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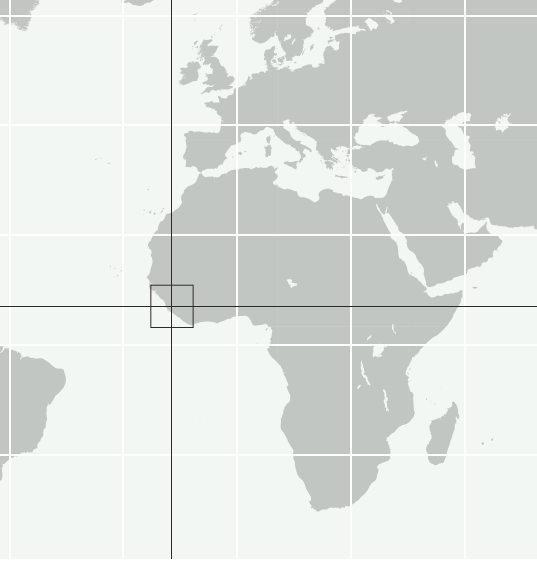
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

SIMPLIFIED EDITION



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
JULY 9–AUGUST 5, 2018

LARGE
PRINT
EDITION



COVER IMAGE:

SIERRA LEONE

During the rainy season in Freetown, the capital city, two pioneers offer a tract to a woman passing by

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SONGS:
68, 72

CAN YOU EXPLAIN?

Why may we feel discouraged when we preach in an area where most people do not listen?

Why can all of us be successful in our ministry?

What will help us to keep bearing fruit with endurance?

Jehovah Loves Those Who “Bear Fruit With Endurance”

“As for that on the fine soil, these are the ones who . . . bear fruit with endurance.”—LUKE 8:15.

SERGIO AND OLINDA are a pioneer couple in the United States. They are both over 80 years old.

1, 2. (a) Why are we encouraged by brothers and sisters who keep preaching in territories where many do not listen? (See opening picture.) (b) What did Jesus say about preaching in his “home territory”? (See footnote.)

Lately, their sore legs make it difficult for them to walk. But, as they have done for many years, they walk to a busy square in their town at seven o'clock in the morning. They take their place near a bus stop and offer our publications to people walking by. Most people ignore them, but Sergio and Olinda stay in their spot and smile at those who look at them. At noon, they slowly walk home. The next morning, at seven o'clock, they go back to the bus stop. They keep preaching six mornings a week, throughout the year.

² Like Sergio and Olinda, there are many faithful brothers and sisters who have been preaching in their home territory for many years, even though most people do not listen. Maybe you preach in a territory like that too. If so, we commend you, because you endure and continue to preach even though it is difficult.* (See footnote.) Your example encourages many brothers and sisters, even those with years of experience. Notice what some circuit overseers have said: “When I work with such faithful brothers and sisters in the ministry, I feel energized by their example.” “Their faithfulness encourages me to persevere and to be courageous in my own ministry.” “Their example warms my heart.”

* Even Jesus said that preaching in his “home territory” was difficult. This is recorded in all four accounts about his ministry.—Matthew 13:57; Mark 6:4; Luke 4:24; John 4:44.

³ In this article we will answer three questions: Why may we sometimes feel discouraged? What does it mean to bear fruit? What will help us to keep bearing fruit with endurance? Knowing the answers to these questions will encourage us to continue doing the preaching work that Jesus gave us to do.

WHY MAY WE FEEL DISCOURAGED?

⁴ Have you ever felt discouraged because people in your territory do not want to listen to the message about the Kingdom? If so, you will understand how the apostle Paul felt. He spent about 30 years preaching, and he helped many people to become Christians. (Acts 14:21; 2 Corinthians 3:2, 3) Still, he was not able to help many Jews to become Christians. Instead, most of them refused to listen to Paul, and some even persecuted him. (Acts 14:19; 17:1, 4, 5, 13) How did that negative reaction make Paul feel? He said: “I have great grief and unceasing pain in my heart.” (Romans 9:1-3) Why did he feel that way? Because he really loved preaching and he loved people. Paul truly cared about the Jews and felt sad when they rejected God’s mercy.

3. What three questions will we consider, and why?

4. (a) How did the negative reaction from most Jews make Paul feel? (b) Why did Paul feel that way?

⁵ Like Paul, we preach to people because we care about them and want to help them. (Matthew 22:39; 1 Corinthians 11:1) We know from our own experience that serving Jehovah is the best way to live. And we want to help others to see how much better their life could be too! That is why we keep encouraging them to learn the truth about Jehovah and his purpose for mankind. It is as though we are bringing them a beautiful gift and begging them: ‘Please accept this.’ So when they reject that gift, it is normal to feel ‘pain in our heart,’ as Paul did. We feel this pain, not because we lack faith, but because we really love people. So although we may sometimes feel discouraged, we continue to preach. We may agree with Elena, a pioneer for over 25 years, who says: “I find the preaching work difficult. Still, there is no other work I would rather do.”

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BEAR FRUIT?

⁶ Why can we be sure that we can be successful in our ministry no matter where we preach? To answer that important question, let us discuss two of Jesus’ illustrations in which he talks about the need to “bear fruit.” (Matthew 13:23) The first illustration is about a vine.

5. (a) What motivates us to preach? (b) Why is it normal to feel discouraged sometimes?

6. What question will we answer now?

⁷ Read John 15:1-5, 8. In this illustration, Jesus explained that Jehovah is “the cultivator,” Jesus himself is “the vine,” and his disciples are “the branches.”* (See footnote.) Then Jesus told his apostles: “My Father is glorified in this, that you keep bearing much fruit and prove yourselves my disciples.” So, what does it mean to bear fruit? In this illustration, Jesus did not say specifically what that fruit is, but he did give a clue that helps us to find the answer to that question.

⁸ Jesus said about his Father: “He takes away every branch in me not bearing fruit.” In other words, we can be Jehovah’s servants **only if we bear fruit.** (Matthew 13:23; 21:43) So in this illustration, bearing fruit cannot mean making new disciples. (Matthew 28:19) If it did, faithful Witnesses who have not helped someone to become a disciple of Jesus would be like the branches that do not bear fruit. But this cannot be true! Why? Because we cannot force peo-

* Although the branches in this illustration refer to Christians who will go to heaven, the illustration has lessons for all of God’s servants.

7. (a) In Jesus’ illustration, who are represented by “the cultivator,” “the vine,” and “the branches”? **(b)** What question do we still need to answer?

8. (a) In Jesus’ illustration, why can “bearing fruit” not mean making new disciples? **(b)** What is true of everything Jehovah asks us to do?

ple to become disciples. Jehovah is loving. He would never ask us to do something we are not able to do. He only asks of us what we can do.—Deuteronomy 30:11-14.

⁹ What, then, does it mean to bear fruit? It must be something that all of us can do. What work has Jehovah given to all of his servants? The preaching of the good news of God’s Kingdom.* (See footnote.) (Matthew 24:14) Jesus’ illustration of the sower makes this clear. Let us discuss that illustration next.

¹⁰ Read Luke 8:5-8, 11-15. In the illustration of the sower, Jesus explained that the seed is “the word of God,” or the message about God’s Kingdom. The soil is a person’s heart. The seed that fell on the fine soil grew roots, sprouted, and became a plant. Then, the plant “produced 100 times more fruit.” If that plant was a wheat stalk, what kind of fruit would it produce? Little wheat stalks? No, it would produce seeds, which in time grow and become wheat stalks. In this

* The expression “bearing fruit” can also refer to producing “the fruitage of the spirit.” However, this article and the next one focus on producing “the fruit of our lips,” or preaching about God’s Kingdom.—Galatians 5:22, 23; Hebrews 13:15.

9. (a) How do we bear fruit? (b) What illustration will we discuss next?

