

- Song 116 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“The Messiah Fulfilled Prophecy”:** (10 min.)  
Isa 9:1, 2—His public ministry in Galilee was foretold (w11 8/15 10 ¶13; ip-1 124-126 ¶13-17)  
Isa 9:6—He would have many different roles (w14 2/15 12 ¶18; w07 5/15 6)  
Isa 9:7—His rulership will bring true peace and justice (ip-1 132 ¶28-29)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)  
Isa 7:3, 4—Why did Jehovah extend salvation to wicked King Ahaz? (w06 12/1 9 ¶4)

Isa 8:1-4—How was this prophecy fulfilled? (it-1 1219; ip-1 111-112 ¶23-24)

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:** (4 min. or less) Isa 7:1-17

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) g16.6 cover
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) g16.6 cover
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) lv 34 ¶18  
—Show how to reach the heart.

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 10
- **“Here I Am! Send Me!” (Isa 6:8):** (15 min.)  
Discussion. Play the video *Moving to Serve Where the Need Is Greater* (video category OUR MEETINGS AND MINISTRY).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) kr chap. 5 ¶10-17, box on p. 53
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 150 and Prayer  
*Reminder:* Play the new song through once before singing.

ISAIAH 6-10 | The Messiah Fulfilled Prophecy

Centuries before Jesus was born, Isaiah foretold that the Messiah would preach “in the region of the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.” Jesus fulfilled this prophecy as he traveled throughout Galilee preaching and teaching the good news.—Isa 9:1, 2.



Performed his first miracle  
—Joh 2:1-11 (Cana)



Chose his apostles  
—Mr 3:13, 14 (near Capernaum)



Gave the Sermon on the Mount  
—Mt 5:1-7:27 (near Capernaum)



Resurrected a widow’s only son  
—Lu 7:11-17 (Nain)



Appeared to some 500 disciples after his resurrection—1Co 15:6 (Galilee)



1. The prophets of old sought to learn of the Christ,  
The hope of all groaning creation.  
God's spirit revealed that Messiah would come,  
Providing the means of salvation.  
The time has arrived, the Messiah now reigns,  
The proof of his presence is clear.  
How great is the favor of learning such things;  
Into these even angels would peer!

*(CHORUS)*

*Our path now becomes ever brighter;  
We walk in the full light of day.  
Behold what our God is revealing;  
He guides us each step of the way.*

2. Our Lord has appointed a trustworthy slave,  
Through whom He gives food in due season.  
The light of the truth has grown brighter with time,  
Appealing to heart and to reason.  
Our path ever clearer, our steps ever firm,  
We walk in the brightness of day.  
All thanks to Jehovah, the Source of all truth,  
We most gratefully walk in his way.

*(Chorus)*

## Isaiah 6-10

**6** In the year that King Uz-ziah died, I saw Jehovah sitting on a lofty and elevated throne, and the skirts of his robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> Seraphs were standing above him; each had six wings. Each covered his face with two and covered his feet with two, and each of them would fly about with two.

<sup>3</sup> And one called to the other:

“Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of armies.  
The whole earth is filled with his glory.”

<sup>4</sup> And the pivots of the thresholds quivered at the sound of the shouting, and the house was filled with smoke.

<sup>5</sup> Then I said: “Woe to me!

I am as good as dead,  
For I am a man of unclean lips,  
And I live among a people of unclean lips;  
For my eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of  
armies himself!”

<sup>6</sup> At that, one of the seraphs flew to me, and in his hand was a glowing coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. <sup>7</sup> He touched my mouth and said:

“Look! This has touched your lips.  
Your guilt is removed,  
And your sin is atoned for.”

<sup>8</sup> Then I heard the voice of Jehovah saying: “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” And I said: “Here I am! Send me!”

<sup>9</sup> And he replied, “Go, and say to this people:  
‘You will hear again and again,  
But you will not understand;  
You will see again and again,  
But you will not get any knowledge.’”

<sup>10</sup> Make the heart of this people unreceptive,  
Make their ears unresponsive,  
And paste their eyes together,  
So that they may not see with their eyes  
And hear with their ears,  
So that their heart may not understand  
And they may not turn back and be healed.”

<sup>11</sup> At this I said: “How long, O Jehovah?” Then he said:

“Until the cities crash in ruins without an  
inhabitant  
And the houses are without people  
And the land is ruined and desolate;

<sup>12</sup> Until Jehovah removes men far away  
And the deserted condition of the land becomes  
very extensive.

<sup>13</sup> “But there will still be a tenth in it, and it will again  
be burned, like a big tree and like an oak, which after

they are cut down leave a stump; a holy seed will be its stump.”

**7** Now in the days of A'haz son of Jo'tham son of Uz-zi'ah, the king of Judah, King Re'zin of Syria and Pe'kah son of Rem-a-li'ah, the king of Israel, came up to wage war against Jerusalem, but he could not capture it. <sup>2</sup> A report was made to the house of David: “Syria has joined forces with E'phra-im.”

And the heart of A'haz and the heart of his people began to tremble, like the trees of the forest shaking in the wind.

<sup>3</sup> Jehovah then said to Isaiah: “Go out, please, to meet A'haz, you and your son She'ar-ja'shub, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool by the highway of the laundryman's field. <sup>4</sup> You must say to him, ‘Take care to stay calm. Do not be afraid, and do not lose heart because of these two stumps of smoldering logs, because of the hot anger of Re'zin and Syria and the son of Rem-a-li'ah. <sup>5</sup> For Syria with E'phra-im and the son of Rem-a-li'ah have plotted harm against you, saying: <sup>6</sup> “Let us go up against Judah and tear it apart and conquer it for ourselves, and let us appoint the son of Tab'e-el as its king.”

<sup>7</sup> “This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says:  
“It will not succeed,  
Nor will it take place.

<sup>8</sup> For the head of Syria is Damascus,  
And the head of Damascus is Re'zin.  
Within just 65 years  
E'phra-im will be completely shattered and  
cease to be a people.

<sup>9</sup> The head of E'phra-im is Sa-mar'i-a,  
And the head of Sa-mar'i-a is the son of  
Rem-a-li'ah.  
Unless you have firm faith,  
You will not be firmly established.”””

<sup>10</sup> Jehovah continued speaking to A'haz: <sup>11</sup> “Ask for a sign from Jehovah your God; it may be as deep as the Grave or as high as the sky.” <sup>12</sup> But A'haz said: “I will not ask, nor will I put Jehovah to the test.”

<sup>13</sup> Isaiah then said: “Listen, please, O house of David. Is it not enough that you try the patience of men? Must you also try the patience of God? <sup>14</sup> Therefore, Jehovah himself will give you a sign: Look! The young woman will become pregnant and will give birth to a son, and she will name him Im-man'u-el. <sup>15</sup> He will eat butter and honey by the time that he knows how to reject the bad and choose the good. <sup>16</sup> For before the boy knows how to reject the bad and choose the good, the land of the two kings whom you dread will be completely abandoned. <sup>17</sup> Jehovah will bring against you and against your people and against the house of

your father a time such as has not come since the day E'phra·im broke away from Judah, for He will bring the king of As·syr'i·a.

<sup>18</sup> “In that day Jehovah will whistle for the flies from the distant streams of the Nile of Egypt and for the bees in the land of As·syr'i·a, <sup>19</sup> and they will all come and settle down on the steep valleys, on the rocky clefts, on all the thornbushes, and on all the watering places.

<sup>20</sup> “In that day by means of a hired razor from the region of the River, by means of the king of As·syr'i·a, Jehovah will shave the head and the hair of the legs, and it will sweep away the beard as well.

<sup>21</sup> “In that day a man will keep alive a young cow of the herd and two sheep. <sup>22</sup> And because of the abundance of milk, he will eat butter, for everyone remaining in the land will eat butter and honey.

<sup>23</sup> “In that day wherever there used to be 1,000 vines worth 1,000 pieces of silver, there will be only thornbushes and weeds. <sup>24</sup> Men will go there with bow and arrow, because all the land will become thornbushes and weeds. <sup>25</sup> And all the mountains that used to be cleared with a hoe, you will not go near for fear of thornbushes and weeds; they will become a grazing place for bulls and a trampling ground of sheep.”

