

- Song 111 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Job Was Confident in the Resurrection”:** (10 min.)
 Job 14:1, 2—Job summed up the current situation of human life (*w15 3/1 3; w10 5/1 5 ¶2; w08 3/1 3 ¶3*)
 Job 14:13-15a—Job knew Jehovah would not forget him (*w15 8/1 5; w14 1/1 7 ¶4; w11 3/1 22 ¶2-4*)
 Job 14:15b—Jehovah treasures his faithful worshippers (*w15 8/1 7 ¶3; w14 6/15 14 ¶12; w11 3/1 22 ¶3-6*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Job 12:12—Why do older Christians have the potential to help younger Christians? (*g99 7/22 11, box*)

Job 15:27—What did Eliphaz mean when he intimated that Job’s face was “covered with fat”? (*it-1 802 ¶4*)

What does this week’s Bible reading teach me about Jehovah?

What points from this week’s Bible reading can I use in the field ministry?

- **Bible Reading:** Job 14:1-22 (4 min. or less)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** *fg* lesson 13 ¶1—Lay the groundwork for a return visit. (2 min. or less)
- **Return Visit:** *fg* lesson 13 ¶2—Lay the groundwork for the next visit. (4 min. or less)
- **Bible Study:** *fg* lesson 13 ¶3-4 (6 min. or less)

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

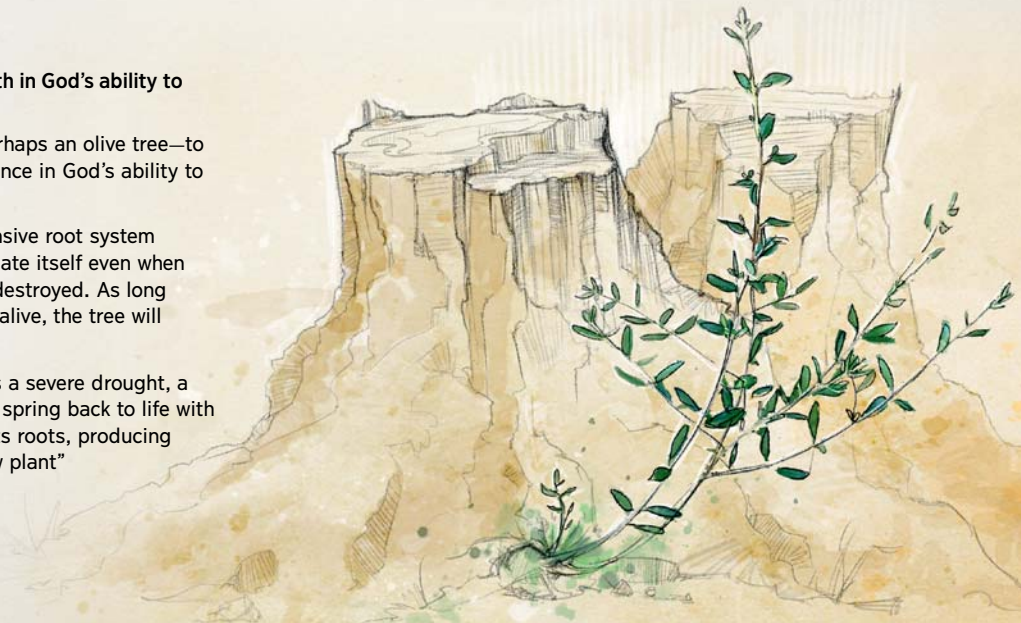
- Song 134
- **Local needs:** (5 min.)
- **“The Resurrection—Made Possible by the Ransom”:** (10 min.) Discussion. Conclude by playing the video that was shown at the 2014 “Keep Seeking First God’s Kingdom!” Regional Convention.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** *ia* chap. 12 ¶1-12 (30 min.)
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 33 and Prayer

JOB 11-15 | Job Was Confident in the Resurrection

14:7-9, 13-15

Job expressed his faith in God’s ability to resurrect him

- Job used a tree—perhaps an olive tree—to illustrate his confidence in God’s ability to resurrect him
- An olive tree’s expansive root system enables it to rejuvenate itself even when the trunk has been destroyed. As long as the roots remain alive, the tree will sprout again
- When rainfall breaks a severe drought, a dry olive stump can spring back to life with shoots rising from its roots, producing “branches like a new plant”



He Will Call (Job 14:13-15)

1. Life, like a mist, appears for just a day,
Then disappears tomorrow.
All that we are can quickly fade away,
Replaced with tears and sorrow.
If a man should die, can he live again?
Hear the promise God has made:

(CHORUS)

*He will call; The dead will answer.
They shall live at his command.
For he will have a longing
For the work of his own hand.
So have faith, and do not wonder,
For our God can make us stand.
And we shall live forever,
As the work of his own hand.*

2. Friends of our God, though they may pass away,
Will never be forsaken.
All those asleep who in God's mem'ry stay,
From death he will awaken.
Then we'll come to see all that life can be:
Paradise eternally.

(Chorus)

- You have guarded my spirit*
with your care.^a
- 13** But you secretly intended
to do these things.*
I know that these things are
from you.
- 14** If I sinned, you would
watch me,^b
And you would not acquit me
of my error.
- 15** If I am guilty, too bad for me!
And even if I am innocent,
I cannot raise my head,^c
For I am filled with dishonor
and affliction.^d
- 16** If I raise my head up, you
hunt for me like a lion^e
And again show your power
against me.
- 17** You bring new witnesses
against me
And increase your anger
against me,
As hardship after hardship
comes upon me.
- 18** So why did you bring me out
from the womb?^f
I should have died before
any eye could see me.
- 19** It would have been as though
I never existed;
I would have been taken
straight from the womb
to the grave.^g
- 20** Are not my days few?^g
Let him leave me alone;
Let him turn his eyes away
from me, so that I may find
some relief.^h
- 21** Before I go away—and I will
not returnⁱ—
To the land of deepest
darkness,^{*j}
- 22** To the land of utter gloom,
A land of deep shadow and
disorder,
Where even the light is like
the gloom.”

10:12 *Or “breath; life.” **10:13** *Lit., “And these things you have hidden in your heart.” **10:20** *Or “cheer up a little.” **10:21** *Or “of darkness and death’s shadow.”

CHAP. 10

a Ps 8:4

b Ps 139:1

c Job 9:15

d Ps 119:153

e Isa 38:13

f Job 3:11
Jer 20:18

g Job 7:6
Job 14:1, 2
Ps 39:5, 6
Ps 103:15, 16

h Job 9:27

i Job 7:9
Ps 115:17
Isa 38:11

j Job 38:17
Ps 88:12
Ec 9:10

Second Col.

CHAP. 11

a Job 20:1
Job 42:9

b Job 12:4

c Job 6:10

d Job 6:29
Job 10:7

e Job 38:1

11 Zo’phar^a the Na’a-ma-thite
said in reply:

- 2** “Will all these words go
unanswered,
Or will a lot of talking make
someone right?*
- 3** Will your empty talk silence
people?
Will no one rebuke you for
your mocking words?^b
- 4** For you say, ‘My teaching is
pure,^c
And I am clean in your eyes.’^d
- 5** But if only God would speak
And open his lips to you!^e
- 6** Then he would reveal to you
the secrets of wisdom,
For practical wisdom has
many sides.
Then you would realize that
God allows some of your
error to be forgotten.
- 7** Can you discover the deep
things of God
Or discover everything
about* the Almighty?
- 8** It is higher than heaven.
What can you accomplish?
It is deeper than the Grave.*
What can you know?
- 9** It is longer than the earth
And broader than the sea.
- 10** If he passes by and detains
someone and convenes
a court,
Who can resist him?
- 11** For he knows when men are
deceitful.
When he sees what is evil,
will he not take notice?
- 12** But an empty-headed man
will understand
Only when a wild donkey can
give birth to a man.*
- 13** If only you would prepare
your heart

11:2 *Or “will a boaster be right?” **11:7** *Or “find out the limit of.” **11:8** *Or “Sheol,” that is, the common grave of mankind. See Glossary. **11:12** *Or “when a wild donkey is born a man.”

And stretch out your hands to him.

- 14** If your hand is doing wrong, put it far away,
And let no unrighteousness dwell in your tents.
- 15** For then you could lift up your face with no defect;
You could stand firm, free of fear.
- 16** For then you will forget your trouble;
You will remember it as waters that have flowed past you.
- 17** Your life will become brighter than midday;
Even its darkness will be like the morning.
- 18** You will be confident because there is hope,
And you will look around and lie down in security.
- 19** You will lie down, with no one to make you afraid,
And many people will seek your favor.
- 20** But the eyes of the wicked will fail;
And they will find no place to escape,
And their only hope will be death.^{***a}
- 12** Then Job said in reply:
2 “Surely you are the people who know,^{*}
And wisdom will die out with you!
3 But I too have understanding.^{*}
I am not inferior to you.
Who does not know these things?
4 I have become a laughing-stock to my companions,^b
One calling to God for an answer.^c
A righteous and blameless man is a laughingstock.