10. (a) What are the seed and the soil in Jesus’ illustration? (b) What does a wheat stalk produce?

illustration, one seed produced 100 seeds. What does this teach us about our ministry?

¹¹ When our Christian parents or other Witnesses first taught us about God’s Kingdom, it was as if they planted a seed in fine soil. They were very happy when they saw that we accepted the message. That seed kept growing and growing until it was ready to bear fruit. And just as the wheat stalk mentioned earlier does not produce new stalks, but new seed, we do not produce new disciples, but new seed.* (See footnote.) How do we do that? Every time we tell others about God’s Kingdom, it is as if we are multiplying and scattering the seed that was planted in our heart. (Luke 6:45; 8:1) So as long as we keep preaching the message about God’s Kingdom, we “bear fruit with endurance.”

¹² What do we learn from Jesus’ illustrations of the vine and of the sower? We learn that “bearing fruit” does not depend on whether people listen to the message. It depends on whether we keep on preaching. Paul said something similar when he explained: “Each

* At other times, Jesus used the examples of sowing and reaping to illustrate the work of making disciples.—Matthew 9:37; John 4:35-38.

11. (a) What does the illustration of the sower teach us about our ministry? (b) How do we produce new seed?

12. (a) What do we learn from Jesus’ illustrations of the vine and of the sower? (b) How does that lesson make you feel?



How do we “bear fruit with endurance”?
(See paragraph 11)

person will receive his own reward according to his own work.” (1 Corinthians 3:8) Jehovah will reward us for our work, not for the results of our work. Matilda, who has been pioneering for 20 years, says, “It gives me joy to know that Jehovah rewards our efforts.”

HOW CAN WE ENDURE IN BEARING FRUIT?

¹³ What will help us to “bear fruit with endurance”? Let us look at Paul’s example more closely. We know

13, 14. According to Romans 10:1, 2, what were the reasons why Paul never stopped preaching?

that Paul felt discouraged because the Jews rejected the message about the Kingdom. However, Paul never stopped preaching to them. He explained how he felt about those Jews when he said: “The goodwill of my heart and my supplication to God for them are indeed for their salvation. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to accurate knowledge.” (Romans 10:1, 2) So why did Paul keep preaching?

¹⁴ First, Paul said that he was moved to preach to the Jews because of ‘the goodwill of his heart.’ He really wanted them to be saved. (Romans 11:13, 14) Second, he mentioned his “supplication to God for them.” Paul begged Jehovah to help individual Jews to accept the message about the Kingdom. Third, Paul said: “They have a zeal for God.” Paul saw the good in people and their potential to serve Jehovah. He knew that those zealous Jews could become zealous disciples of Christ, just like him.

¹⁵ How can we imitate Paul? First, we must really want to find those who are “rightly disposed for everlasting life.” Second, we beg Jehovah to help sincere people to listen when we preach to them. (Acts 13:48; 16:14) That is what Silvana, who has been pioneering for nearly 30 years, has done. She says, “Before I go

15. How can we imitate Paul? Give examples.

to a house in my territory, I pray to Jehovah, asking him to give me a positive attitude.” We also pray that the angels will help us to find people who are willing to listen. (Matthew 10:11-13; Revelation 14:6) Robert, who has been pioneering for over 30 years, says, “To work along with angels who know what is going on in the householders’ lives is exciting.” Third, we try to see the good in people and their potential to serve Jehovah. Carl, an elder who was baptized over 50 years ago, says, “I look for any small sign that may reveal a person’s sincerity, perhaps a smile, a kind look, or an honest question.” If we do these things, we can “bear fruit with endurance,” as Paul did.

“DO NOT LET YOUR HAND REST”

¹⁶ We should never forget how much our preaching can affect people, even if it seems that no one listens. (Read Ecclesiastes 11:6.) People are watching us. They notice that we are dressed neatly and that we are polite and friendly. This may impress them, and in time, even those who used to think negatively about us may start to think more positively about us. Sergio and Olinda found this to be true.

¹⁷ Sergio says: “Because of illness, we did not go to the square for a while. When we returned, passersby

16, 17. (a) What lesson can we learn from Ecclesiastes 11:6?
(b) How can our preaching affect those who are watching us?

asked, ‘What happened? We missed you.’” Olinda adds with a smile: “The bus drivers waved to us and some shouted from their driver’s seat, ‘Good job!’ They even asked for our magazines.” Sergio and Olinda were very surprised when a man came to their witnessing cart, gave them a bouquet of flowers, and thanked them for the work they do.

¹⁸ As long as you “do not let your hand rest” from telling others about God’s Kingdom, you have an important part in giving “a witness to all the nations.” (Matthew 24:14) Most of all, you can have great joy because you know that you are making Jehovah happy. He loves all those who “bear fruit with endurance”!

18. Why are you determined to “bear fruit with endurance”?

SOME EXPRESSIONS EXPLAINED

In Jesus’ illustrations of the vine and of the sower, **bearing fruit** means preaching the good news. It does not mean making new disciples. We “bear fruit with endurance” when we keep preaching whether people listen or not



Why We “Keep Bearing Much Fruit”

“My Father is glorified in this, that you keep bearing much fruit and prove yourselves my disciples.”

—JOHN 15:8.

THE night before he died, Jesus had a long talk with his apostles. He assured them that he loved them very much. He also told

1, 2. (a) What did Jesus discuss with his disciples the night before he died? (See opening picture.) (b) Why is it important for us to remember why we preach? (c) What will we discuss?

SONGS:
53, 60

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

What reasons does the Bible give us to keep preaching?

Why is it important to remember why we preach?

What helps us to endure in our preaching work?

them the illustration of the vine, which we discussed in the previous article. Jesus wanted to encourage his disciples to “keep bearing much fruit,” that is, to endure in preaching the message about the Kingdom. —John 15:8.

² However, Jesus told his disciples not only what they needed to do but also why they needed to do it. He gave them reasons why they needed to continue to preach. It is important for us to remember why we too need to continue to preach. Thinking about this will motivate us to endure while we give “a witness to all the nations.” (Matthew 24:13, 14) In this article, we will discuss four Scriptural reasons why we preach. Also, we will discuss four gifts from Jehovah that help us to keep bearing fruit.

WE GLORIFY JEHOVAH

³ The most important reason why we preach is that we want to glorify Jehovah and sanctify his name. (Read John 15:1, 8.) When Jesus told the illustration of the vine, he compared Jehovah to a cultivator, or gardener, who grows grapes. Jesus said that he himself was the vine and his followers were the branches. (John 15:5) So in the illustration, the grapes rep-

3. (a) According to John 15:8, what is the most important reason why we preach? (b) What do the grapes in Jesus’ illustration represent, and why is this comparison appropriate?

resent the fruit that Jesus' disciples produce, or the preaching work that they do. Jesus told his apostles: "My Father is glorified in this, that you keep bearing much fruit." When vines produce good grapes, it brings honor to the cultivator. In a similar way, when we do our best to preach the message about the Kingdom, we bring honor, or glory, to Jehovah.—Matthew 25:20-23.

⁴ God's name is already holy. There is nothing we can do to make it more holy. So how do we sanctify God's name when we preach? Notice what the prophet Isaiah said: "Jehovah of armies—he is the One you should regard as holy." (Isaiah 8:13) We sanctify God's name, Jehovah, when we view it as the greatest of all names and when we help others to understand that it is holy. (Matthew 6:9; footnote) For example, when we teach people the truth about Jehovah's wonderful qualities and his purpose for humans to live forever in Paradise, we help them to see that all the bad things Satan has said about Jehovah are lies. (Genesis 3:1-5) We also sanctify God's name when we help people to know that Jehovah deserves "to receive the glory and the honor and the power." (Revelation 4:11) Rune, who has been pioneering for 16 years, says: "Knowing that I have been given the

4. (a) How do we sanctify God's name? (b) How do you feel about having the privilege to sanctify God's name?

opportunity to be a witness for the Creator of the universe makes me grateful. It gives me the desire to keep on preaching.”

