. This is primarily because we inherited sinful tendencies from the first man, Adam. (Rom. 5:12) Some, like Paul and Marco, have trouble controlling their temper. Others may find it a challenge to control their thoughts. They dwell on their fears or are often troubled by negative thinking. Still others may have difficulty in resisting the urge to commit sexual immorality, to abuse alcohol, or to misuse drugs.

Those who allow their thinking, desires, and actions to go uncontrolled can ruin their lives. But we can avoid that outcome. How? By cultivating self-control. To help us do that, let us discuss three questions: (1) What is self-control? (2) Why is it essential? (3) How can we cultivate this quality that is one aspect of “the fruitage of the spirit”? (Gal. 5:22, 23) Then we will consider what we personally can do if we at times do not have self-control.

### WHAT IS SELF-CONTROL?

A person with self-control does not act on every impulse. Rather, he holds back from speaking and acting in ways that are displeasing to God.

Jesus showed us what self-control involves. The Bible says: “When he was being insulted, he did not insult in return. When he was suffering, he did not threaten, but he entrusted himself to the One who judges righteously.” (1 Pet. 2:23) Jesus exercised such self-control when opposers ridiculed him as he hung on the torture stake. (Matt. 27:39-44) Earlier, he showed remarkable restraint when hostile religious leaders tried to trap him in his speech. (Matt. 22:15-22) And what an example he set when certain angry Jews picked up stones to throw at him! Rather than retaliate, “Jesus hid and went out of the temple.”—John 8: 57-59.

Can we imitate Jesus’ example? We can, to some extent. The apostle Peter wrote: “Christ suffered for you, leaving a model for you to follow his steps closely.” (1 Pet. 2:21) Although we are imperfect, we can follow Jesus’ example of self-control *closely*. Why is it essential that we do so?

Jesus certainly manifested  
self-control



## WHY IS SELF-CONTROL ESSENTIAL?

We need to have self-control in order to have Jehovah's approval. Even if we have served Jehovah faithfully for a long time, we could lose our friendship with him if we did not control what we do and say.

Consider Moses, who was “by far the meekest of all the men on the face of the earth” at that time. (Num. 12:3) After decades of patiently enduring complaints from the Israelites, Moses lost control of himself. He got angry when they yet again complained about a shortage of water. He spoke harshly to the people, saying: “Hear, now, you rebels! Must we bring out water for you from this crag?”—Num. 20:2-11.

Moses failed to control himself. He did not give credit to Jehovah as the Source of the miraculously provided water. (Ps. 106:32, 33) As a result, Jehovah did not allow him to enter the Promised Land. (Num. 20:12) To his dying day, Moses likely regretted losing his temper.—Deut. 3: 23-27.

The lesson for us? Even if we have been in the truth for a long time, we should

never speak disrespectfully to those who irritate us or who need to be corrected. (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12) True, as we grow older, our patience may wear thin at times. But remember Moses. We would never want to tarnish a long record of faithful service with a lapse in self-control. What can we do to cultivate this essential quality?

## HOW TO CULTIVATE SELF-CONTROL

**Pray for holy spirit.** Why? Because self-control is an aspect of the fruitage of God's spirit, and Jehovah gives his spirit to those asking him. (Luke 11:13) By means of his spirit, Jehovah can give us the power we need. (Phil. 4:13) He can also help us to cultivate other aspects of the spirit's fruitage, such as love, which will help us strengthen our self-control.—1 Cor. 13:5.

**Avoid anything that could weaken your self-control.** For example, keep away from Internet websites and entertainment that feature wrong conduct. (Eph. 5: 3, 4) In fact, we must avoid anything that might tempt us to do wrong. (Prov. 22:3; 1 Cor. 6:12) For instance, a person with a



**Avoid anything that weakens  
your self-control**

leaning toward sexual uncleanness may need to avoid romantic books and movies altogether.

We may find it difficult to apply this counsel. However, if we put forth the effort, Jehovah will give us the power that we need to control ourselves. (2 Pet. 1:5-8) He will help us to control our thoughts, speech, and actions. As evidence of that, Paul and Marco, mentioned earlier, each learned to control his violent temper. Consider also a brother who often lost his temper while driving, even getting into disputes with others. What did he do about it? “I prayed intensely every day. I studied articles on self-control and memorized helpful Bible verses. Although I have been working at this for years, it is still helpful for me to begin each day with the goal of remaining calm. And I leave early for appointments so as not to be in a hurry.”

