

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

MARCH 2014

WEEK STARTING MARCH 10

Song 1 and Prayer

❑ **Congregation Bible Study:**

cl chap. 4 ¶1-9 (30 min.)

❑ **Theocratic Ministry School:**

Bible reading: Genesis 40-42 (10 min.)

No. 1: Genesis 41:1-16 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: How Do the Rest of the Dead Come to Life on Earth?—*rs* p. 338 ¶2–p. 339 ¶2 (5 min.)

No. 3: Abihu—Prominence Does Not Excuse Disobedience—*it-1* p. 22 (5 min.)

❑ **Service Meeting:**

Song 88

15 min: Family Worship That Refreshes. Interview a family regarding their family worship. Of what does their program consist? How do they determine what to discuss? What tools available on *jw.org* have they used? How has their program helped them in the ministry? How do they prevent other activities from disrupting their schedule? How have they benefited from their program of family worship?

15 min: “Improving Our Skills in the Ministry—Responding to Potential Conversation Stoppers.” Discussion. Consider two or three potential conversation stoppers that publishers may encounter, and invite comments on how we might respond. Remind publishers that they will have an opportunity to relate experiences during the week of April 7.

Song 97 and Prayer

Improving Our Skills in the Ministry—Responding to Potential Conversation Stoppers

Why Important: Imagine that you know that a natural disaster is imminent. People will die unless they flee to safety. You go to a neighbor’s home to warn him, but he interrupts you, saying that he is busy. Surely, you would not quickly abandon your efforts to help him! Many in our territory turn us away, not realizing the life-saving value

of our message. At the time of our visit, perhaps they are preoccupied. (Matt. 24:37-39) Or maybe they have been prejudiced by untrue rumors. (Matt. 11:18, 19) They might assume that we are no different from the religions that have produced bad fruitage. (2 Pet. 2:1, 2) If the householder initially is not interested, we should not be quick to give up.

How to Do It:

- Before preaching from house to house, take a few moments to think about potential conversation stoppers that you may encounter and consider how to respond.
- If the householder presents an objection, gently try to continue the conversation. Perhaps you can do that by commending him. For example, if he says that he has his own religion, you might reply, “I was hoping to find someone like you who has an interest in spiritual things.” Sometimes acknowledging the householder’s feelings or circumstances will enable you to continue giving a witness. For instance, if he says that he is busy, you might say: “I understand. But before I leave, I would like to give you this.” Another option is to ask a question if the householder says that he is not interested. You could say, “Do you mean that you are not interested in the Bible, or is it religion in general that does not interest you?”
- Use good judgment. Remember that Jehovah does not force people to listen. (Deut. 30:19) Everyone must carry his own load of spiritual responsibility. (Gal. 6:5) If the householder is adamant, it is best to take our leave. By demonstrating respect for his feelings, we may open the door for another publisher to give a witness in the future.—1 Pet. 3:15.

Try This During the Month:

- When you encounter a potential conversation stopper, after leaving the householder, discuss with your partner how you might have responded in a better way.

1

Jehovah's Attributes

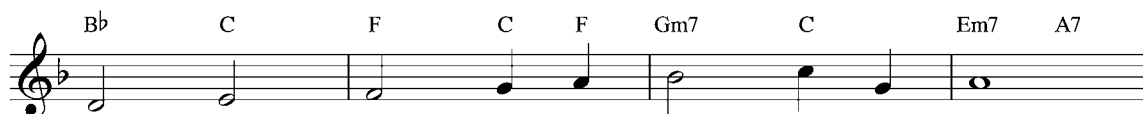
(Revelation 4:11)



Je - ho - vah God, ex - alt - ed in might,
 Your loft - y throne, on jus - tice it stands.
 Great - est of all is your per - fect love.



Source of all life and Pro - vid - er of light. Cre -
 Thus you make known all your righ - teous com - mands. And
 None can re - pay all your gifts from a - bove. Your



a - tion speaks of your pow - er so great;
 as we turn to your Word, we can see
 at - tri - butes and your glo - ri - ous name,



More your great day will still re - late.
 Your wis - dom shine so bril - liant - ly.
 Ex - ult - ing - ly we will pro - claim.

S E C T I O N 1

“VIGOROUS IN POWER”

In this section we will examine Bible accounts that testify to Jehovah’s power to create, to destroy, to protect, and to restore.

Understanding how Jehovah God, who is “vigorous in power,” uses his “dynamic energy” will fill our hearts with awe.

—Isaiah 40:26.

“Jehovah Is . . . Great in Power”

ELIJAH had seen amazing things before. He had seen ravens carrying food to him twice a day while he lived in hiding. He had seen two containers supplying flour and oil throughout a long famine and never emptying. He had even seen fire falling from the sky in response to his prayer. (1 Kings, chapters 17, 18) Still, Elijah had never seen *anything* like this.

² As he huddled near the mouth of a cave on Mount Horeb, he witnessed a series of spectacular events. First there was a wind. It must have made a howling, deafening roar, for it was so powerful that it sundered mountains and shattered crags. Next there was an earthquake, unleashing immense forces pent up in the earth's crust. Then came a fire. As it swept through the region, Elijah likely felt the blast of its searing heat.—1 Kings 19:8-12.

³ All these diverse events that Elijah witnessed had one thing in common—they were demonstrations of Jehovah God's great power. Of course, we do not need to witness a miracle to discern that God possesses this attribute. It is readily apparent. The Bible tells us that creation gives proof of Jehovah's “eternal power and Godship.” (Romans 1:20) Just think of the blinding flashes and rumbling booms of a thunderstorm, the glorious cascade of a mighty waterfall, the overwhelming vastness of a starry sky! Do you not see the power of God in such displays? Yet, few in today's world truly recognize God's power.