WE LOVE JEHOVAH AND HIS SON

⁵ Read John 15:9, 10. A second reason why we preach the message about the Kingdom is that we love Jehovah and Jesus. (Mark 12:30; John 14:15) Jesus told his disciples that they should ‘remain in his love.’ Why did Jesus say this? Because he knew that his followers would need endurance to live as true Christians. In fact, at John 15:4-10, we see that Jesus used the word “remain” many times to help his disciples understand that they would need to endure.

⁶ How do we show that we want to remain in Christ’s love and have his approval? By being obedient to him. Jesus is only asking us to do what he did himself. He said: “I have observed the commandments of the Father and remain in his love.” Jesus sets the example for us.—John 13:15.

⁷ Jesus made it clear that obedience is connected to love when he said: “Whoever has my command-

5. (a) What reason for preaching is mentioned at John 15:9, 10?
(b) How did Jesus help his disciples understand that they would need to endure?

6. How do we show that we want to remain in Christ’s love?

7. How is obedience connected to love?



We preach because we love Jehovah, Jesus, and people
(See paragraphs 5, 10)

ments and observes them is the one who loves me.” (John 14:21) Jesus’ commands come from his Father, so when we obey Jesus’ command to preach, we also show that we love Jehovah. (Matthew 17:5; John 8:28) And when we show Jehovah and Jesus that we love them, they keep us in their love.

WE WARN PEOPLE

⁸ A third reason why we preach is that we want to warn others about Jehovah’s coming day. In the Bible, Noah is described as “a preacher.” (Read 2 Peter 2:5.) Before the Flood came, Noah’s message to the people must have included a warning about the

8, 9. (a) What is another reason why we preach? (b) How do Jehovah’s words found at Ezekiel 3:18, 19 and 18:23 motivate us to keep on preaching?

coming destruction. Why do we say that? Because Jesus said: “As they were in those days before the Flood, eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and they took no note until the Flood came and swept them all away, so the presence of the Son of man will be.” (Matthew 24:38, 39) Although most people ignored Noah, he faithfully preached the warning message Jehovah had given him.

⁹ Today, we preach the message about the Kingdom to give people an opportunity to learn what God will do for mankind in the future. Like Jehovah, we really want people to pay attention to the message and “keep living.” (Ezekiel 18:23) When we preach from house to house and in public places, we warn as many people as possible that God’s Kingdom will come and destroy this wicked world.—Ezekiel 3:18, 19; Daniel 2:44; Revelation 14:6, 7.

WE LOVE PEOPLE

¹⁰ A fourth reason why we continue preaching is that we love people. (Matthew 22:39) This love helps us to keep preaching because we know that people may change their attitude when their circumstances change. For example, opposers threw Paul and Silas

10. (a) What reason for preaching is mentioned at Matthew 22:39?
(b) How did Paul and Silas help a prison guard in Philippi?

into prison in the city of Philippi. But in the middle of the night, there was an earthquake that shook the prison and opened its doors. The prison guard became so afraid that the prisoners had escaped that he wanted to kill himself. But Paul stopped him and shouted: “Do not hurt yourself!” The guard asked: “What must I do to get saved?” Paul and Silas told him: “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will get saved.”—Acts 16:25-34.

¹¹ What does the account about the prison guard teach us about the preaching work? Notice that it was only **after** the earthquake that the prison guard changed his attitude and asked for help. In a similar way, some people who do not want to listen to the Bible’s message may change their attitude and look for help when something tragic has happened in their life. For example, some may be in shock because they lost their job or got divorced. Others may be very sad because they found out that they have a serious sickness or because someone close to them died. When such things happen, people may begin to ask questions about life, questions they did not think about before. They may even wonder, ‘What must I do to get saved?’ They may want to listen to our message of hope for the first time in their life.

11, 12. (a) What does the account about the prison guard teach us about our ministry? (b) Why do we want to continue to preach?

¹² So if we faithfully continue to preach, we will be available when people are ready to accept the comfort we bring. (Isaiah 61:1) Charlotte, who has been pioneering for 38 years, says: “People today are lost. They need a chance to hear the good news.” Ejvor, who has been pioneering for 34 years, says: “Today, more than ever, many people feel emotionally low. I really want to help them. That motivates me to preach.” Clearly, love for people is an excellent reason to continue preaching!

GIFTS THAT HELP US TO ENDURE

¹³ During the night before he died, Jesus also mentioned gifts that would help his apostles to keep bearing fruit. What are these gifts, and how can they help us today?

¹⁴ **The gift of joy.** Is it a burden for us to preach? Not at all. After Jesus told the illustration about the vine, he said that when we preach we will have his joy. (Read John 15:11.) How is that possible? Remember, in Jesus’ illustration, he compared himself to a vine and his disciples to branches. The branches get the water and nutrients they need only if they stay attached to the vine. In a similar way, we can be joyful

13, 14. (a) What gift is mentioned at John 15:11? (b) How can we have the joy that Jesus has? (c) How does joy help us in our ministry?

as Jesus was only if we stay united with him and follow his steps closely. Then we will have the joy that he has, the joy that comes from doing God’s will. (John 4:34; 17:13; 1 Peter 2:21) Hanne, who has been pioneering for over 40 years, says, “The joy I always feel after I have been in the ministry stimulates me to continue in Jehovah’s service.” Joy will give us the strength to keep preaching even when most people do not listen.—Matthew 5:10-12.

15 The gift of peace. (Read John 14:27.) Earlier during the evening before Jesus died, he told his apostles: “I give you my peace.” How can Jesus’ peace help us to keep preaching? When we keep preaching, we feel peace because we know that we are making Jehovah and Jesus happy. (Psalm 149:4; Romans 5:3, 4; Colossians 3:15) Ulf, who has been pioneering for 45 years, says, “The preaching work makes me tired, but it brings true satisfaction and real meaning to my life.” We are thankful that we have found peace that lasts!

16 The gift of friendship. After Jesus told his apostles that he wanted them to be joyful, he explained

15. (a) What gift is mentioned at John 14:27? (b) How does peace help us to keep bearing fruit?

16. (a) What gift is mentioned at John 15:15? (b) How could the apostles remain Jesus’ friends?

why it was important for them to show unselfish love. (John 15:11-13) Then he said: “I have called you friends.” What a precious gift it is to be Jesus’ friend! But how could the apostles remain his friends? Jesus explained: “Go and keep bearing fruit.” (Read John 15:14-16.) In other words, keep preaching. About two years before that, Jesus told his apostles: “As you go, preach, saying: ‘The Kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.’” (Matthew 10:7) That is why, on the night before his death, Jesus encouraged his disciples to endure in the preaching work. (Matthew 24:13; Mark 3:14) Of course, Jesus knew that carrying out his command would not be easy. But they could do it and remain his friends. How? With the help of another gift.

¹⁷ **The gift of answers to our prayers.** Jesus said: “Ask whatever you wish and it will take place for you.” (John 15:7, 16) Jesus’ promise must have really strengthened the apostles!* (See footnote.) The apostles did not fully understand that Jesus would soon die. But his death would not mean that they

* During his talk with the apostles, Jesus reminded them several times that Jehovah would answer their prayers.—John 14:13; 15:7, 16; 16:23.

17, 18. (a) What gift is mentioned at John 15:7? (b) How did that gift help Jesus’ disciples? (c) What gifts help us today?



We can be sure that Jehovah answers our prayers for help
(See paragraph 18)

would be without help. Jehovah was ready to answer their prayers and help them in their preaching work. And he did just that. Soon after Jesus died, the apostles begged Jehovah to give them courage, and Jehovah answered their prayers.—Acts 4:29, 31.

