

- Song 38 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

"Go With the Strength You Have": (10 min.)



Jehovah gave Gideon a daunting assignment (Jg 6:2-6, 14)

(Judges 6:2-6) The hand of Mid'i-an dominated over Israel. Because of Mid'i-an, the Israelites made hiding places for themselves in the mountains, in the caves, and in the places difficult to approach. 3 If Israel sowed seed, Mid'i-an and Am'a-lek and the Easterners would attack them. 4 They would camp against them and ruin the produce of the land all the way to Gaz'a, and they left nothing for Israel to eat and no sheep or bull or donkey. 5 For they would come up with their livestock and tents as numerous as the locusts, and they and their camels could not be numbered, and they would come into the land to destroy it. 6 So Israel became greatly impoverished on account of Mid'i-an; and the Israelites called to Jehovah for help.

(Judges 6:14) Jehovah faced him and said: "Go with the strength you have, and you will save Israel out of Mid'i-an's hand. Is it not I who send you?"

Gideon felt unqualified and unworthy (Jg 6:15; w02 2/15 6-7)

(Judges 6:15) Gid'e-on answered him: "Pardon me, Jehovah. How can I save Israel? Look! My

clan is the least in Ma-nas'sseh, and I am the most insignificant in my father's house."

*** w02 2/15 pp. 6-7 Godly Principles Can Benefit You ***

Someone who had a healthy attitude about himself and who made a sound appraisal of his own worth, was Gideon, a judge among the ancient Hebrews. He did not seek to be leader of Israel. When he was designated to fill that role, however, Gideon called attention to his unworthiness. "My thousand is the least in Manasseh, and I am the smallest in my father's house," he explained.—Judges 6:12-16.

- (Judges 6:12-16) 12 Jehovah's angel appeared to him and said: "Jehovah is with you, you mighty warrior." 13 At this Gid'e-on said to him: "Pardon me, my lord, but if Jehovah is with us, why has all of this come upon us? Where are all his wonderful acts that our fathers related to us, saying, 'Did Jehovah not bring us up out of Egypt?' Now Jehovah has deserted us and given us into Mid'i-an's hand." 14 Jehovah faced him and said: "Go with the strength you have, and you will save Israel out of Mid'i-an's hand. Is it not I who send you?" 15 Gid'e-on answered him: "Pardon me, Jehovah. How can I save Israel? Look! My clan is the least in Ma-nas'sseh, and I am the most insignificant in my father's house." 16 But Jehovah said to him: "Because I will be with you, you will strike down Mid'i-an as if they were one man."

Gideon was successful because of Jehovah's strength (Jg 7:19-22; w05 7/15 16 ¶3)



(Judges 7:19-22) Gid'e-on and the 100 men who were with him came to the edge of the camp at the start of the middle night watch, just after the sentries were posted. They blew the horns and smashed the large water jars that were in their hands. 20 So the three bands blew the horns and shattered the large jars. They held the torches in their left hands and blew the horns in their right hands and they called out: "The sword of Jehovah and of Gid'e-on!" 21 All the while each man stood in his place all around the camp, and the whole army ran away, shouting as they fled. 22 The 300 continued to blow the horns, and Jehovah turned the sword of each one against the other throughout the camp; and the army fled as far as Beth-shit'tah, on to Zer'e-rah, as far as the outskirts of A'bel-me-ho'lah by Tab'bath.

*** w05 7/15 p. 16 "Jehovah's Sword and Gideon's!" ***

What terror the Midianites now experience! Suddenly, the stillness is broken by the shattering of 300 jars, the blare of 300 horns, and the shouts of 300 men. Stunned, especially by the cry "Jehovah's sword and Gideon's!," the Midianites add their own cries to the din. In the chaos, it is impossible for them to tell friend from foe. The 300 stand still in their assigned positions as God causes the

enemies to use their own swords to slaughter one another. The camp is routed, escape is cut off, and mop-up operations involving an arduous pursuit permanently remove the Midianite threat. The long and murderous occupation has finally come to an end.—Judges 7:19-25; 8:10-12, 28.