1, 2. What amazing things had Elijah seen in his life, but what spectacular events did he witness from the cave on Mount Horeb?

3. Elijah witnessed evidence of what divine attribute, and where can we see evidence of this same quality?

Still fewer view it properly. Understanding this divine attribute, though, gives us many reasons for drawing closer to Jehovah. In this section, we embark upon a detailed study of Jehovah's matchless power.

An Essential Attribute of Jehovah

⁴ Jehovah is unique in power. Jeremiah 10:6 says: "In no way is there anyone like you, O Jehovah. You are great, and your name is great in mightiness." Note that mightiness, or power, is linked with Jehovah's name. Remember, this name evidently means "He Causes to Become." What enables Jehovah to create anything he wants and to become whatever he chooses? Power, for one thing. Yes, Jehovah's ability to act, to carry out his will, is unlimited. Such power is one of his essential attributes.

⁵ Because we could never grasp the full extent of his power, Jehovah uses illustrations to help us. As we have seen, he uses the bull to symbolize his power. (Ezekiel 1:4-10) That choice is apt, for even the domesticated bull is a huge and powerful creature. People in the Palestine of Bible times rarely, if ever, faced anything stronger. But they did know of a more fearsome sort of bull—the wild bull, or aurochs, which has since become extinct. (Job 39:9-12) Roman Emperor Julius Caesar once observed that these bulls were scarcely smaller than elephants. "Great is their strength," he wrote, "and great their speed." Imagine how tiny and weak you would feel standing in the shadow of such a creature!

4, 5. (a) What link is there between Jehovah's name and his mightiness, or power? (b) Why is it fitting that Jehovah chose the bull to symbolize his power?

"Look! Jehovah was passing by"



⁶ Similarly, man is puny and powerless when compared with the God of power, Jehovah. To him, even mighty nations are like a mere film of dust on a pair of scales. (Isaiah 40:15) Unlike any creature, Jehovah has *unlimited* power, for he alone is called “the Almighty.”* (Revelation 15:3) Jehovah is “vigorous in power” and possesses an “abundance of dynamic energy.” (Isaiah 40:26) He is the ever-plentiful, inexhaustible source of power. He depends upon no outside source for energy, for “strength belongs to God.” (Psalm 62:11) By what means, though, does Jehovah exert his power?

How Jehovah Exerts His Power

⁷ Holy spirit pours forth from Jehovah in limitless supply. It is God’s power *in action*. In fact, at Genesis 1:2, the Bible refers to it as God’s “active force.” The original Hebrew and Greek words that are rendered “spirit” may, in other contexts, be translated “wind,” “breath,” and “blast.” According to lexicographers, the original-language words suggest an invisible force in action. Like wind, God’s spirit is invisible to our eyes, but its effects are real and discernible.

⁸ God’s holy spirit is endlessly versatile. Jehovah can use it to carry out any purpose that he has in mind. Aptly, then, in the Bible, God’s spirit is figuratively called his “finger,” his “strong hand,” or his “outstretched arm.” (Luke 11:20; Deuteronomy 5:15; Psalm 8:3) Just as a man

* The Greek word rendered “Almighty” literally means “Ruler Over All; One Who Has All Power.”

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6. Why is Jehovah alone called “the Almighty”?
 7. What is Jehovah’s holy spirit, and what is suggested by the original-language words used in the Bible?
 8. In the Bible, what is God’s spirit figuratively called, and why are these comparisons fitting?

might apply his hand to a wide range of tasks requiring varying degrees of strength or finesse, so God can use his spirit to accomplish any purpose—such as creating the infinitesimal atom or parting the Red Sea or enabling first-century Christians to speak in foreign tongues.

⁹ Jehovah also exerts power through his authority as Universal Sovereign. Can you imagine having millions upon millions of intelligent, able subjects eager to do your bidding? Jehovah wields such ruling power. He has human servants, in Scripture often likened to an army. (Psalm 68:11; 110:3) A human is a weak creature, though, compared with an angel. Why, when the Assyrian army attacked God's people, a single angel killed 185,000 of those soldiers in one night! (2 Kings 19:35) God's angels are "mighty in power."—Psalm 103:19, 20.

¹⁰ How many angels are there? The prophet Daniel had a vision of heaven in which he saw well over 100 million spirit creatures before Jehovah's throne, but there is no indication that he saw the entire angelic creation. (Daniel 7:10) So there may be hundreds of millions of angels. God is thus called Jehovah of armies. This title describes his powerful position as Commander of a vast, organized array of mighty angels. Above all these spirit creatures, he has placed one in charge, his own beloved Son, "the first-born of all creation." (Colossians 1:15) As the archangel—chief over all the angels, seraphs, and cherubs—Jesus is the mightiest of all of Jehovah's creations.

¹¹ Jehovah has yet another means of exerting power. Hebrews 4:12 says: "The word of God is alive and exerts

9. How extensive is Jehovah's ruling power?

10. (a) Why is the Almighty called Jehovah of armies? (b) Who is the mightiest of all of Jehovah's creations?

11, 12. (a) In what ways does God's word exert power? (b) How did Jesus attest to the extent of Jehovah's power?

14 she began to cry out to the men of her house and to say to them: "Look! He brought to us this Hebrew man to make us a laughingstock. He came to me to lie down with me, but I began to cry out at the top of my voice. 15 Then as soon as he heard me raising my voice and screaming, he left his garment beside me and fled outside." 16 After that she laid his garment beside her until his master came to his house.