### **IF WE FAIL TO EXERCISE SELF-CONTROL**

At times, we will fail to exercise self-control. When that happens, we may feel too ashamed to approach Jehovah

in prayer. But this is when we need to pray the most. So go to Jehovah in prayer immediately. Beg him for forgiveness, seek his help, and be determined not to make the same mistake again. (Ps. 51:9-11) Jehovah will not despise your sincere prayer for mercy. (Ps. 102:17) The apostle John reminds us that the blood of God’s Son “cleanses us from all sin.” (1 John 1:7; 2:1; Ps. 86:5) Remember that Jehovah tells his human servants to forgive repeatedly. So we can be confident that he will do the same for us.—Matt. 18:21, 22; Col. 3:13.

Jehovah was displeased when Moses temporarily lost his self-control in the wilderness. Nevertheless, Jehovah forgave him. And God’s Word speaks of Moses as being an outstanding example of faith. (Deut. 34:10; Heb. 11:24-28) Jehovah did not permit Moses to step into the Promised Land, but He will welcome Moses into the Paradise earth and give him the prospect of living forever. We can enjoy that same prospect if we keep striving to cultivate the essential quality of self-control.—1 Cor. 9:25.



Are the qualities listed at Galatians 5:22, 23 the only aspects of “the fruitage of the spirit”?

LOVE

JOY

PEACE

PATIENCE

KINDNESS

GOODNESS

FAITH

MILDNESS

SELF-CONTROL

Those verses list nine Christian qualities: “The fruitage of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control.” We need not, though, view those as being the only fine qualities that God’s spirit can help us to develop.

Note what the apostle Paul wrote in the preceding verses: “The works of the flesh . . . are sexual immorality, uncleanness, brazen conduct, idolatry, spiritism, hostility, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, dissensions, divisions, sects, envy, drunkenness, wild parties, **and things like these.**” (Gal.

5:19-21) So Paul could have mentioned other things as being “works of the flesh,” such as those referred to at Colossians 3:5. Similarly, after listing nine good qualities, he stated: “Against **such things** there is no law.” So Paul was not trying to list all the fine qualities that we can cultivate with the help of holy spirit.

This is apparent when we compare this list with what Paul wrote to the congregation in Ephesus: “The fruitage of the light consists of every sort of goodness and righteousness and truth.” (Eph. 5: 8, 9) Yes, “goodness,” along with righteousness and truth, is part of “the fruitage of the light,” but it is also an aspect of “the fruitage of the spirit.”

Similarly, Paul urged Timothy to “pursue righteousness, godly devotion, faith, love, endurance, and mildness”—six fine qualities. (1 Tim. 6:11) Only three of those (faith, love, and mildness) are mentioned as aspects of “the fruitage of the spirit.” Timothy would, however, also want the help of the spirit to develop the other qualities mentioned: righteousness, godly devotion, and endurance.—Compare Colossians 3:12; 2 Peter 1:5-7.

Hence, it is not that Galatians 5:22, 23 sets out a complete list of Christian qualities. God’s spirit can help us to develop the nine aspects listed as “the fruitage of the spirit.” But there are more qualities to be cultivated as we grow in Christian maturity and “put on the new personality that was created according to God’s will in true righteousness and loyalty.”—Eph. 4:24.

## SONG 105

“God Is Love”

## PREVIEW

Why do some who have served Jehovah faithfully for years drift away from the congregation? How does God feel about them? This article considers answers to those questions. It also discusses what we can learn from the way Jehovah helped some in Bible times who temporarily drifted away from him.

## “I Myself Will Search for My Sheep”

*“I myself will search for my sheep, and I will care for them.”—EZEK. 34:11.*

“CAN a woman forget her nursing child?” That was a question Jehovah asked in the days of the prophet Isaiah. “Even if these women forget, I would never forget you,” God told his people. (Isa. 49:15) He does not often compare himself to a mother. However, he did so on that occasion. Jehovah used the bond between a mother and her child to reveal how deeply he is attached to his servants. Most mothers can relate to what a sister named Jasmin says, “When you nurse your child, you form a very special bond that lasts a lifetime.”

<sup>2</sup> Jehovah takes note when even one of his children stops associating with the Christian congregation and engaging in the preaching work. Think, then, of how pained he must be to see thousands of his servants become inactive\* each year.

<sup>3</sup> Many of these dear brothers and sisters who have become inactive do come back to the congregation, where they are most welcome! Jehovah wants them to come back, and so do we. (1 Pet. 2:25) How can we help? Before we answer that question, it would be good to know

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\* **EXPRESSION EXPLAINED:** An **inactive** publisher is someone who has not reported any activity in the preaching and disciple-making work for six months or more. Even so, inactive ones are still our brothers and sisters, and we love them.