11:20 *Or “the expiring of the soul.”
12:2 *Lit., “you are the people.” 12:3 *Lit., “a heart.”

CHAP. 11

a Job 8:13, 14
Job 18:5, 14

CHAP. 12

b Job 16:10
Job 17:2
Job 30:1
Ps 22:7
Heb 11:36

c Ps 91:15
Mic 7:7

Second Col.

a Ps 37:35
Ps 73:12
Jer 12:1

b Job 21:7, 9

c Nu 16:22
Ps 104:30
Ec 12:7
Eze 18:4

d Job 34:3

e Job 32:6, 7

f Job 9:4
Da 2:20

g Job 36:5
Ps 147:5
Isa 40:14
Jer 10:12
Ro 11:34

h Jude 7

i Ge 8:1
Ex 14:21
Na 1:4

j Ge 6:17

- 5** The carefree person has contempt for calamity,
Thinking it is only for those whose feet are unsteady.^{*}
- 6** The tents of robbers are at peace,^a
And those who provoke God are secure,^b
Those who have their god in their hands.
- 7** However, ask, please, the animals, and they will instruct you;
Also the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you.
- 8** Or give consideration^{*} to the earth, and it will instruct you;
And the fish of the sea will declare it to you.
- 9** Who among all these does not know
That the hand of Jehovah has done this?
- 10** In his hand is the life of every living thing^{*}
And the spirit[#] of every human.^{^c}
- 11** Does not the ear test out words
As the tongue^{*} tastes food?^d
- 12** Is not wisdom found among the aged,^e
And does not understanding come with a long life?
- 13** With him there are wisdom and mightiness;^f
He has counsel and understanding.^g
- 14** When he tears something down, it cannot be rebuilt;^h
What he has shut, no man can open.
- 15** When he withholds the waters, everything dries up;ⁱ
When he sends them out, they overwhelm the earth.^j

12:5 *Or “slipping.” 12:8 *Or possibly, “speak.” 12:10 *Or “the soul of everyone alive.” *Or “breath.” ^Lit., “of all flesh of man.” 12:11 *Lit., “palate.”

- 16** With him there are strength and practical wisdom;^a
To him belong the one going astray and the one leading astray;
- 17** He makes counselors go barefoot,*
And he makes fools of judges.^b
- 18** He loosens the bonds imposed by kings,^c
And he binds a belt around their waist.
- 19** He makes priests walk barefoot,^d
And he overthrows those who are firmly established in power;^e
- 20** He deprives trusted advisers of speech
And takes away the sensibility of old men;*
- 21** He pours out contempt upon nobles,^f
And he makes powerful ones weak;*
- 22** He reveals deep things from the darkness,^g
And he brings deep darkness into the light;
- 23** He makes nations grow great in order to destroy them;
He enlarges nations, that he may lead them into exile.
- 24** He takes away the understanding* of the leaders of the people
And makes them wander in trackless wastelands.^h
- 25** They grope in darkness,ⁱ where there is no light;
He makes them wander about like drunken men.^j
- 13** "Yes, my eye has seen all of this,
My ear has heard and understood it.

12:17 *Or "stripped of everything."
12:20 *Or "of elders." 12:21 *Lit., "loosens the belt of powerful ones."
12:24 *Lit., "heart."

CHAP. 12

a Ro 1:20

b Isa 29:14
Isa 44:25

c Da 2:21

d Jer 14:18

e Lu 1:52

f Ps 107:40

g Da 2:22

h Ps 107:40

i De 28:29

j Ps 107:27

Second Col.

CHAP. 13

a Job 23:3, 4
Job 31:35

b Job 16:2

c Pr 17:28
Jas 1:19d Ps 139:23
Jer 17:10e Ps 50:20, 21
Jas 2:9

- 2** What you know, I also know;
I am not inferior to you.
- 3** For my part, I would rather speak to the Almighty himself;
I desire to argue my case with God.^a
- 4** But you are smearing me with lies;
All of you are useless physicians.^b
- 5** If only you would keep absolutely silent,
That would show wisdom on your part.^c
- 6** Listen, please, to my arguments,
And pay attention to the pleadings of my lips.
- 7** Will you speak unjustly on God's behalf,
And will you speak deceitfully for him?
- 8** Will you take his side,*
Will you try to plead the case of the true God?
- 9** Will you turn out well if he examined you?^d
Will you fool him as you would a mortal man?
- 10** He will surely rebuke you
If you secretly try to show favoritism.^e
- 11** Will not his very dignity terrify you
And the dread of him fall upon you?
- 12** Your wise* sayings are proverbs of ashes;
Your defenses^f are as fragile as defenses of clay.
- 13** Keep silent before me, so that I may speak.
Then let whatever may come upon me come!
- 14** Why do I put myself in danger*

13:8 *Or "show partiality toward him."
13:12 *Or "memorable." ^fLit., "shield bosses." 13:14 *Lit., "Why do I carry my flesh in my teeth?"

And take my life* in my hands?

- 15** Though he may slay me, I would still wait;^a
I would argue my case* before his face.
- 16** He would then become my salvation,^b
For no godless person* may come in before him.^c
- 17** Listen closely to my word; Pay attention to my declaration.
- 18** See, now, I have prepared my legal case;
I know I am in the right.
- 19** Who will contend with me? I would die if I were to stay silent!*
- 20** Only grant two things to me, O God,*
So that I will not conceal myself from before you:
- 21** Remove your heavy hand far away from me,
And do not let the fear of you terrify me.^d
- 22** Either call and I will answer, Or let me speak, and you answer me.
- 23** What are my errors and sins? Reveal to me my transgression and my sin.
- 24** Why do you hide your face* And consider me your enemy?^f
- 25** Will you try to frighten a windblown leaf Or chase after dry stubble?
- 26** For you keep recording bitter accusations against me,
And you make me answer for the sins of my youth.
- 27** You have put my feet in stocks,
You scrutinize all my paths,

13:14 *Or "soul." **13:15** *Or "defend my ways." **13:16** *Or "no apostate." **13:19** *Or possibly, "If someone can, I will stay silent and die." **13:20** *Lit., "Only two things, do not do to me."

CHAP. 13

a Job 19:25
Ps 23:4

b Ex 15:2
Ps 27:1
Isa 12:2

c Job 27:8
Job 36:13
Isa 33:14

d Job 9:34, 35
Job 33:6, 7

e Ps 10:1
Ps 13:1
Ps 44:24

f Job 16:9
Job 19:11
Job 33:8-11

Second Col.

CHAP. 14

a Ps 39:5, 6
Jas 4:14

b Ge 3:19
Ge 47:9
Ps 90:10
Ec 2:23

c Ps 103:15, 16
Isa 40:6
Jas 1:10, 11
1Pe 1:24

d 1Ch 29:15
Ps 102:11
Ps 144:4

e Ps 143:2

f Ge 5:3
Ps 51:5
Ro 5:12

g Ps 39:4

h Ps 39:13

And you trace out each of my footprints.

- 28** So man* decays like something rotten,
Like a garment eaten by moths.

14 "Man, born of woman, Is short-lived^a and filled with trouble."^b

- 2** He comes up like a blossom and then withers away;^{*c}

He flees like a shadow and disappears.^d

- 3** Yes, you have fixed your eye upon him,

And you bring him* into judgment with yourself.^e

- 4** Who can produce someone clean from someone unclean?^f

No one can!

- 5** If his days are decided, The number of his months is with you;

You have set a limit for him that he may not go beyond.^g

- 6** Turn your gaze away from him so that he may rest, Until, like a hired worker, he finishes out his day.^h

- 7** For there is hope even for a tree.

If it is cut down, it will sprout again,

And its twigs will continue to grow.

- 8** If its root grows old in the ground

And its stump dies in the soil,

- 9** At the scent of water it will sprout;

And it will produce branches like a new plant.

- 10** But a man dies and lies powerless;

13:28 *Lit., "he," possibly referring to Job. **14:1** *Or "glutted with agitation." **14:2** *Or possibly, "and is cut off." **14:3** *Lit., "me."