¹⁸ The same is true today. When we endure in the preaching work, we remain Jesus' friends. And we can be sure that Jehovah is ready to answer our prayers for help when we find it difficult to preach. (Philippians 4:13) We are very grateful that Jehovah answers our prayers and that we have Jesus as our friend. These gifts from Jehovah strengthen us to keep on bearing fruit.—James 1:17.

¹⁹ In this article, we have learned about four reasons why we keep preaching: to glorify Jehovah and sanctify his name, to show our love for Jehovah and Jesus, to warn people, and to show that we love people. We have also learned about four gifts: joy, peace, friendship, and answers to our prayers. These gifts strengthen us to finish the work God has given us to do. Jehovah is very happy when he sees us working hard to “keep bearing much fruit”!

19. (a) Why do we keep preaching? (b) What helps us to finish the work God has given us?

SOME EXPRESSIONS EXPLAINED

We **sanctify God’s name** when we view the name Jehovah as pure, holy, and more important than any other name and when we help others to do the same. We also sanctify it when we help others to see that all the bad things that have been said about Jehovah are lies



Know Your Enemy

“We are not ignorant of [Satan’s] schemes.”—2 CORINTHIANS 2:11, footnote.

ADAM knew that serpents cannot talk. So when he learned that a serpent had spoken to Eve, perhaps Adam realized that it was actually a spirit who spoke. (Genesis 3:1-6) Adam and Eve did not know who this spirit was. However, Adam chose to join this stranger and rebel against his

1. After Adam and Eve sinned, what did Jehovah reveal about our enemy?

SONGS:
150, 32

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

How much influence does Satan have?

How does Satan try to influence others?

What did you learn about our enemy?

loving heavenly Father. (1 Timothy 2:14) Right away, Jehovah began to reveal more about this wicked enemy and promised that he would eventually be destroyed. But Jehovah warned that in the meantime, the spirit who had spoken through the snake would oppose all those who love God.—Genesis 3:15.

² Jehovah has never told us the personal name of the angel who rebelled against him.* (See footnote.) It was not until 2,500 years after the rebellion in Eden that Jehovah revealed who the rebel was. (Job 1:6) He is known by the title “Satan,” which means “Resister.” Only three books in the Hebrew Scriptures, 1 Chronicles, Job, and Zechariah, even mention Satan. Why was so little revealed about this enemy before the Messiah arrived?

³ Jehovah did not include in the Hebrew Scriptures many details about Satan and what he does.

* The Bible reveals the personal names of some angels. (Judges 13:18; Daniel 8:16; Luke 1:19; Revelation 12:7) It also says that Jehovah gave a name to each star. (Psalm 147:4) So it makes sense to think that Jehovah also gave names to all the angels, including the one who later became Satan.

2, 3. What may be the reason why Jehovah revealed little about Satan before the Messiah arrived?

After all, the purpose of the Hebrew Scriptures was to help people to recognize and follow the Messiah. (Luke 24:44; Galatians 3:24) When the Messiah arrived, Jehovah used him and his disciples to reveal much of what we know about Satan and the angels who joined him.* (See footnote.) This is appropriate, because Jehovah will use Jesus and the anointed to destroy Satan and his followers.—Romans 16:20; Revelation 17:14; 20:10.

⁴ The apostle Peter describes Satan the Devil as “a roaring lion,” and John calls him a “serpent” and a “dragon.” (1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:9) But we should not be terrified of the Devil. His power is limited. (Read James 4:7.) We have the protection of Jehovah, Jesus, and the faithful angels. With their help, we can resist our enemy. Still, we need to know the answers to three important questions: How much influence does Satan have? How does he try to influence people? And what are the things he cannot do? Let us answer these questions and see what lessons we can learn.

* The title “Satan” is found only 18 times in the Hebrew Scriptures but more than 30 times in the Christian Greek Scriptures.

4. Why should we not be terrified of the Devil?

HOW MUCH INFLUENCE DOES SATAN HAVE?

⁵ Many angels joined Satan in rebelling against God. Before the Flood, Satan tempted at least some of them into having sexual relations with women. The Bible describes this in a symbolic way when it says that the dragon who fell from heaven dragged a third of the stars with him. (Genesis 6:1-4; Jude 6; Revelation 12:3, 4) When those angels abandoned God's family, they put themselves under Satan's control. We should not think that these rebel angels are a disorganized group. In the invisible spirit world, Satan has set up his own government in imitation of God's Kingdom. He has made himself king, and he has organized the demons, given them power, and made them world rulers.—Ephesians 6:12.

⁶ Satan uses his organization to control all human governments. We can be sure of this, because he showed Jesus “all the kingdoms of the inhabited earth” and said: “I will give you all this authority and their glory, because it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish.” (Luke 4:5, 6) Still, many governments do good things for their

5, 6. Why are human governments not able to bring the changes mankind needs most?

citizens, and some rulers sincerely want to help people. But no human ruler can bring the changes we need most.—Psalm 146:3, 4; Revelation 12:12.

⁷ Satan and the demons also use false religion and the business world to mislead “the entire inhabited earth,” or all of mankind. (Revelation 12:9) Satan uses false religion to spread lies about Jehovah, and he has even tried to hide God’s name. (Jeremiah 23:26, 27) As a result, some sincere people who think that they are worshipping God are actually worshipping demons. (1 Corinthians 10:20; 2 Corinthians 11:13-15) Satan also uses the business world to spread lies, such as the lie that money and things make people happy. (Proverbs 18:11) Those who believe this lie spend their lives serving “Riches” rather than God. (Matthew 6:24) Even if they once loved God, their love for material things becomes so strong that their love for God disappears.—Matthew 13:22; 1 John 2:15, 16.

⁸ There are two important lessons we can learn from the actions of Adam, Eve, and the rebellious

7. In addition to using governments, how does Satan use false religion and the business world? (See opening picture.)

8, 9. (a) What two lessons can we learn from the actions of Adam, Eve, and the rebellious angels? (b) Why is it good for us to know that Satan controls the world?

angels. First, we learn that there are only two sides and that we must choose one. We can either be on Jehovah's side or on Satan's side. (Matthew 7:13) Second, we learn that those who join Satan get only limited benefits. Adam and Eve got the opportunity to decide for themselves what was right and what was wrong. And the demons got some power over human governments. (Genesis 3:22) But choosing Satan's side always has bad results. There are no real benefits!—Job 21:7-17; Galatians 6:7, 8.

⁹ Why is it good for us to know that Satan controls the world? It helps us to have the correct view of governments and motivates us to preach the good news. We know that Jehovah wants us to respect the governments. (1 Peter 2:17) He expects us to obey their laws as long as those laws do not go against his standards. (Romans 13:1-4) But we also know that we must remain neutral and never support any political party or human leader. (John 17:15, 16; 18:36) Because we realize that Satan is trying to hide Jehovah's name and damage His reputation, we do all we can to teach people the truth about our God. We are proud to be called by his name and to use it. Love of God is far more precious than love of money or things.—Isaiah 43:10; 1 Timothy 6:6-10.

HOW DOES SATAN TRY TO INFLUENCE OTHERS?

¹⁰ Satan uses effective methods to influence others. To get them to do what he wants, at times he uses bait to tempt them and at other times he tries to bully them.

¹¹ Satan used bait to tempt a large number of angels. He probably watched them for a long time in order to know what would tempt them. Some angels took the bait and had sex with women. Their children were violent giants who were cruel to the people around them. (Genesis 6:1-4) In addition to using immorality to tempt those angels, Satan may also have promised them that they would gain power over all humans. In this way, Satan may have been trying to interfere with the fulfillment of Jehovah's prophecy about the 'offspring of the woman.' (Genesis 3:15) But Jehovah did not allow him to succeed. He brought the Flood, which ruined any such plans of Satan and the demons.

¹² What do we learn from this? Immorality and pride are very effective types of bait. The angels who joined Satan had spent many years in heaven

10-12. (a) How may Satan have used bait to tempt some angels?
(b) What do we learn from what those angels did?