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1. How is Jehovah like a nursing mother?
2. How does Jehovah feel when one of his children drifts away from him?
3. What does Jehovah want?

why some stop attending meetings and sharing in the ministry.

#### WHY DO SOME STOP SERVING JEHOVAH?

<sup>4</sup> Some have become absorbed in secular work. “I let myself get overly involved in my secular work,” admits Hung,\* a brother who lives in Southeast Asia. “I foolishly told myself that if I were better off materially, I would be better able to serve Jehovah. So I worked more hours. I began to miss more and more meetings until I finally stopped associating with the congregation. It seems that the world is designed to draw people away from God little by little.”

<sup>5</sup> Some brothers and sisters are overwhelmed by problems. Anne from Britain is a mother of five children. “One of my children was born with severe disabilities,” Anne explains. “In time, one of my daughters was disfellowshipped and a son developed a mental illness. I got so depressed that I stopped attending meetings and preaching. Eventually, I became inactive.” Our hearts go out to Anne and her family as well as others who face such challenges!

<sup>6</sup> **Read Colossians 3:13.** Some of Jehovah’s servants have felt hurt by a fellow believer. The apostle Paul recognized that at times we might have a valid “cause for complaint against” a brother or a sister. We may even have been treated unjustly. If we are not careful,

we could become resentful. Bitterness may eventually cause a person to drift away from Jehovah’s people. Consider the experience of Pablo, a brother in South America. He was falsely accused of wrongdoing and, as a result, lost a privilege of service in the congregation. How did he react? “I got angry,” says Pablo, “and I gradually drifted away from the congregation.”

<sup>7</sup> Or a guilty conscience may torment a person who has broken God’s law in the past, making him feel unworthy of God’s love. Even if he was repentant and was shown mercy, he might feel that he is no longer good enough to be one of God’s people. A brother named Francisco felt that way. “I was reprovved for committing sexual immorality,” he says. “Although at first I continued to attend meetings, I became depressed and felt unworthy to be among Jehovah’s people. My conscience bothered me, and I was convinced that Jehovah had not forgiven me. In time, I stopped associating with the congregation.” How do you feel about brothers and sisters who face situations like those just discussed? Do you have empathy for them? More important, how does Jehovah feel about them?

#### JEHOVAH LOVES HIS SHEEP

<sup>8</sup> Jehovah does not forget those who once served him but who have temporarily stopped associating with his people; nor does he forget the work they did

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\* Some names have been changed.

4. How can secular work affect some?

5. How did a series of problems affect one sister?

6. How could not applying Colossians 3:13 cause someone to drift away from Jehovah’s people?

7. What effect can a guilty conscience have on a person?

8. Does Jehovah forget those who once served him? Explain.



in his service. (Heb. 6:10) The prophet Isaiah recorded a beautiful illustration to show how Jehovah cares for his people. “Like a shepherd he will care for his flock,” Isaiah wrote. “With his arm he will gather together the lambs, and in his bosom he will carry them.” (Isa. 40: 11) How does the Great Shepherd feel when one of his sheep strays from the flock? Jesus revealed Jehovah’s feelings when he asked his disciples: “What do you think? If a man has 100 sheep and one of them strays, will he not leave the 99 on the mountains and set out on a search for the one that is straying? And if he finds it, I certainly tell you, he rejoices more over it than over the 99 that have not strayed.”—Matt. 18:12, 13.

<sup>9</sup> Why is it appropriate to liken Jehovah to a shepherd? Because a good shepherd in Bible times cared deeply about

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9. How did good shepherds in Bible times treat their sheep? (See cover picture.)

his sheep. David, for example, fought a lion and a bear to protect his flock. (1 Sam. 17:34, 35) A good shepherd would certainly notice if even one sheep went missing. (John 10:3, 14) That kind of shepherd would leave his 99 sheep in the safety of a pen or in the care of fellow shepherds and go searching for the missing one. Jesus used that illustration to teach us an important truth: “It is not a desirable thing to my Father who is in heaven for even one of these little ones to perish.”—Matt. 18:14.

#### JEHOVAH SEARCHES FOR HIS SHEEP

<sup>10</sup> Jehovah loves each one of us, including the “little ones” who have strayed from his flock. Through the prophet Ezekiel, God promised that he would search for his lost sheep and help them to regain their spiritual health. And he outlined specific steps that he

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10. According to Ezekiel 34:11-16, what did Jehovah promise to do for his lost sheep?



