



WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

Steps That
Can Save Lives



3 COVER SUBJECT When Disaster Strikes —Steps That Can Save Lives

Why is it important to prepare for disasters?

The Bible says: “The shrewd person sees the danger and conceals himself, but the inexperienced keep right on going and suffer the consequences.”—Proverbs 27:12.

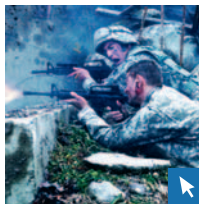
This magazine highlights what we should do before, during, and after a disaster.

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COMMUNITY AND POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT

Why Don't Jehovah's Witnesses Go to War?

Jehovah's Witnesses are known worldwide for refusing to go to war. Learn why we take this stand.

(Look under ABOUT US > FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS)



HELPING THE COMMUNITY

When Disaster Strikes, Love Moves Us to Action

In dozens of countries, Jehovah's Witnesses have provided assistance in times of need.

(Look under ABOUT US > ACTIVITIES)



COVER SUBJECT

WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

STEPS THAT CAN SAVE LIVES

“A deafening explosion nearly threw me to the floor. Smoke came from the air vents, and our high-rise office erupted in flames.”—Joshua.

Earthquake . . . hurricane . . . terrorist attack . . . school shooting. Those terms appear in the headlines too often. Of course, it is one thing to *read* about a disaster; it is another to live through one. What can you do *before*, *during*, and *after* a disaster to improve the likelihood of your survival?



Preparation
is your most
important key to survival

BEFORE

PREPARE!

NO ONE is immune to disaster. Preparation is your most important key to survival. But what does preparation involve?

- **Prepare mentally.** Acknowledge the fact that disasters happen and that you and your loved ones are potentially at risk. It is too late to prepare *after* disaster strikes.
- **Learn about disasters** that can happen in your area. Know where shelters are. Consider whether the construction of your home and its location are as safe as possible. Remove fire hazards. Install smoke detectors, and change their batteries at least once a year, if not more often.
- **Prepare emergency supplies.** Power, water, phone, and transportation services can fail. If you own a car, try to keep the fuel tank at least half full, and always have food, water, and an emergency kit in your home.—See the box “Do You Have What You Need?”

- **Have access to the phone numbers** of friends, both near and far.
- **Make and rehearse an escape plan.** Know the nearest exits in your building, as well as the emergency plan of your children’s school. Set up family meeting places—such as a school or a library—one nearby and another outside your neighborhood. Authorities recommend that you practice walking with your family to those meeting points.
- **Plan to help others,** including the elderly and the infirm.

DURING

ACT QUICKLY

“When fire broke out, most people didn’t panic—they delayed,” relates Joshua, quoted at the outset. “Some turned off a computer or filled a water bottle. One man said, ‘Maybe we should just wait.’” Despite the hesitancy of others, Joshua shouted: “We need to get out of here *now!*” At that,

If authorities order evacuation, leave immediately!



his coworkers snapped out of denial and followed him down the stairs. “If anyone falls, pick him up and keep moving,” Joshua kept calling out. “We’re all going to make it!”

- **In a fire.** Stay close to the floor, and move quickly to the nearest exit. Smoke makes it hard to see, and most fire deaths are caused by smoke inhalation. Leave behind personal items. Seconds can make the difference between life and death.
- **In an earthquake.** Get under sturdy furniture or next to an inside wall. Expect aftershocks, and get outside and away from buildings as soon as you can. Trained rescuers may not arrive for hours, so try to rescue others if you can.
- **In a tsunami.** If the water suddenly rushes away from the shore, move *quickly* to higher ground. Expect more and larger waves.
- **In a tornado or a hurricane.** Go to a storm shelter without delay.
- **In a flood.** Stay out of flooded buildings. Avoid wading in or driving through water. Floodwater can contain sewage and

conceal dangers, including debris, open manholes, and downed power lines.

- **Did you know?** Two feet [0.6 m] of moving water can carry a car away. Most deaths in a flood result when people try to drive through moving water.
- **If the authorities order evacuation,** leave immediately! Let friends know where you are, or they may risk *their* lives looking for you.
- **Did you know?** Text messaging may be more reliable than telephone voice service.
- **If the authorities direct residents to remain at home or shelter in place,** stay inside. In case of an outdoor chemical, biological, or nuclear accident or attack, stay indoors, turn off ventilation, and seal all doors and windows. In a nuclear event, go to the lowest internal part of your building to reduce exposure to radiation. Listen to local TV or radio news. Stay indoors until authorities announce that the threat has passed.