- (Judges 7:19-25) Gid'e-on and the 100 men who were with him came to the edge of the camp at the start of the middle night watch, just after the sentries were posted. They blew the horns and smashed the large water jars that were in their hands. 20 So the three bands blew the horns and shattered the large jars. They held the torches in their left hands and blew the horns in their right hands and they called out: "The sword of Jehovah and of Gid'e-on!" 21 All the while each man stood in his place all around the camp, and the whole army ran away, shouting as they fled. 22 The 300 continued to blow the horns, and Jehovah turned the sword of each one against the other throughout the camp; and the army fled as far as Beth-shit'tah, on to Zer'e-rah, as far as the outskirts of A'bel-me-ho'lah by Tab'bath. 23 And the men of Israel were called together from Naph'ta-li, Ash'er, and all of Ma-nas'seh, and they chased after Mid'i-an. 24 Gid'e-on sent messengers into all the mountainous region of E'phra-im, saying: "Go down to attack Mid'i-an, and capture the access to the waters as far as Beth-bar'ah and the Jordan." So all the men of E'phra-im were gathered together, and they captured the waters as far as Beth-bar'ah and the Jordan. 25 They also captured the two princes of Mid'i-an, O'reb and Ze'eb; they killed O'reb on the rock of O'reb, and they killed Ze'eb at the winepress of Ze'eb. They kept on pursuing Mid'i-an, and they brought

the heads of O'reb and Ze'eb to
Gid'e-on in the region of the Jordan.

- (Judges 8:10-12) Now Ze'bah and Zal-mun'na were in Kar'kor with their armies, about 15,000 men. These were all who remained of the entire army of the Easterners, for 120,000 men armed with swords had fallen. 11 Gid'e-on continued up by the way of the tent dwellers east of No'bah and Jog'be-hah and attacked the camp, which was off guard. 12 When Ze'bah and Zal-mun'na fled, he pursued and captured the two Mid'i-an-ite kings, Ze'bah and Zal-mun'na, throwing the whole camp into a panic.
- (Judges 8:28) Thus Mid'i-an was subdued before the Israelites, and they did not challenge them again; and the land had rest for 40 years in the days of Gid'e-on.

Jehovah expects us to use the strength we have to worship him. His holy spirit can make up for any lack and give us success.—Isa 40:30, 31.

- (Isaiah 40:30, 31) 30 Boys will tire out and grow weary, And young men will stumble and fall, 31 But those hoping in Jehovah will regain power. They will soar on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary; They will walk and not tire out."

Spiritual Gems:

Jg 6:27—How can Gideon's example help us in the ministry? (w05 1/15 26 ¶16)

(Judges 6:27) 27 So Gid'e-on took ten men of his servants and did just as Jehovah told him. But he feared the household of his father and the men of the city too much to do it by day, so he did it at night.

*** w05 1/15 p. 26 par. 6 Highlights From the Book of Judges ***

6:25-27. Gideon used discretion so as not to anger his opposers needlessly. When preaching the good news, we must be careful not to offend others unduly by the way we speak.

- (Judges 6:25-27) 25 That night Jehovah said to him: "Take the young bull that belongs to your father, the second young bull that is seven years old, and tear down the altar of Ba'al that belongs to your father, and cut down the sacred pole next to it. 26 After you build an altar to Jehovah your God on top of this stronghold with the row of stones, take the second young bull and offer it as a burnt offering on the pieces of wood from the sacred pole that you cut down." 27 So Gid'e-on took ten men of his servants and did just as Jehovah told him. But he feared the household of his father and the men of the city too much to do it by day, so he did it at night.

What spiritual gems from this week's Bible reading would you like to share regarding Jehovah, the field ministry, or something else?