An Israelite shepherd cared  
deeply about a lost sheep  
(See paragraphs 8-9)



would take to rescue them, steps that a typical Israelite shepherd would take if a sheep went missing. **(Read Ezekiel 34:11-16.)** First, the shepherd would search for the sheep, which could require much time and effort. Then, once he located the stray, the shepherd would bring it back to the flock. Further, if the sheep was injured or starving, the shepherd would lovingly support the weak animal, binding its wounds, carrying it, and feeding it. Elders, the shepherds of “the flock of God,” need to take these same steps to help any who have strayed from the congregation. (1 Pet. 5:2, 3) The elders search for them, help them to return to the flock, and show them love by providing the necessary spiritual support.\*

<sup>11</sup> A good shepherd understood that

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\* The next article will discuss specific ways that elders can follow these steps.

sheep may get lost. And if a sheep did wander away from the flock, the shepherd did not treat it harshly. Consider the example that God set when helping some of his servants who, for a while, strayed from Jehovah.

<sup>12</sup> The prophet Jonah ran away from his assignment. Even so, Jehovah did not quickly give up on Jonah. Like a good shepherd, Jehovah rescued him and helped him gain the strength he needed to fulfill his assignment. (Jonah 2:7; 3:1, 2) Later, God used a bottle-gourd plant to help Jonah understand the value of each human life. (Jonah 4:10, 11) The lesson? Elders must not quickly give up on those who become inactive. Instead, the elders try to understand what caused a sheep to stray from the flock. And when that sheep comes back to Jehovah, the elders continue to show loving interest in him.

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11. What did a good shepherd understand?

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12. How did Jehovah deal with Jonah?



## How a Lost Sheep May Feel

Many who have stopped associating with Jehovah's people no doubt feel the same way as those quoted below once felt.

Flora, who lives in Cameroon, says: "I felt a huge void in my life. I had lost my joy and inner peace, and my conscience kept troubling me. I wanted to find peace again and enjoy the company of the brothers and sisters. But above all, I wanted a good relationship with Jehovah."

Note the comment made by an inactive one in Spain: "I want to be reactivated, but it is very

difficult. I know what I have to do, and I want to do it. But it is not easy. I have to change my lifestyle and cut ties with some worldly friends. And since I am spiritually weak, I find it hard to get ready to go to meetings when I come home from work exhausted. But I am going to try hard because I still love Jehovah and I want to help my wife and two children."

<sup>13</sup> The writer of Psalm 73 became discouraged when he observed how the wicked seemed to flourish. He questioned whether doing God's will was worthwhile. (Ps. 73:12, 13, 16) How did Jehovah react? He did not condemn the man. In fact, God had his words recorded in the Bible. Eventually, the psalmist came to realize that a good relationship with Jehovah is worth more than anything else, making life worthwhile. (Ps. 73:23, 24, 26, 28) The lesson? Elders should not be quick to judge those who begin to question the benefits of serving Jehovah. Rather than condemn them, elders must try to understand why

they speak and act the way they do. Only then can the elders draw attention to the specific Scriptural encouragement that is needed.

<sup>14</sup> The prophet Elijah fled from Queen Jezebel. (1 Ki. 19:1-3) He thought that nobody else was serving as a prophet for Jehovah, and he felt that his work had served no purpose. Elijah became so depressed that he wanted to die. (1 Ki. 19:4, 10) Rather than condemn Elijah, Jehovah assured him that he was not alone, that he could trust in God's power, and that there was still much work for him to do. Jehovah kindly listened to Elijah's concerns and gave him new

13. What can we learn from Jehovah's reaction to the writer of Psalm 73?

14. Why did Elijah need help, and how did Jehovah supply it?

assignments. (1 Ki. 19:11-16, 18) The lesson? All of us, especially the elders, should treat Jehovah's sheep kindly. Whether a person expresses bitterness or feels unworthy of Jehovah's mercy, elders will listen to him as he pours out his heart. Then they will try to assure the lost sheep that Jehovah values him.

#### HOW SHOULD WE FEEL ABOUT GOD'S LOST SHEEP?

<sup>15</sup> How does Jehovah want us to feel about his lost sheep? Jesus provides the pattern for us. He knew that all of Jehovah's sheep are precious in God's eyes, so Jesus did all he could to help "the lost sheep of the house of Israel" return to Jehovah. (Matt. 15:24; Luke 19:9, 10) As the fine shepherd, Jesus also did his utmost to avoid losing any of Jehovah's sheep.—**Read John 6:39.**

<sup>16</sup> The apostle Paul urged the elders of the congregation in Ephesus to imi-

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15. According to John 6:39, how did Jesus view his Father's sheep?