SATAN TRIES TO TEMPT US

(See paragraphs 12, 13)

with God himself! Even so, many of them allowed wrong desires to develop in them, and these desires became very strong. We must always remember that no matter how long we have served Jehovah, bad desires can take root in our heart. (1 Corinthians 10:12) That is why we must constantly check what is in our heart and get rid of any immoral thoughts and selfish pride!—Galatians 5:26; read Colossians 3:5.

¹³ Another type of bait that Satan uses is curiosity about the supernatural. Today, he tries to get

13. What is another type of bait that Satan uses, and how can we avoid it?



Governmental
bans

Pressure from
schoolmates

Opposition from
family

SATAN TRIES TO BULLY US

(See paragraph 14)

people interested in the demons by using false religion as well as entertainment. Movies, electronic games, and other kinds of entertainment can make the supernatural seem exciting. How can we avoid this bait? We should not expect God’s organization to give us a list of good and bad entertainment. We must train our conscience so that we can make good choices based on Jehovah’s principles. (Hebrews 5:14) And if our love for God is “without hypocrisy,” we will choose wisely. (Romans 12:9) A hypocritical person says one thing but does another. So when we choose entertainment, we could ask ourselves: ‘Am I following the same principles that

I tell others to follow? What would my Bible students or the people I call on think if they saw the entertainment I choose?’ When we follow the same principles we tell others to follow, it is easier for us to reject Satan’s bait.—1 John 3:18.

¹⁴ Satan also tries to bully and scare us so that we will become disloyal to Jehovah. For example, he may influence governments to ban our preaching work. He can influence our workmates or schoolmates to mock us for following Bible standards. (1 Peter 4:4) Satan can even influence our unbelieving family members, who may have good intentions but who may try to stop us from going to meetings. (Matthew 10:36) What can we do to stand firm against Satan’s bullying? We should not be surprised by such attacks, because we know that Satan is at war with us. (Revelation 2:10; 12:17) Also, we must remember what the real issue is: Satan claims that we serve Jehovah only when it is easy and that we will reject God if things become difficult. (Job 1:9-11; 2:4, 5) Finally, we must always ask Jehovah to give us strength. Remember that Jehovah will never abandon us.—Hebrews 13:5.

14. How could Satan try to bully us, and how can we stand firm?

WHAT SATAN CANNOT DO

¹⁵ Satan cannot force people to do anything that they do not want to do. (James 1:14) Many in the world do not even realize they are on Satan's side. But when a person learns the truth, he must choose whether he will be on Jehovah's side or on Satan's. (Acts 3:17; 17:30) If we are determined to obey God, Satan cannot break our loyalty.—Job 2:3; 27:5.

¹⁶ There are other things that Satan and the demons cannot do. For example, the Bible never says that they can know what is in our mind or heart. Only Jehovah and Jesus can do that. (1 Samuel 16:7; Mark 2:8) So should we be afraid that if we speak or pray out loud, the Devil and the demons will hear what we say and use the information against us? No! Why not? Think of this comparison: We are not afraid to do good things in our service to Jehovah just because the Devil might see us. In a similar way, we should not be afraid to pray out loud just because the Devil might hear us. Also, the Bible tells of many times that God's servants

15. Can Satan force us to do anything that we do not want to do? Explain.

16, 17. (a) What else are Satan and the demons unable to do? (b) Why should we not be afraid to pray out loud to Jehovah?

prayed out loud, and we never read that they were afraid that the Devil would hear them. (1 Kings 8: 22, 23; John 11:41, 42; Acts 4:23, 24) If we do our best to speak and act as God wants us to, we can be sure that Jehovah will not allow the Devil to harm us in any lasting way.—Read Psalm 34:7.

¹⁷ We need to know our enemy, but we do not need to be terrified by him. Even though we are imperfect, with Jehovah's support we can conquer Satan! (1 John 2:14) If we oppose him, he will flee from us. (James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:9) Today, it seems that Satan is especially attacking young people. How can they resist the Devil's attacks? We will discuss this in the next article.

SOME EXPRESSIONS EXPLAINED

Satan's schemes are the tricks and methods he uses as he tries to break our loyalty to Jehovah. For example, he uses immorality, curiosity about the supernatural, and fear



Young Ones Stand Firm Against the Devil

“Put on the complete suit of armor from God so that you may be able to stand firm against the crafty acts of the Devil.”—EPHESIANS 6:11.

THE apostle Paul compared Christians to soldiers. We are in a war, and our enemies are real! But our war is not against humans; it is

1, 2. (a) Why are young Christians winning the fight against Satan and the demons? (See opening picture.) (b) What will we discuss?

SONGS:
79, 140

**HOW WOULD YOU
ANSWER?**

What are the pieces of the spiritual armor?

Why must we wear each piece?

What do you think of the example of our young ones?

against Satan and the demons. They have been warriors for thousands of years and are very good at fighting. So it may seem that we cannot possibly win this war, especially if we are young. Can young people win a war against such powerful enemies? Yes they can, and they are winning! Why? Because they receive power from Jehovah. Also, like well-trained soldiers, they “put on the complete suit of armor from God” so that they will be prepared for battle. —Read Ephesians 6:10-12.

² When Paul used that illustration, he may have been thinking of the armor that Roman soldiers wore. (Acts 28:16) In this article, we will examine that excellent illustration. We will also discuss what some young people say about the difficulties and the benefits of wearing each piece of our spiritual armor.

“THE BELT OF TRUTH”

³ Read Ephesians 6:14. A Roman military belt had metal plates to protect the soldier’s waist and keep his heavy breastplate in place. Some belts also had strong clips to carry a sword and a dagger. With his belt fastened tightly, a soldier could feel confident when he went into battle.

⁴ Like a belt, the truths we learn from God’s Word

3, 4. How is the truth from the Bible like a Roman military belt?

protect us from false teachings. (John 8:31, 32; 1 John 4:1) And the more we learn to love the truths from God's Word, the easier it becomes for us to live by God's standards, or to wear our "breastplate." (Psalm 111:7, 8; 1 John 5:3) Also, the better we understand these truths, the better we can defend them against our enemies.—1 Peter 3:15.

⁵ Since the truths from God's Word are important to us, we obey what the Bible says and we always tell the truth. Lies are one of Satan's most successful weapons. Lies hurt the person who tells them and the person who believes them. (John 8:44) So even though we are not perfect, we try our best never to lie. (Ephesians 4:25) This can be difficult. Abigail, age 18, says: "Speaking the truth may not always seem worth it, especially when telling a lie can get you out of a difficult situation." So why does she always try to tell the truth? She says: "When I'm truthful, I have a clean conscience before Jehovah. And my parents and my friends know that they can trust me." Victoria, age 23, says: "When you tell the truth and stand up for your beliefs, you might get bullied. But you always get outstanding benefits: You gain confidence, you feel closer to Jehovah, and you earn the respect of those who love you." Do you see why it is important to wear "the belt of truth" at all times?

5. Why should we always tell the truth?

“THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS”

⁶ The breastplate of a Roman soldier was often made of horizontal strips of iron that were bent to fit around his chest. The iron strips were attached to leather straps with metal hooks and buckles. His shoulders were covered in more strips of iron that were also attached to leather. The breastplate limited his movement, and it required him to check regularly that the plates were in place. But that breastplate protected his heart and other organs against the edge of a sword or the point of an arrow!

⁷ Jehovah’s righteous standards, which protect our “heart,” or the person we are inside, can be compared to that breastplate. (Proverbs 4:23) A soldier would never exchange his iron breastplate for one made of a weaker metal. In the same way, we would never exchange Jehovah’s standards of what is right for our own ideas of what is right. We are simply not wise enough to protect our own heart. (Proverbs 3:5, 6) That is why we must regularly check that our “breastplate” is still protecting our heart.