DO YOU HAVE WHAT YOU NEED?

Disaster management organizations urge families to store and annually update emergency supplies. Of course, needs will vary according to your location and circumstances, so check with local emergency management services for recommendations that could be applied in your area.

In general it is recommended that you keep *at least* three gallons (11 L) of water per person and three days of nonperishable, ready-to-eat foods.

Also, some families have prepared “go bags” with such items as the following.*

- Blankets, complete change of warm clothes, and sturdy shoes
- Flashlight, radio (battery or windup), and spare batteries
- First-aid kit and a whistle to signal for help
- Eating utensils, can opener, pocket tool set, and waterproof matches
- Dust masks, waterproof tape, and plastic sheeting for shelter
- Toothbrushes, soap, towels, and toilet paper
- _____
- _____
- Child-care supplies and special-needs items for seniors or the disabled
- A waterproof container with needed medication, copies of prescriptions, and other important documents
- List of emergency contacts and meeting places and a local map
- Credit cards and cash
- Extra set of house keys and car keys
- Paper, pencils, books, and games for children
- Bible
- _____
- _____

* Not every item listed may be suitable in your case or in your part of the world. You might also have to include some items not listed here.



After the disaster,
keep your routine
as normal as
possible



AFTER **STAY SAFE!**

To avoid disease and danger, consider the following recommendations:

- **Stay with friends**, if possible, rather than in a camp.
- **Keep your living space sanitary.**
- **Use personal protective equipment** when cleaning up debris. If possible, wear gloves, sturdy shoes, a hard hat, and a dust mask. Beware of electrical wires and hidden embers.
- **Keep your daily routine** as normal as possible. Your children need to see that you are calm and hopeful. Do school lessons, play, and worship as a family. Do not dwell on news coverage of the tragedy, and do not take out your anxiety or frustration on family members. Accept help, and help others.
- **Acknowledge that disasters cause loss.** Government and other relief efforts focus on helping people to survive, not on replacing everything that was lost. To survive, we need clean water, food, clothing, and shelter from the weather.—1 Timothy 6:7, 8.

- **Recognize and address emotional injury.** This often surfaces after the initial shock has passed. Symptoms include anxiety, depression, and mood swings, as well as difficulty thinking, working, and sleeping. Talk to caring friends.

Although Joshua survived the fire in his workplace, many of his acquaintances did not. He received assistance from Christian elders and mental-health professionals. “They assured me that my grief was part of a natural healing process and that it would pass,” Joshua says. “After six months, the nightmares lessened. Other symptoms have lasted longer.”

Disasters assault our very sense of justice. In response, some people mistakenly blame God. Many, like Joshua, experience “survivor’s guilt.” “I still wonder if I could have saved more people,” he says. “I am comforted by my belief that God will soon bring complete justice to the earth and will right all wrongs. In the meantime, I cherish each day of life and do what I reasonably can to preserve it.”—Revelation 21:4, 5.* ■

* For more information about God’s promises for the future and why he has permitted suffering, see the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* It is available for download at www.jw.org.



What You Should Know About

ENERGY CONSERVATION

WE DEPEND on energy to heat and cool our homes, fuel our vehicles, and accomplish many of our daily activities. Yet people around the world are facing serious energy challenges.

For Gary, from South Africa, “the rising cost of fuel” is a big issue. Jennifer, from the Philippines, is worried about reliable access to energy, since “power interruption is a common problem.” Fernando, from El Salvador, says he is “concerned about the ecological impact.” In many places around the world, energy sources pollute the environment.

Naturally, you may wonder, ‘How can I deal with these energy challenges?’

We can all *choose* to use energy wisely. Both conserving energy and using it efficiently bring benefits. By consuming less, we save money on our energy costs. We also help protect the environment, not adding unnecessarily to the growing energy demand.

Let us consider three areas in which we may be able to use energy more wisely: our home, transportation, and daily activities.

HOME

Use heating and cooling equipment conservatively. A study conducted in one European country revealed that turning down the thermostat during winter just two degrees to limit heating was the most energy-saving behavior over the course of a year. Derek, who lives in Canada, agrees. “By wearing sweaters in winter instead of turning the furnace all the way up, our family saves energy,” he says.

