

- Song 145 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“New Heavens and a New Earth Will Cause Great Rejoicing”:** (10 min.)
Isa 65:17—“The former things will not be called to mind” (*jp-2* 383 ¶23)
Isa 65:18, 19—There will be great rejoicing (*jp-2* 384 ¶25)
Isa 65:21-23—Life will be satisfying, and people will feel secure (*w12* 9/15 9 ¶4-5)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Isa 63:5—How does God’s wrath support him? (*w07* 1/15 11 ¶6)

Isa 64:8—How does Jehovah exercise his authority as our Potter? (*w13* 6/15 25 ¶3-5)

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 63:1-10

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Eph 5:33—Teach the Truth.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) 1Ti 5:8; Tit 2:4, 5—Teach the Truth.
- **Talk:** (6 min. or less) Isa 66:23; *w06* 11/1 30-31 ¶14-17—Theme: Meeting Together—A Permanent Feature of Our Worship

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 142
- **“Rejoice in Your Hope” (Isa 65:17, 18; Ro 12:12):** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Rejoice in the Hope* (video category THE BIBLE).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *kr* chap. 9 ¶1-9, chart on p. 89
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 80 and Prayer

Rejoice in Your Hope



Hope is like an anchor. (Heb 6:19) It helps us to avoid spiritual shipwreck when we face stormy seas. (1Ti 1:18, 19) Stormy seas may include personal disappointments, material loss, prolonged illness, the death of a loved one, or any other threat to our integrity.

Faith and hope enable us to see clearly the promised reward. (2Co 4:16-18; Heb 11:13, 26, 27) So whether our hope is heavenly or earthly, we must regularly nourish it by meditating on the promises recorded in God’s Word. Then, when we are distressed by trials, it will be easier to maintain our joy.—1Pe 1:6, 7.

WATCH THE VIDEO REJOICE IN THE HOPE, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- Why is Moses a good example to imitate?

- What responsibility rests on family heads?

- What subjects might you consider for Family Worship projects?

- How can hope help you to face trials with confidence?

- What do you look forward to?

145 *God's Promise of Paradise*

(Luke 23:43)

1. A paradise our God has promised,
 By means of Christ's Millennial Reign,
When he'll blot out all sin and error,
 Removing death and tears and pain.

(CHORUS)

*A paradise, the earth will be.
With eyes of faith, this we can see.
This promise Christ will soon fulfill,
For he delights to do God's will.*

2. Soon here on earth, as God has purposed,
 His Son will cause the dead to rise.
Then it will be as Jesus promised:
 'You'll be with me in Paradise.'

(Chorus)

3. The Paradise, our Lord has promised,
 And he is now our reigning King.
We daily thank our loving Father,
 And from our hearts, his praises sing.

(Chorus)

Isaiah 63-66

- 63** Who is this coming from E'dom,
From Boz'rah with bright-colored garments,
This one with splendid clothing,
Marching in his great power?
“It is I, the One speaking in righteousness,
The One with great power to save.”
- ² Why is your clothing red,
And why are your garments like those of one
treading the winepress?
- ³ “I have trodden the wine trough alone.
No one from the peoples was with me.
I kept treading them in my anger,
And I kept trampling them in my wrath.
My garments were spattered with their blood,
And I have stained all my clothing.
- ⁴ For the day of vengeance is in my heart,
And the year of my repurchased ones has come.
- ⁵ I looked, but there was no one to help;
I was appalled that no one offered support.
So my arm brought me salvation,
And my own wrath supported me.
- ⁶ I trampled peoples in my anger,
I made them drunk with my wrath
And poured out their blood on the ground.”

- ⁷ I will mention Jehovah's acts of loyal love,
The praiseworthy acts of Jehovah,
Because of all that Jehovah has done for us,
The many good things he has done for the
house of Israel,
According to his mercy and his great loyal love.
- ⁸ For he said: "Surely they are my people, sons who
will not be disloyal."
So he became their Savior.
- ⁹ During all their distress it was distressing to him.
And his own personal messenger saved them.
In his love and compassion he repurchased
them,
And he lifted them up and carried them all the
days of old.
- ¹⁰ But they rebelled and grieved his holy spirit.
He then turned into their enemy,
And he fought against them.
- ¹¹ And they remembered the days of old,
The days of Moses his servant:
"Where is the One who brought them up out of
the sea with the shepherds of his flock?
Where is the One who put within him His holy
spirit,
- ¹² The One who made His glorious arm go with the
right hand of Moses,

- The One who split the waters before them
To make an everlasting name for himself,
- ¹³ The One who made them walk through the surging
waters,
So that they walked without stumbling,
Like a horse in the open country?
- ¹⁴ Just like livestock when they go down into the
valley plain,
The spirit of Jehovah made them rest.”
This is how you led your people,
To make a majestic name for yourself.
- ¹⁵ Look down from heaven and see
From your lofty abode of holiness and glory.
Where are your zeal and your mightiness,
The stirring of your compassions and your
mercy?
They are withheld from me.
- ¹⁶ For you are our Father;
Although Abraham may not know us
And Israel may not recognize us,
You, O Jehovah, are our Father.
Our Repurchaser of long ago is your name.
- ¹⁷ Why do you, O Jehovah, let us wander from your
ways?
Why do you let our hearts become hard, so that
we do not fear you?

Return, for the sake of your servants,
The tribes of your inheritance.

¹⁸ Your holy people possessed it for a short time.
Our adversaries have trampled on your
sanctuary.