⁸ Do you sometimes feel that Jehovah’s standards take away your freedom or prevent you from doing

6, 7. Why is righteousness compared to a breastplate?

8. Why should we obey Jehovah’s standards?

ARE YOU WEARING
EACH PIECE OF YOUR
SUIT OF ARMOR?



The breastplate of
righteousness
(See paragraphs 6-8)



The helmet of salvation
(See paragraphs 15-18)



The sword of the spirit
(See paragraphs 19-20)



The belt of truth
(See paragraphs 3-5)



Feet shod in readiness
(See paragraphs 9-11)



The large shield of faith
(See paragraphs 12-14)



things you want to do? Daniel, age 21, says: “Teachers and fellow students made fun of me because I live by Bible standards. For a while, I lost my confidence and felt depressed.” But how does he feel now? He says: “Eventually, I saw the benefits of living by Jehovah’s standards. Some of my ‘friends’ began taking drugs; others dropped out of school. It was sad to see how their lives turned out. Jehovah really protects

us.” Madison, age 15, says: “It’s a struggle for me to stick to Jehovah’s standards and not go along with what my peers think is cool or fun.” So, what does she do? “I remind myself that I bear Jehovah’s name and that temptation is just Satan’s way of shooting at me. When I win a struggle, I feel better about myself.”

“FEET SHOD IN READINESS TO DECLARE THE GOOD NEWS OF PEACE”

⁹ **Read Ephesians 6:15.** A Roman soldier could not go into battle without his shoes. They were made of three layers of leather, so they were very strong. But these shoes were also comfortable, so a soldier could walk confidently and not slip.

¹⁰ While the shoes that Roman soldiers wore helped them to succeed in war, the symbolic shoes we wear help us “to declare the good news of peace.” (Isaiah 52:7; Romans 10:15) Still, sometimes it takes a lot of courage to preach. Bo, age 20, says: “I was afraid to witness to my classmates. I think I was embarrassed. Looking back, I don’t know why I should have been. Now I’m happy to witness to my peers.”

¹¹ Many young Christians have found that they feel more comfortable when they preach if they have pre-

9-11. (a) What symbolic shoes do Christians wear? (b) What can help us to feel more comfortable when we preach?

pared ahead of time. What can you do to prepare? Julia, age 16, says: “I keep literature in my schoolbag, and I listen to the opinions and beliefs expressed by my classmates. Then I’m able to think of what will help them. When I am prepared, I can talk to them about what will specifically benefit them.” Makenzie, age 23, says: “If you are kind and are a good listener, you’ll get an idea of what your peers are dealing with. I make sure that I’ve read all the material published for young people. That way I can direct my peers to something in the Bible or on jw.org that will help them.” Being well-prepared to preach is like wearing “shoes” that fit you well.

“THE LARGE SHIELD OF FAITH”

¹² Read Ephesians 6:16. A Roman soldier carried a large rectangular shield. It covered him from his shoulders to his knees and protected him from swords, spears, and arrows.

¹³ What “burning arrows” could Satan shoot at you? Perhaps he attacks you with lies about Jehovah. Satan wants you to feel that Jehovah does not love you and that no one cares about you. Ida, age 19, says: “I have often felt that Jehovah isn’t close to me and that he doesn’t want to be my Friend.” What does

12, 13. What are some of Satan’s “burning arrows”?

she do when she feels this way? “The meetings are a giant boost to my faith. I used to sit there and never comment, thinking that nobody would want to hear what I had to say. Now, though, I prepare for the meetings and try to answer two or three times. It’s difficult, but I feel much better when I do. And the brothers and sisters are so encouraging. I always come away from the meetings knowing that Jehovah loves me.”

¹⁴ A soldier’s shield always stays the same size. But as we learn from Ida’s experience, our faith is not like that. Our faith can grow or shrink, become stronger or weaker. It is our choice. (Matthew 14:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:3) For our “shield of faith” to protect us, we must keep making it bigger and stronger!

“THE HELMET OF SALVATION”

¹⁵ Read Ephesians 6:17. A Roman soldier wore a helmet to protect his head, neck, and face. Sometimes the helmet had a handle so that a soldier could carry it in his hand.

¹⁶ Just as a helmet protects a soldier’s brain, our “hope of salvation” protects our thinking. (1 Thessalonians 5:8; Proverbs 3:21) Hope helps us to focus on

14. What do we learn from Ida’s experience?

15, 16. How is our hope like a helmet?

God's promises and not to become discouraged because of our problems. (Psalm 27:1, 14; Acts 24:15) But if we want our hope to protect us, it must be real to us. We must wear our "helmet" on our head, not carry it in our hand!

¹⁷ How could Satan trick us into taking our helmet off? Think about what he tried to do to Jesus. Satan knew that Jesus would become the ruler of mankind. But first, Jesus would have to suffer and die. And then he would have to wait to become King until it was Jehovah's time. So Satan offered him the chance to rule sooner. Satan promised that if Jesus would do just one act of worship, he could become the ruler of the world immediately. (Luke 4:5-7) Satan also knows that Jehovah has promised to give us wonderful things in the new world. But we have to wait for this promise to become a reality, and in the meantime we may have many problems. So Satan offers us a chance to have a comfortable life now. He wants us to put our own comfort first and God's Kingdom second.—Matthew 6:31-33.

¹⁸ Many young Christians have not been tricked by Satan. For example, Kiana, age 20, says: "I know that the only hope for solving all our problems is God's

17, 18. (a) How could Satan trick us into taking our helmet off?
(b) How can we prove that we have not been tricked by Satan?

Kingdom.” How does her hope affect how she thinks and lives her life? It helps her to remember that the things of this world are temporary. Instead of putting all her efforts into having a career in this system, Kiana is using her time and energy to serve Jehovah.

“THE SWORD OF THE SPIRIT,” GOD’S WORD

¹⁹ Roman soldiers used swords that were about 50 centimeters (20 inches) long. Those soldiers were very skilled with their swords because they practiced using them every day.

²⁰ The apostle Paul said that God’s Word is like a sword. Jehovah has given it to us. But we must learn to use it skillfully to defend our faith or to adjust the way we think. (2 Corinthians 10:4, 5; 2 Timothy 2:15) How can you improve your skills? Sebastian, age 21, says: “I’ve been writing down one verse from every chapter in my Bible reading. I’m compiling a list of my favorite verses.” This helps him to understand better how Jehovah thinks. Daniel adds: “As I do my Bible reading, I pick verses that I think will help people I meet in the ministry. I’ve found that people respond well when they see that you are passionate about the Bible and are doing your best to help them.”

19, 20. How can we become more skilled in using God’s Word?

²¹ As we learned from the examples of the young ones in this article, we do not need to be afraid of Satan and the demons. It is true that they are powerful, but they are not more powerful than Jehovah. And they will not live forever. They will be imprisoned and will not be able to harm anyone during the Thousand Year Reign of Christ, and after that they will be destroyed. (Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10) We know our enemy, his tricks, and his goal. With Jehovah's help, we can stand firm against him!

21. Why should we not be afraid of Satan and the demons?

**SOME
EXPRESSIONS
EXPLAINED**

Spiritual armor:

All the things that Jehovah provides to protect us in our fight against the Devil. To defend ourselves, we must wear each piece of this armor

A Poor Start—A Rich Ending

AS TOLD BY SAMUEL F. HERD

I was born in a one-room log cabin in a very small town called Liberty, Indiana, U.S.A. My parents already had one son and two daughters when I was born. Later, my mother gave birth to my two younger brothers and my younger sister.

DURING my school years, not much changed. Your classmates in the first year were the same ones you finished school with in the last year. You actually knew the names of most people in town, and they knew yours.

The town of Liberty was surrounded by small farms, and the basic crop was corn. When I was born, my father worked for a local farmer. As a teenager, I learned to drive a tractor and to do other farmwork.