**8** Jehovah said to me: “Take a large tablet and write on it with an ordinary stylus, ‘Ma'her-shal'al-hash-baz.’  
**2** And let me have it confirmed in writing by faithful witnesses, U-ri'ah the priest and Zech·a·ri'ah the son of Je·ber·e·chi'ah.”

**3** Then I had relations with the prophetess, and she became pregnant and in time gave birth to a son. Jehovah then said to me: “Name him Ma'her-shal'al-hash-baz, **4** for before the boy knows how to call out, ‘My father!’ and ‘My mother!’ the resources of Damascus and the spoil of Sa·mar'i·a will be carried away before the king of As·syr'i·a.”

**5** Jehovah spoke to me again:

**6** “Because this people has rejected the gently  
flowing waters of the Shi-lo'ah  
And they rejoice over Re'zin and the son of  
Rem·a·li'ah,

**7** Therefore look! Jehovah will bring against them  
The mighty and vast waters of the River,  
The king of As·syr'i·a and all his glory.  
He will come up over all his streambeds  
And overflow all his banks

**8** And sweep through Judah.  
He will flood and pass through, reaching to the  
neck;



His outspread wings will fill the breadth of your  
land,  
O Im·man'u·el!”

<sup>9</sup> Cause harm, you peoples, but you will be shattered  
to pieces.

Listen, all you from distant parts of the earth!  
Prepare for battle, but you will be shattered to  
pieces!

Prepare for battle, but you will be shattered to  
pieces!

<sup>10</sup> Devise a plan, but it will be thwarted!  
Say what you like, but it will not succeed,  
For God is with us!

<sup>11</sup> With his strong hand on me, this is what Jehovah  
said to me to warn me away from following the course  
of this people:

<sup>12</sup> “You should not call a conspiracy what this people  
calls a conspiracy!  
Do not fear what they fear;  
Do not tremble at it.

<sup>13</sup> Jehovah of armies—he is the One you should  
regard as holy,  
He is the One you should fear,  
And he is the One who should cause you to  
tremble.”

<sup>14</sup> He will become as a sanctuary,  
But as a stone to strike against  
And as a rock to stumble over  
To both houses of Israel,  
As a trap and a snare  
To the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

<sup>15</sup> Many of them will stumble and fall and be broken;  
They will be ensnared and caught.

<sup>16</sup> Wrap up the written confirmation;  
Seal up the law among my disciples!

<sup>17</sup> I will keep in expectation of Jehovah, who is hiding  
his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in  
him.

<sup>18</sup> Look! I and the children whom Jehovah has given  
me are as signs and as miracles in Israel from Jehovah  
of armies, who resides on Mount Zion.

<sup>19</sup> And if they say to you: "Inquire of the spirit  
mediums or of the fortune-tellers who chirp and  
mutter," is it not of their God that a people should  
inquire? Should they inquire of the dead in behalf of the  
living? <sup>20</sup> Instead, they should inquire of the law and of  
the written confirmation!

When they do not speak according to this word, they  
have no light. <sup>21</sup> And each one will pass through the  
land afflicted and hungry; and because he is hungry

and indignant, he will curse his king and his God as he looks upward. <sup>22</sup> Then he will look to the earth and see only distress and darkness, obscurity and hard times, gloom and no brightness.

**9** However, the gloom will not be as when the land had distress, as in former times when the land of Zeb'u-lun and the land of Naph'ta-li were treated with contempt. But at a later time He will cause it to be honored—the way by the sea, in the region of the Jordan, Gal'i-lee of the nations.

<sup>2</sup> The people who were walking in the darkness  
Have seen a great light.  
As for those dwelling in the land of deep  
shadow,  
Light has shone on them.

<sup>3</sup> You have made the nation populous;  
You have made its rejoicing great.  
They rejoice before you  
As people rejoice in the harvesttime,  
As those who joyfully divide up the spoil.

<sup>4</sup> For you have shattered to pieces the yoke of their  
load,  
The rod on their shoulders, the staff of the  
taskmaster,  
As in the day of Mid'i-an.

<sup>5</sup> Every boot that shakes the earth as it marches

And every garment soaked in blood  
Will become fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup> For a child has been born to us,  
A son has been given to us;  
And the rulership will rest on his shoulder.  
His name will be called Wonderful Counselor,  
Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup> To the increase of his rulership  
And to peace, there will be no end,  
On the throne of David and on his kingdom  
In order to establish it firmly and to sustain it  
Through justice and righteousness,  
From now on and forever.  
The zeal of Jehovah of armies will do this.

<sup>8</sup> Jehovah sent a word against Jacob,  
And it has come against Israel.

<sup>9</sup> And all the people will know it  
—E'phra·im and the inhabitants of Sa·mar'i·a—  
Who say in their haughtiness and in their  
insolence of heart:

<sup>10</sup> “Bricks have fallen,  
But we will build with hewn stone.  
Sycamore trees have been cut down,  
But we will replace them with cedars.”

- <sup>11</sup> Jehovah will raise up Re'zin's adversaries against him  
And will stir his enemies to action,
- <sup>12</sup> Syria from the east and the Phi-lis'tines from the west,  
They will devour Israel with open mouths.  
In view of all this, his anger has not turned back,  
But his hand is still stretched out to strike.
- <sup>13</sup> For the people have not returned to the One who strikes them;  
They have not sought Jehovah of armies.
- <sup>14</sup> Jehovah will cut off from Israel  
Head and tail, shoot and rush, in one day.
- <sup>15</sup> The elder and highly respected one is the head,  
And the prophet giving false instruction is the tail.
- <sup>16</sup> Those leading this people are causing them to wander,  
And those who are being led are confused.
- <sup>17</sup> That is why Jehovah will not rejoice over their young men,  
And he will have no mercy on their fatherless children and their widows  
Because all of them are apostates and evildoers  
And every mouth is speaking senselessness.

In view of all this, his anger has not turned back,  
But his hand is still stretched out to strike.

**18** For wickedness burns like a fire,  
Consuming thornbushes and weeds.  
It will set fire to the thickets of the forest,  
And they will go up in clouds of smoke.

**19** In the fury of Jehovah of armies  
The land has been set on fire,  
And the people will become fuel for the fire.  
No one will spare even his brother.

**20** One will cut down on the right  
But still be hungry;  
And one will eat on the left  
But will not be satisfied.  
Each will devour the flesh of his own arm,

**21** Ma·nas'seh will devour E'phra·im,  
And E'phra·im Ma·nas'seh.  
Together they will be against Judah.  
In view of all this, his anger has not turned back,  
But his hand is still stretched out to strike.

**10** Woe to those who enact harmful regulations,  
Who constantly draft oppressive decrees,

**2** To deny the legal claim of the poor,  
To deprive the lowly among my people of  
justice,

Making widows their spoil  
And fatherless children their plunder!

<sup>3</sup> What will you do on the day of reckoning,  
When destruction comes from afar?  
To whom will you flee for assistance,  
And where will you leave your wealth?

<sup>4</sup> Nothing remains except to crouch among the  
prisoners  
Or to fall among the slain.  
In view of all this, his anger has not turned back,  
But his hand is still stretched out to strike.

<sup>5</sup> “Aha! the As-syr'i-an,  
The rod to express my anger  
And the staff in their hand for my denunciation!

<sup>6</sup> I will send him against an apostate nation,  
Against the people who infuriated me;  
I will command him to take much spoil and much  
plunder  
And to trample them like mud in the streets.

<sup>7</sup> But he will not be inclined this way  
And his heart will not scheme this way;  
For it is in his heart to annihilate,  
To cut off many nations, not a few.

<sup>8</sup> For he says,  
'Are not my princes all kings?

<sup>9</sup> Is not Cal'no just like Car'che-mish?  
Is not Ha'math like Ar'pad?  
Is not Sa-mar'i-a like Damascus?

<sup>10</sup> My hand has seized the kingdoms of the worthless  
gods,  
Whose graven images were more than those of  
Jerusalem and Sa-mar'i-a!

<sup>11</sup> Will I not also do to Jerusalem and her idols  
Just as I have done to Sa-mar'i-a and to her  
worthless gods?'

<sup>12</sup> "When Jehovah finishes all his work on Mount Zion  
and in Jerusalem, He will punish the king of As-syr'i-a  
for his insolent heart and his proud, arrogant gaze.

<sup>13</sup> For he says,

'I will do this by the strength of my hand  
And with my wisdom, for I am wise.  
I will remove the boundaries of peoples  
And pillage their treasures,  
And I will subdue the inhabitants like a mighty  
one.