¹⁹ For too long we have become like those you never
ruled over,
Like those never called by your name.

64 If only you had ripped the heavens apart and
come down,
So that the mountains would quake because of
you,

² As when a fire ignites the brushwood,
And the fire makes the water boil,
Then your name would be known to your
adversaries,
And the nations would tremble before you!

³ When you did awe-inspiring things that we dared
not hope for,
You came down, and the mountains quaked
before you.

⁴ From of old no one has heard or given ear,
Nor has any eye seen a God except you,
Who acts in behalf of those who keep in
expectation of him.

- ⁵ You have met up with those who joyfully do what is right,
Those who remember you and follow your ways.
Look! You became indignant, while we kept sinning,
We did so for a long time.
Should we now be saved?
- ⁶ And we have all become like someone unclean,
And all our acts of righteousness are like a menstrual cloth.
We will all wither like a leaf,
And our errors will carry us off like the wind.
- ⁷ There is no one calling on your name,
No one who stirs himself to take hold of you,
For you have hidden your face from us,
And you cause us to waste away because of our error.
- ⁸ But now, O Jehovah, you are our Father.
We are the clay, and you are our Potter;
We are all the work of your hand.
- ⁹ Do not become too indignant, O Jehovah,
And do not remember our error forever.
Look at us, please, for we are all your people.
- ¹⁰ Your holy cities have become a wilderness.
Zion has become a wilderness,
Jerusalem a wasteland.

- 11** Our house of holiness and glory,
Where our forefathers praised you,
Has been burned with fire,
And all the things we cherished lie in ruins.
- 12** In view of this, will you still restrain yourself, O
Jehovah?
Will you remain silent and let us be afflicted so
severely?
- 65** “I have let myself be searched for by those who
did not ask for me;
I have let myself be found by those who did not
look for me.
I said, ‘Here I am, here I am!’ to a nation that
was not calling on my name.
- 2** I have spread out my hands all day long to a
stubborn people,
To those walking in the way that is not good,
Following their own thoughts;
- 3** A people who constantly offend me to my face,
Sacrificing in gardens and making sacrificial
smoke on bricks.
- 4** They sit among graves,
And they pass the night in hidden places,
Eating the flesh of pigs,
And the broth of foul things is in their vessels.

- ⁵ They say, 'Keep to yourself; do not approach me,
For I am holier than you.'
These are a smoke in my nostrils, a fire burning
all day long.
- ⁶ Look! It is written before me;
I will not stand still,
But I will repay them,
I will repay them in full measure
- ⁷ For their errors and for the errors of their
forefathers as well," says Jehovah.
"Because they have made sacrificial smoke on
the mountains
And have reproached me on the hills,
I will first measure out their wages in full."
- ⁸ This is what Jehovah says:
"Just as when new wine is found in a cluster of
grapes
And someone says, 'Do not destroy it, for there
is some good in it,'
So I will do for the sake of my servants;
I will not destroy them all.
- ⁹ I will bring out of Jacob an offspring
And out of Judah the one to inherit my
mountains;
My chosen ones will take possession of it,
And my servants will reside there.

- ¹⁰ Shar'on will become a pasture for sheep
And the Valley of A'chor a resting-place for
cattle,
For my people who search for me.
- ¹¹ But you are among those forsaking Jehovah,
Those forgetting my holy mountain,
Those setting a table for the god of Good Luck,
And those filling up cups of mixed wine for the
god of Destiny.
- ¹² So I will destine you for the sword,
And all of you will bow down to be slaughtered,
Because I called, but you did not answer,
I spoke, but you did not listen;
You kept doing what was bad in my eyes,
And you chose what displeased me.”
- ¹³ Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah
says:
“Look! My servants will eat, but you will go
hungry.
Look! My servants will drink, but you will go
thirsty.
Look! My servants will rejoice, but you will suffer
shame.
- ¹⁴ Look! My servants will shout joyfully because of the
good condition of the heart,
But you will cry out because of the pain of heart

And you will wail because of a broken spirit.

¹⁵ You will leave behind a name that my chosen ones
will use as a curse,
And the Sovereign Lord Jehovah will put each of
you to death,
But his own servants he will call by another
name;

¹⁶ So that anyone who seeks a blessing for himself in
the earth
Will be blessed by the God of truth,
And anyone who swears an oath in the earth
Will swear by the God of truth.
For the former distresses will be forgotten;
They will be concealed from my eyes.

¹⁷ For look! I am creating new heavens and a new
earth;
And the former things will not be called to mind,
Nor will they come up into the heart.

¹⁸ So exult and be joyful forever in what I am creating.
For look! I am creating Jerusalem a cause for joy
And her people a cause for exultation.

¹⁹ And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and exult in my
people;
No more will there be heard in her the sound of
weeping or a cry of distress.”

- 20 “No more will there be an infant from that place
who lives but a few days,
Nor an old man who fails to live out his days.
For anyone who dies at a hundred will be
considered a mere boy,
And the sinner will be cursed, even though he is
a hundred years of age.
- 21 They will build houses and live in them,
And they will plant vineyards and eat their
fruitage.
- 22 They will not build for someone else to inhabit,
Nor will they plant for others to eat.
For the days of my people will be like the days of
a tree,
And the work of their hands my chosen ones will
enjoy to the full.
- 23 They will not toil for nothing,
Nor will they bear children for distress,
Because they are the offspring made up of those
blessed by Jehovah,
And their descendants with them.
- 24 Even before they call out, I will answer;
While they are yet speaking, I will hear.
- 25 The wolf and the lamb will feed together,
The lion will eat straw just like the bull,
And the serpent’s food will be dust.