Bible Reading:) (4 min.)
Jg 6:1-16 (th study 10)

(Judges 6:1-16) 6 But the Israelites again did what was bad in the eyes of Jehovah, so Jehovah gave them into the hand of Mid'i-an for seven years. 2 The hand of Mid'i-an dominated over Israel. Because of Mid'i-an, the Israelites made hiding places for themselves in the mountains, in the caves, and in the places difficult to approach. 3 If Israel sowed seed, Mid'i-an and Am'a-lek and the Easterners would attack them. 4 They would camp against them and ruin the produce of the land all the way to Gaz'a, and they left nothing for Israel to eat and no sheep or bull or donkey. 5 For they would come up with their livestock and tents as numerous as the locusts, and they and their camels could not be numbered, and they would come into the land to destroy it. 6 So Israel became greatly impoverished on account of Mid'i-an; and the Israelites called to Jehovah for help. 7 When the Israelites called to Jehovah for help because of Mid'i-an, 8 Jehovah sent to the Israelites a prophet who said to them: "This is what Jehovah the God of Israel says, 'I brought you up from Egypt and thus brought you out of the house of slavery. 9 So I rescued you from the hand of Egypt and from all your oppressors and drove them out from before you and gave you their land. 10 And I said to you: "I am Jehovah your God. You must not fear the gods of the Am'or-ites in whose land you are dwelling." But you did not obey me.'" 11 Later Jehovah's angel came and sat under the big tree that was in Oph'rah, which belonged to Jo'ash the Abi-ez'rite. His son Gid'e-on was beating out wheat in the winepress in order to hide it from Mid'i-an. 12 Jehovah's angel appeared to him and said: "Jehovah is with you, you mighty warrior." 13 At this Gid'e-on said to him: "Pardon me, my lord, but if Jehovah is with us, why has all of this come upon us? Where are all his wonderful acts that our fathers related to us, saying, 'Did Jehovah not bring us up out of Egypt?' Now Jehovah has deserted us and given us into Mid'i-an's hand." 14 Jehovah faced him and

said: "Go with the strength you have, and you will save Israel out of Mid'i-an's hand. Is it not I who send you?" 15 Gid'e-on answered him: "Pardon me, Jehovah. How can I save Israel? Look! My clan is the least in Ma-nas'sah, and I am the most insignificant in my father's house." 16 But Jehovah said to him: "Because I will be with you, you will strike down Mid'i-an as if they were one man."

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

Initial Call Video: (5 min.) Discussion.
Play the video Initial Call: The Bible—Ro 15:4. Stop the video at each pause, and ask the audience the questions that appear in the video.

Initial Call: (4 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer the Enjoy Life Forever! brochure. (th study 6)

Initial Call December

Question: How do you view the Bible?

Scripture: Ro 15:4

- (Romans 15:4) 4 For all the things that were written beforehand were written for our instruction, so that through our endurance and through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope.

Link: What Bible promise gives us hope?

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:

- Iffi lesson 01 point 5

Initial Call: (4 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer the **Enjoy Life Forever!** brochure, and show the householder how he can obtain an electronic copy. (th study 15)

Question: How do you view the Bible?

Scripture: Ro 15:4

Link: What Bible promise gives us hope?

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:

• Iffi lesson 01 point 5

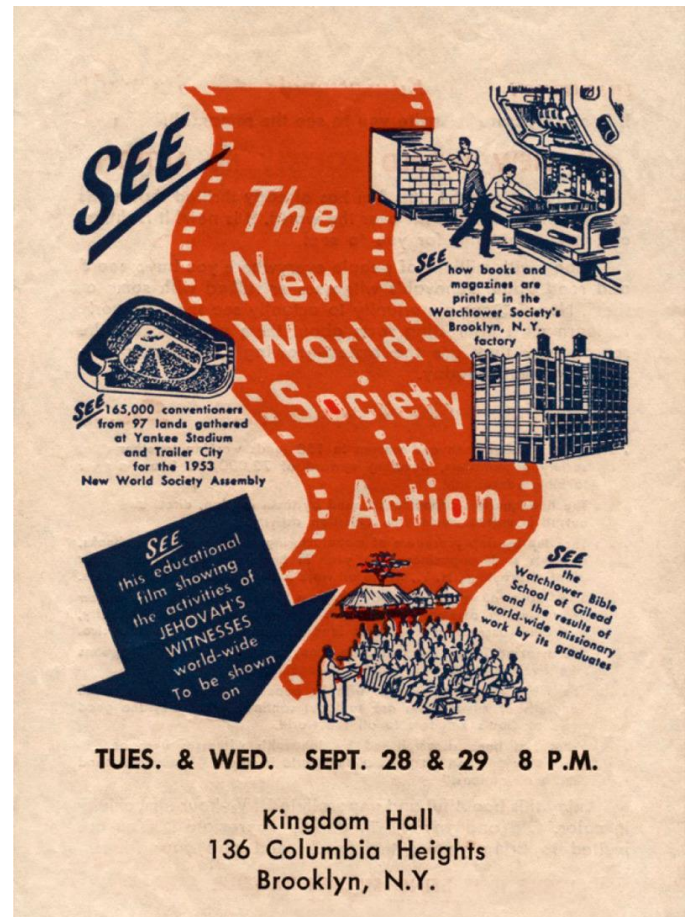
LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 104