17 Then she told him the same thing, saying: "The Hebrew servant whom you brought to us came to me to make me a laughingstock. 18 But as soon as I raised my voice and began to scream, he left his garment beside me and fled outside." 19 As soon as his master heard the words his wife spoke to him, saying: "These are the things your servant did to me," his anger blazed. 20 So Joseph's master took him and gave him over to the prison, the place where the prisoners of the king were kept under arrest, and he remained there in the prison.^a

21 But Jehovah continued with Joseph and kept showing loyal love to him and granting him favor in the eyes of the chief officer of the prison.^b 22 So the chief officer of the prison put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners in the prison, and everything that they were doing there, he was the one having it done.^c 23 The chief officer of the prison was looking after absolutely nothing that was in Joseph's care, for Jehovah was with Joseph and Jehovah made whatever he did successful.^d

40 After these things, the chief cupbearer^e of the king of Egypt and the chief baker sinned against their lord, the king of Egypt. 2 So Phar'aoah grew indignant at his two of-

CHAP. 39

a Ps 105:17, 18

b Ge 40:2, 3
Ps 105:19
Ac 7:9

c Ge 39:6

d Ge 49:22, 25
Ac 7:9, 10

CHAP. 40

e Ge 40:11

Second Col.

a Ge 40:20-22

b Ge 37:36

c Ge 39:20
Ps 105:17, 18

d Ge 39:22

e Ge 41:15, 16
Da 2:28, 45

f Ge 41:12, 13

g Ge 40:20, 21

ficers, the chief cupbearer and the chief baker,^a 3 and he committed them to the jail of the house of the chief of the guard,^b to the place where Joseph was a prisoner.^c 4 Then the chief of the guard assigned Joseph to be with them and to take care of them,^d and they remained in jail for some time.*

5 The cupbearer and the baker of the king of Egypt, who were confined in the prison, each had a dream on the same night, and each dream had its own interpretation. 6 The next morning, when Joseph came in and saw them, they looked dejected. 7 So he asked the officers of Phar'aoah who were in custody with him in his master's house: "Why are your faces gloomy today?" 8 At this they said to him: "We each had a dream, but there is no interpreter with us." Joseph said to them: "Do not interpretations belong to God?^e Relate it to me, please."

9 So the chief cupbearer related his dream to Joseph, saying to him: "In my dream, there was a vine before me. 10 And on the vine, there were three twigs, and as it was sprouting shoots, it blossomed, and its clusters ripened into grapes. 11 And Phar'aoah's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes and squeezed them out into Phar'aoah's cup. After that I put the cup in Phar'aoah's hand." 12 Then Joseph said to him: "This is its interpretation: The three twigs are three days. 13 Three days from now, Phar'aoah will bring you out,^f restoring you to your office,^g and you will put Phar'aoah's cup into his hand as you did before when you were his cupbearer.^h 14 Nevertheless, you must remember me

40:4 *Lit., "days." 40:13 *Lit., "lift up your head."

when things go well with you. Please show me loyal love and mention me to Phar'aoh, in order to get me out of this place. **15** I was, in fact, kidnapped from the land of the Hebrews,^a and I have not done anything here for which they should put me in prison."^{*b}

16 When the chief baker saw that Joseph had interpreted something good, he said to him: "I too was in my dream, and there were three baskets of white bread on my head, **17** and in the top basket, there were all sorts of baked goods for Phar'aoh, and there were birds eating them out of the basket on top of my head." **18** Then Joseph answered, "This is its interpretation: The three baskets are three days. **19** Three days from now, Phar'aoh will behead you* and will hang you on a stake, and the birds will eat your flesh from you."^c

20 Now the third day was Phar'aoh's birthday,^d and he made a feast for all his servants, and he brought out* both the chief cupbearer and the chief baker in the presence of his servants. **21** And he returned the chief cupbearer to his post of cupbearer, and he continued to hand the cup to Phar'aoh. **22** But he hanged the chief baker, just as Joseph had interpreted to them.^e **23** However, the chief cupbearer did not remember Joseph; he kept forgetting him.^f

41 At the end of two full years, Phar'aoh dreamed^g that he was standing by the Nile River. **2** And there, coming up from the river, were seven fine-looking, fat cows, and they were feeding on the Nile grass.^h

40:15; 41:14 *Lit., "the cistern; the pit."
 40:19 *Lit., "lift up your head from you."
 40:20 *Lit., "he lifted up the head of."

CHAP. 40
 a Ge 37:28
 b Ge 39:7, 8
 c Ge 40:20, 22
 d Mr 6:21
 e Ge 40:8
 f Ge 40:14
 CHAP. 41
 g Da 2:1
 h Ge 41:18-21
 Second Col.
 a Ge 41:22-24
 b Ge 40:2, 3
 c Ge 40:5
 d Ge 39:1
 e Ge 40:8
 f Ge 40:21, 22
 g Ps 105:20
 h Ge 40:15

3 There were seven other cows that looked ugly and thin coming up after them from the Nile, and they stood alongside the fat cows by the bank of the Nile. **4** Then the ugly, thin cows began to eat up the seven fine-looking, fat cows. At this Phar'aoh woke up.

5 Then he went back to sleep and had a second dream. There were seven ears of grain coming up on one stalk, full and choice.^a **6** And growing up after them were seven ears of grain that were thin and scorched by the east wind. **7** And the thin ears of grain began to swallow up the seven full and choice ears of grain. At this Phar'aoh woke up and realized that it was a dream.

8 But in the morning, his spirit became agitated. So he sent for all the magic-practicing priests of Egypt and all her wise men. Phar'aoh related his dreams to them, but there was no one who could interpret them for Phar'aoh.

9 At that the chief cupbearer spoke with Phar'aoh, saying: "I am confessing my sins today. **10** Phar'aoh was indignant at his servants. So he committed me to the jail of the house of the chief of the guard, both me and the chief baker.^b **11** After that we each had a dream on the same night. He and I each had a dream with its own interpretation.^c **12** And there with us was a young Hebrew man, a servant of the chief of the guard.^d When we related them to him,^e he interpreted for us the meaning of each dream. **13** It happened exactly as he had interpreted to us. I was restored to my office, but the other man was hanged."^f

14 So Phar'aoh sent for Joseph,^g and they brought him quickly from the prison.^h He shaved and changed his clothes and went in to Phar'aoh.