They will do no harm nor cause any ruin in all my holy mountain,” says Jehovah.

66 This is what Jehovah says:

“The heavens are my throne, and the earth is my footstool.

Where, then, is the house that you could build for me,

And where is my resting-place?”

² “My own hand has made all these things,
And this is how they all came to be,” declares Jehovah.

“To this one, then, I will look,
To the one humble and broken in spirit who trembles at my word.

³ The one slaughtering the bull is like one striking down a man.

The one sacrificing a sheep is like one breaking the neck of a dog.

The one offering a gift—like the blood of a pig!

The one presenting a memorial offering of frankincense is like one saying a blessing with magical words.

They have chosen their own ways,

And they take delight in what is disgusting.

⁴ So I will choose ways to punish them,

And the very things they dread I will bring upon them.

Because when I called, no one answered;
When I spoke, there were none who listened.
They kept doing what was bad in my eyes,
And they chose to do what displeased me.”

⁵ Hear the word of Jehovah, you who tremble at his word:

“Your brothers who hate you and exclude you because of my name said, ‘May Jehovah be glorified!’

But He will appear and bring you joy,
And they are the ones who will be put to shame.”

⁶ There is a sound of uproar from the city, a sound from the temple!

It is the sound of Jehovah repaying his enemies what they deserve.

⁷ Before she went into labor, she gave birth.

Before birth pangs came to her, she delivered a male child.

⁸ Who has ever heard of such a thing?

Who has seen such things?

Will a land be brought to birth in one day?

Or will a nation be born all at once?

Yet, as soon as Zion went into labor, she gave birth to her sons.

- ⁹ “Will I bring it to the point of birth and then not bring it forth?” says Jehovah.
“Or would I cause the birth and then shut the womb?” says your God.
- ¹⁰ Rejoice with Jerusalem and be joyful with her, all you who love her.
Exult greatly with her, all you who are in mourning over her,
- ¹¹ For you will nurse and be fully satisfied from her breast of consolation,
And you will drink deeply and find delight in the abundance of her glory.
- ¹² For this is what Jehovah says:
“Here I am extending to her peace just like a river
And the glory of nations like a flooding torrent.
You will nurse and be carried on the hip,
And you will be bounced on the knees.
- ¹³ As a mother comforts her son,
So I will keep comforting you;
And over Jerusalem you will be comforted.
- ¹⁴ You will see this, and your heart will rejoice,
Your bones will flourish just like new grass.
And the hand of Jehovah will become known to his servants,
But he will denounce his enemies.”

¹⁵ “For Jehovah will come as a fire,
And his chariots are like a storm wind,
To repay in furious anger,
To rebuke with flames of fire.

¹⁶ For with fire Jehovah will execute judgment,
Yes, with his sword, against all flesh;
And the slain of Jehovah will be many.

¹⁷ “Those sanctifying themselves and cleansing themselves to enter the gardens following one who is in the center, those eating the flesh of pigs and loathsome things and mice, they will all come to their end together,” declares Jehovah. ¹⁸ “Since I know about their works and their thoughts, I am coming to gather people of all nations and languages, and they will come and see my glory.”

¹⁹ “I will set a sign among them, and I will send some of those who escape to the nations—to Tar'shish, Pul, and Lud, those who draw the bow, to Tu'bal and Ja'van, and to the faraway islands—who have not heard a report about me or seen my glory; and they will proclaim my glory among the nations. ²⁰ They will bring all your brothers out of all the nations as a gift to Jehovah, on horses, in chariots, in covered wagons, on mules, and on swift camels, up to my holy mountain, Jerusalem,” says Jehovah, “just as when the people of

Israel bring their gift in a clean vessel into the house of Jehovah.”

²¹ “I will also take some for the priests and for the Levites,” says Jehovah.

²² “For just as the new heavens and the new earth that I am making will remain standing before me,” declares Jehovah, “so your offspring and your name will remain.”

²³ “And from new moon to new moon and from sabbath to sabbath,
All flesh will come in to bow down before me,”
says Jehovah.

²⁴ “And they will go out and look on the carcasses of the men who rebelled against me;
For the worms on them will not die,
And their fire will not be extinguished,
And they will become something repulsive to all people.”

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- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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Rejoice in Your Hope



Hope is like an anchor. (Heb 6:19) It helps us to avoid spiritual shipwreck when we face stormy seas. (1Ti 1:18, 19) Stormy seas may include personal disappointments, material loss, prolonged illness, the death of a loved one, or any other threat to our integrity.

Faith and hope enable us to see clearly the promised reward. (2Co 4:16-18; Heb 11:13, 26, 27) So whether our hope is heavenly or earthly, we must regularly nourish it by meditating on the promises recorded in God’s Word. Then, when we are distressed by trials, it will be easier to maintain our joy.—1Pe 1:6, 7.

WATCH THE VIDEO REJOICE IN THE HOPE, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- Why is Moses a good example to imitate?

- What responsibility rests on family heads?