The same principle applies to cooling in warmer climates. Rodolfo, from the Philippines, limits the use of his air conditioner by carefully setting the thermostat. Why? He states, “We save money and also conserve energy.”

Keep windows and doors closed when heating or cooling your home.* We can avoid wasting energy by preventing heated or cooled air from escaping outdoors. For example, leaving a door open in cold weather greatly increases the amount of energy required to heat a building.

Beyond simply keeping windows and doors closed, some people have further reduced energy loss in their homes by installing better insulation and energy-efficient windows.

Switch to more energy-efficient lighting. “Instead of using traditional incandescent bulbs, we switched to new energy-

* Carefully follow the manufacturer’s instructions for safe operation of heating and cooling equipment. For example, some appliances have specific fresh-air supply or venting guidelines that may require keeping a door or window open.

efficient light bulbs,” says Jennifer, quoted earlier. While new energy-efficient lighting products typically cost more up front, they consume much less energy during their lifetime, saving you money in the long run.

TRANSPORTATION

Use public transportation if possible.

“I use the train or cycle to work whenever I can,” says Andrew, from Great Britain. The book *Energy: What Everyone Needs to Know* reminds us that “automobiles consume at least three times more energy per passenger than busses and short-distance trains.”

Organize your trips. By planning ahead, you may be able to trim the number of trips you need to make, reducing your energy consumption while saving time and money.

Jethro, from the Philippines, sets a monthly fuel allowance for his car. “This makes me plan my trips more efficiently.”

DAILY ACTIVITIES

Reduce the amount of hot water you use. According to one study, “residential hot water heating consumes on average 1.3% of total energy used in Australian cities or 27% of total household energy use.”

Since heating water consumes energy, using less hot water conserves energy. With good reason, Victor, from South Africa, says: “We try to use as little hot water as possible when showering.” According to scientist Steven Kenway, “saving hot water represents a real win-win-win,” because “it cuts energy and water use for consumers, reduces energy demand for utilities, and helps households . . . save money.”

Turn it off. This includes lights, appliances, and electronic devices, such as TVs and computers. Even when turned off, many such devices still consume energy in standby mode. Some experts recommend unplugging them from their power source or using a switchable power strip to turn off this standby mode for further energy savings. Fernando, quoted earlier, has adopted this habit, “I turn off lights and unplug appliances that I am not using.”

We may personally have little control over the cost of energy or the environmental toll to produce it, but we can choose to use energy wisely. People around the world are finding ways to do just that. True, conserving energy may require more effort and planning, but consider the benefits. Valeria, from Mexico, says, “I save money, and I protect the environment.” ■

Did You Know?

The Bible contains helpful principles that encourage us to use resources wisely.

- John 6:12: Jesus told his disciples: “Gather together the fragments left over, so that nothing is wasted.”

What steps can you take to avoid wastefulness?

- Philippians 2:4: “Look out not only for your own interests, but also for the interests of others.”

How do your actions affect your neighbor? your neighborhood?



WAR

In ancient times, the Israelites waged war in the name of their God, Jehovah. Does this mean that God approves of modern warfare?

Why did ancient Israel go to war?

WHAT SOME PEOPLE SAY The Israelites worshipped a bloodthirsty “tribal war god.”

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS The nations whom Israel defeated were thoroughly corrupted by violence and depraved practices—including bestiality, incest, and child sacrifice. After giving them centuries to change their ways, God said: “It is by all these things that the nations that I am

driving out from before you have made themselves unclean.”—Leviticus 18:21-25; Jeremiah 7:31.

“It is because of the wickedness of these nations that Jehovah your God is driving them away from before you.”
—Deuteronomy 9:5.

Does God take sides in war today?

YOU MAY HAVE OBSERVED In many conflicts, religious leaders on both sides claim that God is on their side. “Religion has always played a part in every war that was ever fought,” says the book *The Causes of War*.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS Christians are not authorized to fight against their enemies. The apostle Paul wrote to fellow Christians: “If possible, as far as it depends on you, be peaceable with all men. Do not avenge yourselves.”—Romans 12:18, 19.