15 Then Phar'aoth said to Joseph: "I had a dream, but there is no one to interpret it. Now I have heard it said about you that you can hear a dream and interpret it."^a 16 At this Joseph answered Phar'aoth: "I need not be considered! God will speak concerning Phar'aoth's welfare."^b

17 Phar'aoth went on to say to Joseph: "In my dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile River. 18 And there, coming up from the Nile, were seven fine-looking, fat cows, and they began to feed on the Nile grass.^c 19 And there were seven other cows coming up after them, poor and very bad-looking and thin. I have never seen such bad-looking cows in all the land of Egypt. 20 And the skinny, bad cows began to eat up the first seven fat cows. 21 But when they had consumed them, no one could have known that they had done so, since their appearance was just as bad as at the start. At that I woke up.

22 "After that I saw in my dream seven ears of grain coming up on one stalk, full and choice.^d 23 Growing up after them were seven ears of shriveled grain, thin and scorched by the east wind. 24 Then the thin ears of grain began to swallow up the seven choice ears of grain. So I told it to the magic-practicing priests,^e but there was no one who could explain it to me."^f

25 Then Joseph said to Phar'aoth: "The dreams of Phar'aoth are one and the same. The true God has told to Phar'aoth what He will do.^g 26 The seven good cows are seven years. Likewise, the seven good ears of grain are seven years. The dreams are one and the same. 27 The seven skinny and bad cows that came up after them are seven years, and the seven empty

CHAP. 41

a Da 5:12
Ac 7:9,10b Ge 40:8
Da 2:23,28

c Ge 41:2-4

d Ge 41:5-7

e Ge 41:8
Da 2:2f Da 2:27
Da 4:7g Da 2:28
Am 3:7

Second Col.

a Ac 7:11

b Ge 41:26,47

c Ge 41:48,49
Ac 7:12d Ge 45:9,11
Ge 47:13,19

ears of grain, scorched by the east wind, will prove to be seven years of famine. 28 This is just as I told to Phar'aoth: The true God has caused Phar'aoth to see what He will do.

29 "There are to be seven years of great abundance in all the land of Egypt. 30 But seven years of famine will certainly arise after them, and all the abundance in the land of Egypt will certainly be forgotten, and the famine will exhaust the land.^a

31 And the previous abundance in the land will not be remembered because of the famine afterward, for it will be very severe. 32 The dream was given twice to Phar'aoth because the matter has been firmly established by the true God, and the true God will soon carry it out.

33 "So now let Phar'aoth look for a man who is discreet and wise and place him over the land of Egypt. 34 Let Phar'aoth take action and appoint overseers in the land, and he should collect one fifth of the produce of Egypt during the seven years of abundance.^b 35 And let them collect all the food during these coming good years, and let them stockpile grain under Phar'aoth's authority as food to be stored in the cities and safeguarded there.^c 36 The food should serve as a supply for the land for the seven years of famine that will occur in the land of Egypt, so that the land may not perish in the famine."^d

37 This proposal seemed good to Phar'aoth and all his servants. 38 So Phar'aoth said to his servants: "Can another man be found like this one in whom there is the spirit of God?" 39 Phar'aoth then said to Joseph: "Since God has caused you to know all of this, there is no one as discreet and wise as you. 40 You will personally be over

my house, and all my people will obey you implicitly.^a Only in my role as king* will I be greater than you.” **41** And Phar’aoth added to Joseph: “See, I am putting you over all the land of Egypt.”^b **42** Then Phar’aoth removed his signet ring from his own hand and put it on Joseph’s hand and clothed him with garments of fine linen and placed a necklace of gold around his neck. **43** Moreover, he had him ride in the second chariot of honor that he had, and they would call out ahead of him, “*A-urékhi!*”^c Thus he put him over all the land of Egypt.

44 Phar’aoth further said to Joseph: “I am Phar’aoth, but without your authorization, no man may do a single thing* in all the land of Egypt.”^c **45** After that Phar’aoth gave Joseph the name Zaph’e-nath-pa-ne’ah and gave him As’e-nath^d the daughter of Pot’i’phe-ra the priest of On* as a wife. And Joseph began to oversee^e the land of Egypt.^e **46** Joseph was 30 years old^f when he stood before* Phar’aoth king of Egypt.

Then Joseph went out from before Phar’aoth and traveled throughout all the land of Egypt. **47** And during the seven years of abundance, the land went on producing plentifully.* **48** And he kept collecting all the food of the seven years from the land of Egypt, and he would stockpile the food in the cities. In each city he would store the food from the fields around it. **49** Joseph continued stockpiling grain in very great quantity, like

41:40 *Or “Only with regard to the throne.” **41:43** *Apparently a term calling for honor and dignity to be shown. **41:44** *Lit., “lift up his hand or his foot.” **41:45** *That is, Heliopolis. ^eOr “travel through.” **41:46** *Or “when he entered the service of.” **41:47** *Lit., “by handfuls.”

CHAP. 41

a Ge 39:6
Ps 105:21
Ac 7:9, 10

b Da 5:7

c Ge 44:18
Ge 45:8
Ac 7:9, 10

d Ge 46:20

e Ps 105:21

f Nu 4:3
2Sa 5:4
Lu 3:23

Second Col.

a Ge 48:5

b Ge 50:23
Nu 1:34, 35

c Ge 48:17
Nu 1:32, 33
De 33:17
Jos 14:4

d Ps 105:17, 18
Ac 7:9, 10

e Ge 41:26

f Ge 41:30
Ac 7:11

g Ge 45:9, 11
Ge 47:17

h Ge 47:13

i Ps 105:21

j Ge 43:1

k Ge 41:48, 49
Ge 47:16

l Ge 47:4

CHAP. 42

m Ge 41:48, 49

the sand of the sea, until finally they gave up measuring it because it could not be measured.

