

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES

OCTOBER 27–NOVEMBER 2

**Are You Convinced
That You Have the
Truth? Why?**

PAGE 7 • SONGS: 28, 107

NOVEMBER 3-9

**Serve God Loyally
Despite “Many
Tribulations”**

PAGE 12 • SONGS: 135, 133

NOVEMBER 10-16

**Parents—Shepherd
Your Children**

PAGE 17 • SONGS: 88, 24

NOVEMBER 17-23

**The Last Enemy,
Death, Brought
to Nothing**

PAGE 23 • SONGS: 111, 109

NOVEMBER 24-30

**Remember Those in
the Full-Time Service**

PAGE 28 • SONGS: 95, 100





SRI LANKA

COVER: Two brothers sharing the Bible's message with a fisherman in Negombo on the west coast of Sri Lanka

POPULATION

20,860,000

PUBLISHERS

5,600

REGULAR PIONEERS

641

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

3 Are You "Reaching Out"?

22 Questions From Readers

STUDY ARTICLES

■ Are You Convinced That You Have the Truth? Why?

This article will highlight some reasons why many people conclude that Jehovah's Witnesses have the truth. We will also consider reasons why Witnesses are convinced that they have the truth.

■ Serve God Loyally Despite "Many Tribulations"

Tribulation is a by-product of living in Satan's world. Some trials are like frontal attacks on our faith; others are more subtle. This article will help us to recognize these and prepare for Satan's attack.

■ Parents—Shepherd Your Children

Parents are to raise their children "in the discipline and admonition of Jehovah." (Eph. 6:4) This article discusses three ways that they can do so and act as spiritual shepherds to their growing children.

■ The Last Enemy, Death, Brought to Nothing

How did death become a part of the human experience? How will 'the last enemy, death, be brought to nothing'? (1 Cor. 15:26) See how the answers highlight Jehovah's justice, his wisdom, and especially his love.

■ Remember Those in the Full-Time Service

Jehovah has long had faithful servants who have served him full-time despite the challenges of doing so in this system of things. What can we do to 'remember their faithful work and loving labor'?—1 Thess. 1:3.

Are You “Reaching Out”?

FERNANDO* was nervous. Two elders had asked to speak with him in private. After a number of recent visits of the circuit overseer, the elders had explained to him what he needed to do in order to qualify for additional privileges in the congregation. As time went on, Fernando began wondering if he would ever be appointed an elder. Now the circuit overseer had recently visited the congregation again. What would the elders say this time?

Fernando listened as one of the elders spoke to him. The brother alluded to 1 Timothy 3:1 and said that the congregation elders had received word that he had been appointed an elder. Fernando sat up straight and asked, “What did you say?” The brother repeated what he had said, and a smile appeared on Fernando’s face. Thereafter, when his appointment was announced to the

congregation, there were smiles on the faces of all.

Is it wrong to desire privileges in the congregation? Not at all. According to 1 Timothy 3:1, “if a man is reaching out to be an overseer, he is desirous of a fine work.” Many Christian men apply that encouragement and make spiritual progress to qualify for privileges in the congregation. The result is that God’s people are blessed with tens of thousands of capable elders and ministerial servants. But because of the increase seen in the congregations, there is a need for more brothers to reach out. What is the proper way to do so? And should those aspiring to be an overseer worry about the matter, as Fernando did?

WHAT DOES “REACHING OUT” MEAN?

The Bible phrase “reaching out” translates a Greek verb that has the sense of desiring earnestly, stretching out. That may make you think of a

* Names in this article have been changed.



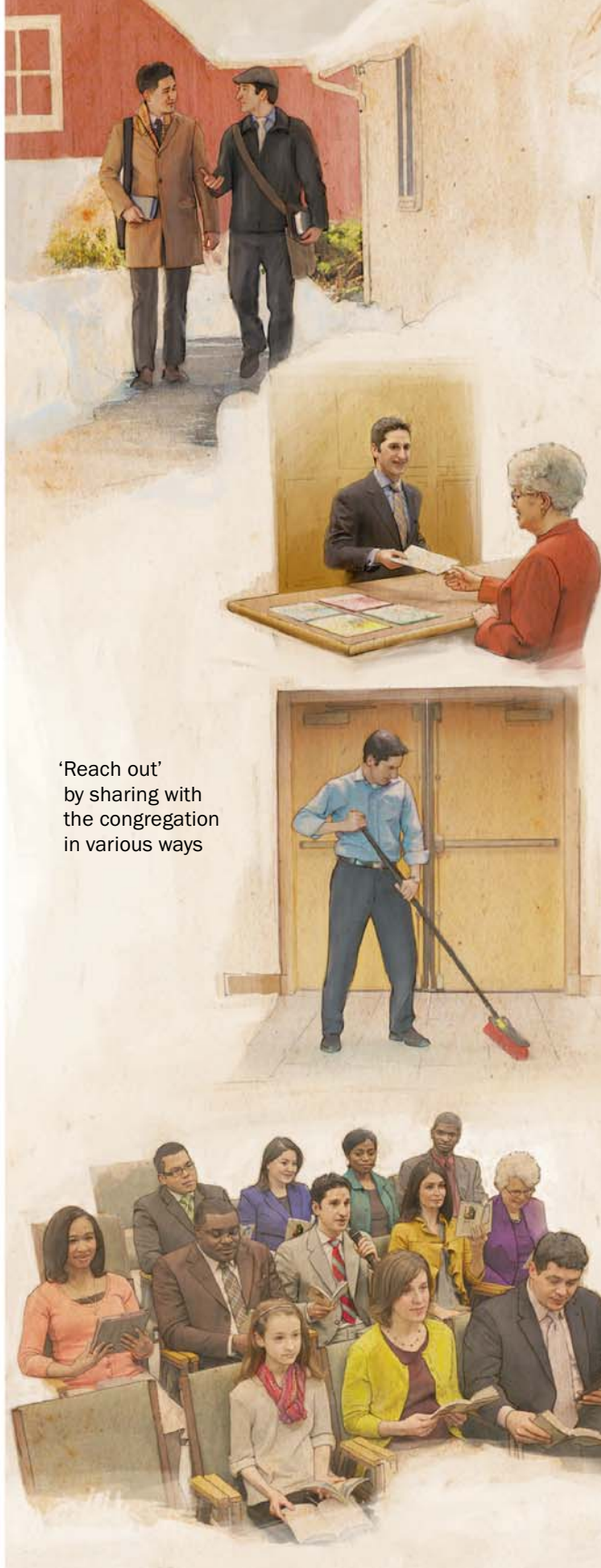
person straining to grasp an attractive piece of fruit hanging from a tree. But reaching out does not mean grasping greedily at the privilege “to be an overseer.” Why not? Because the goal of those sincerely interested in serving as elders should be to do “a fine work” rather than to attain a position.

Many of the requirements related to this fine work are listed at 1 Timothy 3:2-7 and Titus 1:5-9. Regarding those high standards, a longtime elder named Raymond explains: “To me, what matters most is what we are. Speaking and teaching are important, but those abilities do not override the need to be irreprehensible, moderate in habits, sound in mind, orderly, hospitable, and reasonable.”

A brother who is truly reaching out shows himself to be irreprehensible by avoiding every sort of dishonesty and uncleanness. He is moderate in habits, sound in mind, orderly, and reasonable; hence, his fellow worshippers trust him to take the lead and help them with their problems. In being hospitable, he is a source of encouragement to young ones and those new in the truth. He brings comfort and assistance to the sick and the elderly because he is a lover of goodness. He develops these qualities to benefit others, not to advance his prospects of being appointed.*

The body of elders is happy to give counsel and encouragement, but satisfying the Scriptural requirements falls primarily on the individual who is reaching out. Henry, an experienced overseer, says: “If you are reaching out, work hard to prove that you are qualified.” Referring to Ecclesiastes 9: 10, he explains: “‘Whatever your hand finds to do, do with all your might.’ Whatever assignment the elders give you, do your best. Love all the work you are given to do in the congregation, including sweeping the floor. In time, your work and efforts will be recognized.” If you wish to serve as an elder some day, be hardworking and trustworthy in all aspects of sacred service. Hu-

* The principles stated in this article also apply to those desirous of serving as ministerial servants. The requirements that they must meet are found at 1 Timothy 3:8-10, 12, 13.



‘Reach out’
by sharing with
the congregation
in various ways

mility, not prideful ambition, should characterize your life.—Matt. 23:8-12.

REJECT INCORRECT THINKING AND ACTIONS

Some who are desirous of privileges in the congregation may be tempted to drop hints or may try to influence the body of elders. Others show displeasure when the elders offer them counsel. Such ones should ask themselves, ‘Do I want to further my own interests, or do I want humbly to care for Jehovah’s sheep?’

Those reaching out should not forget another requirement for elders, that of “becoming examples to the flock.” (1 Pet. 5:1-3) He who is an example to the congregation avoids devious thinking and actions. He cultivates patient endurance whether he is presently appointed or not. Becoming an elder does not miraculously free a man of human defects. (Num. 12:3; Ps. 106:32, 33) Also, a brother may not be ‘conscious of anything against himself,’ but others may have some reason to hold a less than favorable opinion of him. (1 Cor. 4:4) Hence, if the elders offer you sincere, Bible-based counsel, strive to listen without irritation. Then work at putting their counsel into practice.