Instead of sending his followers to war, Jesus told them: “Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those who persecute you, so that you may prove yourselves sons of your Father who is in the

heavens.” (Matthew 5:44, 45) Even when the nation in which they live goes to war, Christians should remain neutral, “no part of the world.” (John 15:19) If God wants his worshippers in all nations to love their enemies and to remain separate from the world, how could he support either side of a violent conflict today?

“My Kingdom is no part of this world. If my Kingdom were part of this world, my attendants would have fought that I should not be handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my Kingdom is not from this source.”—John 18:36.



Will war ever end?

WHAT SOME PEOPLE SAY War is inevitable. “War has a future,” says the book *War and Power in the 21st Century*. “There is no danger of universal and perpetual peace breaking out in this century.”

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS Wars will end when no one has the desire to wage war. Consequently, God’s Kingdom—a real government that rules from heaven—will soon act to disarm our planet and to teach humans to pursue peace. The Bible assures us that God will “set matters straight respecting mighty nations far away. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, nor will they learn war anymore.”—Micah 4:3.

The Bible teaches that under God’s Kingdom there will no longer be national governments competing for their own interests, unjust policies prompting citizens to revolt, or prejudice that fuels ethnic divisions. As a result, war will vanish. “They will not cause any harm or any ruin,” God promises, “because the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters cover the sea.”—Isaiah 11:9. ■

“He is bringing an end to wars throughout the earth. He breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the military wagons with fire.”—Psalm 46:9.





Is Thrill-Seeking Worth the Risk?



THE CHALLENGE

“I stood close to a high-speed train that was racing by in a tunnel. The rush of adrenaline made my problems seem to fade.”—Leon.*

“Diving into water from dangerously high cliffs, I felt completely free for a few seconds. Usually I enjoyed it, but sometimes I was scared.”—Larissa.

Like Leon and Larissa, many young people get a thrill out of testing their limits—sometimes in very risky ways. Are you tempted to join in? If so, this article can help you.

* Some names in this article have been changed.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Thrill-seeking can become an addiction. It might give you a short-term high but leave you craving greater excitement. Marco, who like Leon went into train tunnels, says: “It was a vicious circle. I was happy for a moment. But then I needed yet another thrill.”

Justin, who went high-speed skating by grabbing hold of passing cars, says: “The thrill I felt made me want to do it again. I wanted people to admire me, but I ended up in the hospital.”

Peer pressure can make you ignore common sense. A young man named Marvin says: “My friends pressured me to free-climb a tall building, saying: ‘Go on. You can do it.’ I felt very insecure. I was trembling as I pulled myself up the wall.” Larissa, mentioned earlier, says: “I did what everybody else did. I just went along with it.”

The Internet too is used by some to create a form of peer pressure by praising thrill-seekers and downplaying the risks. In fact, some dares posted on social media go viral, giving thrill-seekers recognition and attention.

For example, some popular videos depict parkour—an activity that involves traversing obstacles (such as walls, houses, and stairs) by running, climbing, or jumping rapidly and efficiently without any safety equipment. This could lead you to two mistaken conclusions: (1) The risks are minimal. (2) Everyone is doing it. The result: You may



be tempted to try out activities that involve life-threatening risks.

There are better and safer ways to test your limits.

“Physical training is beneficial for a little,” says the Bible. (1 Timothy 4:8) But the Scriptures also caution you to “live with soundness of mind.” (Titus 2:12) How can you do that?

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Weigh the risks. The Bible says: “The shrewd person acts with knowledge, but the fool exposes his own foolishness.” (Proverbs 13:16) Before you consider engaging in a certain activity, get to know the risks involved. Ask yourself, ‘Does this activity amount to little more than a gamble with death or serious injury?’—*Bible principle: Proverbs 14:15.*

Choose friends who show respect for life. True friends will not encourage you to take risks or try to talk you into doing something you feel uncomfortable about. Larissa says: “Good and stable friends helped me to make better choices about activities I wanted to participate in. When my friends changed, so did my life.”—*Bible principle: Proverbs 13:20.*

Ask yourself, ‘Does this activity amount to little more than a gamble with death or serious injury?’

Enjoy your skills without risking your life. Part of growing up is “learning how to establish one’s own principles and boundaries,” says the book *Adolescent Risk Behaviors*. You can test your limits in a safe environment, using appropriate safety equipment and precautions.