“A Daunting Assignment Accomplished by Holy Spirit”: (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video Producing “The New World Society in Action.”

Throughout history, God’s servants have accomplished amazing things, not because of their own ability, but because of Jehovah’s help. In 1954, Jehovah’s organization released a film entitled *The New World Society in Action*. It was produced primarily by Bethelites who had no experience in filmmaking. This daunting project was accomplished only by Jehovah’s holy spirit. It gives us confidence that if we rely on Jehovah, we can be successful in carrying out any assignment we receive.—Zec 4:6.

- (Zechariah 4:6) He then said to me: “This is the word of Jehovah to Ze·rub'ba·bel: “Not by a military force, nor by power, but by my spirit,” says Jehovah of armies.



WATCH THE VIDEO PRODUCING “THE NEW WORLD SOCIETY IN ACTION,” AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- Why was a decision made to make a film about world headquarters?

• How did the film show that Bethel is like the human body?—1Co 12:14-20

- (1 Corinthians 12:14-20) For, indeed, the body is made up not of one member but of many. 15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am no part of the body," that does not make it no part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am no part of the body," that does not make it no part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If it were all hearing, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But now God has arranged each of the body members just as he pleased. 19 If they were all the same member, where would the body be? 20 But now they are many members, yet one body.

• What challenges did the brothers encounter when making the film, and how did they overcome them?

• What does this experience teach about Jehovah's holy spirit?

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)

rr chap. 17 ¶1-8, intro video

(Ezekiel 38:3) Say, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: "Here I am against you, O Gog, head chieftain of Me'shech and Tu'bal.

Paragraph 1

(Revelation 16:14) They are, in fact, expressions inspired by demons and they perform signs, and they go out to the kings of the entire inhabited earth, to gather them together to the war of the great day of God the Almighty.

Paragraph 2

(Ezekiel 38:1-23) omitted due length

(Ezekiel 39:1-29) omitted due to length

Paragraph 3

(Ezekiel 38:1, 2) The word of Jehovah again came to me, saying: 2 "Son of man, set your face against Gog of the land of Ma'gog, the head chieftain of Me'shech and Tu'bal, and prophesy against him.

(Ezekiel 38:8) ""You will be given attention after many days. In the final part of the years you will invade the land whose people have been restored from the ravages of the sword, collected together out of many peoples onto the mountains of Israel, which had long been lying devastated. The inhabitants of this land were restored from the peoples, and all of them dwell in security.

(Ezekiel 38:18) ""On that day, the day when Gog invades the land of Israel,' declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, 'my great rage will flare up.

(Ezekiel 39:4) On the mountains of Israel you will fall, you and all your troops and the peoples who will be with you. I will give you as

food to all kinds of birds of prey and the wild beasts of the field.”

(Ezekiel 39:11) “On that day I will give Gog a burial place there in Israel, in the valley of those who travel east of the sea, and it will block the path of those passing through. That is where they will bury Gog and all his hordes, and they will call it the Valley of Hamon-Gog.