WHAT IF THE WAIT IS LONG?

A number of brothers wait what seems to them to be a long time before they are appointed. If you have been “reaching out to be an overseer” for a number of years, do you sometimes get anxious? If so, note these inspired words: “Expectation postponed makes the heart sick, but a desire realized is a tree of life.”—Prov. 13:12.

A person may feel heartsick when a cherished goal seems to be unattainable. Abraham felt that way. Jehovah promised him a son, but years passed during which he and Sarah had no children. (Gen. 12:1-3, 7) In his advancing age, Abraham cried out: “Sovereign Lord Jehovah, what will you give me, seeing that I continue childless . . . You have given me no offspring.” Jehovah reassured him that His promise regarding a son would come true. But at least 14 more

years passed before God carried out his word.—Gen. 15:2-4; 16:16; 21:5.

While he was waiting, did Abraham lose his joy in serving Jehovah? No. He never doubted God’s promise. He continued to look forward to a good outcome. The apostle Paul wrote: “After Abraham had shown patience, he obtained this promise.” (Heb. 6:15) In the end, Almighty God blessed that faithful man far beyond his expectations. What can you learn from Abraham?

If you would like to serve as an elder but that has not happened despite the passing of years, continue to trust in Jehovah. Do not lose your joy in his service. Warren, who has helped many brothers to make spiritual progress, explains why: “The process of qualifying for an appointment follows a progression. Over time, a

The Value of Good Communication

A brother who is “reaching out to be an overseer” or to have other privileges in Jehovah’s organization appreciates words of commendation. (1 Tim. 3:1) When loving elders offer clear, kind counsel and correction, their words can make the brother’s “heart rejoice.” The one receiving attention in that way usually detects ‘sweetness’ in such helpful expressions. He will feel a strong inclination to accept spiritual help and put it into practice.—Prov. 27:9.

At times, however, a person’s attitude may make others hesitate to offer him Scriptural advice. Philip recalls that for several years his actions showed the congregation that he did not want more responsibility. When his thinking changed, he ‘sought to find knowledge’ and asked the elders for direction. He reports, “The brothers gave me helpful, practical counsel.” Philip put that counsel into practice. He now serves as an elder.—Prov. 18:15.

brother's abilities and his attitude are revealed little by little in the way he handles himself and takes care of his assignments. Some believe that they are successful only if they get this privilege or that appointment. Such thinking is erroneous and can turn into an obsession. If you serve Jehovah faithfully wherever you are and whatever you do, you are a success."

One brother had waited for over a decade when he was appointed an elder. Referring to a well-known description in the book of Ezekiel, chapter 1, he relates the lesson he learned: "Jehovah drives his chariot, his organization, at the speed he chooses. What is important is not our time but Jehovah's time. In the matter of wanting to serve as an elder, it's not about me—what I want or what I wish I could be. What I want may not be what Jehovah knows I need."

If you hope to do the fine work of a Christian overseer some day, reach out by contributing to the happiness of the congregation. If time seems to pass slowly, fight anxiety and impatience. Raymond, mentioned earlier, states: "Ambition is an enemy of contentment. Those who are always anxious miss the rich joy that comes from serving

Jehovah." Cultivate more fully the fruitage of God's spirit, especially patience. Strive to improve your spirituality through your study of the Scriptures. Expand your share in preaching the good news and studying the Bible with interested ones. Lead your family in spiritual activities and in family worship. Enjoy each opportunity you have to be with your brothers and sisters. As you move forward toward your goal, you will enjoy the journey.

Working to qualify for privileges in the congregation is a blessed opportunity from Jehovah; neither he nor his organization desires that those reaching out become frustrated and unhappy in his service. God supports and blesses all who serve him with pure motives. As is true of all his blessings, "he adds no pain with it."—Prov. 10:22.

Even if you have been reaching out for quite some time, you can still make excellent spiritual progress. As you strive to develop the needed qualities and work hard in the congregation while not neglecting your family, you will establish a record of service that will not be forgotten. May serving Jehovah always be a delight for you, whatever assignments you receive.





Are You Convinced That You Have the Truth? Why?

“Prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”—ROM. 12:2.

IS IT the will of God that true Christians go to war and kill people of a different nationality? During the last 100 years, that has often been done by many who called themselves Christians. Catholic army chaplains have blessed troops and their weapons in wars against Catholics of an opposing nation. The same has been true of Protestant chaplains. World War II is a prime example of the resulting slaughter.

² What did Jehovah’s Witnesses do in that time of war? The historical record shows that they maintained a position of Christian neutrality. What was the basis for their stand? It was primarily the example and teachings of Jesus. He said: “By this all will know that you are my disciples—if you have love among yourselves.” (John 13:35) They also took to heart the extended application of the reasoning that the apostle Paul presented in writing to Christians in Corinth.—**Read 2 Corinthians 10:3, 4.**

³ Therefore, true Christians, who have their conscience trained by the Bible, do not learn war or participate in

1. How did Christendom’s clergy react during wartime?
- 2, 3. What position did Jehovah’s Witnesses take during World War II and later, and why?

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

Why has the conduct of Jehovah’s Witnesses during times of war impressed many people?

What is it about our preaching work that convinces many that we are true Christians?

Why are you convinced that you have the truth?

warfare. As a result of holding to this Christian position, thousands of Witnesses, young and old, male and female, have been persecuted. Many have suffered in forced-labor camps and prisons. During the Nazi era in Germany, some were even murdered. Regardless of the vicious persecution they faced in Europe, the Witnesses never forgot their commission to preach the good news of Jehovah's Kingdom. They faithfully did so—in prisons, in concentration camps, and in exile.* Later, Witnesses took no part in the warlike ethnic cleansing in Rwanda in 1994. They also remained neutral during the bloodbaths that more recently occurred in the Balkans conflict during the breakup of the former Yugoslavia.

⁴ The strict neutrality of Jehovah's Witnesses has convinced thousands of observers around the globe that the Witnesses practice genuine love of God and of neighbor. In other words, they are practicing true Christianity. Yet, there are other features of our worship that have convinced many that when they see Jehovah's Witnesses, they are seeing true Christians.

THE GREATEST EDUCATIONAL WORK IN HISTORY

⁵ From the start of his ministry, Jesus stressed the importance of proclaiming the good news of God's Kingdom. He chose 12 disciples to share in laying the foundation for a global ministry; afterward, he trained a group of 70 disciples.

* See *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, pages 191-198, 448-454.

4. How has the neutrality of Jehovah's Witnesses affected observers?

5. What change did Christ's early followers face?

(Luke 6:13; 10:1) These were prepared to take the good news to others, at first to the Jews. Then, a surprise! Jesus' disciples were going to take it to uncircumcised ones of the nations. What a change that must have been for zealous Jewish disciples!—Acts 1:8.

⁶ The apostle Peter was sent to the home of Cornelius, an uncircumcised Gentile. Peter then recognized that God is impartial. Cornelius and his household were baptized. Christianity was now expanding into a vast new field; people in all nations could hear the truth and accept it. (Acts 10:9-48) Now the field was the whole world.

⁷ During the modern-day history of Jehovah's Witnesses, those taking the lead have zealously promoted the preaching and teaching of the good news around the world. Today, almost eight million zealous Witnesses are doing their utmost to spread Christ's message in well over 600 languages, with more to come! Jehovah's Witnesses are clearly identified by their house-to-house ministry and by their preaching on the streets, sometimes using display tables and mobile literature carts.

⁸ More than 2,900 translators have received specialized training to translate the Bible and Bible literature. Their work is certainly not limited to what might be considered major languages. Their efforts include hundreds of languages that are not widely known but that are, nevertheless, spoken by millions of people. For example, in Spain millions of Catalonians speak their native language, Catalan, on a daily basis. In re-

6. What led Peter to recognize Jehovah's impartiality?

7, 8. What initiative has Jehovah's organization taken? (See opening image.)



Translation team preparing publications in Low German
(See paragraph 10)

cent times especially, there has been a resurgence of Catalan and its variations in Andorra, Alicante, the Balearic Islands, and Valencia. Jehovah's Witnesses now produce Bible literature in Catalan, and Christian meetings are being held in the language that warms the hearts of the Catalanian people.

⁹ This pattern of translation and teaching is being repeated in many cultures. Mexico is a Spanish-speaking country but has sizable indigenous groups speaking other languages. The Maya make up one such group. The branch in Mexico assigned the Maya translation team to reside in a part of the country where they could speak and hear the language on a daily basis. Another example is Nepali, one of the languages spoken in Nepal, which has a population of over 29 million. Some 120 languages are spoken in the country, but well over ten million speak Nepali and many others use it as a second tongue. Our Bible literature is also produced in that language.

9, 10. What illustrates that God's organization is interested in the spiritual needs of all people?

¹⁰ Jehovah's organization takes the commission to preach the good news of the Kingdom worldwide very seriously, as shown by the support given to the many translation teams around the world. Millions upon millions of tracts, brochures, and magazines have been distributed in campaigns throughout the world, without charge to the public. The expense has been covered by the voluntary donations of Jehovah's Witnesses, who have followed Jesus' instruction: "You received free, give free." —Matt. 10:8.