50 Before the year of the famine arrived, two sons were born to Joseph,^a whom As’e-nath the daughter of Pot’i’phe-ra the priest of On* bore to him. **51** Joseph named the firstborn Ma-nas’sseh,^b for he said, “God has made me forget all my trouble and all the house of my father.” **52** And he named the second one E’phra-im,^c for he said, “God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction.”^d

53 Then the seven years of abundance in the land of Egypt ended,^e **54** and the seven years of famine began, just as Joseph had said.^f The famine developed in all the lands, but in all the land of Egypt there was bread.^g **55** Eventually, all the land of Egypt suffered from the famine, and the people began to cry to Phar’aoth for bread.^h Then Phar’aoth said to all the Egyptians: “Go to Joseph, and do whatever he tells you.”ⁱ **56** The famine continued over all the surface of the earth.^j Then Joseph began to open up all the granaries that were among them and to sell to the Egyptians,^k as the famine had a strong grip on the land of Egypt. **57** Moreover, people of all the earth came to Egypt to buy from Joseph, because the famine had a strong grip on all the earth.^l

42 When Jacob learned that there was grain in Egypt,^m he said to his sons: “Why do you just keep looking at one another?” **2** He added: “I have heard that there is grain in Egypt. Go down there and buy some for us, so that we may stay alive and

41:50 *That is, Heliopolis. **41:51** *Meaning “One Making Forgetful; One Who Makes Forget.” **41:52** *Meaning “Doubly Fruitful.” **41:54** *Or “food.”

not die.”^a **3** So ten of Joseph’s brothers^b went down to buy grain from Egypt. **4** But Jacob did not send Benjamin,^c Joseph’s brother, with his other brothers, for he said: “Perhaps a fatal accident may befall him.”^d

5 So Israel’s sons came along with the others who were coming to buy, because the famine had extended to the land of Ca’naan.^e **6** Joseph was the man in authority over the land,^f and he was the one who sold grain to all the people of the earth.^g So Joseph’s brothers came and bowed low to him with their faces to the ground.^h **7** When Joseph saw his brothers, he immediately recognized them, but he concealed his identity from them.ⁱ So he spoke harshly with them and said: “Where have you come from?” to which they said: “From the land of Ca’naan to buy food.”^j

8 Thus Joseph recognized his brothers, but they did not recognize him. **9** Joseph immediately remembered the dreams that he had dreamed about them,^k and he said to them: “You are spies! You have come to see the vulnerable areas* of the land!” **10** Then they said to him: “No, my lord, but your servants have come to buy food. **11** We are all sons of but one man. We are upright men. Your servants do not act as spies.” **12** But he said to them: “Not so! You have come to see the vulnerable areas of the land!” **13** At this they said: “Your servants are 12 brothers.^l We are the sons of but one man^m in the land of Ca’naan, and the youngest is now with our father,ⁿ whereas the other one is no more.”^o

14 However, Joseph said to them: “It is just as I said to you—‘You are spies!’ **15** By this you will be tested: As surely as

CHAP. 42

a Ac 7:12

b 1Ch 2:1, 2

c Ge 35:18, 19
Ge 42:38
Ge 44:20

d Ge 43:14

e Ge 41:57
Ac 7:11

f Ge 41:44
Ge 45:8
Ps 105:21
Ac 7:9, 10

g Ge 47:14

h Ge 37:7, 9

i Ge 42:23

j Ge 37:1
Ac 7:11, 12

k Ge 37:7-9

l 1Ch 2:1, 2

m Ex 1:1-4

n Ge 35:18, 19
Ge 42:38
Ge 43:7

o Ge 37:27, 35
Ge 44:20

Second Col.

a Ge 42:34
Ge 43:29

b Ge 45:21, 23

c Ge 37:18, 28
Ge 50:17
Ac 7:9

d Ge 37:21

e Ge 9:5

f Ge 43:30

g Ge 42:19

h Ge 43:23

Phar’aoth lives, you will not leave this place until your youngest brother comes here.^a **16** Send one of you to bring your brother while you remain in bondage. In this way, your words may be tested out to see if you are telling the truth. And if not, then, as surely as Phar’aoth lives, you are spies.” **17** With that he put them together in custody for three days.

18 Joseph said to them on the third day: “Do this and live, for I fear God. **19** If you are upright, let one of your brothers remain in bondage in your house of custody, but the rest of you may go and take grain to alleviate the famine in your households.^b **20** Then bring your youngest brother to me, so that your words will be found trustworthy and you will not die.” And they did so.

21 And they said to one another: “We are surely being punished on account of our brother,^c because we saw his distress* when he begged us to show compassion, but we did not listen. That is why this distress has come upon us.” **22** Then Reu’ben answered them: “Did I not say to you, ‘Do not sin against the child,’ but you would not listen?^d Now his blood is certainly being asked back.”^e **23** But they did not know that Joseph understood, for there was an interpreter between them. **24** So he turned away from them and began to weep.^f When he returned and spoke to them again, he took Sim’e-on^g from them and bound him before their eyes.^h **25** Joseph then gave the command to fill up their bags* with grain and to return each man’s money to his own sack and to give them

42:21 *Or “the distress of his soul.”

42:25 *Or “receptacles.”

42:9 *Or “weakened condition.”

provisions for the journey. This was done for them.