Paragraph 5

(Ezekiel 39:4) On the mountains of Israel you will fall, you and all your troops and the peoples who will be with you. I will give you as food to all kinds of birds of prey and the wild beasts of the field.”

(Deuteronomy 28:26) And your carcasses will become food for every bird of the sky and animal of the ground, with no one to frighten them away.

(Jeremiah 7:33) And the dead bodies of this people will become food for the birds of the heavens and for the beasts of the earth, with no one to frighten them away.

(Ezekiel 29:3) Speak these words: ‘This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: “Here I am against you, Phar’aoth king of Egypt, The great sea monster lying among the streams of his Nile, Who has said, ‘My Nile River belongs to me. I made it for myself.’

(Ezekiel 29:5) I will abandon you in the desert, you and all the fish of your Nile. You will fall on the open field, and you will not be gathered up nor be collected together. I will give you as food to the wild beasts of the earth and the birds of the sky.

Paragraph 6

(Ezekiel 39:11) “On that day I will give Gog a burial place there in Israel, in the valley of those who travel east of the sea, and it will block the path of those passing through. That is where they will bury Gog and all his hordes, and they will call it the Valley of Hamon-Gog.

(Luke 8:31) And they kept pleading with him not to order them to go away into the abyss.

(Revelation 20:1-3) And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven with the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. 2 He seized the dragon, the original serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for 1,000 years. 3 And he hurled him into the abyss and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not mislead the nations anymore until the 1,000 years were ended. After this he must be released for a little while.

(Revelation 20:10) And the Devil who was misleading them was hurled into the lake of fire and sulfur, where both the wild beast and the false prophet already were; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Paragraph 8

(Daniel 11:40-45) “In the time of the end the king of the south will engage with him in a pushing, and against him the king of the north will storm with chariots and horsemen and many ships; and he will enter into the lands and sweep through like a flood. 41 He will also enter into the land of the Decoration, and many lands will be made to stumble. But these are the ones that will escape out of his hand: E’dom and Mo’ab and the main part of the Am’mo-ni-tes. 42 And he will keep thrusting out his hand against the lands; and as regards the land of Egypt, she will not escape. 43 And he will rule over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the desirable things of Egypt. And the Lib’y-ans and the E-thi-o-pi-ans will be at his steps. 44 “But reports out of the east and out of the north will disturb him, and he will go out in a great rage to annihilate and to devote many to destruction. 45 And he will plant his royal tents between the grand sea and the holy mountain of Decoration; and he will come all the way to his end, and there will be no helper for him.

*****Daniel 11:45 indicates that the king of the north will target God’s people, for it says that this king “will plant his royal tents between

the grand sea [Mediterranean] and the holy mountain of Decoration [where God's temple once stood and where God's people worshipped]."

Footnote on Paragraph 4:

*** rr chap. 17 p. 182 "I Am Against You, O Gog" ***

See "Questions From Readers" in The Watchtower, May 15, 2015, pp. 29-30.

Who is Gog of Magog mentioned in the book of Ezekiel?

- For a number of years, our publications have explained that Gog of Magog is the name given to Satan the Devil after his ouster from heaven. This explanation was based on the fact that the book of Revelation identifies Satan the Devil as the leader of the worldwide attack on God's people. (Rev. 12:1-17) So it was thought that Gog must be another prophetic name for Satan.

- However, that explanation raised some important questions. Why so? Consider this: When referring to the time that Gog is defeated, Jehovah says regarding Gog: "I will give you as food to all kinds of birds of prey and the wild beasts of the field." (Ezek. 39:4) Then Jehovah adds: "On that day I will give Gog a burial place there in Israel . . . That is where they will bury Gog and all his hordes." (Ezek. 39:11) But how could a spirit creature be eaten by "birds of prey and the wild beasts of the field"? How could Satan be given "a burial place" on earth? The Bible clearly shows that Satan will be abysed for 1,000 years, not eaten or buried.—Rev. 20:1, 2.