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February 27–March 5

Treasures From God's Word

Isaiah 65:17—“The former things will not be called to mind”

Reference: ip-2 383 **paragraph 23.**

The book of Revelation describes a vision the apostle John saw of the coming day of Jehovah, when this system of things will be removed. After that, Satan will be abysed. (Revelation 19:11–20:3) Following that description, John echoes the prophetic words of Isaiah, writing: “I saw a new heaven and a new earth.” The subsequent verses of the account of this glorious vision tell of the time when Jehovah God will radically change conditions on this earth for the better. (Revelation 21:1, 3-5) Clearly, Isaiah’s promise of “new heavens and a new earth” will have a wonderful fulfillment in God’s new world! Under the new governmental heavens, a new earthly society will enjoy a paradise that is both spiritual and physical. Comforting indeed is the promise that “the former things [sicknesses, suffering, and the many other woes humans face] will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart.” Whatever we may remember at that time will not cause us the deep hurt, or pain, that now burdens the hearts of many.

Isaiah 65:18, 19—There will be great rejoicing

Reference: ip-2 384 **paragraph 25**.

Today, too, Jehovah makes Jerusalem “a cause for joyfulness.” How? As we have already seen, the new heavens that came into existence in 1914 will eventually include 144,000 corulers, who have a share in the heavenly government. These are prophetically described as “New Jerusalem.” (Revelation 21:2) It is with regard to New Jerusalem that God says: “Here I am creating Jerusalem a cause for joyfulness and her people a cause for exultation.” New Jerusalem will be used by God to shower untold blessings on obedient mankind. No more will be heard the sound of weeping or a plaintive cry, for Jehovah will satisfy “the requests of [our] heart.”—**Psalm 37:3, 4**.

Isaiah 65:21-23—Life will be satisfying, and people will feel secure

Reference: w12 9/15 9 **paragraphs 4-5**.

‘They Will Build Houses and Plant Vineyards’

4 Who would not like to have a home of his own, a place where he and his family could feel safe and secure? In today’s world, however, adequate housing is a serious problem. People are packed into crowded cities. Many have

to manage with makeshift dwellings in shantytowns and city slums. Having a house of their own remains a mere dream for them.

5 Under Kingdom rule, the desire of every resident to have his own home will be fulfilled, for it was prophesied through Isaiah: “They will certainly build houses and have occupancy; and they will certainly plant vineyards and eat their fruitage.” (Isaiah 65:21) Yet, having a home of their own is not the only prospect. After all, some today live in their own home, a few even in a mansion or on a grand estate. But there is always the worry that the home can be lost through some financial reverses or that burglars—or worse—will break in. How different everything will be under Kingdom rule! The prophet Micah wrote: “They will actually sit, each one under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be no one making them tremble.”—Micah 4:4.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Isaiah 63:5—How does God’s wrath support him?

Reference: w07 1/15 11 paragraph 6.

God’s rage is a controlled emotion—his righteous indignation. His rage supports and motivates him to execute his righteous judgments.

Isaiah 64:8—How does Jehovah exercise his authority as our Potter?

Reference: w13 6/15 25 paragraphs 3-5.

How the Potter Exercises His Authority

3 Describing Jehovah's authority over individuals and nations in an illustrative way, Isaiah 64:8 states: "O Jehovah, you are our Father. We are the clay, and you are our Potter; and all of us are the work of your hand." A potter has full authority to mold the clay into the type of vessel he wants to make. The clay has no control over the matter. So it is with man and God. The man cannot rightly dispute with God any more than the clay can with the potter whose hands are giving it a form.—*Read Jeremiah 18:1-6.*

4 With ancient Israel, Jehovah demonstrated his ability to do what the potter does to clay. But there is a marked difference. A potter can make any sort of vessel he is capable of making from a lump of clay. Does Jehovah arbitrarily mold people or nations, making some good and others bad? The Bible's answer is no. Jehovah has given mankind a very precious gift—the gift of free will. He does not exercise his sovereign authority in a way that nullifies his gift. Humans must choose to be molded by the Creator, Jehovah.—*Read Jeremiah 18:7-10.*

5 What if humans stubbornly refuse to be molded by the Great Potter? How, then, does he exercise his divine authority? Think about what happens to the clay if it becomes unsuited for the intended purpose. Why, the potter can make another type of vessel out of it or simply discard it! When the clay is useless, though, generally the potter is at fault. This is never the case with our Potter. (**Deuteronomy 32:4**) When a person does not yield to Jehovah's molding, the fault always lies with that person. Jehovah exercises his potterlike authority over humans by adjusting his dealings with them depending on their response to his molding. Those who respond properly are fashioned in a beneficial way. For example, anointed Christians are "vessels of mercy" who have been molded into 'vessels for an honorable use.' On the other hand, those who stubbornly oppose God end up as "vessels of wrath made fit for destruction."—**Romans 9:19-23**.

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A Permanent Feature of Our Worship

¹⁴ As stated before, Jehovah is gathering his people and making them rejoice inside his “house of prayer,” his spiritual temple. (Isaiah 56:7) The faithful man Nehemiah reminded his fellow Jews that they should show proper respect for the literal temple by supporting it materially. He stated: “We should not neglect the house of our God.” (Nehemiah 10:39) Furthermore, we should not neglect Jehovah’s invitation to worship him inside his “house of prayer.”

¹⁵ Showing the need for regularity in meeting together to worship, Isaiah prophesied: “It will certainly occur that from new moon to new moon and from sabbath to sabbath all flesh will come in to bow down before me,’ Jehovah has said.” (Isaiah 66:23) This is happening today. Regularly, every week of every month, dedicated Christians come together to worship Jehovah. They do this by, among other things, attending Christian meetings and engaging in the public ministry. Are you one of those who regularly ‘come and bow down before Jehovah’?