16-17. How should elders feel about helping those who have gone astray? (See the box "How a Lost Sheep May Feel.")

tate Jesus' example. "You must assist those who are weak and must keep in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, when he himself said: 'There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.'" (Acts 20:17, 35) Clearly, elders today have a special responsibility in this regard. "When I think of how much Jehovah cares for his lost sheep, I feel motivated to do all I can to help them," explains Salvador, an elder in Spain. "As a spiritual shepherd, I am convinced that Jehovah wants me to care for them."

<sup>17</sup> All those mentioned in this article who had drifted away were helped to come back to Jehovah. At this very moment, many more who have strayed want to do the same. The next article will discuss in more detail what we can do to help them return to Jehovah.

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**PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Pages 20-21:** Concerned about a lost sheep, an Israelite shepherd would search for it and help it back to the flock. Spiritual shepherds today do the same. **Page 22:** As an inactive sister waits for her bus to depart, she observes two Witnesses who happily share in public witnessing.

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#### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| ■ Why do some brothers and sisters become inactive? | ■ How does Jehovah feel about his lost sheep? | ■ Why should we be concerned about inactive ones? |
|---|---|---|

## SONG 102

“Assist Those Who  
Are Weak”

## PREVIEW

Jehovah wants those who no longer associate with the congregation to return to him. We can do a lot to encourage those who want to accept Jehovah’s invitation: “Return to me.” In this article, we will consider how we can help them to do so.

## “Return to Me”

*“Return to me, and I will return to you.”—MAL. 3:7.*

AS WE discussed in the preceding article, Jehovah likens himself to a good shepherd who tenderly cares for each of his sheep. And he searches for any who go astray. Jehovah told the Israelites who had left him: “Return to me, and I will return to you.” We know that he still feels the same way because he says: “I do not change.” (Mal. 3:6, 7) Jesus said that Jehovah and the angels feel great joy when even one of His servants who has strayed returns to Him.—Luke 15:10, 32.

<sup>2</sup> Let us consider three of Jesus’ illustrations that focus on helping those who have strayed from Jehovah. We will discuss some specific qualities we need in order to help lost sheep to return to him. And we will see why it is worth the effort to support those who are weak.

### SEARCH FOR THE LOST COIN

<sup>3</sup> We need to work hard to find those who want to return to Jehovah. In a parable recorded in Luke’s Gospel, Jesus describes how a woman searches for something valuable that was lost—a drachma coin. This illustration draws our attention to the search itself.—**Read Luke 15:8-10.**

<sup>4</sup> Jesus describes the feelings of a woman who finds a precious drachma coin that was lost. In Jesus’ day, some Jewish mothers apparently gave a set of ten drachma coins to a daughter on her wedding day. Perhaps the coin was one of such a set. The woman assumes that the coin has fallen on the floor. So she lights a lamp and looks

1. How does Jehovah feel when one of his sheep is rescued?

2. What will we consider in this article?

3-4. Why did the woman mentioned at Luke 15:8-10 search so carefully for her lost drachma?



around, but she sees nothing. Her oil lamp may not give her enough light to spot the small silver coin. Finally, she carefully sweeps the whole house. There in the dust she has collected lies her precious drachma, glinting in the light of her lamp. What a relief! She calls her friends and neighbors together to share the good news.

<sup>5</sup> As we see from Jesus' illustration, it takes work to find something that was lost. Similarly, we might need to work hard to locate those who have left the congregation. Years may have passed since they stopped associating with us. They might even have moved to an area where the local brothers do not know them. But at this very moment, no doubt some of these inactive ones are longing to return to Jehovah. They want to serve Jehovah with his family of true worshippers, but they need our help.

<sup>6</sup> Who can share in the search for inactive ones? All of us—elders, pioneers, family members, and congregation publishers—can help in locating them. Do you have a friend or a relative who has become inactive? Have you met an inactive one in your house-to-house ministry or while sharing in public witnessing? Explain to the person that if he would appreciate a visit, you would be happy to provide his contact information to the local elders.

<sup>7</sup> What practical steps can elders in

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5. Why might it be difficult to locate those who have left the congregation?

6. How can all in the congregation be involved in the search for inactive ones?

7. What do you learn from the comments of an elder named Thomas?

particular take to locate those who want to return to Jehovah? Note the comments of an elder named Thomas,\* who lives in Spain. He has helped more than 40 Witnesses to return to the congregation. Thomas says: "First, I ask various brothers and sisters if they know where inactive individuals now live. Or I ask the publishers if they remember any who no longer attend meetings. Most in the congregation respond enthusiastically because they feel involved in the search. Later, when I visit inactive brothers or sisters, I ask about their children and other relatives. Some inactive ones used to bring their children to the meetings, and these children may have been publishers at one time. They too can be helped to return to Jehovah."