When a human expires,
where is he?^a

- 11** Waters disappear from the sea,
And a river drains away and dries up.
- 12** Man also lies down and does not get up.^b
Until heaven is no more,
they will not wake up,
Nor will they be aroused from their sleep.^c
- 13** O that in the Grave* you would conceal me,^d
That you would hide me until your anger passes by,
That you would set a time limit for me and remember me!^e
- 14** If a man dies, can he live again?^f
I will wait all the days of my compulsory service
Until my relief comes.^g
- 15** You will call, and I will answer you.^h
You will long* for the work of your hands.
- 16** But for now, you keep counting my every step;
You watch only for my sin.
- 17** My transgression is sealed up in a bag,
And you seal up my error with glue.
- 18** As a mountain falls and crumbles away
And a rock is dislodged from its place,
- 19** As water wears away stones
And its torrents wash away earth's soil,
So you have destroyed the hope of mortal man.
- 20** You keep overpowering him until he perishes;ⁱ
You change his appearance,
and you send him away.

14:13 *Or "Sheol," that is, the common grave of mankind. See Glossary. **14:15** *Or "yearn."

CHAP. 14

a Ec 3:19, 20
Ec 9:10

b Ec 9:5
Ec 12:5

c Ps 13:3
Joh 11:11
Ac 7:59, 60

d 1Sa 2:6
Isa 57:1, 2

e Lu 23:42
Joh 5:28, 29
Heb 11:35

f Joh 11:25
Ac 26:8
1Co 15:12
Re 20:13

g Job 19:25

h Da 12:13
Joh 5:28, 29
Joh 11:43, 44

i Ec 8:8
Isa 57:16

Second Col.

a Ec 9:5, 6

CHAP. 15

b Job 2:11
Job 4:1

c Job 42:8

d Job 13:2
Job 16:2

e Job 32:6

- 21** His sons are honored, but he does not know it;
They become insignificant,
but he does not realize it.^a
- 22** He feels pain only while he is still in his flesh;
He* mourns only while he is still alive."

15 El'i-phaz^b the Te'man-ite said in reply:

- 2** "Will a wise person answer with empty arguments,*
Or will he fill his belly with the east wind?
- 3** Reproving with mere words is useless,
And talk alone is of no benefit.
- 4** For you undermine the fear of God,
And you diminish any concern for God.
- 5** For your error dictates what you say,*
And you choose crafty speech.
- 6** Your own mouth condemns you, and not I;
Your own lips testify against you.^c
- 7** Were you the first man ever born,
Or was your birth before that of the hills?
- 8** Do you listen to the confidential talk of God,
Or do you limit wisdom to yourself?
- 9** What do you know that we do not know?^d
What do you understand that we do not?
- 10** Both the gray-haired and the aged are among us,^e
Men much older than your father.
- 11** Are God's consolations not enough for you,

14:22 *Or "His soul." **15:2** *Or "with blustery knowledge." **15:5** *Or "your error trains your mouth."

- Or words spoken gently
to you?
- 12** Why does your heart carry
you away,
And why do your eyes flash
with anger?
- 13** For you turn your spirit
against God himself,
And you allow such words to
go out of your own mouth.
- 14** What is mortal man that
he should be pure,
Or anyone born of a
woman that he should
be righteous?^a
- 15** Look! He has no faith in his
holy ones,
And even the heavens are
not pure in his eyes.^b
- 16** How much less so when
a person is detestable and
corrupt,^c
A man who drinks in unrighteousness
just like water!
- 17** I will inform you; listen
to me!
I will relate what I have seen,
- 18** What wise men have related
from their fathers,^d
Things they have not hidden.
- 19** To them alone the land was
given,
And no stranger passed
among them.
- 20** A wicked person suffers
torment all his days,
Throughout all the years
reserved for the tyrant.
- 21** Terrifying sounds are in his
ears;^e
In a time of peace, marauders
attack him.
- 22** He does not believe that he
will escape from darkness;^f
He is reserved for a sword.
- 23** He wanders about in search
of food*—where is it?
He well knows that the day
of darkness is at hand.

15:23 *Lit., "bread."

CHAP. 15

a Job 25:4

b Job 25:5, 6

Job 42:7

c Job 4:18, 19

d Job 8:8

e Job 18:11

Job 20:25

f Job 18:12

Second Col.

a Job 4:9

b Job 22:15, 16

c Job 8:11-13

- 24** Distress and anguish keep
terrifying him;
They overpower him like
a king ready to launch
an attack.
- 25** For he raises his hand
against God himself
And tries to defy* the
Almighty;
- 26** He stubbornly rushes
against Him,
With his thick, strong
shield;*
- 27** His face is covered with fat,
And his hips bulge with fat;
- 28** He resides in cities that will
be brought to ruin,
In houses where no one will
dwell,
Which will become heaps
of stones.
- 29** He will not grow rich,
and his wealth will not
accumulate,
Nor will his possessions
spread over the land.
- 30** He will not escape from
darkness;
A flame will dry up his twig,*
And he will pass away by
a blast of God's[#] mouth.^a
- 31** He should not go astray and
trust in what is worthless,
For what he gets in exchange
will be worthless;
- 32** It will happen before his day,
And his branches will never
flourish.^b
- 33** He will be like a vine
that shakes off its unripe
grapes,
And like an olive tree that
casts off its blossoms.
- 34** For the assembly of godless
ones* is sterile,^c
And fire will consume the
tents of bribery.

15:25 *Or "tries to prevail against."

15:26 *Lit., "his thick shield bosses."

15:30 *That is, any hope of recovery.
#Lit., "his." 15:34 *Or "of apostates."

35 They conceive trouble
and give birth to what
is wicked,
And their womb produces
deceit.”

16 Job said in reply:
2 “I have heard many
things like these before.
All of you are troublesome
comforters!^a

3 Is there an end to empty*
words?

What provokes you to
answer this way?

4 I could also speak as you do.
If you were in my place,*
I could make persuasive
speeches against you
And shake my head at you.^b

5 Instead, though, I would
strengthen you with the
words of my mouth,
And the consolation of my
lips would bring relief.^c

6 If I speak, my own pain is
not relieved,^d
And if I stop speaking, how
much is my pain reduced?

7 But now he has made me
weary;^e
He has devastated my whole
household.*

8 You also seize me, and it has
become a witness,
So that my own skinniness
rises up and testifies to my
face.

9 His anger has torn me to
pieces, and he harbors
animosity against me.^f
He grinds his teeth
against me.

My adversary pierces me
with his eyes.^g

10 They have opened their
mouth wide against me,^h
And they have scornfully
struck my cheeks;

CHAP. 16

a Job 13:4, 5
Job 19:2, 3

b Ps 109:25
Mt 27:39

c Pr 27:9
Mt 7:12
Ro 12:15
1Pe 3:8

d Job 2:13

e Job 7:3

f Job 10:16

g Job 33:8-10

h Ps 22:13

Second Col.

a Ps 35:15

b Ps 27:12

c Job 1:12, 17

d Job 7:20

e Ps 73:21

f 1Ki 21:27
2Ki 6:30

g Job 30:19
Ps 7:5

h Ps 6:6
Ps 31:9
La 1:16

i Ge 4:8, 10
Ps 72:14

j Job 12:4

k Ps 40:1
Ps 142:2

l Job 31:35

In large numbers they gather
against me.^a

11 God hands me over to young
boys,

And he thrusts me into the
hands of the wicked.^b

12 I was untroubled, but he
shattered me;^c

He grabbed me by the
back of the neck and
crushed me;

Then he set me up as his
target.

13 His archers surround me;^d
He pierces my kidneys^e and
feels no compassion;
He pours out my gall on the
earth.

14 He breaks through against
me with breach after
breach;
He rushes at me like
a warrior.

15 I have sewn sackcloth
together to cover my skin,^f
And I have buried my
dignity* in the dust.^g

16 My face is red from
weeping,^h
And on my eyelids is deep
shadow,*

17 Although my hands have
done no violence
And my prayer is pure.

18 O earth, do not cover
my blood!ⁱ
And let there be no resting-
place for my outcry!

19 Even now, my witness is
in the heavens;
The one who can testify
for me is in the heights.

20 My companions ridicule me^j
As my eye sheds tears*
to God.^k

21 Let someone arbitrate
between a man and God,
As one would between a man
and his fellow.^l

16:13 *Or “blustery.” 16:4 *Or “If your
soul were in place of my soul.” 16:7
*Or “those assembling with me.”

16:15 *Or “strength.” Lit., “horn.”
16:16 *Or “death’s shadow.” 16:20 *Or
possibly, “looks sleeplessly.”

- Song 111 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Job Was Confident in the Resurrection”:** (10 min.)
 Job 14:1, 2—Job summed up the current situation of human life (*w15 3/1 3; w10 5/1 5 ¶2; w08 3/1 3 ¶3*)
 Job 14:13-15a—Job knew Jehovah would not forget him (*w15 8/1 5; w14 1/1 7 ¶4; w11 3/1 22 ¶2-4*)
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- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Job 12:12—Why do older Christians have the potential to help younger Christians? (*g99 7/22 11, box*)

Job 15:27—What did Eliphaz mean when he intimated that Job’s face was “covered with fat”? (*it-1 802 ¶4*)

What does this week’s Bible reading teach me about Jehovah?