26 So they loaded their grain on their donkeys and left from there. **27** When one of them opened his sack to give fodder to his donkey at the lodging place, he saw his money there in the mouth of his bag. **28** At that he said to his brothers: "My money has been returned, and now here it is in my bag!" Then their hearts sank, and trembling, they turned to one another and said: "What is this that God has done to us?"

29 When they came to Jacob their father in the land of Ca'naan, they told him all the things that had befallen them, saying: **30** "The man who is the lord of the country spoke harshly with us^a and accused us of spying on the country. **31** But we said to him, 'We are upright men. We are not spies.^b **32** We are 12 brothers,^c the sons of our father. One is no more,^d and the youngest is now with our father in the land of Ca'naan.'^e **33** But the man who is the lord of the country said to us, 'By this I will know that you are upright: Leave one of your brothers with me.^f Then take something to alleviate the famine in your households and go.^g **34** And bring your youngest brother to me, so that I may know that you are not spies but upright men. I will then give your brother back to you, and you may carry on trade in the land.'"

35 As they were emptying their sacks, here was each one's bag of money in his sack. When they and their father saw their bags of money, they became afraid. **36** Jacob their father exclaimed to them: "It is I you have bereaved!^h Joseph is no more,ⁱ and Sim'e-on is no more,^j and you are going to take Benjamin! It is upon me

CHAP. 42
 a Ge 42:7, 9
 b Ge 42:11
 c Ge 42:13
 d Ge 37:28, 35
 e Ge 35:18, 19
 Ge 42:4
 f Ge 42:19
 g Ge 42:2
 h Ge 43:14
 i Ge 37:28, 35
 j Ge 42:24

Second Col.

a Ge 37:22
 Ge 46:9
 b Ge 43:8, 9
 Ge 44:32
 c Ge 37:31-34
 Ge 44:20
 d Ps 89:48
 Ec 9:10
 Ho 13:14
 Ac 2:27
 Re 20:13
 e Ge 37:34, 35
 Ge 44:29

CHAP. 43

f Ge 41:30
 Ac 7:11
 g Ge 42:1, 2
 h Ge 42:15
 i Ge 42:15
 j Ge 32:28
 k Ge 42:13
 l Ge 42:16
 m Ge 37:26
 Ge 42:38
 n Ge 42:1, 2
 o Ac 7:14
 p Ge 44:32

that all these things have come!" **37** But Reu'ben said to his father: "You may put to death my own two sons if I do not bring him back to you.^a Give him over to my care, and I will return him to you."^b **38** However, he said: "My son will not go down with you, because his brother is dead and he alone is left.^c If a fatal accident should befall him on the journey you would make, then you would certainly bring down my gray hairs to the Grave^{*d} in grief."^e

43 Now the famine was severe in the land.^f **2** So when they had finished eating the grain they had brought from Egypt,^g their father said to them: "Return and buy a little food for us." **3** Then Judah said to him: "The man clearly warned us, 'You must not see my face again unless your brother is with you.'^h **4** If you send our brother with us, we will go down and buy food for you. **5** But if you do not send him, we will not go down, for the man said to us, 'You must not see my face again unless your brother is with you.'ⁱ **6** And Israel^j asked: "Why did you have to bring this trouble on me by telling the man that you had another brother?" **7** They replied: "The man directly inquired concerning us and our relatives, saying, 'Is your father still alive? Do you have another brother?' and we told him these facts.^k How could we possibly know that he would say, 'Bring your brother down?'"^l

8 Judah then urged Israel his father: "Send the boy with me,^m and let us go on our way so that we may live and not dieⁿ—we and you and our children.^o **9** I will be a guarantee for his safety."^p

42:38 *Or "Sheol," that is, the common grave of mankind. See Glossary. **43:9** *Or "be surety for him."

Will some be raised simply to have judgment pronounced and then be consigned to second death?

What is the meaning of John 5:28, 29? It says: “All those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who did good things to a resurrection of life, those who practiced vile things to a resurrection of judgment.” What Jesus said here must be understood in the light of the later revelation that he gave to John. (See Revelation 20:12, 13, quoted on page 337.) Both those who formerly did good things and those who formerly practiced bad things will be “judged individually according to their deeds.” What deeds? If we were to take the view that people were going to be condemned on the basis of deeds in their past life, that would be inconsistent with Romans 6:7: “He who has died has been acquitted from his sin.” It would also be unreasonable to resurrect people simply for them to be destroyed. So, at John 5:28, 29a, Jesus was pointing ahead to the resurrection; then, in the remainder of verse 29, he was expressing the outcome after they had been uplifted to human perfection and been put on judgment.

What does Revelation 20:4-6 indicate as to those who will be resurrected on earth?

Rev. 20:4-6: “I saw thrones, and there were those who sat down on them, and power of judging was given them. Yes, I saw the souls of those executed with the ax for the witness they bore to Jesus and for speaking about God . . . And they came to life and ruled as kings with the Christ for a thousand years. (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. Happy and holy is anyone having part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority, but they will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule as kings with him for the thousand years.”

The parentheses are used in *NW* and *Mo* to help the reader to connect what follows the parenthetical statement with what precedes it. As clearly stated, it is not “the rest of the dead” who share in the first resurrection. That resurrection is for those who rule with Christ for the thousand years. Does this mean that no others of mankind will live

during the thousand years except the ones who rule in heaven with Christ? No; because, if such were the case, it would mean that there was no one on behalf of whom they were serving as priests, and their domain would be a desolate globe.

Who, then, are “the rest of the dead”? They are all those of mankind who died as a result of Adamic sin and those who, though survivors of the great tribulation or those who may be born during the Millennium, need to be relieved of the death-dealing effects of such sin.—Compare Ephesians 2:1.