¹⁶ Isaiah 66:23 will fully apply to life in Jehovah’s promised new world. At that time, “all flesh will,” in a literal sense, week by week and month by month,

“come in to bow down before,” or worship, Jehovah throughout eternity. Since meeting together to worship Jehovah will be a permanent feature of our spiritual lives in the new system of things, should we not make regular attendance at our sacred gatherings a permanent feature of our lives now?

¹⁷ As the end draws near, we should be more determined than ever to attend our Christian gatherings for worship. Out of respect for the sacred nature of our meetings, we do not allow secular work, school homework, or evening schooling to cause us to miss out on meeting regularly with our fellow believers. We need the strength that comes through association. Our congregation meetings provide us with the opportunity to get to know one another, to impart encouragement, and to incite one another to “love and fine works.” We need to do this “all the more so as [we] behold the day drawing near.” (Hebrews 10:24, 25) May we, therefore, always show proper respect for our sacred gatherings by regular attendance, appropriate dress, and fitting behavior. By doing so, we show that we share Jehovah’s view of sacred things.

- Song 145 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“New Heavens and a New Earth Will Cause Great Rejoicing”:** (10 min.)
Isa 65:17—“The former things will not be called to mind” (*jp-2 383 ¶23*)
Isa 65:18, 19—There will be great rejoicing (*jp-2 384 ¶25*)
Isa 65:21-23—Life will be satisfying, and people will feel secure (*w12 9/15 9 ¶4-5*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Isa 63:5—How does God’s wrath support him? (*w07 1/15 11 ¶6*)

Isa 64:8—How does Jehovah exercise his authority as our Potter? (*w13 6/15 25 ¶3-5*)

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 63:1-10

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Eph 5:33—Teach the Truth.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) 1Ti 5:8; Tit 2:4, 5—Teach the Truth.
- **Talk:** (6 min. or less) Isa 66:23; *w06 11/1 30-31 ¶14-17*—Theme: Meeting Together—A Permanent Feature of Our Worship

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 142
- **“Rejoice in Your Hope” (Isa 65:17, 18; Ro 12:12):** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Rejoice in the Hope* (video category THE BIBLE).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *kr* chap. 9 ¶1-9, chart on p. 89
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 80 and Prayer

Rejoice in Your Hope



Hope is like an anchor. (Heb 6:19) It helps us to avoid spiritual shipwreck when we face stormy seas. (1Ti 1:18, 19) Stormy seas may include personal disappointments, material loss, prolonged illness, the death of a loved one, or any other threat to our integrity.

Faith and hope enable us to see clearly the promised reward. (2Co 4:16-18; Heb 11:13, 26, 27) So whether our hope is heavenly or earthly, we must regularly nourish it by meditating on the promises recorded in God’s Word. Then, when we are distressed by trials, it will be easier to maintain our joy. —1Pe 1:6, 7.

WATCH THE VIDEO REJOICE IN THE HOPE, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- Why is Moses a good example to imitate?

- What responsibility rests on family heads?

- What subjects might you consider for Family Worship projects?

- How can hope help you to face trials with confidence?

- What do you look forward to?

142 *Holding Fast to Our Hope*

(Hebrews 6:18, 19)

1. Mankind has stumbled for centuries in darkness.
Vain is their quest as they try to catch the wind.
Man's tragic flaw is revealed in its starkness;
None can they save, for they all have sinned.

(CHORUS)

*Sing with good cheer, for God's Kingdom is here!
His Son's mighty reign brings us freedom from fear.
Through him, at last, evil soon will be past;
This hope, like an anchor, is holding us fast.*

2. "God's day is near!" rings the Kingdom proclamation;
Men will no longer cry out to God: "How long?"
Soon he will free all his groaning creation.
Praise God Almighty, and join our song.

(Chorus)

- Song 145 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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- Why is Moses a good example to imitate?

- What responsibility rests on family heads?

- What subjects might you consider for Family Worship projects?

- How can hope help you to face trials with confidence?

- What do you look forward to?

9 Results of Preaching

“The Fields . . . Are White for Harvesting”

FOCUS OF CHAPTER

Jehovah has made the seeds of Kingdom truth grow

THE disciples are puzzled. Jesus has told them: “Lift up your eyes and view the fields, that they are white for harvesting.” They gaze in the direction to which Jesus gestures, but all they see are fields that are, not white, but green—the color of recently sprouted barley. ‘What harvest?’ they likely reason. ‘It will take months before the harvest takes place.’—John 4:35.

² Jesus, though, is not speaking about a literal harvest. Instead, he is using this occasion to teach his disciples two important lessons concerning a spiritual harvest—a harvest of people. What are those lessons? To find out, let us consider the account in more detail.

1, 2. (a) Why are the disciples puzzled? (b) Jesus speaks about what type of harvest?

A Call to Action and a Promise of Joy

³ Jesus' conversation with his disciples occurred at the end of 30 C.E., near the Samaritan town of Sychar. While his disciples entered the town, Jesus stayed behind at a well where he shared spiritual truths with a woman who quickly grasped the importance of his teachings. When the disciples returned to Jesus, the woman hurried off to Sychar to tell her neighbors the amazing things she had learned. Her report aroused great interest, and many of her neighbors rushed toward the well to meet Jesus. Possibly at that moment—as Jesus gazed beyond the fields into the distance and saw a crowd of Samaritans approaching—he stated: “View the fields, that they are white for harvesting.”*^[1] Then, to clarify that he meant, not a literal harvest, but a spiritual one, Jesus added: “The reaper is . . . gathering fruit for everlasting life.”—John 4:5-30, 36.