¹¹ As devoted Christian preachers and teachers, Jehovah's Witnesses are so convinced that they have found the truth that they make great sacrifices in order to share the message with people of other nations and ethnic groups. Many have simplified their life, learned another language, and adapted to a different culture in order to share in this vital Christian work. This international preaching and teaching work is another

11, 12. How has the global preaching work done by Jehovah's Witnesses had a good effect on others?



Publications in Low German are useful in Paraguay
(See also opening image)

factor that convinces many people that Jehovah's Witnesses are the true followers of Christ Jesus.

¹² Witnesses do all of this because they are convinced that they have found the truth. But what else has convinced millions of people that Jehovah's Witnesses have the truth?—**Read Romans 14:17, 18.**

WHY THEY BELIEVE

¹³ We can benefit from comments by devoted Christians of our time, who are convinced that they have the truth. One longtime servant of Jehovah expressed his feelings this way: "Every effort is made to keep Jehovah's organization morally clean and undefiled, regardless of who has to be counseled or disciplined." How is this high moral standard achieved? By following the standards set out in God's Word and the pattern that Jesus and his disciples provided. Thus, during the modern-day history of Jeho-

13. How have the Witnesses kept the organization clean?

vah's Witnesses, relatively few have had to be expelled from the Christian fellowship because they would not conform to God's standards. The vast majority—including some who formerly lived in a way that God did not approve of but who changed—maintain a clean and exemplary lifestyle.—**Read 1 Corinthians 6:9-11.**

¹⁴ What about those who had to be put out of the congregation, in obedience to Scriptural direction? Thousands have repented of their unchristian actions and have been welcomed back into the congregation. (**Read 2 Corinthians 2:6-8.**) Holding to the Bible's high code of conduct has resulted in a clean Christian congregation that inspires confidence and trust. That Jehovah's Witnesses hold to God's standards—in stark contrast with the permissiveness common in many churches—has in itself convinced many that this is a people who practice the truth.

¹⁵ Why do other experienced Witnesses believe that they have found the truth? One brother in his 50's explained: "I have believed since I was a teenager that my faith rested on three basic pillars or premises: (1) that God exists; (2) that he inspired the Bible; and (3) that he is using and blessing the Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses today. As I have studied over the years, I have always tried to test those pillars and have asked myself if they were on truly solid ground. The evidence for each has grown substantially year after year, strengthening my faith and deepening my conviction that we do, indeed, have the truth."

14. What have many disfellowshipped ones done, and with what result?

15. What convinced one brother that he has the truth?

¹⁶ A married sister who is serving at the world headquarters in New York commented about Jehovah's organization: "It is the only one that unwaveringly proclaims Jehovah's name. How logical that is when we recall that the divine name appears some 7,000 times in the Bible! I appreciate the encouragement found at 2 Chronicles 16:9: 'The eyes of Jehovah are roving about through all the earth to show his strength in behalf of those whose heart is complete toward him.'" She continues: "The truth has shown me how to have a complete heart so that Jehovah can freely show his strength toward me. My relationship with Jehovah is most precious to me. And I appreciate Jesus' role in providing intimate knowledge of God that sustains me."

¹⁷ A former atheist confessed: "The creation convinces me that God wants mankind to enjoy life and therefore he will not allow suffering to go on forever. Also, as the world descends further into ungodliness, Jehovah's people are progressing in faith, zeal, and love. Only Jehovah's spirit could produce this modern-day miracle."—**Read 1 Peter 4: 1-4.**

¹⁸ Another longtime Witness gave his reasons for believing the truth that we preach: "My study over the years has convinced me that the Witnesses have made serious efforts to return to the model of first-century Christianity. I have seen for myself the global unity of Jehovah's Witnesses as I have traveled

the world. The truth from the Bible has given me satisfaction and happiness." When a brother who is over 60 was asked why he was convinced that he had found the truth, he focused on Jesus Christ, explaining: "We have carefully studied the life and ministry of Jesus and have come to appreciate his example. We have made adjustments in our lifestyle to draw nearer to God through Christ Jesus. We have recognized Christ's ransom sacrifice as the basis for salvation. And we know that he was resurrected from the dead. We have the testimony of reliable eye-witnesses to that fact."—**Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8.**

WHAT MUST WE DO WITH THE TRUTH?

¹⁹ As Christians who love our neighbor, we cannot keep our precious knowledge of the truth to ourselves. Paul reasoned with his brothers in the congregation in Rome: "If you publicly declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and exercise faith in your heart that God raised him up from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one exercises faith for righteousness, but with the mouth one makes public declaration for salvation."—Rom. 10:9, 10.

²⁰ As dedicated Witnesses of Jehovah, we are convinced that we have the truth and are aware of our privilege to teach others the good news of God's Kingdom rule. As we go about our preaching assignment, may others become impressed not only with what we teach from the Bible but also with our glowing conviction.

16. What was it about the truth that impressed one sister?

17. Of what is a former atheist convinced, and why?

18. How do you feel about the sentiments expressed by two other brothers?

19, 20. (a) What responsibility did Paul emphasize to the congregation in Rome? (b) As dedicated Christians, what is our privilege?



Serve God Loyally Despite “Many Tribulations”

“We must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations.”—ACTS 14:22.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

Who is the source of our tribulations?

How can we prepare to face persecution and combat discouragement?

What will be the reward for those who endure tribulation?

DOES it shock you that you can expect to face “many tribulations” before you gain the prize of everlasting life? Likely not. Whether you are new in the truth or you are a longtime servant of Jehovah, you know that hardship is an aspect of life in Satan’s world.—Rev. 12:12.

² Besides difficulties that are “common to men”—problems that affect all imperfect humans—Christians face an additional type of tribulation. (1 Cor. 10:13) What is it? Intense opposition because of their steadfast obedience to God’s laws. Jesus told his followers: “A slave is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you.” (John 15:20) Who is behind such opposition? Ultimately, it is Satan, whom the Bible describes as “a roaring lion” who is “seeking to devour” God’s people. (1 Pet. 5:8) Satan will use any means he can to try to break the integrity of Jesus’ disciples. Consider what happened to the apostle Paul.

1. Why does tribulation come as no surprise to God’s servants?
2. (a) In addition to problems that affect all imperfect humans, what type of tribulation do Christians face? (See opening image.) (b) Who is behind our tribulations, and how do we know?

TRIBULATION IN LYSTRA

³ More than once, Paul was persecuted because of his faith. (2 Cor. 11:23-27) One such incident occurred in Lystra. After healing a man who was lame from birth, Paul and his companion Barnabas were hailed as gods. The two had to beg the ecstatic crowd not to worship them! All too soon, however, Jewish opposers arrived, and they used slander to poison the minds of the people. Quickly the tide turned! The people now pelted Paul with stones and left him for dead.—Acts 14:8-19.

⁴ After visiting Derbe, Paul and Barnabas “returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch. There they strengthened the disciples, encouraging them to remain in the faith and saying: ‘We must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations.’” (Acts 14:21, 22) At first, that statement might seem strange. After all, the prospect of going through “many tribulations” would seem distressing, not encouraging. How is it, then, that Paul and Barnabas “*strengthened* the disciples” with a message that pointed to more tribulation?

⁵ We can find the answer if we look carefully at Paul’s words. He did not simply say: “We must *endure* many tribulations.” Rather, he said: “We must *enter into the Kingdom of God* through many tribulations.” So Paul strengthened the disciples by emphasizing the positive result of a faithful course. That reward was no mere illusion. Indeed, Jesus stated: “The one who has endured to the end *will be saved*.”—Matt. 10:22.

⁶ If we endure, we will have a reward.

3-5. (a) What tribulation did Paul face in Lystra? (b) In what way was his message about future tribulations strengthening?

6. What reward is held out to those who endure?

For anointed Christians, that reward is immortal life in heaven as corulers with Jesus. For the “other sheep,” it is everlasting life on earth where “righteousness is to dwell.” (John 10:16; 2 Pet. 3:13) As Paul noted, though, we will face many tribulations in the meantime. Consider two types of trials that we may encounter.

FRONTAL ATTACKS

⁷ Jesus foretold: “People will hand you over to local courts, and you will be beaten in synagogues and be put on the stand before governors and kings.” (Mark 13:9) As those words indicate, some Christians will face tribulation in the form of physical persecution, perhaps at the instigation of religious or political leaders. (Acts 5:27, 28) Again, consider Paul’s example. Did he cower at the thought of being subjected to such persecution? Not at all.—**Read Acts 20:22, 23.**

⁸ Paul bravely stood up to Satan’s frontal attacks and stated: “I do not consider my own life of any importance to me, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to bear thorough witness to the good news of the undeserved kindness of God.” (Acts 20:24) Clearly, Paul did not feel intimidated by the prospect of persecution. On the contrary, he was determined to endure, come what may. His primary concern was to “bear thorough witness” despite any tribulation.