<sup>14</sup> Like a man reaching into a nest,  
My hand will seize the resources of the peoples;  
And like one gathering abandoned eggs,  
I will gather the whole earth!  
No one will flutter his wings or open his mouth or  
chirp.'"



- 15 Will the ax exalt itself over the one who chops with it?  
Will the saw exalt itself over the one who saws with it?  
Could a staff wave the one who lifts it?  
Or could a rod lift up the one who is not made of wood?
- 16 Therefore the true Lord, Jehovah of armies,  
Will inflict emaciation on his fat ones,  
And beneath his glory he will kindle a blazing fire.
- 17 Israel's Light will become a fire,  
And his Holy One a flame;  
It will blaze up and consume his weeds and his thornbushes in one day.
- 18 He will utterly do away with the glory of his forest and his orchard;  
It will be as when a sick man wastes away.
- 19 The rest of the trees of his forest  
Will be so few that a boy could list them.
- 20 In that day those remaining of Israel  
And the survivors of the house of Jacob  
Will no longer support themselves on the one who struck them;  
But they will support themselves on Jehovah,  
The Holy One of Israel, with faithfulness.

<sup>21</sup> Only a remnant will return,  
The remnant of Jacob, to the Mighty God.

<sup>22</sup> For though your people, O Israel,  
Are as the grains of sand of the sea,  
Only a remnant of them will return.  
An extermination has been decided on,  
And justice will engulf them.

<sup>23</sup> Yes, the extermination decided on by the  
Sovereign Lord, Jehovah of armies,  
Will be carried out in the entire land.

<sup>24</sup> Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord, Jehovah of armies, says: "Do not be afraid, my people who are dwelling in Zion, because of the As-syr'i-an, who used to strike you with the rod and to lift up his staff against you as Egypt did. <sup>25</sup> For in a very little while the denunciation will come to an end; my anger will be directed to their destruction. <sup>26</sup> Jehovah of armies will brandish a whip against him, as when he defeated Mid'i-an by the rock O'reb. And his staff will be over the sea, and he will raise it as he did with Egypt.

<sup>27</sup> In that day his load will depart from on your  
shoulder,  
And his yoke from on your neck,  
And the yoke will be broken because of the oil."

<sup>28</sup> He has come to Ai'ath;  
He has passed through Mig'ron;

At Mich'mash he deposits his baggage.

<sup>29</sup> They have passed over the ford;  
They spend the night at Ge'ba;  
Ra'mah trembles, Gib'e-ah of Saul has fled.

<sup>30</sup> Cry out and scream, O daughter of Gal'lim!  
Pay attention, O La'i-shah!  
O poor An'a-thoth!

<sup>31</sup> Mad-me'nah has run away.  
The inhabitants of Ge'bim have sought shelter.

<sup>32</sup> This very day he will halt in Nob.  
He shakes his fist at the mountain of the  
daughter of Zion,  
The hill of Jerusalem.

<sup>33</sup> Look! The true Lord, Jehovah of armies,  
Is chopping off branches with a terrible crash;  
The tallest trees are being cut down,  
And the lofty are brought low.

<sup>34</sup> He strikes down the thickets of the forest with an  
iron tool,  
And Leb'a-non will fall by a mighty one.

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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?

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ISAIAH 6-10 | The Messiah Fulfilled Prophecy

Centuries before Jesus was born, Isaiah foretold that the Messiah would preach “in the region of the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.” Jesus fulfilled this prophecy as he traveled throughout Galilee preaching and teaching the good news.—Isa 9:1, 2.



Performed his first miracle  
—Joh 2:1-11 (Cana)



Chose his apostles  
—Mr 3:13, 14 (near Capernaum)



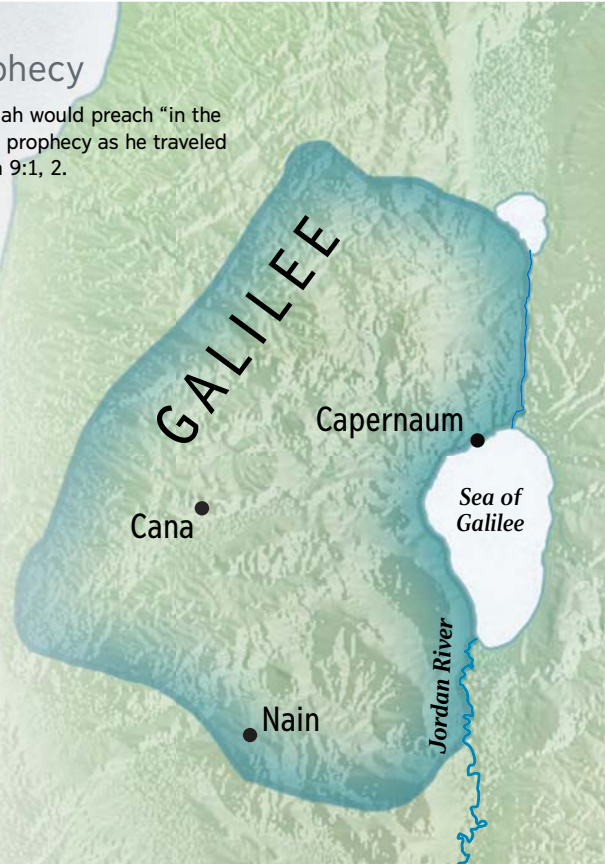
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—Mt 5:1-7:27 (near Capernaum)



Resurrected a widow’s only son  
—Lu 7:11-17 (Nain)



Appeared to some 500 disciples after his resurrection—1Co 15:6 (Galilee)



**December 12-18**

**Treasures From God's Word**

**Isaiah 9:1, 2**—His public ministry in Galilee was foretold

Reference: w11 8/15 10 **paragraph 13**.

*The Messiah's public ministry in Galilee was foretold.* Concerning “the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali . . . Galilee of the nations,” Isaiah wrote: “The people that were walking in the darkness have seen a great light. As for those dwelling in the land of deep shadow, light itself has shone upon them.” (**Isaiah 9:1, 2**) Jesus began his public ministry in Galilee, residing at Capernaum, where many residents of Zebulun and Naphtali enjoyed the benefits of the spiritual light he brought them. (**Matthew 4:12-16**) In Galilee, Jesus gave his thought-provoking Sermon on the Mount, chose his apostles, performed his first miracle, and likely appeared to some 500 disciples after his resurrection. (**Matthew 5:1–7:27; 28:16-20; Mark 3:13, 14; John 2:8-11; 1 Corinthians 15:6**) He thus fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy by preaching in “the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali.” Of course, Jesus went on to preach the Kingdom message elsewhere in Israel.

Reference: ip-1 124-126 paragraphs 13-17.

## **A Land “Treated With Contempt”**

13 Isaiah now alludes to one of the worst of the cataclysmic events that come upon the descendants of Abraham: “The obscureness will not be as when the land had stress, as at the former time when one treated with contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali and when at the later time one caused it to be honored—the way by the sea, in the region of the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.” (*Isaiah 9:1*) Galilee is a territory in the northern kingdom of Israel. In Isaiah’s prophecy it includes “the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali” and also “the way by the sea,” an ancient road that ran by the Sea of Galilee and led to the Mediterranean Sea. In Isaiah’s day, the region is called “Galilee of the nations,” likely because many of its cities are inhabited by non-Israelites. How is this land “treated with contempt”? The pagan Assyrians conquer it, take the Israelites into exile, and resettle the whole region with pagans, who are not descendants of Abraham. Thus the ten-tribe northern kingdom disappears from history as a distinct nation!—**2 Kings 17:5, 6, 18, 23, 24.**

14 Judah too is under pressure from the Assyrians. Will it sink into a permanent “obscureness” as did the ten-tribe kingdom represented by Zebulun and Naphtali? No. At a “later time,” Jehovah will bring

blessings to the region of the southern kingdom of Judah and even to the land formerly ruled by the northern kingdom. How?

15 The apostle Matthew answers this question in his inspired record of the earthly ministry of Jesus. Describing the early days of that ministry, Matthew says: “After leaving Nazareth, [Jesus] came and took up residence in Capernaum beside the sea in the districts of Zebulun and Naphtali, that there might be fulfilled what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying: ‘O land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, along the road of the sea, on the other side of the Jordan, Galilee of the nations! the people sitting in darkness saw a great light, and as for those sitting in a region of deathly shadow, light rose upon them.’”—Matthew 4:13-16.