*^[1] Jesus' remark about ‘the fields being white’ could allude to the white robes that may have been worn by the crowd of Samaritans whom Jesus saw approaching.

3. (a) What possibly prompted Jesus to say: “The fields . . . are white for harvesting”? (See footnote.) (b) How did Jesus clarify his statement?

4 What two important lessons about the spiritual harvest did Jesus teach? First, **the work is urgent**. His declaration that “the fields . . . *are* white for harvesting” was a call to action for his followers. To impress upon his disciples the degree of urgency, Jesus added: “Already the reaper is receiving wages.” Yes, the harvest had *already* begun—there was no time for delay! Second, **the workers are joyful**. Sowers and reapers will “rejoice together,” said Jesus. (John 4:35b, 36) Just as Jesus himself must have rejoiced on seeing that “many of the Samaritans . . . put faith in him,” so his disciples would experience deep joy as they worked whole-souled in the harvest. (John 4:39-42) This first-century account has special meaning for us because it illustrates what is happening today during the greatest spiritual harvest of all time. When did this modern-day harvest begin? Who have a share in it? What have been the results?

Our King Takes the Lead in the Greatest Harvest of All Time

5 In a vision given to the apostle John, Jehovah

4. (a) What two lessons about the harvest did Jesus teach? (b) What questions will we consider?

5. Who takes the lead in the global harvest, and how does John’s vision indicate that the work is urgent?

reveals that he assigned Jesus to take the lead in a global harvest of people. **(Read Revelation 14:14-16.)** In this vision, Jesus is described as having a crown and a sickle. The “golden crown on [Jesus]’ head” confirms his position as ruling King. The “sharp sickle in his hand” confirms his role as Harvester. By stating through an angel that “the harvest of the earth is fully ripe,” Jehovah emphasizes that **the work is urgent**. Indeed, “the *hour* has come to reap”—there is no time for delay! In response to God’s command “put your sickle in,” Jesus thrusts in his sickle, and the earth is reaped—that is, people of the earth are reaped. This exciting vision reminds us that again “the fields . . . are white for harvesting.” Does this vision help us to determine when this global harvest began? Yes!

⁶ Since John’s vision in Revelation chapter 14 shows Jesus, the Harvester, wearing a crown (verse 14), his appointment as King in 1914 had already taken place. (Dan. 7:13, 14) Sometime after that, Jesus is commanded to start the harvest (verse 15). The same order of

6. (a) When did “the harvest season” begin? (b) When did the actual “harvest of the earth” begin? Explain.

events is seen in Jesus' parable about the harvest of the wheat, where he states: "The harvest is a conclusion of a system of things." Thus, the harvest season and the conclusion of this system of things began at the same time—in 1914. Later "in the harvest season," the actual harvesting began. (Matt. 13:30, 39) Looking back from our vantage point in time, we can see that the harvest began some years after Jesus started ruling as King. First, from 1914 until the early part of 1919, Jesus carried out a cleansing work among his anointed followers. (Mal. 3:1-3; 1 Pet. 4:17) Then, in 1919, "the harvest of the earth" began. Without delay, Jesus used the newly appointed faithful slave to help our brothers see the urgency of the preaching work. Consider what happened.

⁷ In July 1920, *The Watch Tower* stated: "It seems evident from an examination of the Scriptures that a great privilege is granted unto the church in delivering a message concerning the kingdom." For instance, Isaiah's prophetic words helped the brothers to see that the Kingdom news had to be announced

7. (a) What examination helped our brothers to see the urgency of the preaching work? (b) What were our brothers encouraged to do?

worldwide. (Isa. 49:6; 52:7; 61:1-3) How such a work could be accomplished they did not know, but they trusted that Jehovah would open the way for them. **(Read Isaiah 59:1.)** As a result of this clearer view about the urgency of the preaching work, our brothers were encouraged to step up their activities. How did the brothers respond?

⁸ In December 1921, *The Watch Tower* announced: “It has been the best year of all; and greater numbers of people have heard the message of truth during 1921 than in any previous year.” The magazine added: “There is much yet to be done. . . . Let us do it with a joyful heart.” Note how the brothers grasped the same two important facts about the preaching work that Jesus had impressed upon his apostles: The work is **urgent**, and the workers are **joyful**.

⁹ During the 1930’s, after the brothers understood that a great crowd of other sheep would respond to

8. In 1921, what two facts about the preaching work did our brothers grasp?

9. (a) In 1954, what did *The Watchtower* state about the harvest work, and why? (b) What worldwide increase in publishers has taken place during the past 50 years?

the Kingdom message, the preaching work intensified further. (Isa. 55:5; John 10:16; Rev. 7:9) The result? The number of those preaching the Kingdom message rose from 41,000 in 1934 to 500,000 in 1953! *The Watchtower* of December 1, 1954, rightly concluded: “It is Jehovah’s spirit and the power of his Word that have accomplished this great world-wide harvest.”*^[2]—Zech. 4:6.