#### BRING BACK JEHOVAH'S LOST SONS AND DAUGHTERS

<sup>8</sup> What qualities must we have if we are to help those who want to return to Jehovah? Note some lessons we can learn from Jesus' illustration of the wayward son who left home. **(Read Luke 15:17-24.)** Jesus explains how the son finally came to his senses and decided to return home. The father ran to meet his son and gave him a warm embrace, assuring the son of his love. The son had a troubled conscience and felt unworthy of being called a son. The father felt empathy for his son, who poured out his feelings. The father then took practical steps to assure his son that he was welcome back home,

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\* Some names have been changed.

8. In the illustration of the lost son, found at Luke 15:17-24, how did the father treat his repentant son?

not as a hired man, but as a cherished member of the family. To prove the point, the father arranged a feast and provided fine clothes for his repentant son.

<sup>9</sup> Jehovah is like the father in that illustration. He loves our inactive brothers and sisters and wants them to return to him. By imitating Jehovah, we can help them to return. This calls for patience, empathy, and love on our part. Why should we display those specific qualities, and how can we do so?

<sup>10</sup> We need to be patient because it takes time for a person to heal spiritual-

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9. What attitude must we have in order to help inactive ones to return to Jehovah? (See the box “How to Help Those Who Want to Return.”)

10. What part does patience play in helping someone to recover spiritually?

ly. Many formerly inactive ones admit that they responded only after repeated visits by the elders and others in the congregation. A sister named Nancy, from Southeast Asia, writes: “A close friend in the congregation helped me a great deal. She loved me like an older sister. She reminded me of the good times we shared in the past. She would listen patiently as I expressed my feelings, and she did not hesitate to give me advice. She proved to be a true friend, ready to help at any time.”

<sup>11</sup> Empathy is like a powerful ointment; it can help to heal hurt feelings. Some inactive ones have struggled for years with bitter feelings toward someone in

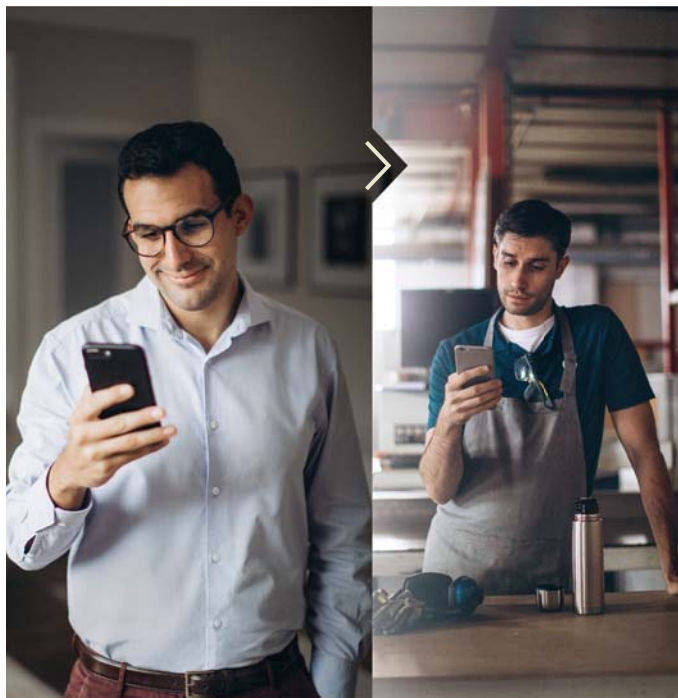
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11. Why do we need empathy to soothe hurt feelings?

## How to Help Those Who Want to Return

Most inactive ones need close friends to give them support. Such friends must . . .

- be willing to keep in contact, even visiting them again and again.
- show them genuine love and assure them that Jehovah loves them and so do the brothers.
- be prepared to listen with empathy. Doing so involves understanding their challenges and avoiding a judgmental attitude.



the congregation. These feelings have stifled the desire to return to Jehovah. Some may think that they were treated unjustly. They may need someone who will listen to them and understand their feelings. (Jas. 1:19) María, who was inactive at one time, says, “I needed a listening ear, a shoulder to cry on, and a helping hand to guide me.”

<sup>12</sup> The Bible describes Jehovah’s love for his people as a cord, or rope. In what sense is God’s love like a rope? Consider this illustration: Imagine that you are drowning in rough seas and someone throws you a life vest. Surely you would appreciate the help because that may ease your struggle to stay afloat. But a

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12. Illustrate how Jehovah’s love draws inactive ones back to his people.

life vest will not be enough to keep you alive. The water is cold, and you will not survive unless you can reach a lifeboat. You need someone to throw you a rope and to pull you toward the lifeboat. Jehovah said about the Israelites who had gone astray: “I kept drawing them, with the cords of love.” (Hos. 11:4) God feels the same way today about those who have stopped serving him and who are drowning in problems and anxiety. He wants them to know that he loves them, and he wants to draw them to him. And Jehovah can use you to express his love to them.