16 Yes, “the later time” foretold by Isaiah is the time of Christ’s earthly ministry. Most of Jesus’ earthly life was spent in Galilee. It was in the district of Galilee that he began his ministry and started to announce: “The kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.” (Matthew 4:17) In Galilee, he delivered his famous Sermon on the Mount, chose his apostles, performed his first miracle, and appeared to some 500 followers after his resurrection. (**Matthew 5:1–7:27; 28:16-20; Mark 3:13, 14; John 2:8-11; 1 Corinthians 15:6**) In this way Jesus fulfilled Isaiah’s prophecy by honoring “the land of



Zebulun and the land of Naphtali.” Of course, Jesus did not restrict his ministry to the people of Galilee. By preaching the good news throughout the land, Jesus ‘caused to be honored’ the entire nation of Israel, including Judah.

## **The “Great Light”**

17 What, though, of Matthew’s mention of “a great light” in Galilee? This too was a quotation from Isaiah’s prophecy. Isaiah wrote: “The people that were walking in the darkness have seen a great light. As for those dwelling in the land of deep shadow, light itself has shone upon them.” (*Isaiah 9:2*) By the first century C.E., the light of truth had been hidden by pagan falsehoods. Jewish religious leaders had compounded the problem by holding to their religious tradition with which they had “made the word of God invalid.” (*Matthew 15:6*) Humble ones were oppressed and bewildered, following “blind guides.” (***Matthew 23:2-4, 16***) When Jesus the Messiah appeared, the eyes of many humble people were opened in a wondrous way. (***John 1:9, 12***) Jesus’ work while on earth and the blessings resulting from his sacrifice are aptly characterized in Isaiah’s prophecy as “a great light.”—*John 8:12*.



**Isaiah 9:6**—He would have many different roles

Reference: w14 2/15 12 **paragraph 18**.

During his Millennial Reign, Christ will become a father to others also. In fact, all earth's inhabitants who receive everlasting life will gain it because they exercise faith in Jesus' ransom sacrifice. (John 3:16) He thus becomes their "Eternal Father."—**Isaiah 9:6, 7**.

Reference: w07 5/15 6.

### **A Sure Foundation for Hope**

Jesus Christ told his followers: "You must pray . . . this way: 'Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth.'" (**Matthew 6:9, 10**) That heavenly Kingdom—a government in the hands of Jesus Christ—is God's means of expressing His rightful sovereignty over the earth.—**Psalm 2:7-12; Daniel 7:13, 14**.

The many facets of fear that affect every aspect of life today are a clear indication that divine intervention is needed. Happily, that intervention is near! Now enthroned by God as Messianic King, Jesus Christ is entrusted with authority to vindicate Jehovah's sovereignty and sanctify His name. (Matthew 28:18) Soon, Kingdom rule will be directed to the earth to do away with all causes of fear and anxiety. **Isaiah 9:6**

cites credentials that show Jesus to be a worthy Ruler who can relieve us of our fears. For instance, he is called “Eternal Father,” “Wonderful Counselor,” and “Prince of Peace.”

Consider the endearing expression “Eternal Father.” As such, Jesus has the power and authority—as well as the desire—to give obedient humans the prospect of eternal life on earth by the merit of his ransom sacrifice. This means that they will finally be released from sin and imperfection inherited from the sinful first man, Adam. (Matthew 20:28; Romans 5:12; 6:23) Christ will also apply his God-given authority to bring back to life many who have died.—**John 11:25, 26.**

When on earth, Jesus proved to be the “Wonderful Counselor.” Because of his knowledge of God’s Word and his extraordinary understanding of human nature, Jesus knew how to solve the problems of daily life. Since his enthronement in heaven, Christ continues to be the “Wonderful Counselor,” serving as the principal figure in Jehovah’s channel of communication to mankind. Jesus’ counsel, recorded in the Bible, is always wise and flawless. Knowing and believing this can lead you to a life free of uncertainty and paralyzing fear.

Isaiah 9:6 also identifies Jesus as the “Prince of Peace.” In that capacity, Christ will soon use his power to remove all inequality—political, social, and

economic. How? By bringing mankind under the one peaceful rule of the Messianic Kingdom.—Daniel 2:44.

Under Kingdom rule, lasting peace will prevail earth wide. Why can you be sure of this? The reason is revealed at Isaiah 11:9, where we read: “They [the Kingdom’s subjects] will not do any harm or cause any ruin in all my holy mountain; because the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea.” Eventually, every human on earth will have accurate knowledge of God and will be obedient to him. Does that prospect warm your heart? If it does, do not delay in taking in the precious “knowledge of Jehovah.”

You can avail yourself of the faith-building and life-giving knowledge of God by examining what the Bible really teaches about events of our day and the bright future promised in the Bible. We therefore urge you to avail yourself of the free Bible study program that Jehovah’s Witnesses offer in your community. This is a way to allay fear and find true hope in a world full of distress.

**Isaiah 9:7**—His rulership will bring true peace and justice

Reference: *ip-1* 132 **paragraphs 28-29**.

28 In God’s due time, Christ will establish on earth a

peace that will be global, firmly established, permanent. (Acts 1:7) “To the abundance of the princely rule and to peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom in order to establish it firmly and to sustain it by means of justice and by means of righteousness, from now on and to time indefinite.” (*Isaiah 9:7a*) In exercising his authority as the Prince of Peace, Jesus will not resort to tyrannical means. His subjects will not be stripped of their free will and subjugated by force. Rather, all that he will accomplish will be “by means of justice and by means of righteousness.” What a refreshing change!

29 In view of the wonderful implications of Jesus’ prophetic name, Isaiah’s conclusion to this part of his prophecy is truly thrilling. He writes: “The very zeal of Jehovah of armies will do this.” (*Isaiah 9:7b*) Yes, Jehovah acts with zeal. He does nothing in a halfhearted way. We can be sure that whatever he promises, he will fully accomplish. If anyone, then, longs to enjoy everlasting peace, let him serve Jehovah wholeheartedly. Like Jehovah God and Jesus, the Prince of Peace, may all servants of God be “zealous for fine works.”—Titus 2:14.

## Digging for Spiritual Gems

**Isaiah 7:3, 4**—Why did Jehovah extend salvation to wicked King Ahaz?

Reference: *w06* 12/1 9 **paragraph 4**.

The kings of Syria and Israel planned to dethrone King Ahaz of Judah and install in his place a puppet ruler, the son of Tabeel—a man who was not a descendant of David. This diabolical scheme would have the effect of interrupting the operation of the Kingdom covenant with David. Jehovah extended salvation to Ahaz in order to preserve the line through which the promised “Prince of Peace” would come.—Isaiah 9:6.

**Isaiah 8:1-4**—How was this prophecy fulfilled?

Reference: *it-1* 1219.

During Isaiah’s prophetic service to Judah, especially in the days of King Ahaz, the kingdom was in a deplorable moral state. It was full of revolt on the part of both princes and people, and in Jehovah’s eyes the nation was sick in the heart and in the head. The rulers were called “dictators of Sodom” and the people likened to “people of Gomorrah.” (**Isaiah 1:2-10**) Isaiah was told in advance that their ears would be unresponsive. Jehovah said that this situation would continue until the nation would come to ruin and that only “a tenth,” “a holy seed,” would be left like the

stump of a massive tree. Isaiah's prophetic work must have comforted and strengthened the faith of that small number, even though the rest of the nation refused to take heed.—**Isaiah 6:1-13**.

Though concentrating on Judah, Isaiah also uttered prophecies concerning Israel and the nations round about, as they had a bearing on Judah's situation and history. He enjoyed a long term in the prophetic office, starting in about 778 B.C.E., when King Uzziah died, or possibly earlier, and continuing until sometime after the 14th year of Hezekiah's reign (732 B.C.E.).—**Isaiah 36:1, 2; 37:37, 38**.

**Isaiah's Family.** Isaiah was married. His wife is called "the prophetess" (**Isaiah 8:3**), which seems to mean more than merely the wife of a prophet. Evidently, like Deborah of the time of the Judges and like Huldah during Josiah's reign, she had a prophetic assignment from Jehovah.—**Judges 4:4; 2 Kings 22:14**.