⁹ Today, many of our brothers and sisters have shown similar determination. For example, in one country

7. What type of tribulation could be described as frontal attacks?

8, 9. How did Paul show that he was determined to endure, and how have some in modern times shown similar determination?

some Witnesses have endured almost 20 years of imprisonment because of maintaining their neutrality. Their case was never brought to trial, for that land had no provision for conscientious objectors. While in prison, they were denied visits even from family members, and some prisoners were beaten and subjected to various forms of torture.

¹⁰ Our brothers elsewhere endure tribulations that arise suddenly. Should that happen to you, do not give in to fear. Think of Joseph. He was sold into slavery, but Jehovah “rescued him out of all his tribulations.” (Acts 7:9, 10) Jehovah can do the same for you. Never forget that “Jehovah knows how to rescue people of godly devotion out of trial.” (2 Pet. 2:9) Will you continue to trust in Jehovah, knowing that he can deliver you from this wicked system of things and allow you to enjoy everlasting life under the rule of his Kingdom? You have every reason to do so and to face up to persecution courageously. —1 Pet. 5:8, 9.

SUBTLE ATTACKS

¹¹ Another kind of tribulation that we may face involves subtle attacks. How does this differ from the frontal attacks of physical persecution? Frontal attacks are like a tornado that blows into town and destroys your house instantly. Subtle attacks are more like a colony of termites that slowly creep in and nibble away at the wood of your house until it collapses. With the latter, a person may not even be aware of the danger until it is too late.

¹⁰. Why should we not fear sudden tribulations?

¹¹. How do Satan’s subtle attacks differ from his frontal attacks?

¹² Satan would like to destroy your relationship with Jehovah, whether with frontal attacks of persecution or by slowly nibbling away at your faith through subtle attacks. One of the most effective subtle tactics Satan uses is discouragement. The apostle Paul admitted to feeling discouraged at times. (**Read Romans 7:21-24.**) Now, why would Paul—a spiritual “giant” who likely was a member of the first-century governing body—call himself a “miserable man”? Paul said that he felt this way because of his imperfections. He really wanted to do what was right, but he felt another force working against him. If you on occasion struggle with such feelings, do you not find it comforting to know that even the apostle Paul faced a similar challenge?

¹³ At times, many brothers and sisters feel discouraged, anxious, and perhaps even worthless. For example, a zealous pioneer whom we will call Deborah says: “Over and over again, I think about a mistake I’ve made, feeling worse about it each time. When I think about everything I’ve done wrong, it can make me feel as if there’s no way anyone can ever love me, not even Jehovah.”

¹⁴ What causes some zealous servants of Jehovah, like Deborah, to become discouraged? There could be a number of reasons. Some may simply have a tendency to think badly of themselves and their circumstances in life. (Prov. 15:15) For others, negative feelings might be rooted in a physical dis-

¹². (a) What is one of Satan’s subtle tactics, and why is it so effective? (b) How was Paul affected by discouragement?

¹³, ¹⁴. (a) What causes some of God’s people to become discouraged? (b) Who wants to see our faith collapse, and why?

order that affects the emotions. Whatever the cause, we must remember who wants to exploit those feelings. Really, who wants us to get so discouraged that we give up? Who wants *you* to feel the same weighty condemnation that looms over *him*? (Rev. 20:10) It is Satan, of course. The truth is, whether by means of some frontal attack or through more subtle attacks, Satan has the same goal—to worry us, to weaken our zeal, and to cause us to quit. Make no mistake, God’s people are involved in spiritual warfare!

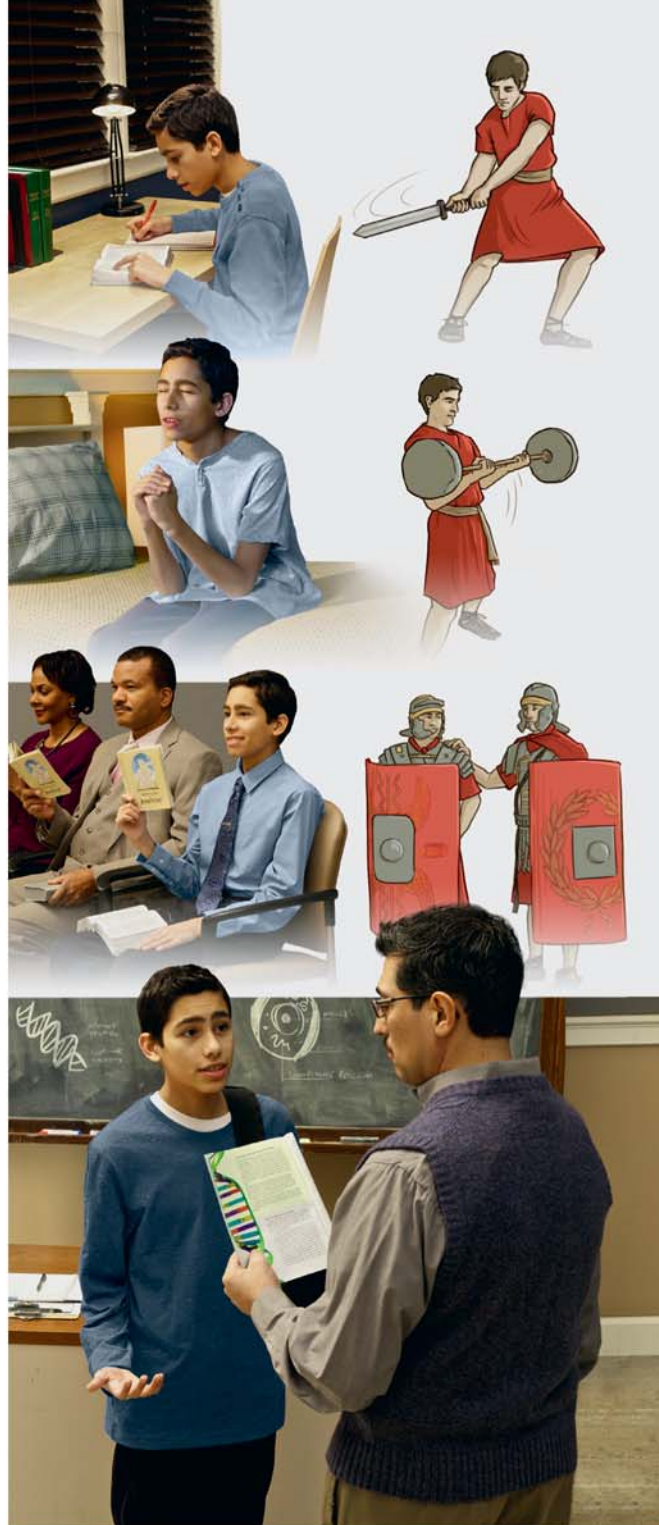
¹⁵ Be determined not to give up the fight. Keep focused on the reward. Paul wrote to Christians in Corinth: “We do not give up, but even if the man we are outside is wasting away, certainly the man we are inside is being renewed from day to day. For though the tribulation is momentary and light, it works out for us a glory that is of more and more surpassing greatness and is everlasting.”—2 Cor. 4:16, 17.

PREPARE NOW FOR TRIBULATION

¹⁶ As we have seen, Satan has a number of “crafty acts” at his disposal. (Eph. 6:11) Each of us needs to follow the admonition found at 1 Peter 5:9: “Take your stand against him, firm in the faith.” To do that, we need to prepare our mind and heart, to train ourselves *now* to do what is right. To illustrate: An army of soldiers will often go through a series of grueling drills long before there is even the threat of a battle. It is similar in Jehovah’s spiritual army. We do not know what our warfare may

15. How can we show that we are determined not to be overwhelmed by discouragement?

16. Why is it important to prepare *now* for tribulation?



Christians young and old train to defend their faith
(See paragraph 16)

involve in the future. Therefore, would it not be wise to do some significant training during a time of relative peace? Paul wrote to the Corinthians: “Keep testing whether you are in the faith; keep proving what you yourselves are.” —2 Cor. 13:5.

¹⁷ One way that we can heed Paul’s inspired advice is by making a serious self-examination. Ask yourself such questions as: ‘Do I persevere in prayer? When faced with peer pressure, do I obey God as ruler rather than men? Do I attend Christian meetings regularly? Am I bold in speaking about my beliefs? Do I really try to put up with my fellow believers’ shortcomings—just as they put up with mine? Am I submissive to those taking the lead in the local congregation and to those responsible for doing so in the worldwide congregation?’

¹⁸ Note that two of the questions are about boldly defending our beliefs and standing up to peer pressure. Many of our young ones have to do that while in school. They have learned not to be timid or embarrassed about their beliefs. Rather, they speak up with boldness. Helpful suggestions in this regard have been published in our magazines. For example, the July 2009 *Awake!* suggests that if a classmate asks: “Why don’t you believe in evolution?” you could simply reply: “Why *should* I believe in evolution? Scientists don’t even agree on it, and they’re supposed to be the experts!” Parents, be sure to have practice sessions with your children so that they are prepared to face such pressures from their peers at school.

17-19. (a) In what ways can we test ourselves? (b) How might young ones prepare to defend their faith while in school?

¹⁹ Granted, it is not always easy to speak up or to do other things that Jehovah asks of us. After a long day at work, we may have to push ourselves to go to the meeting. Getting up in the morning to engage in the ministry might call for overcoming the comfort of the mattress on our bed. But remember: When bigger trials come in the future, you will be in a better position to face them if you have developed a good spiritual routine in advance.