What points from this week’s Bible reading can I use in the field ministry?

- **Bible Reading:** Job 14:1-22 (4 min. or less)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** *fg* lesson 13 ¶1—Lay the groundwork for a return visit. (2 min. or less)
- **Return Visit:** *fg* lesson 13 ¶2—Lay the groundwork for the next visit. (4 min. or less)
- **Bible Study:** *fg* lesson 13 ¶3-4 (6 min. or less)

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

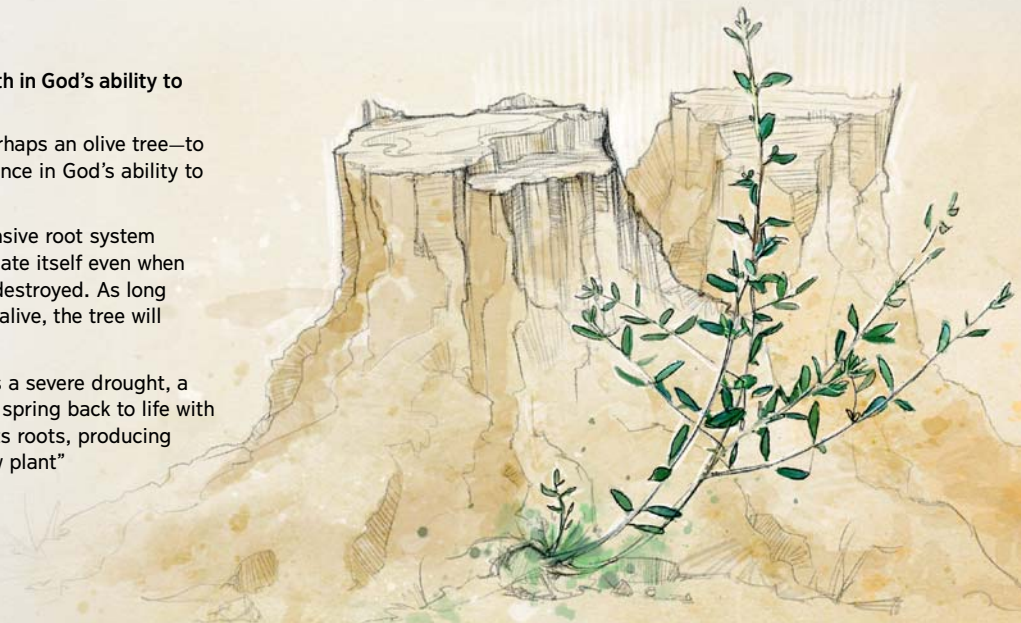
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JOB 11-15 | Job Was Confident in the Resurrection

14:7-9, 13-15

Job expressed his faith in God’s ability to resurrect him

- Job used a tree—perhaps an olive tree—to illustrate his confidence in God’s ability to resurrect him
- An olive tree’s expansive root system enables it to rejuvenate itself even when the trunk has been destroyed. As long as the roots remain alive, the tree will sprout again
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Job 14:1, 2—Job summed up the current situation of human life
(w15 3/1 3)

Why We Need to Be Saved

“Man, born of woman, is short-lived and filled with trouble. He comes up like a blossom and then withers away; he flees like a shadow and disappears.”—Job 14:1, 2.

From earliest times, people have dreamed about how wonderful it would be to live youthful, healthy lives forever. Sadly, though, the cold reality is this: We are mortal. The above words of Job, spoken more than three thousand years ago, still hold true today.

The desire to live endlessly is strong, and it is universal. The Bible tells us that God has put in our hearts a longing for eternity as well as a desire to comprehend it. (Ecclesiastes 3:11) That being so, does it seem reasonable to you that a loving God would put a desire in us that is impossible to achieve? If your answer is no, you are right. God’s Word calls death an enemy and promises that it “is to be brought to nothing.”—1 Corinthians 15:26.

There is no doubt that death is an enemy. No sound person would welcome it. When danger approaches, we dodge, hide, or flee. When we get sick, we seek

ways to get well. We do everything we can to avoid things that could cause us to die.

Is there any reason to believe that this age-old enemy will be brought to nothing? Yes, there is. Jehovah God, the Creator, did not make humans to live just a few years and then to die. Human death was not part of his original purpose. He intended for humans to live forever on the earth, and what he purposes, he accomplishes.—Isaiah 55:11.

How, then, will death be brought to an end? Throughout history, men have struggled to solve the problem of death, but with no success. In modern times, the quest continues. Scientists have developed vaccines and medications that have subdued some diseases. They have peered into the genetic structure of living things. In many places, people, on average, live longer today than they did a century ago. Yet, death is far from vanquished. As the Bible says, “all are returning to the dust.”—Ecclesiastes 3:20.

The good news is that we do not have to rely on human ingenuity to solve this long-standing problem. Jehovah God has already arranged for us to be saved or rescued from death, and the central figure in that arrangement is Jesus Christ.

(w10 5/1 5 ¶2)

Do not underestimate the damaging effects of that rebellion. The Bible says: “Through one man [Adam] sin entered into the world and death through sin.” (Romans 5:12) Besides bringing death, sin has impaired our relationship with our Creator and has affected us physically, mentally, and emotionally. As a result, our condition is similar to that of a run-down house. The righteous man Job realistically summed up our situation when he described man as being “short of days and full of trouble.”—Job 14:1, *Holman Christian Standard Bible*.

(w08 3/1 3 ¶3)

Most of us will never be trapped underground like those nine coal miners or have to face death in a catastrophe. Still, we all need to be rescued, for we cannot escape the ravages of sickness and old age and finally death. “Man, born of woman, is short-lived and glutted with agitation,” observed the faithful patriarch Job. “Like a blossom he has come forth and is cut off, and he runs away like the shadow and does not keep existing.” (Job 14:1, 2) Today, some 3,500 years later, those words continue to prove true, for who of us can escape life’s fatal outcome—death? Regardless of where we live or how well we guard our

health, we need to be rescued from the clutches of suffering, old age, and death.

Job 14:13-15a—Job knew Jehovah would not forget him
(w15 8/1 5)

Can the dead live again?

THE BIBLE'S ANSWER: *“The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear [Jesus] voice and come out.”*—John 5:28, 29.

Jesus thus foretold the future time when, under the rule of his Kingdom, the Grave would be emptied. “I was astounded the first time I read John 5:28, 29,” recalls Fernando, mentioned in the preceding article. “It gave me real hope, and I started thinking about the future with optimism.”

In ancient times, the faithful man Job expected that after his death God would eventually restore him to life. Job asked: “If a man dies, can he live again?” Then he confidently answered: “I will wait all the days of my compulsory service [time in the Grave] until my relief comes. You will call, and I will answer you.”—Job 14:14, 15.

The resurrection was not a new thought to Lazarus' sister Martha. After Lazarus died, Jesus said to her:

“Your brother will rise.” Martha responded: “I know he will rise in the resurrection on the last day.” Jesus then said to her: “I am the resurrection and the life. The one who exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life.” (John 11:23-25) Then Jesus promptly raised Lazarus back to life! That thrilling account gives us a preview of grander events in the future. Imagine such resurrections taking place on a global scale!

Will some be raised to heaven?

THE BIBLE’S ANSWER: God’s Word shows that Jesus’ resurrection differed from the other eight in the Bible record. Those eight people returned to life here on earth. But of Jesus’ resurrection, we read: “*Jesus Christ . . . is at God’s right hand, for he went to heaven.*” (1 Peter 3:21, 22) Would Jesus remain the only one to be resurrected to heaven? Jesus had earlier told his apostles: “If I go my way and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will receive you home to myself, so that where I am you also may be.”—John 14:3.

Christ went to heaven and prepared for the arrival of some of his disciples. Those resurrected to heaven will eventually number 144,000. (Revelation 14:1, 3) But what will those close followers of Jesus do there?

(w14 1/1 7 ¶4)

Addressing Almighty God, Job answered his own question, saying: “You will call, and I will answer you. You will long for the work of your hands.” (Job 14:15) Job felt sure that Jehovah longed for the day when He would resurrect His faithful servant. Was that mere wishful thinking on Job’s part? Not at all.

(w11 3/1 22 ¶2-4)

Consider the setting. Job, a man of outstanding faith, undergoes severe trials—including the loss of his material possessions, the death of all his beloved children, and a painful illness. In the throes of misery, he calls out to God: “O that in Sheol [mankind’s common grave] you would conceal me!” (Verse 13) Job sees Sheol as a welcome relief. There, as if a treasure hidden by God, he will be free of hardship and pain.