The Bible names two sons of Isaiah, given to him as "signs and as miracles in Israel." (**Isaiah 8:18**) Shear-jashub was old enough in the days of Ahaz to accompany his father when Isaiah delivered a message to that king. The name Shear-jashub means "A Mere Remnant (Those Remaining Over) Will Return." This name was prophetic in that, just as certainly as a son born to Isaiah was given that name, so the kingdom of Judah would in time be overthrown

and only a mere remnant would return after a period of exile. (**Isaiah 7:3; 10:20-23**) This return of a small remnant took place in 537 B.C.E. when King Cyrus of Persia issued a decree liberating them from Babylon after an exile of 70 years.—**2 Chronicles 36:22, 23; Ezra 1:1; 2:1, 2.**

Another son of Isaiah was named prior to conception, and the name was written on a tablet and attested to by reliable witnesses. Apparently the matter was kept secret until after the birth of the son, when the witnesses could come forward and testify to the prophet's foretelling of the birth, thereby proving the matter to have prophetic significance. The name given to the boy by God's command was Maher-shalal-hash-baz, meaning "Hurry, O Spoil! He Has Made Haste to the Plunder; or, Hurrying to the Spoil, He Has Made Haste to the Plunder." It was said that before this son would know how to call out, "My father!" and "My mother!" the threat to Judah existing from the conspiracy of Syria and the ten-tribe kingdom of Israel would be removed.—**Isaiah 8:1-4.**

The prophecy indicated that relief would come to Judah soon; relief did come when Assyria interfered with the campaign against Judah by King Rezin of Syria and King Pekah of Israel. The Assyrians captured Damascus and, later, in 740 B.C.E., despoiled and destroyed the kingdom of Israel, fully carrying out the



prophetic meaning of the boy's name. (**2 Kings 16:5-9; 17:1-6**) However, instead of trusting in Jehovah, King Ahaz tried to stave off the threat made by Syria and Israel, resorting to bribery of the king of Assyria to gain his protection. Because of this, Jehovah allowed Assyria to become a great threat to Judah and actually to flood into the land right up to Jerusalem itself, as Isaiah had warned.—**Isaiah 7:17-20**.

Isaiah spoke many times of “signs” that Jehovah would give, among them being his two sons and, in one instance, Isaiah himself. Jehovah commanded him to walk about naked and barefoot for three years as a sign and a portent against Egypt and against Ethiopia, signifying that they would be led captive by the king of Assyria.—**Isaiah 20:1-6; compare Isaiah 7:11, 14; 19:20; 37:30; 38:7, 22; 55:13; 66:19**.

**Prophecies of Exile and Restoration.** Isaiah was also privileged to foretell that Assyria would not be the nation to dethrone the kings of Judah and destroy Jerusalem, but that this would be done by Babylon. (**Isaiah 39:6, 7**) At the time when Assyria flooded Judah “up to the neck,” Isaiah delivered the comforting message to King Hezekiah that the Assyrian forces would not be able to enter the city. (**Isaiah 8:7, 8**) Jehovah backed up His word by sending an angel to destroy 185,000 of the Assyrian army's mighty men and leaders, thus delivering Jerusalem.—**2 Chronicles**



32:21.

The thing that undoubtedly gave Isaiah the greatest joy was the privilege accorded him by Jehovah to speak and to write many prophecies of restoration of his beloved Jerusalem. Although Jehovah would allow the people to go into exile to Babylon because of rebellion and revolt against him, God would in time judge Babylon because she acted out of malice and intended to hold God's people in captivity forever. A number of Isaiah's prophecies are devoted to God's judgment on Babylon and the desolate ruin she would become, never to be rebuilt.—**Isaiah 45:1, 2; chapters 13, 14, 46-48.**

Reference: *ip-1* 111-112 **paragraphs 23-24.**

### **Precise Predictions**

23 Isaiah now returns to the immediate situation. While Jerusalem is still under siege by the Syro-Israelite combine, Isaiah reports: "Jehovah proceeded to say to me: 'Take for yourself a large tablet and write upon it with the stylus of mortal man, "Maher-shalal-hash-baz." And let me have attestation for myself by faithful witnesses, Uriah the priest and Zechariah the son of Jeberechiah.'" (**Isaiah 8:1, 2**) The name Maher-shalal-hash-baz means "Hasten, O Spoil! He Has Come Quickly to the Plunder." Isaiah asks two

respected men in the community to attest his writing this name on a large tablet, so that they can later confirm the authenticity of the document. This sign, though, is to be confirmed by a second sign.

24 Isaiah says: “Then I went near to the prophetess, and she came to be pregnant and in time gave birth to a son. Jehovah now said to me: ‘Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz, for before the boy will know how to call out, “My father!” and “My mother!” one will carry away the resources of Damascus and the spoil of Samaria before the king of Assyria.’” (*Isaiah 8:3, 4*) Both the large tablet and the newborn boy will serve as signs that Assyria will soon plunder Judah’s oppressors, Syria and Israel. How soon? Before the boy is able to say the first words that most babies learn—“Father” and “Mother.” Such an exact prediction should build the people’s confidence in Jehovah. Or it could cause some to ridicule Isaiah and his sons. Whatever the case, Isaiah’s prophetic words come true.—2 Kings 17:1-6.

- Song 116 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“The Messiah Fulfilled Prophecy”:** (10 min.)  
Isa 9:1, 2—His public ministry in Galilee was foretold (w11 8/15 10 ¶13; ip-1 124-126 ¶13-17)  
Isa 9:6—He would have many different roles (w14 2/15 12 ¶18; w07 5/15 6)  
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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:** (4 min. or less) Isa 7:1-17

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) g16.6 cover
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) g16.6 cover
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) lv 34 ¶18  
—Show how to reach the heart.

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 10
- **“Here I Am! Send Me!” (Isa 6:8):** (15 min.)  
Discussion. Play the video *Moving to Serve Where the Need Is Greater* (video category OUR MEETINGS AND MINISTRY).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) kr chap. 5 ¶10-17, box on p. 53
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 150 and Prayer  
*Reminder:* Play the new song through once before singing.

ISAIAH 6-10 | The Messiah Fulfilled Prophecy

Centuries before Jesus was born, Isaiah foretold that the Messiah would preach “in the region of the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.” Jesus fulfilled this prophecy as he traveled throughout Galilee preaching and teaching the good news.—Isa 9:1, 2.



Performed his first miracle  
—Joh 2:1-11 (Cana)



Chose his apostles  
—Mr 3:13, 14 (near Capernaum)



Gave the Sermon on the Mount  
—Mt 5:1-7:27 (near Capernaum)



Resurrected a widow’s only son  
—Lu 7:11-17 (Nain)



Appeared to some 500 disciples after his resurrection—1Co 15:6 (Galilee)





# Disease

How to Reduce the Risk





### 3 COVER SUBJECT Disease—How to Reduce the Risk

*We live in a world that is plagued with dangerous diseases. How can we protect ourselves?*

*An ancient book of wisdom says: “The shrewd one sees the danger and conceals himself.”—Proverbs 22:3.*

*This issue of “Awake!” discusses steps we can take to conceal ourselves from danger and thereby reduce the risk of disease.*

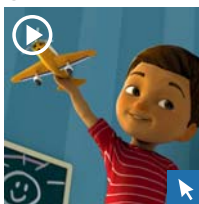
## ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

- 7 **WAS IT DESIGNED?**  
The Byssus of the Marine Mussel
- 8 **HELP FOR THE FAMILY**  
How to Show Respect
- 10 **PORTRAITS FROM THE PAST**  
Desiderius Erasmus
- 12 **The Extraordinary Clown Fish**
- 14 **THE BIBLE’S VIEWPOINT**  
Punctuality
- 16 **Subject Index for 2016 *Awake!***



## MORE ONLINE

### CHILDREN



### Become Jehovah’s Friend Be Neat and Clean

Children can learn vital lessons in this animated series.

(Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > CHILDREN)

### BIBLE QUESTIONS ANSWERED



### What Does the Bible Say About Christmas?

The origins of six popular Christmas customs may surprise you.

(Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > BIBLE QUESTIONS ANSWERED > Celebrations)

the congregation? Not if we have genuine love for Jehovah and for those whom he loves.