²⁰ What about subtle attacks? For instance, how can we counteract feelings of discouragement? One of the most powerful ways to do so is to meditate on the ransom. That is what the apostle Paul did. He knew how he felt at times—miserable. But he also knew that Christ died, not for perfect people, but for sinners. And Paul was one of those sinners. In fact, he wrote: “I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved *me* and handed himself over for *me*.” (Gal. 2:20) Yes, Paul accepted the ransom. He recognized that the ransom applied to him personally.

²¹ That same viewpoint—seeing the ransom as a *personal* gift from Jehovah—can help you tremendously. This does not mean that discouragement will instantly vanish. To an extent, some of us may have to battle this subtle attack until the new world. But remember: The prize will go to those who do not give up. We are ever closer to the glorious day when God’s Kingdom will establish peace and restore all faithful humans to perfection. Be determined to enter into that Kingdom—even if through many tribulations.

20, 21. (a) How can meditating on the ransom help us combat negative feelings? (b) What should be our determination regarding tribulations?



Parents Shepherd Your Children

"You should know well the appearance of your flock."

—PROV. 27:23.

SHEPHERDS in ancient Israel led a rigorous life. They not only had to endure heat and cold but also had to protect their flocks from predators, both animal and human. Shepherds inspected the sheep regularly and treated any that were sick or injured. They gave special attention to the lambs because they were delicate and lacked the strength of full-grown sheep.—Gen. 33:13.

² In some respects, Christian parents are like shepherds, displaying qualities that are valuable to literal shepherds. They have the responsibility to raise their children "in the discipline and admonition of Jehovah." (Eph. 6:4) Is that an easy assignment? No! Children are faced with an onslaught of satanic propaganda as well as with their own imperfect inclinations. (2 Tim. 2:22; 1 John 2:16) If you have children, how can you help them? Let us consider three things you can do to shepherd your children—know them, feed them, and guide them.

1, 2. (a) What were some of the responsibilities of an Israelite shepherd? (b) How are parents like shepherds?

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

What is involved in parents' being like shepherds?

What can help parents to feed their children spiritually?

What have many youths appreciated about family worship?

KNOW YOUR CHILDREN

³ A good shepherd carefully examines each sheep to make sure that it is healthy. In a figurative sense, you can do the same for your children. The Bible says: “Know well the appearance of your flock.” (Prov. 27:23) To do this, you need to consider your children’s actions and also their thoughts and feelings. How can you accomplish that? One of the best ways is to have frequent conversations with your children.

⁴ Some parents have noted that communication is more challenging when their children become teenagers—they may tend to withdraw and feel awkward about revealing their thoughts and feelings. If that is true of your children, what can you do? Rather than force your son or daughter into long, serious discussions, try to take advantage of casual opportunities. (Deut. 6:6, 7) You may need to put forth extra effort to do things together. You might go for a walk or a drive with them, play a game, or work together on some chore around the house. Such informal settings may help adolescents feel at ease and more inclined to open up.

⁵ What if your child still seems to be reluctant to talk? Then you might try a different approach. For example, rather than asking your daughter how *her* day went, you could comment on how *your* day was. She might well respond with observations about her day. Or to find out what your child’s opinion is on some topic, ask questions that shift the focus

away from her. You could ask her how one of her friends feels about the subject. Then you could ask her what advice she would give the friend.

⁶ Of course, if your children are to open up to you, they need to view you as available and approachable. When parents always appear to be too busy to talk, youths in the family are likely to keep their problems to themselves. And what about being approachable? More is involved than simply saying the words, “You can come to me anytime.” Your teens need to sense that you will neither discount their problems nor overreact to them. Many parents set a good example in this regard. Nineteen-year-old Kayla says: “I can talk to my dad about anything. He doesn’t interrupt, and he doesn’t judge; he just listens. Then he always gives me the best advice.”

⁷ Even when talking about delicate subjects—dating, for example—be careful not to put so much emphasis on warnings that you neglect to teach your children the *proper* way to deal with the matter. To illustrate: Suppose you went to a restaurant and discovered that the menu contained only warnings about food poisoning. You would likely leave that place and look for another restaurant. Your children may react similarly if they come to you for advice but all you have on the “menu” is a list of stern warnings. (**Read Colossians 3:21.**) Instead, aim for a balanced approach. A young sister named Emily observes: “When my parents talk to me about dating, they don’t make the subject seem

3. What does it mean for parents to ‘know the appearance’ of their children?

4, 5. (a) What practical suggestions may help children open up to their parents? (See opening image.) (b) What have you done to make it easier for your children to talk to you?

6. What does it mean to be available and approachable?

7. (a) What balanced approach might a parent take on such a topic as dating? (b) How might parents unwittingly irritate their children?



Listen so as to **KNOW** them
(See paragraphs 3-9)



FEED them well
(See paragraphs 10-12)



GUIDE them on their way
(See paragraphs 13-18)

negative. They emphasize the joy of getting to know someone and finding a marriage mate. This has helped me to feel comfortable talking to them about it. In fact, I want to involve them in any relationship I have rather than hide it from them.”

⁸ In line with what Kayla said, you can show that you are approachable by patiently listening to your children. (**Read James 1:19.**) “In the past,” admits a single mother named Katia, “I was very impatient with my daughter. I didn’t give her a chance to finish what she was saying. I was either too tired to listen or just didn’t want to be bothered. Now that I have changed my behavior, my daughter has changed hers. She has become much more cooperative.”

⁹ A father named Ronald had a similar experience with his teenage daughter. “When she told me that she was in love with a boy at school, at first I was very angry,” he says. “But when I reflected on how Jehovah is patient and reasonable with his servants, I thought that

it would be better for me to give my daughter a chance to express her feelings before I tried to correct her. I’m glad I did! For the first time, I understood my daughter’s feelings. When she finished, I found it easier to speak to her in a loving way. Surprisingly, she was very receptive to my counsel. She expressed a sincere desire to change her behavior.” Frequently talking with your children gives you greater access to their thoughts and feelings. That, in turn, will help you to have a greater influence on the decisions they make in life.*

FEED YOUR CHILDREN

¹⁰ A good shepherd knows that any one of his sheep could stray from the flock. Perhaps it is attracted by grass a short distance away and then to some a bit farther away, thus separating itself from the flock. In a similar manner, a child could drift away gradually on a spiritually dangerous path, being tempted by harmful association or degrading

* For more suggestions, see *The Watchtower*, August 1, 2008, pages 10-12.

8, 9. (a) What benefits come from listening without interrupting? (b) What success have you had in listening to your children?

10, 11. How can you help your children not to drift away?

entertainment. (Prov. 13:20) How can you help to prevent such a situation from developing?

¹¹ When teaching your children, act quickly if you recognize potential weak spots. Work at fortifying Christian qualities that your children have but that may need to be strengthened. (2 Pet. 1: 5-8) The regular period for family worship is an excellent time for you to do that. In outlining this arrangement, the October 2008 *Kingdom Ministry* stated: "Family heads are encouraged to shoulder their responsibility before Jehovah to ensure that a meaningful, regular program of family Bible study is followed." Are you taking full advantage of this loving provision to shepherd your children? Trust that your children deeply appreciate your putting priority on taking care of their spiritual need.—Matt. 5:3; Phil. 1:10.

¹² Consider what a teenager named Carissa said about how the Family Worship program benefited her family. "I like that we can all sit down together and talk. As we do this, we are bonding and creating good memories. My dad is consistent with our Family Worship program. It's encouraging to see that he takes it seriously—and that makes me want to take it seriously too. It also gives me more reason to respect him as my father and spiritual head." A young sister named Brittney commented: "Family worship has brought me closer to my parents. It shows me that they do want to hear about my problems and that they really care. It helps us to be a strong and unified family." Clearly, feeding your children spiritually—particular-

ly by means of family worship—is a primary way that you can be a good shepherd.*

GUIDE YOUR CHILDREN

¹³ A good shepherd uses a staff to direct and defend his flock. One of his primary goals is to guide his sheep to "a good pasture." (Ezek. 34:13, 14) As a parent, do you not have a similar goal spiritually? You want to guide your children to serve Jehovah. You want your children to feel as did the psalmist who wrote: "To do your will, O my God, is my delight, and your law is deep within me." (Ps. 40:8) Young ones who develop such appreciation will dedicate their life to Jehovah and get baptized. Understandably, they should take such a step when they are mature enough to make that decision and have a genuine desire to serve Jehovah.

¹⁴ What, though, if your children do not seem to be making spiritual progress—perhaps even questioning their faith? Strive to inculcate in them a love for Jehovah God and an appreciation for all that he has done. (Rev. 4:11) Then when they are in a position to do so, they will be able to make a personal decision about worshipping God.

¹⁵ In the meantime, though, what if your children begin to express doubts? How can you shepherd them and help them to see that serving Jehovah really is the best way of life and will contribute to their lasting happiness? Try

* For more information, see the article "Family Worship—Vital for Survival!" in *The Watchtower* of October 15, 2009, pages 29-31.