The Result of the Harvest —Foretold in Vivid Word Pictures

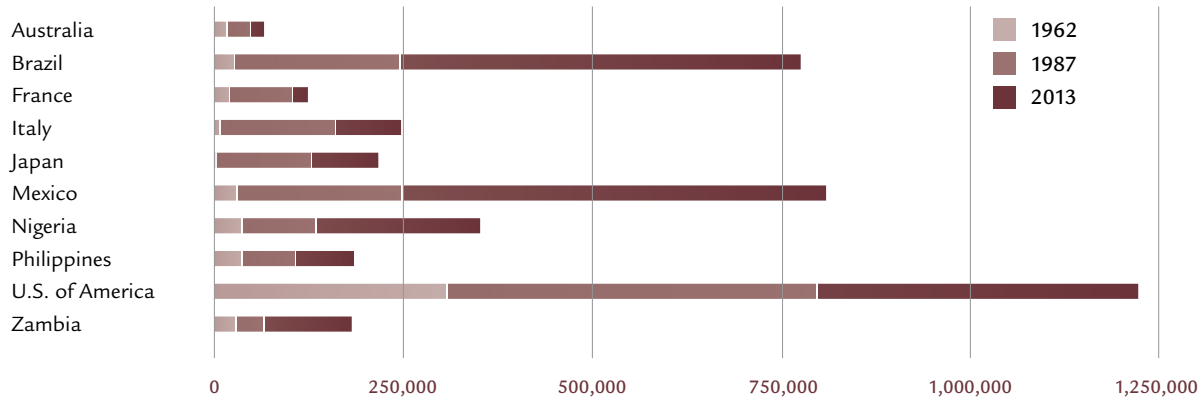
¹⁰ In his Kingdom parables, Jesus foretold in vivid language the result of the harvest work. Let us consider the parable about the mustard grain and the one about the leaven. We will focus particularly on how they have been fulfilled in the time of the end.

¹¹ **The parable of the mustard grain.** A man plants a mustard grain. It then grows into a tree in which birds find shelter. (Read Matthew 13:31, 32.) What

*^[2] To learn more about those years and the decades that followed, we encourage you to read pages 425-520 of the book *Jehovah’s Witnesses—Proclaimers of God’s Kingdom*, which relate what the harvest work accomplished from 1919 to 1992.

10, 11. In the parable of the mustard grain, what aspects of the seed’s growth are highlighted?

WORLDWIDE INCREASE



*“Taste and See That
Jehovah Is Good”*
(Psalm 34:8)

1. Our service to God we cherish;
We value our priv’lege to preach.
We buy out the time and give God our best,
For many we still need to reach.

(CHORUS)

*God’s Word invites us: ‘Come taste and see—
See that Jehovah is good.’
Godly devotion brings greatest gain,
We know we’ve done all we could.*

2. For those in the full-time service,
Rich blessings and treasures abound.
By trusting in God to care for our needs,
In all things contentment is found.

(Chorus)

JANUARY 2017

THE  **WATCHTOWER**
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
FEBRUARY 27–APRIL 2, 2017

LARGE
PRINT
EDITION



COVER IMAGE:

CHILE

Publishers in the south of Chile follow a river that winds through lush forests and snowcapped peaks of the Andes Mountains. They participate in a preaching campaign to reach as many remote homes as possible while the weather is favorable.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 WEEK OF FEBRUARY 27–MARCH 5

“Trust in Jehovah and Do What Is Good”

This article discusses how our yeartext for 2017 encourages us to look to Jehovah for help when faced with challenges. Using faithful examples from the past, we will examine how we can trust in Jehovah to support us while taking whatever action we can to solve problems and help others.

16 WEEK OF MARCH 6-12

Treasure Your Gift of Free Will

In this article, we will learn how to treasure God’s gift of free will by using it in a way that pleases the Giver of that gift. It will also help us to see how we can respect the way that others exercise their gift of free will.

150 *Seek God for Your Deliverance*

(Zephaniah 2:3)

1. Nations align as one,
 Opposing Jehovah's Son.
Their time of human rulership
 By God's decree now is done.
Rulers have had their day;
 God's Kingdom is here to stay.
Soon Christ will crush earthly enemies.
 No more will there be delay.

(CHORUS)

*Seek God for your deliverance,
 Yes, look to him with confidence.
Seek his righteousness,
 Show your faithfulness,
For his sov'reignty, take your stand.
 Then see our God deliver you
By his mighty hand.*

2. People on earth now choose,
 Responding to this good news.
We offer to all men the choice
 To hear or proudly refuse.
Trials, although severe,
 Need not fill our hearts with fear.
Jehovah cares for his loyal ones;
 Our cries for help he will hear.

(Chorus)

(See also 1 Sam. 2:9; Ps. 2:2, 3, 9; Prov. 2:8; Matt. 6:33.)



Our yeartext for 2017:

“Trust in Jehovah and Do What Is Good”

“Trust in Jehovah and do what is good . . . and act with faithfulness.”

—PS. 37:3.

SONGS:
150, 124

**WHAT CAN WE
LEARN ABOUT
TRUSTING IN
JEHOVAH FROM . . .**

Noah?

David?

other faithful
servants of
Jehovah?

JEHOVAH created humans with remarkable abilities. He gave us thinking ability to solve problems and plan for the future. (Prov. 2:11) He gave us power to carry out our plans, enabling

1. Jehovah created humans with what remarkable abilities?

us to work toward proper goals. (Phil. 2:13) He also created us with a conscience—an inborn sense of right and wrong—that can help us avoid wrongdoing and correct our mistakes when we fall short.—Rom. 2:15.

² Jehovah expects us to put our abilities to good use. Why? Because he loves us, and he knows that it brings us satisfaction when we employ these gifts. Through his Word, Jehovah repeatedly admonishes us to use our abilities for good. For example, in the Hebrew Scriptures, we read: “The plans of the diligent surely lead to success”; and “whatever your hand finds to do, do with all your might.” (Prov. 21:5; Eccl. 9:10) In the Christian Greek Scriptures, we are told: “As long as we have the opportunity, let us work what is good toward all”; and “to the extent that each one has received a gift, use it in ministering to one another.” (Gal. 6:10; 1 Pet. 4:10) Clearly, Jehovah wants us to do what we can to benefit ourselves and others.