Will Sheol become Job’s permanent shelter? Job believes otherwise. He continues his prayer: “O that . . . you would set a time limit for me and remember me!” Job confidently hopes that his stay in Sheol will be temporary and that Jehovah will not forget him. Job likens the time that he will spend in Sheol to “compulsory service”—an enforced period of waiting. For how long? “Until my relief comes,” he says.

(Verse 14) That relief will mean release from Sheol—in other words, a resurrection from the dead!

Why is Job convinced that his relief will come? Because he knows how our loving Creator feels about His faithful worshippers who have died. Says Job: “You will call, and I myself shall answer you. For the work of your hands you will have a yearning.” (Verse 15) Job acknowledges that he is the work of God’s hands. The Life-Giver who was responsible for Job’s formation in the womb can certainly restore him to life after he has died.—Job 10:8, 9; 31:15.

Job 14:15b—Jehovah treasures his faithful worshippers (w15 8/1 7 ¶3)

Why has Jehovah arranged for the future resurrection? Because of his love. “If a man dies, can he live again?” asked Job. “You will call, and I will answer you. You will *long* for the work of your hands.” (Job 14:14, 15) Job was convinced that his loving heavenly Father would *yearn* to resurrect him. Has God changed? “I am Jehovah; I do not change.” (Malachi 3:6) God still longs to see the dead brought back to life healthy and happy. This is just as any loving parent would wish after losing a child in death.

The difference, of course, is that God has the *power* to do as he wishes.—Psalm 135:6.

(w14 6/15 14 ¶12)

¹² **God has given us the heartwarming resurrection hope.** (Acts 24:15) We are, of course, deeply saddened by the death of a loved one, but because of the prospect of the resurrection, ‘we do not sorrow as those do who have no hope.’ (1 Thess. 4:13) Out of love, Jehovah God yearns to resurrect the dead, especially faithful ones, like upright Job. (Job 14:15) Imagine the joyous reunions when resurrected ones are welcomed back to life here on earth. How our hearts swell with love for our heavenly Father, who has given us the marvelous resurrection hope!

(w11 3/1 22 ¶3-6)

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Job’s words teach us a tender lesson about Jehovah: He has special attachment to those who, like Job, place themselves in his hands, allowing him to mold and shape them into people who are desirable in his eyes. (Isaiah 64:8) Jehovah treasures his faithful worshippers. For loyal ones who have died, he has “a yearning.” The Hebrew word thus rendered is “unquestionably one of the strongest words to express the emotion of longing desires,” says one scholar. Yes, not only does Jehovah remember his worshippers but he also longs to restore them to life.

Thankfully, in the book of Job—one of the first Bible books to be written—Jehovah saw fit to reveal his purpose to resurrect the dead. He wants to reunite you with your loved ones who have died. That thought can make the loss easier to bear. Why not learn more about this loving God and how you can let him mold

you into the kind of person who will see His purpose become a reality?

Job 12:12—Why do older Christians have the potential to help younger Christians?
(g99 7/22 11, box)

OLDER AND WISER?

“Is there not wisdom among the aged and understanding in length of days?” the Bible asks. (Job 12:12) What is the answer? Researchers studied older people to measure such qualities as “insight, sound judgment, perspective and the ability to weigh conflicting values and generate good problem-solving strategies.” According to *U.S. News & World Report*, the study showed that “older people consistently outshine younger people on all measures of wisdom, offering more-thoughtful, sophisticated advice.” Studies also show that “although it often takes older people longer than youngsters to make a decision, it is usually a better one.” Thus, as the Bible book of Job suggests, age is, indeed, sage.

Job 15:27—What did Eliphaz mean when he intimated that Job's face was "covered with fat"?
(*it-1* 802 ¶4)

The concealing, or covering, of the face by a human or an angel may express humility or reverential fear and respect. (Ex 3:6; 1Ki 19:13; Isa 6:2) It may also be a sign of mourning. (2Sa 19:4) By contrast, Eliphaz falsely intimated that Job's prosperity had made him arrogant, so that, in effect, he was 'covering his face with his fattiness.' (Job 15:27) As in Haman's case, for another to cover one's face could represent shamefulness and possibly doom.—Es 7:8; compare Ps 44:15; Jer 51:51.

- Song 111 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

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 Job 14:1, 2—Job summed up the current situation of human life (w15 3/1 3; w10 5/1 5 ¶2; w08 3/1 3 ¶3)
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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

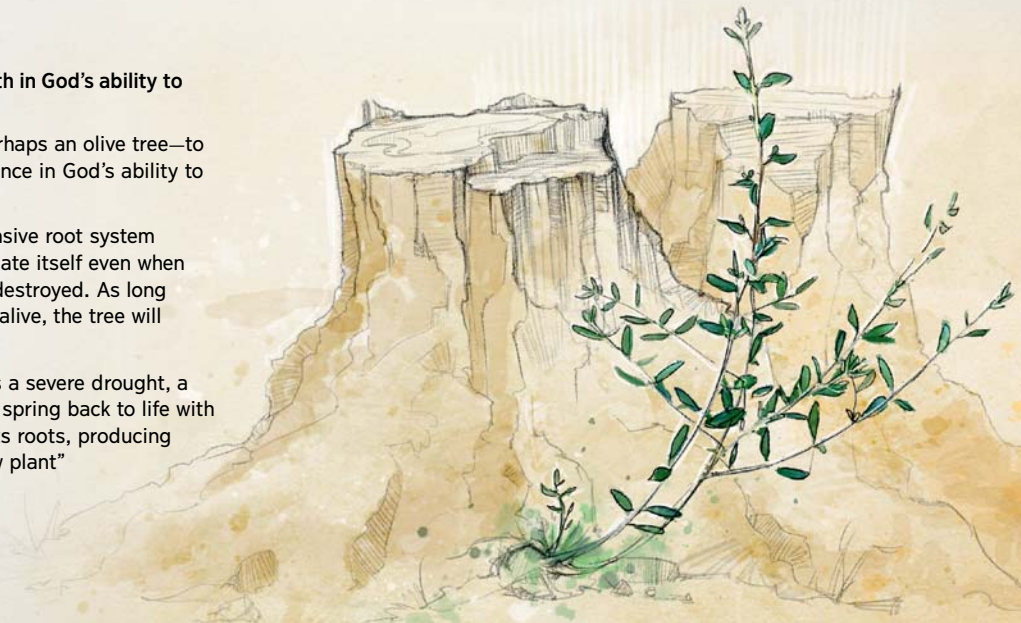
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14:7-9, 13-15

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13

What Is the Good News About Religion?



1. Is all religion good?

There are sincere people in all religions. It is good news that God sees those people and cares about them. But sadly, religion has been used for evil ends. (2 Corinthians 4:3, 4; 11:13-15) According to news reports, some religions are even involved in terrorism, genocide, war, and child abuse. How this saddens sincere believers in God!

📖 *Read Matthew 24:3-5, 11, 12.*

Whereas true religion glorifies God, false religion displeases him. It teaches ideas that are not in the Bible, including false teachings about God and about the dead. But Jehovah wants people to know the truth about him.

📖 *Read Ezekiel 18:4; 1 Timothy 2:3-5.*

2. What is the good news about religion?

Happily, God is not deceived by religions that claim to love him but are really in love with Satan's world. (James 4:4) God's Word refers to all false religion as "Babylon the Great." Babylon was the ancient city where false religion began after the Flood of Noah's day. Soon, God will bring a sudden end to religion that deceives and oppresses mankind. 📖 *Read Revelation 17:1, 2, 5, 16, 17; 18:8.*

There is more good news. Jehovah has not forgotten the sincere people who are scattered among false religions worldwide. He is uniting such people by teaching them the truth. 📖 *Read Micah 4:2, 5.*

134 *See Yourself When All Is New* (Revelation 21:1-5)

1. Just see yourself, just see me too;
Just see us all in a world that is new.
Think how you'll feel, how it will be,
To live in peace, to be truly free.
No evil one will then prevail;
Rule by our God cannot ever fail.
The time will have come for a new earthly start,
The song of our praises
will pour out from our heart:

(CHORUS)

*"Jehovah our God, how well you have done!
All things are new by the rule of your Son.
The fullness of our heart overflows in our song;
All glory and honor and praise to you belong."*

2. Now see yourself, and see me too;
And look ahead to a world that is new.
No sight we see, no sound we hear
Will cause alarm or give rise to fear.
All has come true, just as he said;
Now over mankind, his tent is spread.
He now shall awaken those sleeping in death;
Their voices will join us with
ev'ry grateful breath:

(Chorus)