13. How can a child be motivated to serve Jehovah?

14, 15. (a) What should be the goal of Christian parents? (b) Why might an adolescent express doubts about true worship?

12. (a) How have young people benefited from regular family worship? (Include the box "They Appreciate It.") (b) How have you personally benefited from family worship?

to determine the underlying cause of their doubts. For example, does your son really disagree with Bible teachings, or does he just lack the confidence needed to defend them in front of his peers? Does your daughter really have an issue with the wisdom of God's standards, or does she just feel lonely or excluded by others?

¹⁶ Regardless of the cause, you can help your child to come to grips with the root of any spiritual doubts. How? One suggestion that many parents have found practical and effective is to draw out their son or daughter by asking: "How do you feel about being a Christian? Personally, what do you find are the benefits? What are the costs? Do you find that the costs are clearly outweighed by the many benefits, both those we enjoy now and those that are promised for the future? How?" Of course, you should present such questions in your own words and in a kind, interested way, not as if you were an interrogator. During the conversation, you might discuss Mark 10:29, 30. Some youths may want to write down their thoughts, using two columns—one for the costs and the other for the benefits. Seeing this assessment on paper may identify any problems and help them to work out solutions. If we need to study the *Bible Teach* and "*God's Love*" books with interested ones, how much more so with our own children! Are you doing that?

¹⁷ In time, your children will have to make a personal decision as to whom they will serve. Do not think that they will simply absorb your faith through some sort of osmosis. They must make the truth their own. (Prov. 3:1, 2) If it

16, 17. In what ways might parents help their children make the truth their own?

THEY APPRECIATE IT

Reflect on the honest comments of two young adults who have enjoyed family worship.

"Family Worship night helps you draw close to your family while drawing close to Jehovah. You learn a lot about who you are and where you are spiritually. It helps you to realize where you need to improve."

"Family worship gives us an opportunity to express ourselves in a relaxed setting. It's a time for us to put the stress of daily life on hold and focus on our spirituality. At one time, we did not have that, and now we do. It is a blessing!"

seems that a child has a problem doing that, why not go back to basics? Help him or her to reason on such questions as: "How do *I* know that God exists? What convinces *me* that Jehovah God really values me? Why do I believe that Jehovah's standards are truly for *my* good?" Show yourself to be a good shepherd by patiently guiding your child or children in proving that Jehovah's way is the best way of life.*—Rom. 12:2.

¹⁸ All true Christians want to be imitators of the Supreme Shepherd. (Eph. 5:1; 1 Pet. 2:25) Parents in particular need to know the appearance of their flock—their precious children—and do all they can to guide them toward the blessings Jehovah has for them. By all means, then, shepherd your children by continuing to raise them in the way of the truth!

* This aspect is further considered in *The Watchtower* of February 1, 2012, pages 18-21.

18. How can parents imitate Jehovah, the Supreme Shepherd?

Do David's observation at Psalm 37:25 and Jesus' statement at Matthew 6:33 mean that Jehovah would never allow a Christian to lack sufficient food?

■ David wrote that he had “not seen anyone righteous abandoned, nor his children looking for bread.” He thus made a general statement based on his own experience. He well knew God’s consistent care. (Ps. 37:25) David’s words, however, do not mean that no worshipper ever suffered want or ever will.

There were times when David himself experienced trying circumstances. One such time was when he was fleeing from Saul. David’s provisions were low, and he asked for bread for himself and those who were with him. (1 Sam. 21: 1-6) So in that instance, David was “looking for bread.” Yet, in that critical situation, he knew that Jehovah had not forsaken him. The fact is, we nowhere read that David had to beg in order to obtain the food he needed to survive.

At Matthew 6:33, we find Jesus’ assurance that God will fill the needs of faithful servants who put Kingdom interests first in life. “Keep on, then, seeking first the Kingdom and his righteousness,” Jesus said, “and all these other things [including food, drink, and clothing] will be added to you.” However, Jesus also indicated that because of persecution, his “brothers” might experience hunger. (Matt. 25:35, 37, 40) That happened to the apostle Paul. He at times experienced hunger and thirst.—2 Cor. 11:27.

Jehovah tells us that we will be persecuted in various ways. He may allow us to undergo deprivation as we help to answer the charges brought by the Devil. (Job 2:3-5) For example, some of our fellow Christians, such as those who were put in Nazi concentration camps, have found themselves in peril because of persecution. Depriving the Witnesses of adequate food was one diabolical



method used in an effort to break their integrity. Faithful Witnesses remained obedient to Jehovah; he did not forsake them. He allowed them to undergo this trial, just as he permits all Christians to face trials of various sorts. However, there is no doubt that Jehovah supports all who suffer for his name’s sake. (1 Cor. 10:13) We can bear in mind the words of Philippians 1:29: “You have been given the privilege in behalf of Christ, not only to put your faith in him but also to suffer in his behalf.”

Jehovah promises to be with his servants. Isaiah 54:17, for example, states: “No weapon formed against you will have any success.” This and similar promises guarantee the safety of God’s people as a whole. Individually, though, a Christian may undergo tests, even to the point of death.



The Last Enemy, Death, Brought to Nothing

“The last enemy, death, is to be brought to nothing.”

—1 COR. 15:26.

WHEN they were created, Adam and Eve had no enemies whatsoever. They were perfect humans who lived in a paradise. They enjoyed a close relationship with their Creator as his son and daughter. (Gen. 2:7-9; Luke 3:38) Their life prospects were indicated in the very commission God gave them. **(Read Genesis 1:28.)** To “fill the earth and subdue it” could be accomplished in a certain amount of time. But to continue to ‘have in subjection every living creature that is moving on the earth,’ Adam and Eve would need to live forever, Adam never having to abdicate his oversight by dying.

² Why, then, are conditions so different now? How did there come to be so many enemies of human happiness, the greatest enemy being death? What would God do to bring these enemies to nothing? The answers to these and related questions can be found in the Bible record. Let us examine some essential portions of it.

1, 2. What conditions did Adam and Eve originally experience, and what questions arise?

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

What loving but serious command did Jehovah give Adam?

How did death enter the human family?

When will ‘the last enemy, death, be brought to nothing’?

A LOVING WARNING

³ Although they had the prospect of living forever, Adam and Eve were not immortal. To keep living, they had to breathe, drink, sleep, and eat. More important, their lives depended on their relationship with their Life-Giver. (Deut. 8:3) Accepting God's guidance would be essential for their continuing to enjoy life. Jehovah made this clear to Adam even before Eve was created. How? "Jehovah God also gave this command to the man: 'From every tree of the garden you may eat to satisfaction. But as for the tree of the knowledge of good and bad, you must not eat from it, for in the day you eat from it you will certainly die.'"—Gen. 2:16, 17.

⁴ "The tree of the knowledge of good and bad" stood for God's right to determine ultimately what is good and what is bad. Adam, of course, already had a sense of good and bad; he was created in God's image and had a conscience. The tree would indicate to Adam and Eve that they would always need Jehovah's direction. For them to eat of the tree would be to claim moral independence, which would cause enormous damage to them and to the offspring they would produce. God's command with its penalty conveyed the gravity of such a course.

HOW DEATH ENTERED THE HUMAN FAMILY

⁵ After Eve was created, Adam informed her of God's command. She knew it well and was able to repeat

3, 4. (a) What command did God give Adam and Eve? (b) How important was obedience to that command?

5. How were Adam and Eve led into disobedience?

it almost verbatim. (Gen. 3:1-3) She did so to someone who presented himself as a serpent, a cautious creature. The one behind the serpent was Satan the Devil, a spirit son of God who had allowed himself to nurture a desire for independence and personal power. (Compare James 1:14, 15.) To achieve his evil ends, he accused God of lying. He assured Eve that reaching out for independence would result, not in death, but in becoming like God. (Gen. 3:4, 5) Eve believed him, asserted her independence by eating of the fruit, and persuaded Adam to join her. (Gen. 3:6, 17) The Devil had lied. (**Read 1 Timothy 2:14.**) Still, Adam "listened to [his] wife's voice." Though the serpent might have seemed to be a friend, Satan the Devil was in reality a cruel enemy who knew the fatal consequences of his suggestion to Eve.

⁶ For personal reasons, both Adam and Eve rebelled against the One who gave them life and everything else they had. Jehovah, of course, was aware of all that had happened. (1 Chron. 28:9; **read Proverbs 15:3.**) He had allowed the three individuals involved to show how they felt toward him. As a Father, surely Jehovah was deeply hurt. (Compare Genesis 6:6.) He then had to act as Judge, supporting and applying his own statement of the consequences.

⁷ God had told Adam: "In the day you eat from [the tree of the knowledge of good and bad] you will certainly die." Adam may well have understood this "day" to be a 24-hour day. After violating God's command, he could have expected Jehovah to act before the sun set.

6, 7. How did Jehovah handle the judgment of the wrongdoers?