<sup>17</sup> As our Creator and Life-Sustainer, Jehovah deserves our love and complete devotion. (Revelation 4:11) In addition, the congregation that he is pleased to use deserves our loyal support. (Hebrews 13:17) So if a fellow worshipper hurts us or disappoints us in some way, we will not withdraw from the congregation as a means of protest. How could we? Jehovah is not the one who offended us. Our love for Jehovah could never allow us to turn our back on him and his people! —Psalm 119:165.

<sup>18</sup> Love for fellow worshippers moves us to promote peace in the congregation. Jehovah does not expect perfection from those he loves, and neither should we. Love enables us to overlook minor trespasses, remembering that we are all imperfect and make mistakes. (Proverbs 17:9; 1 Peter 4:8) Love helps us to continue “forgiving one another freely.” (Colossians 3:13) It is not always easy to apply this counsel. If we allow negative emotions to get the better of us, we may be in-

**18. (a) What can we do to promote peace in the congregation? (b) Choosing to forgive when there is a sound basis for doing so brings what blessings?**

clined to hold on to resentment, perhaps feeling that our anger is somehow punishing the offender. In reality, though, holding on to resentment is harmful to us. Choosing to forgive when there is a sound basis for doing so brings rich blessings. (Luke 17:3, 4) It gives us peace of mind and heart, preserves peace in the congregation and, above all, safeguards our relationship with Jehovah.—Matthew 6:14, 15; Romans 14:19.

### **WHEN TO WITHDRAW FELLOWSHIP**

<sup>19</sup> At times, we are called upon to withdraw our fellowship from one who has been a member of the congregation. This situation arises when an individual who unrepentantly violates God’s law is disfellowshipped or when one rejects the faith by teaching false doctrine or by disassociating himself from the congregation. God’s Word plainly tells us to “quit mixing in company” with such ones.\* (1 Corinthians 5:11-13; 2 John 9-11) It may be a real challenge to avoid someone who had perhaps been a friend or who is related to us. Will we take a firm stand, thereby showing that we

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\* For more information on how to treat disfellowshipped or disassociated ones, see the Appendix, pages 267-9.

**19. What situations may arise that make it necessary for us to withdraw our fellowship from someone?**

- Song 116 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

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Resurrected a widow’s only son  
—Lu 7:11-17 (Nain)



Appeared to some 500 disciples after his resurrection—1Co 15:6 (Galilee)





1. Today men heap reproach and shame,  
In many ways on God’s fair name.  
Some show God weak; some paint him cruel.  
“There is no God!” so shouts the fool.  
Who’ll go the name of God to clear?  
Who’ll sing his praise for all to hear?  
“Lord, here I am! Send me, send me.  
I’ll sing your praises faithfully.

***(CHORUS)***

***No greater honor could there be, Lord.  
Here I am! Send me, send me.”***

2. Men make the taunt that God is slow;  
The fear of God they do not know.  
Some worship idols made of stone;  
Some would put Caesar on God’s throne.  
Who’ll tell the wicked what’s in store?  
Who’ll warn of God’s great final war?  
“Lord, here I am! Send me, send me.  
I’ll sound the warning fearlessly.

***(Chorus)***

3. Today the meek ones mourn and sigh  
Because the evils multiply.  
With honest hearts they seek to find  
The truth that gives real peace of mind.  
Who'll go with comfort to the meek?  
Who'll help them righteousness to seek?  
"Lord, here I am! Send me, send me.  
I'll teach such meek ones patiently.

*(Chorus)*

(See also Ps. 10:4; Ezek. 9:4.)

## “Here I Am! Send Me!”

Isaiah’s willing spirit is worthy of imitation. He showed faith and immediately responded to a need, although not knowing all the details. (Isa 6:8) Can you adjust your circumstances in order to serve where there is a greater need for Kingdom proclaimers? (Ps 110:3) Of course, it is necessary to “calculate the expense” of such a move. (Lu 14:27, 28) Be willing, however, to make sacrifices for the sake of the preaching work. (Mt 8:20; Mr 10:28-30) As highlighted in the video *Moving to Serve Where the Need Is Greater*, the blessings we receive in Jehovah’s service far surpass any sacrifices we make.

### AFTER WATCHING THE VIDEO, ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- What personal sacrifices did members of the Williams family make in order to serve in Ecuador?

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- What factors did they consider when choosing where to serve?

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- What blessings did they receive?

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- Where can you find more information about serving where the need is greater?

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### DURING YOUR NEXT FAMILY WORSHIP, DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- How can we expand our ministry as a family? (km 8/11 4-6)

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- If we are unable to serve where the need is greater, in what ways can we help our local congregation? (w16.03 23-25)

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chapter 12.\*<sup>[2]</sup> The article further showed that the persecution and trouble that came upon Jehovah's people during those war years were clear signs that Satan had been hurled down from heaven, "having great anger, knowing that he has a short period of time."—Rev. 12:12.

<sup>8</sup> How important is the Kingdom? In 1928, *The Watch Tower* began to stress that the Kingdom was more important than personal salvation by means of the ransom. Indeed, it is by means of the Messianic Kingdom that Jehovah will sanctify his name, vindicate his sovereignty, and carry out all his purposes regarding mankind.

<sup>9</sup> Who would rule with Christ in that Kingdom? Who would be the earthly subjects of that Kingdom? And what work should occupy Christ's followers?

### **The Harvest Work Focuses on the Anointed**

<sup>10</sup> Decades before 1914, true Christians already understood that 144,000 faithful followers of Christ

<sup>\*</sup><sup>[2]</sup> Before then, it was thought that the vision pointed to a war between pagan Rome and papal Rome.

**8, 9. (a) How did the importance of God's Kingdom come to the fore?  
(b) What questions will we consider?**

**10. What have God's people long understood about the 144,000?**

would rule with him in heaven.\*<sup>[3]</sup> Those Bible Students saw that the number was literal and that it began to be filled back in the first century C.E.

<sup>11</sup> What, though, were those prospective members of Christ's bride assigned to do while they were yet on the earth? They saw that Jesus had emphasized the preaching work and had connected it to a period of harvest. (Matt. 9:37; John 4:35) As we noted in Chapter 2, for a time they held that the harvest period would last 40 years, climaxing with the gathering of the anointed to heaven. However, because the work continued after 40 years elapsed, more clarification was needed. Now we know that the harvest season—the season for separating wheat from weeds, faithful anointed Christians from imitation Christians—began in 1914. The time had come to focus attention on the gathering of the remaining number of that heavenly class!

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\*<sup>[3]</sup> In June 1880, *Zion's Watch Tower* suggested that the 144,000 would be fleshly Jews converted by 1914. However, later in 1880, an understanding was published that more closely corresponds to the one we have held consistently since then.

**11. How did prospective members of Christ's bride progress in knowledge about their earthly assignment?**





The overflow audience  
at the 1935 convention  
in Washington, D.C.



The year 1914 marked the beginning  
of the harvest season  
(See paragraph 11)

<sup>12</sup> From 1919 onward, Christ kept guiding the faithful and discreet slave to emphasize the preaching work. He had made that assignment in the first century. (Matt. 28:19, 20) He also indicated what qualities his anointed followers would need in order to fulfill that preaching commission. How so? In his illustration of the ten virgins, he showed that the anointed would have to remain watchful, spiritually alert, if they were to reach their ultimate goal of sharing in the great wedding feast in heaven, when Christ would be united with his “bride” of 144,000. (Rev. 21:2) Then, in his illustration of the talents, Jesus taught that his anointed servants would be diligent in carrying out the preaching work he had entrusted to them.—Matt. 25:1-30.

<sup>13</sup> The anointed have proved to be both vigilant and diligent during this past century. Without fail, their watchfulness will be rewarded! However, would the great harvest work be limited to gathering the rest of Christ’s 144,000 corulers?

**12, 13. How have Jesus’ illustrations of the ten virgins and of the talents been fulfilled in the last days?**

## **The Kingdom Gathers Its Earthly Subjects!**

<sup>14</sup> Faithful men and women have long been intensely curious about the “great crowd” (“great multitude,” *King James Version*) mentioned at Revelation 7:9-14. Not surprisingly, before it was Christ’s time to reveal the identity of this large group, much that was said on the subject veered wide of the clear, simple truths we know and love today.