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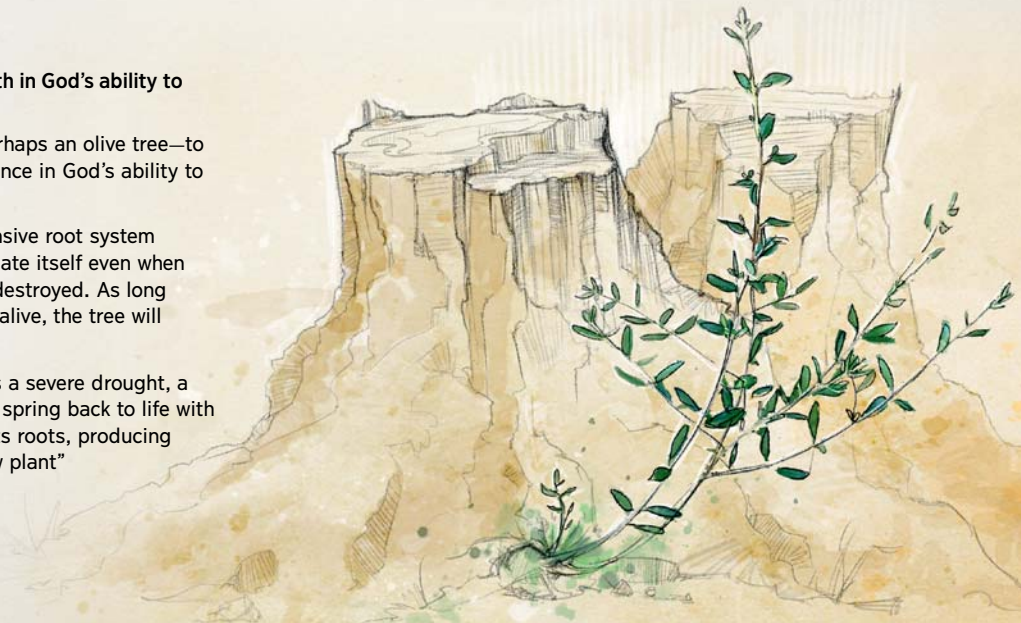
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The Resurrection—Made Possible by the Ransom

The Memorial gives us a good opportunity to reflect on future blessings that are made possible by the ransom, such as the resurrection. Jehovah never intended for humans to die. That is why one of the most painful emotions we experience is grief over the death of a loved one. (1Co 15:26) Jesus was pained to see his disciples mourn the loss of Lazarus. (Joh 11:33-35) Since Jesus is a perfect reflection of his Father, we can be sure that Jehovah is also pained to see us grieve over the loss of our loved ones. (Joh 14:7) Jehovah eagerly anticipates the time when he will bring his servants back from the dead, and we should too.—Job 14: 14, 15.

Since Jehovah is a God of order, it is reasonable to believe that the resurrection will take place in an orderly way. (1Co 14:33, 40) Instead of funerals, there may be welcoming sessions for the resurrected. Do you meditate on the resurrection, especially during times of grief? (2Co 4:17, 18) Do you thank Jehovah for providing the ransom and for revealing in the Scriptures that the dead will live again?—Col 3:15.

Which of your friends and relatives do you especially look forward to seeing again?

Which Bible characters do you especially want to meet and talk to?



He Took Comfort in His God

ELIJAH ran through the rain as the darkness deepened. He had a long way to go before he would reach Jezreel, and he was no young man. Yet, he ran on tirelessly, for “the very hand of Jehovah” was upon him. The energy coursing through his body was surely unlike any he had ever known. Why, he had just outpaced the team of horses that was pulling King Ahab in his royal chariot!—*Read 1 Kings 18:46.*

² Now the open road lay before him. Imagine Elijah blinking the raindrops from his eyes as he ran, thinking back over the most eventful day of his life. Without question, it was a glorious victory for Elijah’s God, Jehovah, and for true worship. Far behind him, lost in the gloom of the storm, lay the wind-swept heights of Mount Carmel, where Jehovah had used Elijah to strike a mighty and miraculous blow against Baal worship. Hundreds of Baal prophets were exposed as wicked frauds and justly executed.

1, 2. What happened on the most eventful day of Elijah’s life?

Then Elijah prayed to Jehovah for an end to the drought that had afflicted the land for three and a half years. The rains fell!—1 Ki. 18:18-45.

³ As Elijah splashed along those 19 miles to Jezreel, his hopes might have been high. It may have seemed to him that a real turning point had come at last. Ahab would have to change! After what he had witnessed, surely he had no choice but to abandon Baal worship; to restrain his queen, Jezebel; and to stop the persecution of Jehovah's servants.

⁴ When things seem to be going our way, it is only natural that our hopes rise. We may imagine that our lot in life will continue to improve, perhaps even thinking that our worst problems are finally behind us. If Elijah thought that way, no wonder, for he “was a man with feelings like ours.” (Jas. 5:17) Actually, though, Elijah's problems were far from over. In fact, within hours Elijah would be so fearful, so low in spirits, that he would wish to die. What happened, and how did Jehovah help his prophet to renew his faith and his courage? Let us see.

3, 4. (a) Why might Elijah's hopes have been high as he made his way to Jezreel? (b) What questions will we consider?



“Elijah . . . went running ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel”

An Unexpected Turn of Events

⁵ When Ahab reached his palace in Jezreel, did he give any evidence of being a changed man? We read: “Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and all about how he had killed all the prophets with the sword.” (1 Ki. 19:1) Notice that Ahab’s account of the day’s events left out Elijah’s God, Jehovah. A fleshly man, Ahab saw the day’s miraculous events in strictly human terms—what “Elijah had done.” Clearly, he had not learned to respect Jehovah God. And how did his vengeful wife react?

⁶ Jezebel was furious! Livid with rage, she sent this message to Elijah: “So may the gods do, and so may they add to it, if at this time tomorrow I shall not make your soul like the soul of each one of them!” (1 Ki. 19:2) This was a death threat of the worst kind. In effect, Jezebel was vowing that she herself should die if she could not have Elijah killed within the day to avenge her Baal prophets. Imagine Elijah being awakened from sleep in some humble lodging

5. After the events on Mount Carmel, had Ahab learned to respect Jehovah more, and how do we know?

6. What message did Jezebel send to Elijah, and what did it mean?

in Jezreel on that stormy night—only to hear the queen’s messenger deliver those awful words. How was he affected?

Overcome by Discouragement and Fear

⁷ If Elijah cherished any notions that the war against Baal worship was all but over, his hopes came crashing down at that moment. Jezebel was undeterred. A great many of Elijah’s faithful colleagues had already been executed on her orders, and now, it seemed, he was to be next. What effect did Jezebel’s threat have on Elijah? The Bible tells us: “He became afraid.” Did Elijah picture in his mind’s eye the terrible death that Jezebel had in store for him? If he dwelled on such thoughts, it is no wonder that his courage failed him. At any rate, Elijah “began to go for his soul”—he ran for his life.—1 Ki. 18:4; 19:3.

⁸ Elijah was not the only man of faith ever to be overcome by fear. Much later, the apostle Peter had a similar problem. For instance, when Jesus enabled Peter to join Him in walking on water, the apostle

7. What effect did Jezebel’s threat have on Elijah, and what did he do?

8. (a) How was Peter’s problem similar to that of Elijah? (b) What lesson can we learn from Elijah and Peter?

began “looking at the windstorm.” He then lost his courage and started to sink. (*Read Matthew 14:30.*) The examples of Elijah and Peter thus teach us a valuable lesson. If we want to maintain our courage, we must not let our mind dwell on the dangers that frighten us. We need to keep our focus on the Source of our hope and strength.

“It Is Enough!”

⁹ Driven by fear, Elijah fled southwestward some 95 miles to Beer-sheba, a town near the southern border of Judah. There he left his attendant behind and struck out into the wilderness alone. The record says that he went “a day’s journey,” so we may picture him starting off at sunrise, evidently carrying no provisions with him. Depressed, spurred ever onward by fear, he struggled over the rough and wild terrain under the blazing sun. As that glaring disk gradually reddened and sank to the horizon, Elijah’s strength gave out. Exhausted, he sat down under a broom tree—the closest thing to shelter in that barren landscape.—1 Ki. 19:4.

9. Describe Elijah’s journey and his state of mind as he fled.

¹⁰ Elijah prayed in utter desperation. He asked to die. He said: “I am no better than my forefathers.” He knew that his forefathers were then mere dust and bones in the grave, unable to do any good for anybody. (Eccl. 9:10) Elijah felt just as worthless. No wonder he cried out: “It is enough!” Why go on living?

¹¹ Should it be shocking to learn that a man of God could become so low in spirits? Not necessarily. A number of faithful men and women in the Bible record are described as feeling so sad that they wished for death—among them Rebekah, Jacob, Moses, and Job.—Gen. 25:22; 37:35; Num. 11:13-15; Job 14:13.