In what sense do they not “come to life” until the end of the thousand years? This does not mean their resurrection. This ‘coming to life’ involves much more than merely existing as humans. It means attaining to human perfection, free from all effects of Adamic sin. Notice that the reference to this in verse 5 occurs immediately after the preceding verse says that those who will be in heaven “came to life.” In their case it means life free from all effects of sin; they are even specially favored with immortality. (1 Cor. 15:54) For “the rest of the dead,” then, it must mean the fullness of life in human perfection.

Who will be included in the earthly resurrection?

John 5:28, 29: “Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice [the voice of Jesus] and come out.” (The Greek word translated “memorial tombs” is not the plural form of *ta'phos* [grave, an individual burial place] or *hai'des* [gravedom, the common grave of dead mankind] but is the plural dative form of *mne-meí'on* [remembrance, memorial tomb]. It lays stress on preserving memory of the deceased person. Not those whose memory was blotted out in Gehenna because of unforgivable sins but persons remembered by God will be resurrected with the opportunity to live forever.—Matt. 10:28; Mark 3:29; Heb. 10:26; Mal. 3:16.)

Acts 24:15: “I have hope toward God . . . that there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.” (Both those who lived in harmony with God’s righteous ways and people who, out of ignorance, did unrighteous things will be resurrected. The Bible does

Abihail the daughter of Eliab the son of Jesse." (See *RS, AT, JP, NW, JB*.) Concerning this, the *Soncino Books of the Bible* says in a footnote on 2 Chronicles 11:18: "The conjunction is implied. Mahalath was the daughter of Jerimoth and Abihail. Some commentators regard Abihail as the name of another of Rehoboam's wives." (Edited by A. Cohen, London, 1952) The singular pronouns used in the following verses (19, 20) support the view that only one wife of Rehoboam is meant in verse 18. It therefore appears most probable that Abihail was the mother of Rehoboam's wife Mahalath.

5. The father of Queen Esther and a descendant of Benjamin. He was the uncle of Esther's cousin, Mordecai. (Es 2:5, 15; 9:29) Esther 2:7 indicates that he and his wife died when their daughter Esther was quite young and thus sometime before her marriage to King Ahasuerus.

ABIHU (A-bi'hu) [He Is Father]. One of Aaron's four sons by his wife Elisheba; the brother of Nadab, Eleazar, and Ithamar. (Ex 6:23; 1Ch 6:3; 24:1) Born in Egypt, Abihu, as the second son of Aaron, was a mature man by the time of the Exodus, his father then being 83.—Nu 33:39.

As older sons, Nadab and Abihu were permitted by Jehovah to accompany their father and 70 of the older men of Israel in approaching Mount Sinai and there to see from a distance a magnificent vision of God's glory. (Ex 24:1, 9-11) Jehovah honored Aaron's sons, appointing them to serve as priests with their father, the high priest, and ordaining that from among them should come Aaron's eventual successor. They would wear priestly robes and headgears "for glory and beauty." Moses was to "anoint them and fill their hand with power and sanctify them" for their service to God. (Ex 28:1, 40-43) The priesthood would become theirs "as a statute to time indefinite."—Ex 29:8, 9.

Thereafter they were continually included in God's instructions regarding the priesthood and its functions. (Ex 29:10-46; 30:26-38) Also, God emphatically impressed upon them, as well as upon the entire nation, the vital importance of respecting the sanctity of the things related to his worship, including the altar of incense and incidental equipment. Their lives depended upon their respecting the divine regulations.

Now, one year from the start of the Exodus, came the time for setting up of the tabernacle and the installation of the priesthood (1512 B.C.E.). The entire nation assembled before the entrance of the tent of meeting for the installation ceremonies and saw Aaron and Abihu and his brothers, washed

and turbaned, receive the anointing as priests of God to represent the nation before Him. Thereafter the newly installed priests remained at the entrance of the tent of meeting for seven days to complete their installation and, as Moses said, "to fill your hand with power." . . . And Aaron and his sons proceeded to do all the things that Jehovah had commanded by means of Moses."—Le 8:1-3, 13-36.

On the eighth day Aaron began to officiate, with Abihu and his brothers assisting. (Le 9:1-24) They witnessed the glorious manifestation of God's presence. But, evidently before the day was over, the account says that "Nadab and Abihu took up and brought each one his fire holder and put fire in them and placed incense upon it, and they began offering before Jehovah illegitimate fire, which he had not prescribed for them. At this a fire came out from before Jehovah and consumed them, so that they died before Jehovah." (Le 10:1, 2) Their corpses were carried outside the camp by Aaron's cousins at Moses' instruction. Their father and remaining brothers were instructed by God to refrain from any display of grief over their being thus cut off from the congregation.—Le 10:4-7.

Immediately thereafter God gave Aaron a warning against the use of intoxicating liquor by him or his sons at the time of serving at the tabernacle, "that you may not die." Commenting on verse 9, *The Pentateuch and Haftorahs* says: "The Rabbis connected the incident of Nadab and Abihu with this injunction against intoxicating liquors before officiating in the Sanctuary." (Edited by J. H. Hertz, London, 1972, p. 446) So, the matter of intoxication may have been involved in their grave sin, but the actual cause of their death was the violation of God's requirement for pure worship by their offering "illegitimate fire, which he had not prescribed for them."

Abihu enjoyed great honor from God and outstanding prominence before all the nation for a short while; but, whether from ambition, an inflated ego, or due to a trifling attitude toward God's instructions, his privileges were short-lived, and he died childless.—Nu 3:2-4; 26:60, 61; 1Ch 24:1, 2.

ABIHUD (A-bi'hud) [possibly, Father Is Dignity]. A descendant of Benjamin through his first-born, Bela.—1Ch 8:1-3.