Build genuine self-respect. People will respect you for how skillfully you master real-life challenges, not for what you dare to do for a thrill. Larissa says: “Cliff diving was just a start of a phase in my life that was full of self-destructive behavior. It would have been better if I had learned to say no.”

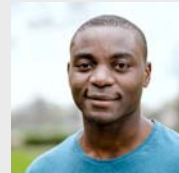
The bottom line: Rather than take needless risks by thrill-seeking, show good judgment with regard to your choice of recreation.—*Bible principle: Proverbs 15:24.* ■

KEY SCRIPTURES

“The shrewd one ponders each step.”—Proverbs 14:15.

“The one walking with the wise will become wise.”—Proverbs 13:20.

“The path of life leads upward to one with insight, to turn him away from the Grave below.”—Proverbs 15:24.



PETER

“The risks involved should be just as clear to you as the fun. After all, no young person wants to end up in a wheelchair.”



RIO

“If your friends are going to do something you don’t want to do, then it’s best not to go with them. Once you’re there, it is usually too late to say no or to change your mind.”



A Visit to KAZAKHSTAN



City of Astana

PRINCIPAL LANGUAGES: KAZAKH, RUSSIAN
POPULATION: 17,563,000 CAPITAL: ASTANA
CLIMATE: HOT AND DRY IN SUMMER, COLD AND SNOWY IN WINTER



KAZAKHS traditionally lived as nomads. To this day, some Kazakh herders move their animals to different pastures according to the season. They spend the summer in cooler highland grazing lands. Then, as the snowy winter approaches, they bring their flocks down to the warmer lowlands.

Some Kazakhs live in modern developed cities. Yet, many traditions, foods, and handicrafts reflect their ancestors' nomadic way of life. Kazakhs enjoy a rich heritage of poetry, songs, and music played on local musical instruments.

The yurt—the traditional portable house of nomads—has become a symbol of man living in har-

The elusive snow leopard spends summers high in Kazakhstan's mountains

DID YOU KNOW?

At least 36 varieties of wild tulips grow in Kazakhstan, and the tulip shape is a common motif in traditional Kazakh art.

The water of Kazakhstan's Lake Balkhash is salty in the eastern part and nearly salt-free in the western part.

Falconry with trained eagles and other birds of prey remains popular. Kazakhs excel in training golden eagles—their favorite species.

A blinder on the eagle's head helps eliminate the bird's fear of humans



Inside a yurt



mony with nature. Shepherds still favor the yurt, and urban Kazakhs often use them for special events. Yurts also serve as comfortable tourist accommodations. The interior of a yurt can be a showplace for Kazakh women's diverse embroidering, weaving, and carpet-making skills.

Rural Kazakh families treasure their horses. There are at least 21 Kazakh words for horse, each with its own shade of meaning, and more than 30 words and expressions to describe the colors of a horse's coat. A fine horse still makes a costly and cherished gift. In the countryside, boys learn to ride from an early age.

A traditional Kazakh meal should always include meat and is usually not spicy. Among Kazakhs' favorite drinks are koumiss, which is made from mare's milk and is said to provide many health benefits, and rich, slightly sour *shubat*, made from camel's milk.

The branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Almaty welcomes visitors and is open for tours. ■



The Shape of Seashells

SEASHELLS enable mollusks to live in harsh conditions, resisting tremendous pressures on the seabed. This ability to provide optimum protection inspired engineers to study the shape and structure of seashells with a view to designing vehicles and buildings that will protect their occupants.

Consider: Engineers analyzed two seashell forms—bivalve (clamshell-style) and spiral (screw-shaped).

In the case of the bivalve, it was found that the ribbing on the exterior of a shell directed stresses toward its hinge and outer edges. In contrast, the curving exterior of a spiral shell directed pressure toward its core and wide top. In both cases, the seashells' shapes channeled pressure

to their strongest areas, meaning that in the event of damage, harm to the mollusk would be less likely.

Researchers also ran comparative stress tests on real shells and on simple hemispheres and cones (produced on a 3-D printer) that mimicked shells' shapes and composition. The results showed that natural seashells' complex surfaces nearly doubled their ability to withstand pressure when compared to the simple shapes.

Commenting on the applications of this research, *Scientific American* says: "If you wind up driving a shell-shaped car someday, it'll be both stylish and designed to protect the soft bodies inside."

What do you think: Did the shape of seashells evolve? Or was it designed? ■