¹² Today, we live in “critical times hard to deal with,” so it is not surprising that many people, even faithful servants of God, find themselves feeling low at times. (2 Tim. 3:1) If you ever find yourself in such a dire situation, follow Elijah’s example in this respect: Pour out your feelings to God.

10, 11. (a) What was the meaning of Elijah’s prayer to Jehovah? (b) Using the cited scriptures, describe the feelings of other godly individuals who became low in spirits.

12. If you ever find yourself feeling very low, in what respect should you follow Elijah’s example?

After all, Jehovah is “the God of all comfort.” (*Read 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.*) Did he comfort Elijah?

Jehovah Sustained His Prophet

¹³ How do you think Jehovah felt as he looked down from heaven and saw his beloved prophet lying under that tree in the wilderness and begging for death to take him? We do not have to guess. After Elijah sank into sleep, Jehovah sent an angel to him. The angel gently woke Elijah with a touch and said: “Rise up, eat.” Elijah did so, for the angel had kindly set out a simple meal for him—fresh, warm bread along with water. Did he even thank the angel? The record says only that the prophet ate and drank and went back to sleep. Was he too despondent to speak? At any rate, the angel woke him a second time, perhaps at dawn. Once more, he urged Elijah, “Rise up, eat,” and he added these remarkable words, “for the journey is too much for you.”—1 Ki. 19:5-7.

¹⁴ Thanks to God-given insight, the angel knew where Elijah was headed. He also knew that the jour-

13, 14. (a) How did Jehovah by means of an angel show loving concern for His troubled prophet? (b) Why is it comforting that Jehovah knows all about each one of us, including our limitations?

1. Ever onward, O my people,
 Let the Kingdom tidings go.
 Tremble not before our foe.
 Let all lovers of truth know
 That my reigning Son, Christ Jesus,
 To the earth has cast the foe,
 Soon to bind the Devil, Satan,
 Letting all his victims go.

(CHORUS)

*Fear them not, O my beloved,
 Though their boasting threats may fly.
 I will keep my faithful servant
 As the apple of my eye.*

2. Even though your foes are many,
 Though they threaten and revile,
 Though they flatter and they smile,
 To mislead and to beguile.
 Fear them not, my faithful warriors,
 Nor their persecution's heat,
 For I will preserve the faithful
 Till the vict'ry is complete.

(Chorus)

3. Never fear you are forgotten;
 I am still your strength and shield.
 Though you die upon the field,
 Even death to me will yield.
 Fear them not who kill the body
 But cannot destroy the soul.
 To the end may you be faithful;
 I will bring you to your goal!

(Chorus)

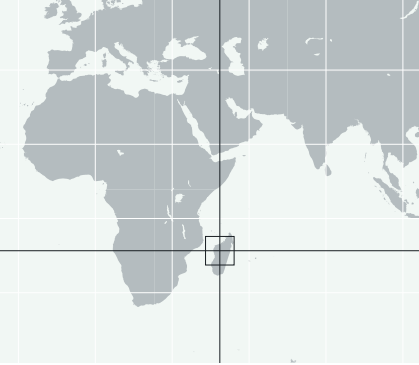
JANUARY 2016

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
FEBRUARY 29–APRIL 3, 2016



COVER IMAGE:
MADAGASCAR

A pioneer shares a Bible passage with an oxcart driver on the Alley of the Baobabs in Morondava, Madagascar

PUBLISHERS
29,963

BIBLE STUDIES
77,984

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE
135,122

TABLE OF CONTENTS

3 THEY OFFERED THEMSELVES WILLINGLY
—In Oceania

7 WEEK OF FEBRUARY 29–MARCH 6
Be Determined to “Let Your Brotherly Love Continue”!

What is our yeartext for 2016? What should we think of when we look at it throughout the year? This article will show us how to gain the most benefit from our yeartext.

12 WEEK OF MARCH 7-13
Be Compelled by God’s “Indescribable Free Gift”

Jehovah has given us what the apostle Paul called God’s “indescribable free gift.” (2 Cor. 9:15) What is that gift? How does it compel us to walk in the footsteps of Christ Jesus, to love our brothers, and to forgive others from the heart? We will answer these questions and consider practical things we can do during the Memorial season.

17 WEEK OF MARCH 14-20
The Spirit Bears Witness With Our Spirit

22 WEEK OF MARCH 21-27
“We Want to Go With You”

These two articles will explain how someone knows that he or she has received the heavenly calling and what it means for that person to be one of the anointed. Additionally, we will consider how anointed ones should view themselves and how we should react to any increase in the number of partakers worldwide.

28 WEEK OF MARCH 28–APRIL 3
Working Together With God —A Cause for Rejoicing

From earliest times, Jehovah has invited others to work with him to accomplish his purpose. It is his purpose that a global witness be given, and he has invited us to share in that work. This article considers the blessings we receive by being God’s fellow workers.

Our Reasons for Joy

(Matthew 5:12)

1. Our reasons for joy are abundant,
Like riches increasing in worth.
Desirable things of all nations
Are joining us in all the earth.
The joy in our heart is well-founded,
With roots reaching deep in God's Word.
We daily partake of its teachings;
Faith follows the things we have heard.
Our causes for joy are deep-seated,
Like embers that burn in our hearts.
Though troubles and trials beset us,
Endurance Jehovah imparts.

(CHORUS)

*Jehovah our God is our joy,
The work of his hands our delight.
How deep are his thoughts, how great are his works,
Abounding in goodness and might!*

2. We gladly behold his productions,
The heavens, the sea, and the land.
We gaze at the book of creation,
Applauding the work of his hand.
Triumphantly we now bear witness,
Proclaiming the Kingdom of God.
The news of its birth and its blessings,
We joyously spread all abroad.
Eternal rejoicing approaches,
Like daylight that follows the night.
The promised new earth and new heavens
Will bring everlasting delight.

(Chorus)

Working Together With God —A Cause for Rejoicing

“Working together with him, we also urge you not to accept the undeserved kindness of God and miss its purpose.”—2 COR. 6:1.

SONGS: 75, 74

WHY CAN IT BE SAID THAT THE PREACHING
WORK . . .

brings us happiness?

draws us closer to God and to others?

is a protection for us?

JEHOVAH is the Supreme One, the Creator of all things, the One possessing infinite wisdom and power. Job came to understand that. After Jehovah questioned Job about His works of creation, Job replied: “I know that you are able to do all things and that nothing you have in mind to do is impossible for you.” (Job 42:2) Though Jehovah can accomplish whatever he sets out to do—without assistance—he

1. Even though Jehovah is the Supreme One, what has he invited others to do?



What could be more satisfying
than teaching someone the truth?
(See paragraph 7)



has from the very beginning lovingly invited others to work along with him to achieve his purpose.

2 God's first creation was his only-begotten spirit Son. Jehovah allowed his Son to share in all further works of creation, both spirit and material. (John 1:1-3, 18) Concerning Jesus, the apostle Paul wrote: "By means of him all other things were created in the heavens and on the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, whether they are thrones or lordships or governments or authorities. All other things have been created through him and for him." (Col. 1:15-17) Thus, Jehovah honored his Son both by including him in the works of creation and by telling others about his Son's important role.

3 Jehovah also invited humans to work along with him. For example, he allowed Adam to name the animals. (Gen. 2:19, 20) What pleasure it must have brought Adam to observe these creatures, to study their characteristics, and to decide what name might

2. What important work did Jehovah invite Jesus to do?

3. What did Jehovah invite Adam to do, and why?

be appropriate for each one of them! Jehovah could have named the animals himself—he created them. Yet, he lovingly allowed Adam to name them. God also gave Adam the opportunity to expand Paradise beyond the borders of Eden. (Gen. 1:27, 28) Sadly, Adam eventually chose not to work along with God, bringing catastrophe on himself and all his offspring.—Gen. 3:17-19, 23.

4 Later, God invited other humans to share in the outworking of his purpose. *Noah* built an ark that preserved him and his family alive through the global Deluge. *Moses* delivered the nation of Israel from Egypt. *Joshua* brought that nation into the Promised Land. *Solomon* built the temple in Jerusalem. *Mary* became mother to Jesus. All these faithful ones and many others worked along with Jehovah to accomplish his will.

5 Today, Jehovah invites us to give our full support to the Messianic Kingdom. There are many av-

4. How did others work with God to accomplish his will?

5. In what work can we share, and did Jehovah need to involve us in this work? (See opening picture of the standard edition.)

venues of sacred service. Some may not be available to all Christians, but all of us can participate in the work of preaching the good news of the Kingdom. Of course, Jehovah did not have to involve us in this work. He could have chosen to speak directly from heaven to people on earth. Jesus said that Jehovah could even have had the stones cry out about the Messianic King. (Luke 19:37-40) Yet, Jehovah allows us to be his “fellow workers.” (1 Cor. 3:9) The apostle Paul wrote: “*Working together with him*, we also urge you not to accept the undeserved kindness of God and miss its purpose.” (2 Cor. 6:1) Working along with God is an undeserved honor, causing us great rejoicing. Let us consider some reasons why.