ABIJAH (A-bi'jah) [My Father Is Jehovah]. In 2 Kings 18:2 Abi occurs as an abbreviation of this name. Abijam is another variant found in the Masoretic text at 1 Kings 14:31; 15:1, 7, 8. However, in 1 Kings 14:31 about 12 Hebrew manu-

Children Are a Trust From God

(Psalm 127:3-5)



When a man be - comes a fa - ther And a wom - an has a child of her
All the words God has com - mand - ed— They must al - ways prove to be on your



own, They share a trust, they must re - mem - ber, That is not
heart. These words you'll speak to sons and daugh - ters; This is your



theirs, not theirs a - lone. The gift they share is from Je -
trust, this is your part. To them you'll speak a - long your



ho - vah; Of life and love he is the one true Source. To par - ents
road - way, When you rise up and when you are at rest. In years to

Children Are a Trust From God



he gives sure di - rec - tion That they may fol - low the wis - est
come, may they re - mem - ber, May they be faith - ful, may they be

Chorus



course.
blessed. A sa - cred trust you have been giv - en; A pre - cious



life is in your hands. You can be - stow the great - est



fa - vor; In - struct your child in God's com - mands.

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

MARCH 2014

WEEK STARTING MARCH 10

Song 1 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

cl chap. 4 ¶1-9 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Genesis 40-42 (10 min.)

No. 1: Genesis 41:1-16 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: How Do the Rest of the Dead Come to Life on Earth?—*rs* p. 338 ¶2—p. 339 ¶2 (5 min.)

No. 3: Abihu—Prominence Does Not Excuse Disobedience—*it-1* p. 22 (5 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 88

15 min: Family Worship That Refreshes. Interview a family regarding their family worship. Of what does their program consist? How do they determine what to discuss? What tools available on *jw.org* have they used? How has their program helped them in the ministry? How do they prevent other activities from disrupting their schedule? How have they benefited from their program of family worship?

15 min: “Improving Our Skills in the Ministry—Responding to Potential Conversation Stoppers.” Discussion. Consider two or three potential conversation stoppers that publishers may encounter, and invite comments on how we might respond. Remind publishers that they will have an opportunity to relate experiences during the week of April 7.

Song 97 and Prayer

Improving Our Skills in the Ministry—Responding to Potential Conversation Stoppers

Why Important: Imagine that you know that a natural disaster is imminent. People will die unless they flee to safety. You go to a neighbor’s home to warn him, but he interrupts you, saying that he is busy. Surely, you would not quickly abandon your efforts to help him! Many in our territory turn us away, not realizing the life-saving value

of our message. At the time of our visit, perhaps they are preoccupied. (Matt. 24:37-39) Or maybe they have been prejudiced by untrue rumors. (Matt. 11:18, 19) They might assume that we are no different from the religions that have produced bad fruitage. (2 Pet. 2:1, 2) If the householder initially is not interested, we should not be quick to give up.

How to Do It:

- Before preaching from house to house, take a few moments to think about potential conversation stoppers that you may encounter and consider how to respond.
- If the householder presents an objection, gently try to continue the conversation. Perhaps you can do that by commending him. For example, if he says that he has his own religion, you might reply, “I was hoping to find someone like you who has an interest in spiritual things.” Sometimes acknowledging the householder’s feelings or circumstances will enable you to continue giving a witness. For instance, if he says that he is busy, you might say: “I understand. But before I leave, I would like to give you this.” Another option is to ask a question if the householder says that he is not interested. You could say, “Do you mean that you are not interested in the Bible, or is it religion in general that does not interest you?”
- Use good judgment. Remember that Jehovah does not force people to listen. (Deut. 30:19) Everyone must carry his own load of spiritual responsibility. (Gal. 6:5) If the householder is adamant, it is best to take our leave. By demonstrating respect for his feelings, we may open the door for another publisher to give a witness in the future. —1 Pet. 3:15.

Try This During the Month:

- When you encounter a potential conversation stopper, after leaving the householder, discuss with your partner how you might have responded in a better way.

97 *Forward, You Ministers of the Kingdom!*

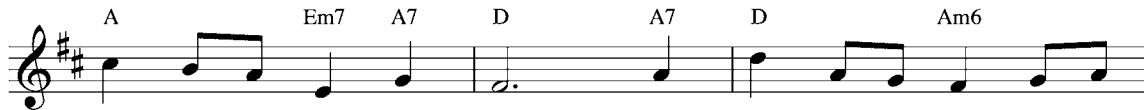
(2 Timothy 4:5)



Go for - ward in preach - ing the King - dom To peo - ple in ev - 'ry
 True min - is - ters keep press - ing for - ward With God's prize of life in
 To - geth - er we press ev - er for - ward, God's rem - nant and oth - er



land. With love in your hearts for your neigh - bor, Help
 view. We fol - low the steps of our Mas - ter With
 sheep. The old and the young men and wom - en In



meekest ones to take their stand. Our ser - vice to God is a
 hearts that have been made new. The good news of God's com - ing
 step with the truth do keep. Our ser - vice we hold to be



priv - 'lege; His word we are glad to pro - claim. Go
 King - dom Is some - thing that all need to hear. We
 sa - cred; Our wor - ship is nev - er rou - tine. To

Forward, You Ministers of the Kingdom!

D Em A7 D Am B7

out in the field and keep preach - ing; Give
 preach in the strength of Je - ho - vah; With
 God may we prove ev - er wor - thy By

Em A7 D Chorus D A D

wit - ness to God's ho - ly name. For - ward,
 him there is noth - ing to fear!
 con - duct that's ho - ly and clean.

G A7 D A D Em7 A7

bold - ly preach the King - dom mes - sage ev - er far and wide.

D Em7 A7 D G D Em7 A7 D

For - ward, faith - ful, loy - al - ly re - main - ing on Je - ho - vah's side.