"About the breezy part of the day," Jehovah approached the couple. (Gen. 3:8) He held court, as it were, establishing the facts from the responses that Adam and Eve gave. (Gen. 3:9-13) Then he pronounced sentence on the wrongdoers. (Gen. 3:14-19) Were he to execute them then and there, his purpose regarding Adam and Eve and their offspring would come to nothing. (Isa. 55:11) Although he confirmed the death penalty and the effects of sin began immediately, he allowed Adam and Eve to produce children who could benefit from other provisions that He would make. Thus, from God's standpoint, Adam and Eve died on the day they sinned, and they actually died within one "day" of 1,000 years.—2 Pet. 3:8.

⁸ Would the children of Adam and Eve be affected by what their parents had done? Yes. Romans 5:12 explains: "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because they had all sinned." The first to die was faithful Abel. (Gen. 4:8) Then Adam's other offspring grew old and died. Did they inherit sin as well as death? The apostle Paul answers: "Through the disobedience of the one man many were made sinners." (Rom. 5:19) Sin and death inherited from Adam thus became implacable enemies of mankind, inescapable for imperfect humans. We cannot exactly describe all that was involved in passing on their sad inheritance to Adam's immediate and more distant offspring, but passed on it was.

⁹ Fittingly, the Bible refers to inherited sin and death as "the shroud that is

enveloping all the peoples and the covering that is woven over all the nations." (Isa. 25:7) This suffocating covering, or shroud, this intricate webwork of condemnation, entraps all people. So the fact is that "in Adam all are dying." (1 Cor. 15:22) The question that naturally follows is, as expressed by Paul: "Who will rescue me from the body undergoing this death?" Could anyone? —Rom. 7:24.

ADAMIC SIN AND DEATH BROUGHT TO NOTHING

¹⁰ Yes, Jehovah could rescue Paul. Directly after mentioning "the shroud," Isaiah wrote: "He will swallow up death forever, and the Sovereign Lord Jehovah will wipe away the tears from all faces." (Isa. 25:8) Like a father who removes the cause of his children's suffering and dries their eyes, Jehovah takes great joy in bringing Adamic death to nothing! In this he has a collaborator. First Corinthians 15:22 reads: "Just as in Adam all are dying, so also in the Christ all will be made alive." Similarly, after Paul asked "Who will rescue me?" he continued: "Thanks to God through Jesus Christ our Lord!" (Rom. 7:25) Plainly, the love that moved Jehovah to create mankind did not grow cold with the rebellion of Adam and Eve. And the one who shared with Jehovah in the work of bringing the first couple into existence did not lose

* Speaking of the efforts of scientists to explain the cause of aging and death, *Insight on the Scriptures* comments: "They overlook the fact that the Creator himself decreed the death sentence for the first human pair, implementing that sentence in a way that man does not fully understand."—Vol. 2, p. 247.

10. (a) What are some Bible verses indicating that Jehovah would bring Adamic death to nothing? (b) What do these verses reveal about Jehovah and his Son?

8, 9. How were Adam's offspring affected by his sin? (See opening image.)

his special fondness for their offspring. (Prov. 8:30, 31) But how would this rescue be accomplished?

¹¹ Human imperfection and death involve both the sin Adam committed and Jehovah's righteous judgment. (Rom. 5:12, 16) We read: "Through one trespass the result to men of all sorts was condemnation." (Rom. 5:18) What could Jehovah do to remove his condemnatory judgment without invalidating his own standards? We find the answer in Jesus' words: "The Son of man came . . . to give his life as a ransom in exchange for many." (Matt. 20:28) The one who was Jehovah's first spirit son made clear that he, having been born on earth as a perfect human, would provide a ransom. How would this ransom satisfy justice? —1 Tim. 2:5, 6.

¹² As a perfect man, Jesus had prospects similar to those of Adam before he sinned. Jehovah's purpose was to fill the earth with Adam's perfect offspring. Hence, with deep love for his Father and for Adam's descendants, Jesus gave up his human life in sacrifice. Yes, Jesus gave up a perfect human life that corresponded to what Adam had lost. Thereafter, Jehovah restored his Son to life as a spirit. (1 Pet. 3:18) Jehovah could justly accept the sacrifice of that *one perfect man*, Jesus, as a ransom, or purchase price, to buy back Adam's family and give them the life prospects that Adam had forfeited. In a sense, Jesus took the place of Adam. Paul explains: "So it is written: 'The first man Adam became a living person.' The last Adam became a life-giving spirit."—1 Cor. 15:45.

11. What provision did Jehovah make to help mankind?

12. What was the corresponding ransom that satisfied justice?

¹³ The time will finally come for "the last Adam" to act as "a life-giving spirit" toward mankind in general. The majority of Adam's offspring will be brought back to life. Why? Because they have already lived and died. They will need a resurrection, a returning to life on earth. —John 5:28, 29.

¹⁴ How would mankind be freed from their struggle with inherited imperfection? Jehovah provided for a Kingdom government made up of "the last Adam" and chosen associates from among mankind. (**Read Revelation 5:9, 10.**) Those associated with Jesus in heaven will have experienced what it means to be imperfect. For a full thousand years, their joint rulership will provide assistance to those on earth, helping them to overcome the imperfection that they could not conquer on their own.—Rev. 20:6.

¹⁵ By the end of the thousand years of Kingdom rule, obedient mankind will have been liberated from all enemies introduced by Adam's disobedience. The Bible says: "Just as in Adam all are dying, so also in the Christ all will be made alive. But each one in his own proper order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who belong to the Christ [his joint rulers] during his presence. Next, the end, when he hands over the Kingdom to his God and Father, when he has brought to nothing all government and

13. How will "the last Adam" act to help the dead?

14. What provision from Jehovah would help reverse the imperfection that Adam passed on to his offspring?

15, 16. (a) What is "the last enemy, death," and when will it be brought to nothing? (b) According to 1 Corinthians 15:28, what will Jesus do in time?

Abel, the first to die, will
benefit from Jesus' ransom
(See paragraph 13)



all authority and power. For he must rule as king until God has put all enemies under his feet. And the last enemy, death, is to be brought to nothing." (1 Cor. 15:22-26) Yes, death inherited from Adam will at last be done away with. "The shroud" that entraps the entire human family will have been removed forever.—Isa. 25:7, 8.

¹⁶ The apostle Paul completes his inspired summary with these words: "When all things will have been subjected to him, then the Son himself will also subject himself to the One who subjected all things to him, that God may be all things to everyone." (1 Cor. 15:28) The purpose of the Son's rule will have been accomplished. He will then, with deep satisfaction, return his authority to Jehovah and present to him the perfected human family.

¹⁷ What about Satan, the one who initially caused all the misery that man-

kind has experienced? Revelation 20:7-15 provides the answer. In a final test of all perfect humans, Satan will be permitted to try to mislead them. The Devil and those who follow his lead will be eliminated everlastingly in "the second death." (Rev. 21:8) Because those within its grasp will be forever out of existence, this death will never be brought to nothing. "The second death" is, however, no enemy of humans who love and serve their Creator.

¹⁸ Perfected mankind will then stand before Jehovah as fully approved for everlasting life, with no enemies anywhere. The commission given to Adam will have been accomplished without him. The earth will abound with his offspring, who will delight to oversee it and enjoy its many life forms. May we never lose appreciation for the way in which Jehovah lovingly brings the last enemy, death, to nothing!

18. How will the commission God gave Adam be fulfilled?

17. How will Satan finally be dealt with?



Remember Those in the Full-Time Service

*“We continually remember your faithful work,
your loving labor.”—1 THESS. 1:3.*

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

What were some fields of service in the first century, and how were those serving in those fields helped financially?

What fields of full-time service in modern times do you appreciate?

How might you help someone who is in the full-time ministry?

THE apostle Paul remembered those who worked hard in behalf of the good news. Paul wrote: “We continually remember your faithful work, your loving labor, and your endurance because of your hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father.” (1 Thess. 1:3) Indeed, Jehovah himself remembers the loving labors of all who faithfully serve him, whether their circumstances in life permit them to do much or little.—Heb. 6:10.

² Many of our fellow servants—past and present—have made great sacrifices to serve Jehovah full-time. Let us take a look at how some served in the first century. We will also examine some forms of full-time service in modern times and see how we can remember the dear ones who have offered themselves to serve in special ways.

FIRST-CENTURY CHRISTIANS

³ Not long after his baptism, Jesus launched a work that was to reach global proportions. (Luke 3:21-23; 4:14, 15, 43)

1. How did Paul feel about those who diligently serve Jehovah?
2. What will we consider in this article?
- 3, 4. (a) How did some serve in the first century? (b) How were their physical needs met?

After his death, his apostles took the lead in the expansion of this preaching work. (Acts 5:42; 6:7) Some Christians, such as Philip, served as evangelizers and missionaries in Palestine. (Acts 8:5, 40; 21:8) Paul and others traveled farther afield. (Acts 13:2-4; 14:26; 2 Cor. 1:19) Some—for example, Silvanus (Silas), Mark, and Luke—also served as copyists or writers. (1 Pet. 5:12) Christian sisters worked along with these faithful brothers. (Acts 18:26; Rom. 16:1, 2) Their exciting experiences help to make the Christian Greek Scriptures a thrill to read and demonstrate that Jehovah remembers his servants favorably.