WORKING WITH GOD MAKES US HAPPY

6 From earliest times, Jehovah’s servants have found joy in working with God. God’s firstborn spirit Son, represented as the personification of wisdom, is depicted as saying: “Jehovah produced me as the

6. How did God’s firstborn Son describe how he felt about working beside his Father?

beginning of his way . . . I was beside him as a master worker. I was the one he was especially fond of day by day; *I rejoiced before him all the time.*” (Prov. 8:22, 30) Jesus joyfully worked alongside his Father, rejoicing both in what he accomplished and in the knowledge that Jehovah was fond of him. What, though, about us?

⁷ Jesus said that there is happiness both in giving and in receiving. (Acts 20:35) It brought us joy to receive the truth, and it brings us joy to share the truth with others. As we share Bible truths with others, we see spiritually hungry ones filled with delight as they begin to understand and appreciate our God and the precious truths contained in his Word. It touches our heart to see them make changes not just in their thinking but also in their way of life. We realize that the work of sharing the good news is vitally important. It opens the way to everlasting life for those who become reconciled to God. (2 Cor. 5:20) What more joyful, satisfying work could we en-

7. Why does the preaching work bring us joy?

gage in than that of helping people chart a course that will result in their living forever?

8 Though we find happiness when people respond to the message we preach, we also delight in knowing that we are pleasing to Jehovah and that he appreciates our efforts to serve him. (Read 1 Corinthians 15:58.) Marco, who lives in Italy, observes: “I have the priceless joy of knowing that I am giving my best to Jehovah and not to someone who will soon forget what I’ve done.” Similarly, Franco, who also serves in Italy, says: “By means of his Word and his spiritual provisions, Jehovah reminds us every day that he loves us and that everything we do for him is important, even though our efforts may seem like nothing to us. This is why working along with God makes me happy and gives my life meaning.”

WORKING WITH GOD DRAWS US CLOSER TO HIM AND TO OTHERS

9 When we work along with those we love,

-
8. What have some said about the joy of working with Jehovah?
9. What relationship existed between Jehovah and Jesus, and why?

we draw close to them and come to know their personality and their qualities. We learn not only what they want to accomplish but also how they go about doing it. Jesus worked along with Jehovah for perhaps billions of years, and they forged a strong, unbreakable bond of love and affection for each other. Pointing to the closeness of their relationship, Jesus said: “I and the Father are one.” (John 10:30) They enjoyed a wonderful unity, always working together in full harmony.

10 In prayer, Jesus asked Jehovah to watch over his disciples. The reason? He prayed: “So that they may be one just as we are one.” (John 17:11) As we conform to God’s standards and share in the work of preaching, we come to understand his appealing qualities. We learn why it is wise to trust in him and to follow his direction. As we draw close to God, he draws close to us. (Read James 4:8.) We also draw close to our spiritual brothers and sisters because we face similar challenges and joys and because we

10. Why does preaching draw us closer to God and to others?

share the same goals. Yes, we work together, rejoice together, and endure together. Octavia, who lives in Britain, says: “Working with Jehovah draws me closer to others because my friendships and relationships are no longer based on a superficial affinity but on a common goal and direction.” Do you not feel the same way? Are you not drawn closer to others when you see the efforts they make to please Jehovah?

11 The bonds of love that we enjoy with God and with fellow humans may be strong now, but they will be even stronger in the righteous new world. Think of the work that lies ahead! There will be resurrected ones to be welcomed back and to be educated in the ways of Jehovah. The earth will need to be transformed into a paradise. These are no small tasks, but how joyful it will be to work shoulder to shoulder and to grow to perfection under the Messianic Kingdom! Those in the human family will draw ever

11. Why will we draw even closer to Jehovah and to our brothers in the new world?

closer to one another and to their God, who will without fail “satisfy the desire of every living thing.”
—Ps. 145:16.

WORKING WITH GOD IS A PROTECTION

12 We need to safeguard our spirituality. Because we live in a world that is dominated by Satan the Devil and because we are imperfect, it is easy for us to adopt the wrong thinking and conduct of the world. The world’s spirit might be compared to a river current that is pulling us in a direction we do not want to go. To avoid being swept downstream, we must vigorously swim in the other direction. Similarly, effort is required to keep from being swept away by the spirit of Satan’s world. When we are preaching to others, we focus on important and beneficial spiritual matters, not on thoughts that will erode our faith. (Phil. 4:8) Preaching strengthens our convictions, reminding us of God’s promises and loving standards. It also helps keep our spiritual armor intact.—Read Ephesians 6:14-17.

12. How is the preaching work a protection?

13 If we keep busy in the preaching work and in other spiritual activities, we simply do not have time to become overly concerned with our own problems, and that helps to protect us. Joel, who lives in Australia, says: “The preaching work helps me not to lose touch with reality. It reminds me of the challenges people are facing and of the benefits I have experienced by applying Bible principles in my life. The preaching work helps me to try to stay humble; it gives me an opportunity to rely on Jehovah and on my brothers and sisters.”

14 Preaching also strengthens our conviction that God’s spirit is with us. Consider: Suppose you were offered a job to distribute nutritious bread to people in your community. You would neither be paid for your work nor be reimbursed for your expenses. What is more, you would soon discover that most people did not want the bread and that some would even hate you for distributing it. How long

13. How does one Witness in Australia feel about preaching?

14. Why does our perseverance in preaching show that God’s spirit is with us?

would you continue to work at such a job? Feeling disheartened by the people's negative response, you would probably not have the inner strength to continue for very long. Yet, many of us have persevered in the ministry year after year at our own expense and despite the scorn and ridicule of thankless ones. Does that not give evidence that God's spirit is at work in us?

WORKING WITH GOD SHOWS OUR LOVE FOR HIM AND FOR OTHERS

15 Just think about how the preaching of the good news fits in with Jehovah's loving purpose for humankind. He purposed that humans would inhabit the earth without ever dying; though Adam sinned, Jehovah did not change His mind. (Isa. 55: 11) Instead, he arranged for humans to be delivered from condemnation to sin and death. Working along with that purpose, Jesus came to earth and sacrificed his life for obedient humans. In order to become obedient, however, they had to understand what God

15. How is the preaching of the good news connected with God's purpose for humankind?

required of them. So Jesus also taught people what God's requirements are, and he commanded his disciples to do the same. By helping others to become reconciled to God, we share directly in his loving arrangement to rescue mankind from sin and death.

16 Helping others on the road to everlasting life demonstrates our love both for our fellow man and for Jehovah, "whose will is that all sorts of people should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth." (1 Tim. 2:4) When asked what was the greatest of all the laws given to the nation of Israel, Jesus replied: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. The second, like it, is this: 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.'" (Matt. 22:37-39) By sharing in the preaching work, we demonstrate our obedience to these commandments.
—Read Acts 10:42.

16. How is our preaching linked to God's greatest commandments?

17 How blessed we are! Jehovah has given us a work that brings us joy, that draws us closer to him and to others, and that serves to protect us spiritually. It also gives us the opportunity to show our love for God and for our fellow man. The circumstances of God’s people vary greatly throughout the earth, but whether young or old, rich or poor, strong or weak, millions are seeking and finding ways to share their faith with others. Likely, you will agree with Chantel, who lives in France. She says: “The most powerful Person in the universe, the Creator of all things, the happy God, says to me: ‘Go! Speak! Speak for me, speak from your heart. I give you my strength, my Word the Bible, heavenly support, earthly companions, progressive training, and precise instructions at the appropriate time.’ What an immense privilege it is to do what Jehovah asks of us and to work together with our God!”

17. How do you feel about the honor to preach the good news?

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The Joy of Jehovah (Nehemiah 8:10)

1. Signs of the times are heralding the Kingdom.
Good news we tell for all to hear.
Lift up your heads, and look to your salvation;
Time for deliverance is near!

(CHORUS)

The joy of Jehovah is our stronghold.

Sing loud, and raise a joyful cry.

Rejoice in the hope, and show a grateful heart,

All give praise and laud our God on high.

The joy of Jehovah is our stronghold.

His name all men must come to know.

With constant devotion to our God and King,

Godly joy in service we will show.

2. Look to our God, you lovers of Jehovah.
No need to fear, for he is strong.
Stand up and shout with voices loud as thunder;
Sing to our God a joyous song!
(Chorus)