<sup>13</sup> It is important to assure inactive ones that Jehovah loves them and that we love

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13. Relate an experience that illustrates the power of brotherly love.



them too. Pablo, mentioned in the preceding article, was inactive for over 30 years. He says: “One morning, as I was leaving my home, a sweet, elderly sister met me and spoke to me in a loving manner. I began to weep like a child. I told her that it seemed that Jehovah had sent her to speak to me. It was at that moment that I decided to return to Jehovah.”

### LOVINGLY SUPPORT THE WEAK

<sup>14</sup> Inactive ones need consistent support from us. Like the lost son in Jesus’ illustration, they may be emotionally scarred. And they are likely weak spiritually because of what they experienced in Satan’s world. We need to help them re-

14. According to the illustration found at Luke 15: 4, 5, what did the shepherd do once he found the lost sheep?

build their faith in Jehovah. In the illustration of the lost sheep, Jesus describes how the shepherd puts the sheep on his shoulders and carries it back to the flock. The shepherd has already spent time and energy finding the lost sheep. But he realizes that he will need to carry it back to the fold because it will not have the strength to return on its own.

—**Read Luke 15:4, 5.**

<sup>15</sup> We may need to invest time and energy in helping some inactive ones to overcome their weaknesses. But with Jehovah’s spirit, his Word, and the publications provided through the congregation, we can help them to become spiritually strong again. (Rom. 15:1)

15. How can we support weak ones who want to return to Jehovah? (See the box “An Invaluable Tool.”)



Return to Jehovah

## An Invaluable Tool

The brochure *Return to Jehovah* can spark a desire in inactive ones to return to the congregation.

María, quoted in the article, says, “This brochure helped me to realize that Jehovah loves me and wants to be by my side always.”

“Part four of the brochure *Return to Jehovah* helped me a lot,” recalls Flora, from Cameroon. “It gave me the strength

and the courage to speak wholeheartedly to Jehovah and then to explain my situation to the elders who had been so helpful.”

“The brochure was like a personal invitation from Jehovah,” says Tatyana, from Bulgaria. “It made me realize that Jehovah cares for his lost sheep, regardless of the reasons why they got lost.”



How can we do this? One experienced elder says, “Most inactive ones need a Bible study after they decide that they truly want to return to Jehovah.”\* So if you are asked to study with an inactive person, why not welcome the privilege? The elder also says, “The publisher who conducts the study needs to be a good friend, someone in whom the inactive one can confide.”

### JOY IN HEAVEN AND JOY ON EARTH

<sup>16</sup> Many experiences indicate that the angels are working alongside us to help us find inactive ones who yearn to return to Jehovah. (Rev. 14:6) For example, Silvio, from Ecuador, earnestly prayed for help to return to the congregation. While he was still praying, his doorbell rang. Two elders were at his door. During that visit, they were happy to begin providing him with the help he needed.

\* Some inactive ones may be helped by studying portions of the book *How to Remain in God's Love*, whereas others have benefited from reviewing chapters of the book *Draw Close to Jehovah*. The Congregation Service Committee will determine who is best qualified to conduct such a study.

16. How do we know that we can count on heavenly support?

<sup>17</sup> We will find much joy in helping the spiritually weak return to Jehovah. Note what Salvador, a pioneer who pays special attention to inactive ones, says: “At times, I find it hard to hold back tears of happiness. It pleases me so much to think that Jehovah has rescued one of his dear sheep from Satan’s world and that I’ve had the privilege of cooperating with Him in this work.” —Acts 20:35.

<sup>18</sup> If you have stopped associating with Jehovah’s people, you can be sure that he still loves you. He wants you to return to him. You will have to take some steps to return to him. But like the father in Jesus’ illustration, Jehovah is on the lookout for your return, and he will gladly welcome you home.

17. What reward do we receive for helping the spiritually weak?

18. If you are inactive, of what can you be sure?

**PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Pages 26-27:** Three different brothers provide help for a brother who wants to return. They do so by keeping in contact, assuring him that he is loved, and listening to him with understanding.

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### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- |   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| ■ How can we search for those who have become inactive? | ■ What three qualities can help us to be successful? | ■ Why do inactive ones need consistent loving support? |
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# Responding to Trumpet Calls Today

WE ALL believe that Jehovah is directing and sustaining his people spiritually during these “last days.” (2 Tim. 3:1) Understandably, it is up to each one of us to respond. We can compare our situation with that of the Israelites in the wilderness. They were to respond to trumpet calls.