<sup>15</sup> In 1917, the book *The Finished Mystery* asserted that there are “two degrees or kinds of Heavenly salvation, and two degrees or kinds of earthly salvation.” Who made up the four groups of people with those different hopes for salvation? First, there were the 144,000, who would rule with Christ. Second, there was the great multitude. Back then, the idea was that these were nominal Christians who were still in the churches of Christendom. They had a measure of faith but not enough to take a firm stand of integrity. Therefore, they would be given lesser positions in heaven. As to the earth, it was thought that a third group, the “ancient wor-

**14, 15. What four different groups were discussed in *The Finished Mystery*?**



thies”—such faithful ones as Abraham, Moses, and others—would have positions of authority over the fourth group, the world of mankind.

<sup>16</sup> How did holy spirit guide Christ’s followers to the understanding that we cherish today? It happened progressively, through a series of flashes of spiritual light. As early as 1923, *The Watch Tower* drew attention to a group with no heavenly aspirations who would live on earth under Christ’s reign. In 1932, *The Watchtower* discussed Jonadab (Jehonadab), who attached himself to God’s anointed Israelite King Jehu to support him in the war against false worship. (2 Ki. 10:15-17) The article said that there was a class of people in modern times who were like Jonadab, adding that Jehovah would take this class “through the Armageddon trouble” to live here on the earth.

<sup>17</sup> In 1935 came a brilliant flash of spiritual light. At the convention held in Washington, D.C., the great multitude was identified as an earthly class, the

**16. What flashes of spiritual light came in 1923 and in 1932?**

**17. (a) In 1935, what brilliant flash of spiritual light came? (b) How were faithful Christians affected by the new understanding of the great multitude? (See the box “A Great Sigh of Relief.”)**

## **“A GREAT SIGH OF RELIEF”**

THE discourse on the great multitude that was delivered on May 31, 1935, at the convention in Washington, D.C., U.S.A., had a profound effect on God’s people. Consider some reactions from those who were present.

■ “Prior to 1935, there was often much discussion among the brothers as to whether one was of the anointed. I recall very well the day Brother Rutherford spoke on the subject ‘The Great Multitude.’ I had been helping to wash dishes in the cafeteria, and when it was time for the talk, I went up to the balcony and took a seat alone. After covering the matter quite thoroughly, Brother Rutherford asked all who believed they were part of the great multitude to stand. I immediately stood up and then looked around, and it seemed that most of those present were also standing. From that day forward, there has never been a question in my mind as to whether I was of the anointed. . . . I am happy to be among those of the other sheep.”—Henry A. Cantwell.

■ “It was so heartening to many, for I used to hear from brothers that they were not sure they were of the anointed. Yet, they did not want to think of themselves as being among a ‘less faithful class,’ as the

great multitude was thought to be. A great sigh of relief was voiced by many, and as this new truth sank in, a new sense of zeal took hold of those who now understood where they stood before Jehovah.”—Herman L. Philbrick.

■ “This assembly gave us much to rejoice over. We could freely offer people a hope of everlasting life on earth. Many who had partaken of the Memorial [emblems] could see where they stood and no longer [partook].”—John C. Booth.

same as the sheep in Jesus’ parable of the sheep and the goats. (Matt. 25:33-40) The great multitude would be among the “other sheep,” of whom Jesus said: “Those too I must bring in.” (John 10:16) When the speaker, J. F. Rutherford, asked: “Will all those who have the hope of living forever on the earth please stand?” more than half the audience rose to their feet! “Behold!” he declared. “The great multitude!” Many were deeply moved to understand at last their hope for the future.

<sup>18</sup> Ever since then, Christ has guided his people to

**18. How have Christ’s followers focused their efforts in the ministry, and with what result?**

## *Reaching Out*

(Matthew 9:37, 38)

1. Jehovah knows just what we need  
     To bring us joy and to succeed.  
     So he provides so many ways  
     In which to serve and spend our days.

*(CHORUS)*

*Reaching out, giving all,  
 for our God above.  
 And where the need is great, there we'll be,  
 reaching out in love.*

2. There's work to do in ev'ry land.  
     Where there's a need, we lend a hand.  
     By reaching out, we show we care.  
     We want to help and want to share.

*(Chorus)*

3. And here at home, in towns nearby,  
     We plan, we build, new skills we try.  
     We learn to speak a foreign tongue  
     And bring good news to ev'ryone.

*(Chorus)*

OCTOBER 2016

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
NOVEMBER 28–DECEMBER 25, 2016



COVER IMAGE:  
**LUXEMBOURG**

Brothers working business territory witness to a mechanic in an auto repair garage. They use the tract *How Do You View the Bible?* to draw his attention to God's Word

POPULATION  
**562,958**

PUBLISHERS  
**2,058**

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE  
(2015)  
**3,895**

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In recent years, the makeup of our congregations has become more diverse and international. The first article helps us to show genuine concern for those from a foreign background who attend meetings in our congregation. The second article discusses how those serving in a foreign field can maintain their spiritual health.

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**31** DID YOU KNOW?

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# *“Give Us More Faith”*

(Luke 17:5)

1. Because we are imperfect, O Jehovah,  
The inclination of our heart is flawed.  
There is a sin that easily ensnares us—  
A lack of faith in you, the living God.

*(CHORUS)*

*Give us more faith, we beg of you, Jehovah.  
Please help us out according to our need.  
Give us more faith, according to your mercy,  
That we may honor you in word and deed.*

2. Apart from faith, no one can fully please you.  
We must believe our faith will be repaid.  
And as a shield, our faith provides a refuge.  
We face the future firm and unafraid.

*(Chorus)*

# **Strengthen Your Faith in What You Hope For**

*“Faith is the assured expectation of what is hoped for.”*  
—HEB. 11:1.

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**SONGS: 81, 134**

## **HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?**

**How did Jehovah’s ancient servants keep their faith strong?**

**What provisions do we have to strengthen our faith?**

**What benefits come from having a strong faith?**

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**WHAT** a wonderful hope true Christians share! All of us, whether of the anointed or of the “other sheep,” hope to see the fulfillment of God’s original purpose and the sanctification of Jehovah’s name. (John 10:16; Matt. 6:9, 10) Such expectations are the most noble any

**1, 2. (a) How does the cherished hope of true Christians differ from the hope of people in Satan’s world? (b) What important questions will we now consider?**





## Strengthen Your Faith in What You Hope For

*“Faith is the assured expectation of what is hoped for.”*—HEB. 11:1.

Are you benefiting from modern-day examples of faith in your congregation?  
(See paragraphs 15, 16)



human can cherish. We also long for the promised reward of everlasting life, either as part of God's "new heavens" or as part of his "new earth." (2 Pet. 3:13) In the meantime, we hope for the continued increase of the spiritual prosperity of God's people.

2 Those who are part of Satan's world also have some sort of hope, but they may doubt whether theirs will ever be realized. For example, millions of gamblers may hope to win a lottery, but they could hardly feel sure about that. Real faith, on the other hand, is "the assured expectation" of our Christian hope. (Heb. 11:1) You may wonder, though, how can your expectation become more sure? And what are the benefits of having a strong faith in what you hope for?

3 Faith is not a quality that sinful humans

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3. True Christian faith is based on what fact?

are born with; nor does it develop naturally. Christian faith is the result of God's holy spirit working on a receptive heart. (Gal. 5:22) The Bible does not say that Jehovah has or needs faith. Because Jehovah is almighty and all-wise, nothing can stop him from fulfilling his purpose. Our heavenly Father is so certain about the fulfillment of his promised blessings that to him they are already a reality. Therefore, he says: "They have come to pass!" (Read Revelation 21:3-6.) Christian faith stems from the fact that Jehovah is "the faithful God," who always does what he promises.—Deut. 7:9.

## **LEARNING FROM ANCIENT EXAMPLES OF FAITH**

**4** Chapter 11 of the book of Hebrews lists the

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**4. What hope did faithful men and women of pre-Christian times cherish?**

names of 16 men and women of faith. The inspired writer referred to them and many others who “received a favorable witness because of their faith.” (Heb. 11:39) All of them had an “assured expectation” that God would raise up the promised “offspring” to crush Satan’s rebellion and to fulfill Jehovah’s original purpose. (Gen. 3:15) Those faithful ones died before the promised “offspring,” Jesus Christ, opened the way to heavenly life. (Gal. 3:16) Nevertheless, thanks to Jehovah’s unfailing promises, they will be resurrected to perfect human life in an earthly paradise.—Ps. 37:11; Isa. 26:19; Hos. 13:14.