⁴ How were early full-time servants supported materially? At times, they received hospitality and other forms of aid from fellow Christians, but they did not demand such aid. (1 Cor. 9:11-15) Some individuals and congregations willingly rendered support. (**Read Acts 16:14, 15; Philippians 4:15-18.**) Paul and his traveling companions also worked part-time to help cover their own expenses.

FULL-TIME SERVANTS IN MODERN TIMES

⁵ Today, too, many exert themselves in various aspects of the full-time service. (See the box “Fields of Full-Time Service.”) How do they feel about their chosen career? That is a question you can ask them, and you will likely find yourself rewarded for doing so. Consider an example: A brother who has served as a regular pioneer, a special pioneer, a missionary, and a member of the Bethel family in a foreign land says: “I feel that entering the full-time service is one of the best choices I have ever

5. What feelings did one married couple express about their life in the full-time service?

made. At 18 years of age, I struggled with making a decision between offers for university training, a full-time secular career, and pioneering. Experience has shown me that Jehovah does not forget the sacrifices you make to serve him full-time. I have been able to use any talents or abilities that Jehovah has given me in ways that would never have been possible had I chosen a worldly career.” His wife comments: “Every assignment has helped me to grow. We have felt Jehovah’s protection and direction over and over again and in ways that would never have happened had we stayed in our own little comfort zone. I thank Jehovah every day for our life in full-time service.” Would you like to look at your life that way?

⁶ Of course, some have circumstances that do not allow them to share in the ministry full-time at this point. We can be confident that Jehovah values their whole-souled efforts as well. Think of those whom Paul named at **Philemon 1-3**, including all who were part of the congregation in Colossae. (**Read.**) Paul appreciated them, and so did Jehovah. In the same way, our heavenly Father appreciates your service. How, though, might you give support to those who are now serving full-time?

ASSISTING PIONEERS

⁷ Like first-century evangelizers, zealous pioneers are a rich source of encouragement to the congregations. Many endeavor to devote 70 hours each month to the ministry. How can you help them?

⁸ One pioneer sister named Shari

6. What confidence should all have as to Jehovah’s feelings?

7, 8. What does pioneer service involve, and how can others in the congregation help pioneers?

Fields of Full-Time Service



Regular pioneers usually dedicate 70 hours a month to the field ministry, serving in their home congregation or in localities where the need is greater.



Special pioneers normally devote 130 hours per month to the field ministry, often being assigned to areas with greater need.



Circuit overseers serve a number of congregations, taking the lead in the ministry and assisting the congregations in other ways.



Bethel family members serve in a branch office or a translation office to assist in providing literature or direction in lands under the oversight of a branch.



Missionaries are usually assigned to serve in lands foreign to them. Many missionaries dedicate 130 hours a month to the field ministry.



International servants and volunteers go to various lands to assist with the construction of branch offices, remote translation offices, Assembly Halls, and Kingdom Halls.



Kingdom Hall construction servants are trained to build Kingdom Halls and assist with other construction needs in their own land.

observed: “Pioneers look strong, being out in service every day. Still, they need encouragement.” (Rom. 1:11, 12) Another sister who was able to pioneer for some years said about the pioneers in her congregation: “They work hard and endlessly. When others offer to drive in service, invite them for a meal, give

them a little gas money or some other financial boost, they are grateful. It shows them that you really care.”

⁹ Would you like to help the pioneers in the ministry? A pioneer named Bobbi pleaded: “We need more support during the week.” A fellow pioneer in the same congregation added: “Getting companions in the afternoon is a real problem.” A sister now serving at Brooklyn Bethel fondly relates about her pioneer service: “One sister who had a car said, ‘Any time that you get stuck without a partner, you call me, and I will go in service with you.’ She absolutely saved my pioneering.” And Shari makes this perceptive point: “After service, single pioneers are often all alone. You might invite single brothers or sisters to your family worship from time to time. Including them in other activities also helps keep them strong.”

¹⁰ Looking back on her pioneering with other single sisters, one sister who has been in the full-time service for almost 50 years recalls: “Our elders visited the pioneers every couple of months. They asked about our health and secular work and checked to see if we had any concerns. They really meant it. They visited our apartment so that they could see whether we needed assistance.” This may call to your mind Paul’s appreciation for the services rendered to him by a family man in Ephesus.—2 Tim. 1:18.

¹¹ Some congregations are blessed to have special pioneers serving with them. Many of these brothers and sisters endeavor to devote 130 hours each month to the field ministry. Because of

9, 10. What have some done to help pioneers in their congregation?

11. What does serving as a special pioneer involve?

the time they spend in the ministry and in helping out in other ways, they spend little or no time doing secular work. The branch office provides them with a modest monthly allowance so that they can focus on the ministry.

¹² How might we assist special pioneers? An elder in a branch office who is in touch with many of them explains: "The elders need to speak to them, find out what their circumstances are, and then determine how they can assist them. Some Witnesses assume that special pioneers are wholly cared for because they get an allowance, but the local brothers can assist them in many ways." Like regular pioneers, special pioneers appreciate having companions in the field ministry. Can you help in that way?

BEING OF HELP TO TRAVELING OVERSEERS

¹³ Circuit overseers and their wives are often viewed as spiritually strong, resilient people. This is true of them, yet they too need encouragement, companionship in the ministry, and inclusion in a balanced amount of recreation. What if they get sick and are hospitalized, perhaps needing surgery or physical therapy? How refreshing they find it when local brothers and sisters assist with their needs and take a personal interest in them. We can imagine the concern that "the beloved physician" Luke, writer of the book of Acts, must have shown toward Paul and other traveling companions.—Col. 4:14; Acts 20:5–21:18.

12. How may elders and others assist special pioneers?

13, 14. (a) What should we remember about circuit overseers? (b) What do you think you could do to assist those who are serving in the traveling work?

¹⁴ Traveling overseers and their wives need and cherish close friends. One circuit overseer wrote: "My friends seem to know when I need encouragement. They ask discerning questions, and this helps me to talk about what concerns me. Just by being good listeners, they are a great help." Circuit overseers and their wives deeply appreciate the personal interest their brothers and sisters show.

GIVING SUPPORT TO BETHEL FAMILY MEMBERS

¹⁵ Worldwide, those serving at Bethel and Assembly Halls provide vital support to the Kingdom work in the lands supervised by their branch office. If your congregation or circuit includes Bethelites, how can you show that you remember them?

¹⁶ When they first arrive at Bethel, they may experience some homesickness, for they have left family and dear friends. How grateful they are when fellow Bethelites and their new congregation befriend them! (Mark 10:29, 30) Their normal work schedule allows them to attend congregation meetings and to have a share in the field service each week. Periodically, however, Bethelites may have extra duties. When congregations understand this and show that they appreciate the Bethelites and the work they are doing, everyone benefits.—**Read 1 Thessalonians 2:9.**

HELPING FULL-TIME SERVANTS IN FOREIGN FIELDS

¹⁷ Those who accept an assignment to serve in another country may encounter

15, 16. What services do those in the Bethel family and at Assembly Halls provide, and how can we be of support?

17, 18. What fields of service include foreign assignments?

foods, languages, customs, and conditions that are very different from what they were used to. Why do they choose to accept the challenge of such changes?

¹⁸ Some are missionaries, who primarily serve in the field ministry where many can benefit from their specialized training. The branch office provides missionaries with modest lodging and an allowance to cover their basic needs. Others who serve in foreign lands are assigned to serve at a branch office or to assist with the construction of branch facilities, remote translation offices, Assembly Halls, or Kingdom Halls. Meals, modest housing, and other services are provided. Like Bethel family members, they regularly attend meetings and share in the ministry locally, so they are a blessing in many ways.

¹⁹ How can you keep such full-time servants in mind? Remember that—especially at first—they may not be used to some local foods. You can have this in mind when you invite them for a meal; you could first ask what they would feel comfortable eating or would like to try. Be patient as they learn the local language and customs. It may take some time before they understand everything you say, but you can kindly help them with their pronunciation. They *want* to learn!

²⁰ Full-time servants age, and so do

19. What should we bear in mind about those serving in foreign fields?

20. In what fine way can we remember full-time servants and their parents?

their parents. When parents are Witnesses, likely their fondest wish is for their children to stay in their assignments. (3 John 4) Of course, if their parents need care, full-time servants will do all they can and will come to help them as often as possible. Still, those back home may help those in the full-time ministry by being ready to provide care if aging parents need assistance. Bear in mind that full-time servants have significant responsibilities in the most important work the world has ever known. (Matt. 28:19, 20) Could you or your congregation lend a hand if the parents of full-time servants need help?

²¹ Those who enter the full-time ministry do so, not to gain financially, but to give—to Jehovah and to others. They deeply appreciate any help you can render. A sister serving in a foreign land echoes the feelings of many: “Even a note expressing appreciation shows that others are thinking of you and that they are happy about what you are doing.”

²² Serving Jehovah full-time is truly the most rewarding way of life. It is challenging, instructive, and fulfilling. And it is fine preparation for the long-lasting joyful service that awaits all faithful servants of Jehovah under God’s Kingdom. May all of us ‘continually remember the faithful work and loving labor’ of those in the full-time service.—1 Thess. 1:3.

21. How do those who serve full-time feel about assistance and encouragement that others give?

22. How do you feel about full-time service?