Jehovah had Moses make two trumpets of hammered silver “to summon the assembly and to break up the camps.” (Num. 10:2) The priests were to blow the trumpets in different ways to indicate what was required of the people. (Num. 10:3-8) Today, God’s people receive directions in several ways. Consider three of these ways that remind us of the ancient trumpet calls. God’s people today are invited to large gatherings, appointed overseers receive training, and theocratic arrangements for all the congregations are updated or adjusted.

## THE CALL TO LARGE GATHERINGS

When Jehovah wanted “the whole assembly” to gather at the entrance on the east side of the tabernacle, the priests blew both

trumpets. (Num. 10:3) All the tribes, which were camped around the tabernacle in four divisions, heard that distinct call. Those camped close to the entrance could likely respond within minutes. Others were farther away and might have needed more time and extra effort to arrive. Whatever the case, Jehovah wanted *all* to assemble and benefit.

Today, we are not assembling at a tabernacle, but we are alerted to gatherings of God’s people. These include regional conventions and other special events, where we receive vital information and direction. In lands all around the globe, Jehovah’s people enjoy the same program. Thus, those who respond to the invitation to attend enjoy being assembled as a happy group. Some have to travel farther than others. Nevertheless, those who respond to the invitation agree that it is well worth the effort.

What about those in isolated groups far away from any of the large gatherings? Thanks to modern technology, many such ones are able to benefit from the same program and even to feel a part of the large gatherings. For example, during one visit of a headquarters representative, the branch in Benin transmitted a program to Arlit, Niger, a mining town in the Sahara Desert. Twenty-one brothers, sisters, and interested ones gathered. Though they were in a dis-

tant location, they felt united with the large assembly of 44,131. One brother wrote: “Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the transmission of this event. It showed us again how much you have us in your hearts.”

### **CALLS TO APPOINTED OVERSEERS**

When the Israelite priests blew just one trumpet, “only the chieftains, the heads of the thousands,” were to appear at the tent of meeting. (Num. 10:4) They could there receive information and training from Moses. That would help them to care for their responsibilities in their tribes. If you were one of those chieftains, would you not have done all you could to be present and to benefit?

Today, the congregation elders are not “chieftains”; nor do they lord it over the flock of God in their care. (1 Pet. 5:1-3) But they certainly do their best in shepherding the flock. Thus, they readily respond when invited for additional training, such as at the Kingdom Ministry School. During these sessions, the elders learn how to be more effective in caring for congregation matters. This results in a higher level of spirituality for all. Even if you have not attended one of those schools, you are likely receiving benefits from those who did attend.

### **CALLS TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS**

The Israelite priests on occasion sounded a fluctuating type of trumpet blast. This announced that Jehovah wanted the whole camp to move. (Num. 10:5, 6) Moving the camp was a marvelous display of organization, but it also represented a major undertaking for everyone. Some may at times have had mixed feelings about it. Why?

Perhaps some felt that the calls to move were coming too often and too unexpectedly. “Sometimes the cloud would remain only from evening until morning.” At other

times “it was two days, a month, or longer” between moves. (Num. 9:21, 22) And how many times did the camp actually move? Numbers chapter 33 mentions some 40 places where the Israelites camped.

At times, some may have found a location where there was shade. That could have been quite agreeable in the “great and fearsome wilderness.” (Deut. 1:19) Hence, there could have been the temptation to think that a move would be a change for the worse.

Once the tribes started to leave, some may have found it difficult to wait their turn. All heard the fluctuating trumpet blast, but not all could depart at the same moment. That fluctuating trumpet blast signaled that the tribes camped to the east, namely Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, should depart. (Num. 2:3-7; 10:5, 6) After they departed, the priests sounded the fluctuating trumpet blast a second time to signal the three-tribe division camped to the south. The priests continued in this fashion until the whole camp had departed.

Maybe you have experienced mixed feelings regarding some organizational adjustment. You may have felt rather overwhelmed when there were a number of unexpected changes. Or perhaps you felt comfortable with certain arrangements and wished that these had not been adjusted. For whatever reason, you may have sensed your patience being tested, and it took time to adapt. Nonetheless, if we endeavor to respond as we realize we should, we will likely see that God is blessing us.

In Moses’ day, Jehovah guided millions of men, women, and children through the wilderness. Without his care and direction, they would not have survived. Today, we survive spiritually with Jehovah’s guidance. In fact, we thrive! Therefore, may all of us be determined to respond as faithful Israelites did to the distinct calls of the trumpets!

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