- We are told that at the end of the 1,000 years, Satan will be released from the abyss, and "he will go out to mislead those nations in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war." (Rev.

20:8) But how can Satan mislead Gog if he himself is Gog? Therefore, "Gog" does not refer to Satan in either Ezekiel's prophecy or the book of Revelation.

- Who, then, is Gog of Magog? To answer that question, we need to search the Scriptures to find out who attacks God's people. The Bible speaks not only of the attack by 'Gog of Magog' but also of the attack by "the king of the north" and of the attack by "the kings of the earth." (Ezek. 38:2, 10-13; Dan. 11:40, 44, 45; Rev. 17:14; 19:19) Do these represent separate attacks? Not likely. The Bible is no doubt referring to the same attack under different names. Why can we draw that conclusion? Because the Scriptures tell us that all the nations of the earth will be involved in this final attack that prompts the war of Armageddon.—Rev. 16:14, 16.

- When we compare all these Scriptural references about the final attack on God's people, it becomes evident that the name Gog of Magog refers, not to Satan, but to a coalition of nations. Will this coalition be led by the figurative "king of the north"? We cannot say with any certainty. But this thought does seem to be in harmony with what Jehovah says about Gog: "You will come from your place, from the remotest parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great assembly, a vast army."—Ezek. 38:6, 15.

- Similarly, the prophet Daniel, who was a contemporary of Ezekiel, says of the king of the north: "Reports out of the east and out of the north will disturb him, and he will go out in a great rage to annihilate and to devote many to destruction. And he will plant his royal tents between the grand sea and the holy mountain of Decoration; and he will come all the way to his end, and there will be no helper for him." (Dan. 11:44, 45) This clearly parallels what the book of Ezekiel says about Gog's activities.—Ezek. 38:8-12, 16.

- What occurs next as a result of this final attack? Daniel tells us: "During that time

Michael [Jesus Christ] will stand up [at Armageddon], the great prince who is standing [since 1914] in behalf of your people. And there will occur a time of distress [the great tribulation] such as has not occurred since there came to be a nation until that time. And during that time your people will escape, everyone who is found written down in the book.” (Dan. 12:1) This action on the part of God’s representative Jesus is also described at Revelation 19:11-21.

- But who is referred to as “Gog and Magog” at Revelation 20:8? During the final test at the end of the 1,000 years, those who rebel against Jehovah will manifest the same murderous attitude as ‘Gog of Magog,’ those nations that attack God’s people at the end of the great tribulation. And the outcome for both groups will be exactly the same—everlasting death! (Rev. 19:20, 21; 20:9) It seems fitting, then, that all those rebels at the end of the Millennium be called “Gog and Magog.”

- As keen students of God’s Word, we wait with eager anticipation to see who in the near future will assume the role of “the king of the north.” But no matter who may take the lead in this coalition of nations, we are certain of two things: (1) Gog of Magog and his armies will be defeated and destroyed; and (2) our reigning King, Jesus Christ, will save God’s people and usher them into a new world of peace and true security.—Rev. 7:14-17.

Chart on page 29]

ATTACK OF GOG OF MAGOG (EZEK. 38:2, 10-13)

GREAT TRIBULATION BEGINS

GOG OF MAGOG:

A coalition of nations that will attempt to annihilate God’s people

ARMAGEDDON:

- Jesus rides to protect God’s people
- Gog of Magog destroyed (Rev. 16:14, 16)
- Satan and the demons abyssed (Rev. 20:1-3)

THE BEGINNING OF CHRIST’S MILLENNIAL REIGN

[Chart on page 30]

ATTACK OF GOG AND MAGOG (REV. 20:8, 9)

END OF THE 1,000 YEARS

SATAN RELEASED

Incites some to rebel against Jehovah and his people

GOG AND MAGOG:

With murderous intent, rebellious humans will encircle righteous mankind

THE END OF WICKEDNESS:

- Fire from heaven destroys Gog and Magog (Rev. 20:9)
- Satan and the demons thrown into lake of fire (Rev. 20:10)

- Concluding Comments (3 min.)

- Song 8 and Prayer