I never had a young father. My father was 56 years old when I was born, and my mother was 35. Yet, my father was strong and healthy. He loved hard work and taught all his kids to love it as well. He never made much money, but he gave us a place to live, clothes to wear, and enough food to eat. And he always spent time with us. My father was 93 years old when he died. My

mother died at the age of 86. Neither of them served Jehovah. One of my brothers, though, has been a faithful elder since 1972.

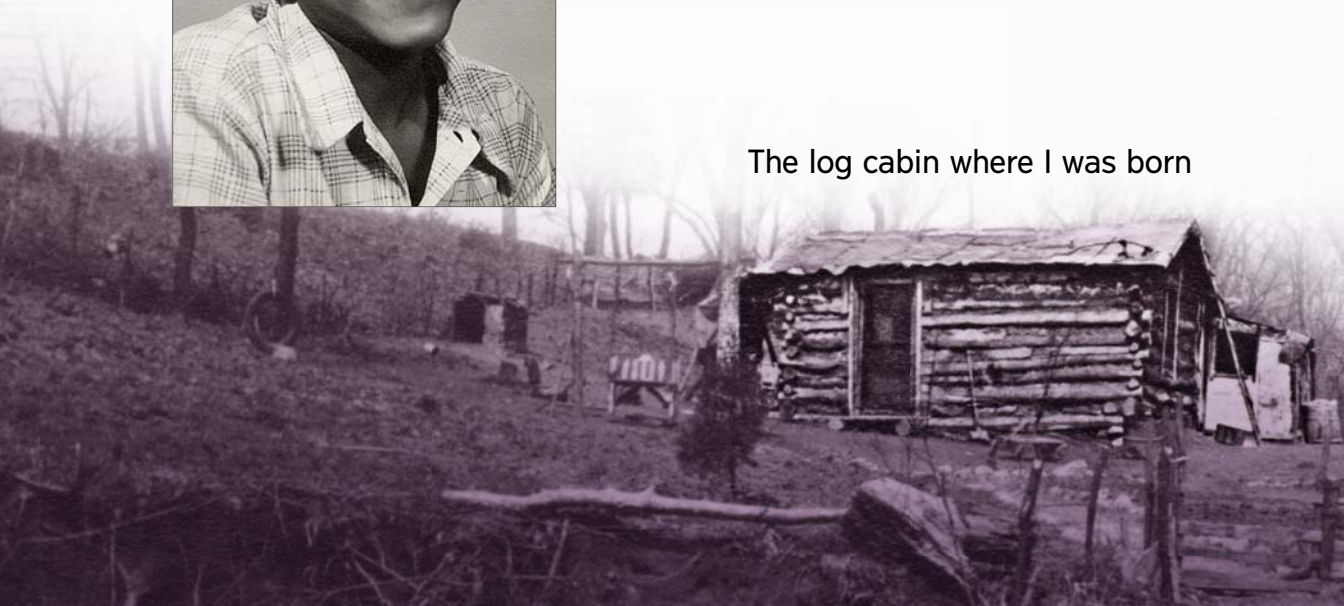
MY EARLY YEARS

My mother was very religious. She took us to the Baptist church every Sunday. When I was 12, I first heard about the Trinity doctrine. So I asked my mom: “How can Jesus be both the Son and the Father at the same time?” I remember her answer: “Son, it’s a mystery. We’re not meant to understand it.” It certainly was a mystery to me. Still, when I was about 14, I got



I was one of seven children,
and I learned to do farmwork
when I was young

The log cabin where I was born



baptized in a local creek. They dipped me in the water three times, once for the Father, once for the Son, and once for the holy spirit!

While I was in high school, I had a friend who was a boxer, and he convinced me to try boxing. So I started training, and I became a member of a boxing organization, the Golden Gloves. I was not very good, so after a few fights, I gave it up. Later, I was called into the U.S. Army and was sent to Germany. While I was serving there, my superiors sent me to a military academy because they thought I could become a good leader. They wanted me to make the military my career. However, I did not want to stay in the military, so after finishing my duty of two years, I left the army in 1956. Not long after, though, I joined a very different army.

A NEW LIFE BEGINS

Before I learned the truth, I had the wrong idea of what a real man should be like. I was influenced by movies and by those around me. I thought that men who talked about the Bible were not manly. But I began to learn some things that changed my life. One day, while I was driving my fancy red car through town, two young women waved at me to come over to them. They were the younger sisters of the man who had married my older sister. These two young ladies were Jehovah's Witnesses. I had accepted the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines from them before, but I felt that *The Watchtower*



1954-1956
I spent two years
in the U.S. Army

1952
At age 17,
before I entered
the army

was a bit too difficult to understand. This time, however, they invited me to come to a Congregation Book Study, a small meeting for Bible study and discussion that was held in their home. I told them I would think about it. They smiled and asked, “Do you promise?” I said, “I promise.”

I regretted saying that, but I felt that I could not break my promise. So that night I went to the meeting. The children impressed me the most. I couldn't believe how much they knew about the Bible! Even though I had gone to church with my mother every Sunday, I still knew very little about the Bible. Now I really wanted to learn more, so I agreed to have a Bible study. One of the first things I learned was that the personal name of God Almighty is Jehovah. Years before, when I asked my mother about Jehovah's Witnesses, she simply said, "Oh, they worship some old man named Jehovah." But I now felt that my eyes were being opened!

I made rapid progress, because I knew that I had found the truth. In March of 1957, only nine months after that first meeting, I got baptized. My attitude had changed. I am so glad that I learned what the Bible teaches about real manliness. Jesus was a perfect man. He had more strength and power than any other man. But he did not get involved in fights. Instead, "he let himself be afflicted," just as was foretold. (Isaiah 53: 2, 7) I learned that a true follower of Jesus "needs to be gentle toward all."—2 Timothy 2:24.

I started pioneering the next year, in 1958. Soon, though, I had to stop for a short time. Why? I had decided to get married to Gloria, one of those two young ladies who had invited me to the book study! I have never regretted that decision. Gloria was a jewel then, and she is a jewel today. To me, she is more precious than

the Hope Diamond, and I am so happy that I married her! Let her tell you a bit about herself:

“I had 16 brothers and sisters. My mom was a faithful Witness. She died when I was 14. After that, my dad began studying the Bible. Because we did not have our mom anymore, my dad made an arrangement with the school principal. My older sister was then in her last year of high school, and Dad asked if she and I could go to school on alternate days. In that way, one of us could be at home to take care of the younger children. We could also have dinner ready for the family by the time Dad came home from work. The school principal agreed, and we kept doing that until my sister finished school. Two Witness families studied with us, and 11 of us children became Jehovah’s Witnesses. I enjoyed field service, even though I was always very shy. My husband, Sam, has helped me with that over the years.”

Gloria and I got married in February of 1959. We enjoyed pioneering together. In July of that year, we applied for Bethel service. We really wanted to serve at world headquarters. A dear brother, Simon Kraker, interviewed us. He told us that Bethel was not accepting married couples at that time. We still wanted to serve at Bethel, but it took many years before we got there.

We wrote to world headquarters and asked to be sent to a territory where there was a need for more publishers. They gave us just one choice: Pine Bluff, Arkansas.

In those days, there were two congregations in Pine Bluff. One congregation had white publishers, and the other had black publishers. We were sent to the black congregation, which had only 14 publishers.

DIFFICULTIES BECAUSE OF SEGREGATION AND RACISM

You may wonder why Jehovah's Witnesses would separate black and white publishers. And the answer is that we had no choice back in those days. It was illegal for the races to mix, and there was also the problem of violence. In many places, the brothers were afraid that their Kingdom Hall would be destroyed if the two races met together for worship. Such things did happen. If black Witnesses preached from door to door in a white neighborhood, they would be arrested and probably beaten up. So in order to get the preaching work done, we obeyed the laws and hoped that things would change for the better.