5 Hebrews 11:13 says of some who lived in pre-Christian times: “In faith all of these died,  
5, 6. On what did Abraham and his family members focus their hope, and how did they maintain strong faith? (See opening picture of the standard edition.)

although they did not receive the fulfillment of the promises; but they saw them from a distance and welcomed them.” One of these was Abraham. Did he keep clear in mind the happy hope of life under the promised “offspring”? Jesus gave a clear answer to that question when he said to his opposers: “Abraham your father rejoiced greatly at the prospect of seeing my day, and he saw it and rejoiced.” (John 8:56) The same was true of Sarah, Isaac, Jacob, and many others who focused their hope on the future Kingdom, “whose designer and builder is God.”—Heb. 11:8-11.

6 How did Abraham and his family keep their faith strong? They likely learned about God by listening to faithful older ones, from receiving divine revelations, or from reading reliable ancient documents. More important, they

did not forget what they had learned but cherished God's promises and requirements and meditated on them. Because their hope was so sure, these men and women were prepared to suffer any hardship to remain loyal to God.

7 To keep our faith strong, Jehovah has kindly provided us with his complete Word, the Bible. To be "happy" and to "succeed," we must regularly read God's Word, daily if possible. (Ps. 1:1-3; read Acts 17:11.) Then, like pre-Christian worshippers of Jehovah, we need to keep meditating on God's promises and be obedient to his requirements. Jehovah has also blessed us with an abundant supply of spiritual food provided through "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matt. 24:45) Thus, by cherishing

7. What provisions has Jehovah kindly made for us to develop a strong faith, and what must we do with those provisions?

what we learn from the spiritual provisions that Jehovah has made available, we will be like the ancient examples of faith who had an “assured expectation” of their Kingdom hope.

8 Prayer also played a vital part in keeping the faith of pre-Christian witnesses strong. Their faith was strengthened as they experienced God’s answers to their prayers. (Neh. 1: 4, 11; Ps. 34:4, 15, 17; Dan. 9:19-21) We too can pour out our concerns to Jehovah, knowing that he will hear us and strengthen us to endure with joy. And when our prayers are answered, our faith gets stronger. (Read 1 John 5:14, 15.) Since faith is an aspect of the fruitage of the spirit, we need to “keep on asking” for God’s spirit, as Jesus urged us to do.—Luke 11:9, 13.

**8. How can prayer strengthen our faith?**



**9** Our prayers, though, should not be limited to asking God for personal help. “Too numerous to recount” are the “wonderful works” we can thank and praise Jehovah for daily! (Ps. 40:5) Also, our prayers should reflect that we “keep in mind those in prison, as though [we] were imprisoned with them.” And we should pray for our worldwide brotherhood, especially “those who are taking the lead among [us].” Our hearts are touched when we see how Jehovah answers our united prayers!—Heb. 13:3, 7.

## **THEY REFUSED TO COMPROMISE**

**10** In Hebrews chapter 11, the apostle Paul describes the trials that many unnamed servants of God endured. For example, the apos-

**9.** In addition to praying for ourselves, for whom else should we pray?

**10.** What examples do we have of servants of God who refused to compromise their integrity, and what gave them the strength to do so?

He mentions women of faith who lost their sons in death but later received them back by resurrection. Then he mentions others who “would not accept release by some ransom, in order that they might attain a better resurrection.” (Heb. 11:35) Though we cannot be sure whom Paul had in mind, some, like Naboth and Zechariah, were stoned to death for obeying God and doing his will. (1 Ki. 21:3, 15; 2 Chron. 24:20, 21) Daniel and his companions clearly had the opportunity to “accept release” by compromising their integrity. Instead, their faith in God’s power enabled them, so to speak, to ‘stop the mouths of lions’ and ‘quench the force of fire.’—Heb. 11:33, 34; Dan. 3:16-18, 20, 28; 6:13, 16, 21-23.

**11** Because of their faith, such prophets as

**11.** What trials did some of the prophets endure because of their faith?

Micaiah and Jeremiah “received their trial by mockings . . . and prisons.” Others, like Elijah, “wandered about in deserts and mountains and caves and dens of the earth.” All of them endured because they had an “assured expectation of what is hoped for.”—Heb. 11:1, 36-38; 1 Ki. 18:13; 22:24-27; Jer. 20:1, 2; 28:10, 11; 32:2.

12 After describing various men and women of faith, Paul highlighted the most outstanding example of all—our Lord Jesus Christ. “For the joy that was set before him,” states Hebrews 12:2, “he endured a torture stake, despising shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” Indeed, we should “consider closely” Jesus’ example of faith in the face of the severest of trials. (Read Hebrews 12:3.) Like Jesus, early Christian martyrs, such as the

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12. Who set the most outstanding example of enduring trials, and what helped him to do so?

disciple Antipas, refused to compromise their integrity. (Rev. 2:13) They would have the reward of a resurrection to heavenly life—surpassing the “better resurrection” that ancient men of faith looked forward to. (Heb. 11:35) Sometime after the Kingdom’s birth in 1914, all such faithful anointed ones, who were sleeping in death, were raised to spirit life in heaven to share with Jesus in his rulership over mankind. —Rev. 20:4.

## MODERN-DAY EXAMPLES OF FAITH

13 Millions of modern-day worshippers of God are following the example of Jesus by keeping their hope in clear focus and not allowing trials to weaken their faith. Consider the example of Rudolf Graichen, who was born in Germany in 1925. He recalled pictures of Bible

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13, 14. What trials did Rudolf Graichen experience, and what helped him to endure?

scenes that hung on the walls of his home. “One picture,” he wrote, “showed the wolf and the lamb, the kid and the leopard, the calf and the lion—all in peace, being led by a little boy. . . . Such pictures made a lasting impression on me.” (Isa. 11:6-9) Despite many years of cruel persecution, first by the Nazi Gestapo and later by the Communist *Stasi* of East Germany, Rudolf maintained his strong faith in an earthly paradise.

14 Other severe trials faced by Rudolf were the loss of his beloved mother, who died of typhus in the Ravensbrück concentration camp, and seeing his father weaken in faith to the point that he signed a document in which he renounced being one of Jehovah’s Witnesses. After being released from prison, Rudolf enjoyed the privilege of serving as a circuit over-

seer and was then invited to Gilead School. He was assigned as a missionary to Chile, where he again served as a circuit overseer. But Rudolf's trials had still not ended. A year after he married Patsy, a fellow missionary, their baby daughter died. Later, his beloved wife, who was only 43 years old, also died. Rudolf endured all these trials and, although aged and sickly, was serving as a regular pioneer and an elder when his life story appeared in the August 1, 1997, issue of *The Watchtower*, pages 20-25.[1]

15 Jehovah's Witnesses continue to rejoice in their hope despite intense and ongoing persecution. For example, many of our brothers and sisters are imprisoned in Eritrea, Singapore, and South Korea, in most cases because of acting in harmony with Jesus' words not to

15. What current examples do we have of Jehovah's Witnesses joyfully enduring persecution?

take up the sword. (Matt. 26:52) Among these hundreds of prisoners are Isaac, Negede, and Paulos, who have been in an Eritrean prison camp for over 20 years! Denied the freedom to support their aging parents and to marry, these brothers have remained loyal in spite of severe mistreatment. The positive look on their faces, as seen on our jw.org website, shows that they have kept their faith strong. Even their prison guards have come to respect them.

16 Most of Jehovah's people have not had to endure severe persecution. Their tests of faith have been different. Many have had to endure poverty or have suffered during civil wars or natural disasters. Others are like Moses and the patriarchs in that they have given up a life of worldly ease or fame. They fight hard to resist being tempted to live a materialistic, self-

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16. How can strong faith protect you?



centered lifestyle. What is it that enables them to do this? Their love for Jehovah and their strong faith in the promise that he will correct all injustices and reward his faithful servants with everlasting life in a new world of righteousness.—Read Psalm 37:5, 7, 9, 29.

17 In this article, we have seen how meditation on God’s promises and regular prayer will keep our faith strong. That, in turn, will enable us to endure trials of faith as we focus on our Christian hope with an “assured expectation.” But the Bible’s description of faith involves more, as the next article will show.

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17. What are you determined to do, and what will be discussed in the next article?

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**ENDNOTE:**

[1] (paragraph 14) See also the article “Despite Trials, My Hope Has Remained Bright” in the April 22, 2002, issue of *Awake!*, which tells the life story of Andrej Hanák from Slovakia.

# 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)