Our ministry was not always easy. When we preached in a black territory, we sometimes accidentally knocked at a door of a white family. We had to decide quickly: Should we try to give a short Bible presentation or just apologize and go to the next door? That is how things were in those days.

Of course, as pioneers, we still had to earn money to live. Most of our jobs paid three dollars a day. Gloria

had a few housekeeping jobs. I was permitted to help her at one place so that she could finish in half the time. The family gave us lunch. It was a frozen prepackaged meal called a TV dinner, which Gloria and I shared before leaving. Each week, Gloria did ironing for one family. I worked in the garden, washed windows, and cared for other jobs around the house. In the home of one white family, we washed the windows. While Gloria washed from the inside, I did it from the outside. It took all day, so they gave us lunch. Gloria ate inside the house but had to stay separate from the family. I had to eat outside in the garage, but I didn't mind. It was a very good meal. They were a nice family, but they were affected by the people around them. I remember one time when we stopped at a gas station. After filling up the tank of our car, I asked the white attendant if Gloria could use the restroom. He looked at me angrily and said, "It's locked."

MEMORABLE ACTS OF KINDNESS

On the other hand, we had wonderful times with the brothers, and we loved our ministry! When we first arrived in Pine Bluff, we lived with the brother who was the congregation servant at the time. His wife was not in the truth yet, and Gloria started a Bible study with her. Meanwhile, I started a study with the couple's daughter and her husband. Mother and daughter both decided to serve Jehovah and got baptized.

We had dear friends in the white congregation. They would invite us to their homes for dinner, but we could only go after it was dark so that nobody would see us together. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK), an organization that promotes racism and violence, was very active then. One Halloween night I remember seeing a man sitting on his front porch, proudly wearing a white sheet and hood, as those in the KKK did. Negative experiences, though, did not stop the brothers from showing kindness. One summer, we needed money in order to go to the convention, and a brother agreed to buy our 1950 Ford in order to make it possible. One day, a month later, we were very tired after walking from door to door in the heat and conducting many Bible studies. Then we came home and found a surprise. There was our car, parked in front of the house! A note on the windshield read, "You can have your car back as a gift from me. Your brother."

Another act of kindness touched me deeply. In 1962, I was invited to attend the Kingdom Ministry School at South Lansing, New York. It was a full month of training for overseers of congregations, circuits, and districts. At that time I had no job, and we had very little money. However, a telephone company in Pine Bluff had interviewed me for a job. If they hired me, I would be the first black man to work for that company. They finally told me that they wanted to give me the job.

What would I do? I had no money to travel to New York. I seriously thought about taking the job and declining the invitation to the school. I was getting ready to write to Bethel when something happened that I will never forget.

A sister in our congregation, whose husband wasn't in the truth, knocked on our door early one morning and gave me an envelope. It was full of money. She and several of her young children had been getting up very early in the morning to go out in the cotton fields and remove the weeds. They did this in order to earn enough money so that I could go to New York. She said, "Go to school and learn as much as you can, and come back and teach us!" Later, I asked the telephone company if I could start to work for them five weeks later than planned. The answer was a definite, "No!" But it didn't matter. I had made my decision. I am so glad that I did not take that job!

Here is how Gloria remembers our time in Pine Bluff: "I fell in love with the territory! I had 15 to 20 Bible studies. So we would go in the house-to-house work in the morning and then conduct Bible studies the rest of the day, sometimes until 11 o'clock at night. Service was so much fun! I would happily have stayed. I have to admit that I did not really want to change my assignment and enter the circuit work, but Jehovah had something else in mind." He certainly did.

LIFE IN THE TRAVELING WORK

While we were pioneering in Pine Bluff, we applied to become special pioneers. We really expected to be appointed. Why? Because we knew that our district overseer wanted us to help a congregation in Texas, and he wanted us to serve as special pioneers there. We liked this idea. So we waited and waited, hoping for an answer, but we kept finding the mailbox empty. Finally, a letter came. We were assigned to the traveling work! That was in January 1965. Brother Leon Weaver, now the coordinator of the United States Branch Committee, was appointed to serve as a circuit overseer at the same time.

I was nervous about becoming a circuit overseer. A year or so earlier, the district overseer, James A. Thompson, Jr., examined my qualifications. He kindly explained where I could improve, mentioning skills that a good circuit overseer needs. Soon after I started in the circuit work, I realized how much I needed that counsel. After I was appointed, Brother Thompson was the first district overseer I served with. I learned a lot from that faithful brother.

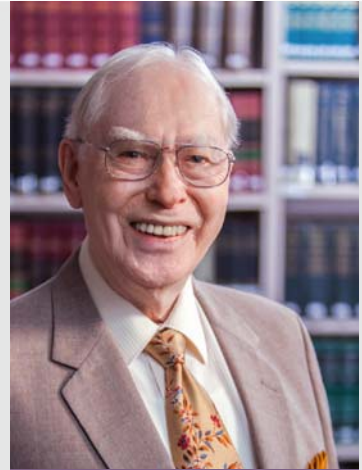
In those days, a circuit overseer received little training. I observed a circuit overseer for one week as he visited a congregation. Then he observed me for one week as I visited another congregation. He offered suggestions and guidance. But after that we were on our own.



James A.
Thompson, Jr.



J.R.
Brown



Fred
Rusk

I cherish the help I received
from experienced brothers

I remember saying to Gloria, “Does he really have to leave now?” In time, though, I realized something important. There will always be good brothers who can help you, but only if you let them help you. I still cherish the help I received from such experienced brothers as J. R. Brown, then a traveling overseer, and Fred Rusk of the Bethel family.

Racism was everywhere in those days. One time, the KKK held a march in a town we were visiting in Tennessee. I remember another time when we stopped at a restaurant for a quick break while we were in service. When I went to use the restroom, an angry-looking man with racist tattoos followed me in there. But then

a white brother, who was much larger than either of us, came in. “Is everything all right, Brother Herd?” the brother asked me. The other customer left quickly without using the restroom. Over the years, I have seen that the real cause of racism is not the color of a person’s skin but the sin that is in all of us. And I have learned that a brother is a brother regardless of his skin color, and he will die for you if necessary.

A RICH ENDING

We spent 12 years in the circuit work and 21 years in the district work. They were rich and rewarding years, full of encouraging experiences. But there was another reward waiting for us. In August 1997 a dream we had for many years came true. We were invited to serve at the United States Bethel. That was 38 years after the first time we applied. The following month, we began our Bethel service. I thought that the responsible brothers at Bethel only wanted me to help out for a short time, but that is not what happened.

My first assignment was in the Service Department. I learned so much! The brothers there receive many sensitive and difficult questions from elder bodies and circuit overseers around the country. I am grateful for how patient and helpful the brothers were in training me. If I were assigned to work there again, I would still have much to learn from those brothers.

Gloria and I love Bethel life. We have always liked getting up early, and that habit certainly helps at Bethel. After a year or so, I began to serve as a helper to the Service Committee of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses. Then in 1999, I was appointed to be a member of the Governing Body. I have learned many things in this assignment. But the most important lesson is that the head of the Christian congregation is Jesus Christ, not any man.

When I think about my life, I sometimes feel a bit like the prophet Amos. Jehovah noticed that humble shepherd who had the simple job of nipping figs, a food that only poor people ate. However, God appointed Amos to



Since 1999, I have had the privilege to serve on the Governing Body



Gloria was a jewel when I married her,
and she still is

be a prophet and blessed him richly in that assignment. (Amos 7:14, 15) Similarly, Jehovah noticed me, the son of a poor farmer in Liberty, Indiana. And Jehovah has blessed me richly, with too many blessings to mention here! (Proverbs 10:22) My life may have had a poor start materially, but I certainly feel that the ending is far richer than I could ever have imagined!



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