³ At the same time, Jehovah knows that humans have limitations. On our own, we can never eliminate imperfection, sin, and death; neither can we

2. How does Jehovah expect us to use our abilities?

3. What limitations do humans have?

control other people, for all have free will. (1 Ki. 8:46) And no matter how much knowledge or experience we gain, we will always be like children in comparison with Jehovah.—Isa. 55:9.

⁴ In all circumstances, we need to lean on Jehovah for guidance, trusting in him to support us and do for us what we cannot do for ourselves. At the same time, we should do what we can, taking appropriate action to solve problems and help others. (Read Psalm 37:3.) In short, we need both ‘to *trust* in Jehovah and to *do* what is good’; we need ‘to *act* with faithfulness.’ In this regard, let us consider what we can learn from the examples of Noah, David, and other faithful servants of God who relied on Jehovah and took appropriate action. As we will see, this involved distinguishing between what they *could not* do and what they *could* do and then acting accordingly.

WHEN SURROUNDED BY WICKEDNESS

⁵ Noah lived in a world that was “filled with violence” and immorality. (Gen. 6:4, 9-13) He

-
4. What will we consider in this article?
 5. Describe the situation that Noah faced.

knew that Jehovah would eventually bring an end to that wicked world. Even so, Noah must have been distressed by such ungodly conditions. In that situation, Noah recognized that there were some things he could not do but other things he *could* do.

⁶ *What Noah could not do:* Although Noah faithfully preached Jehovah’s warning message, he could not force wicked people around him to accept that message, nor could he make the Flood come any sooner. Noah had to trust that Jehovah would keep His promise to end wickedness, believing that God would do so at just the right time. —Gen. 6:17.

⁷ We too live in a world filled with wickedness, which we know Jehovah has promised to destroy. (1 John 2:17) In the meantime, we cannot force people to accept the “good news of the Kingdom.” And we cannot do anything to speed up the start of the “great tribulation.” (Matt. 24:14, 21) Like Noah, we need strong faith, trusting that God will soon intervene. (Ps. 37:10, 11) We are convinced that Jehovah will not allow this wicked world to

6, 7. (a) What could Noah not do? (b) How are we in a situation similar to Noah’s?

continue for even one day longer than his purpose requires.—Hab. 2:3.

⁸ *What Noah could do:* Instead of giving up because of what he could not do, Noah focused on what he *could* do. As “a preacher of righteousness,” Noah faithfully proclaimed the warning message he had been given. (2 Pet. 2:5) No doubt, doing so helped Noah keep his faith strong. In addition to preaching, he also used his physical and mental abilities to accomplish the God-assigned work of building an ark.—Read Hebrews 11:7.

⁹ Like Noah, we strive to have “plenty to do in the work of the Lord.” (1 Cor. 15:58) Such work may include the construction and maintenance of facilities for worship, volunteering to assist at assemblies and conventions, or caring for assignments at a branch office or a remote translation office. Above all, we stay busy in the preaching work, knowing that this work strengthens our hope for the future. One faithful sister put it this way: “When you talk to others about the blessings of God’s Kingdom, you realize that your listeners

8. How did Noah focus on what he could do? (See opening picture.)

9. How can we imitate Noah’s example?

have absolutely no hope and that they see their problems as permanent.” Indeed, sharing in the preaching work fortifies our positive view of the future and our resolve not to give up in the race for life.—1 Cor. 9:24.

WHEN WE FALL SHORT

¹⁰ Jehovah described King David as “a man agreeable to [his] heart.” (Acts 13:22) Overall, David’s life course was one of faithfulness. Even so, on occasion he fell into serious sin. He committed adultery with Bath-sheba. To make matters worse, he tried to hide the sin by arranging for her husband, Uriah, to be killed in battle. David even sent what amounted to Uriah’s death sentence by means of the man’s own hand! (2 Sam. 11:1-21) Inevitably, David’s sins came to light. (Mark 4:22) When that happened, how did David react?

¹¹ *What David could not do:* David could not undo what he had done. And he could not escape the consequences of his mistakes. In fact, some of

10. Describe the situation that David faced.

11, 12. (a) After he sinned, what could David not do? (b) If we repent after making serious mistakes, we can trust that Jehovah will do what for us?

When dealing
with problems,
“trust in Jehovah
and do what
is good”



Opposition to our
preaching
(See paragraphs 6-9)



Past sins
(See paragraphs 11-14)



those consequences would stay with David for the rest of his life. (2 Sam. 12:10-12, 14) Thus, he needed faith. He had to trust that when he truly repented, Jehovah would forgive him and help him endure the consequences of his actions.

¹² Being imperfect, all of us sin. Some mistakes are more serious than others. In some cases, we may not be able to undo our mistakes. We may simply have to live with the consequences. (Gal. 6:7) But we take God at his word, trusting that if we are repentant, Jehovah will support us through



Health problems
(See paragraph 15)



Wayward children
(See paragraph 16)



Low finances
(See paragraph 17)



difficult times—even when those difficulties are of our own making.—Read Isaiah 1:18, 19; Acts 3:19.

¹³ *What David could do:* David allowed Jehovah to help him recover spiritually. One way he did that was by accepting correction from Jehovah’s representative, the prophet Nathan. (2 Sam. 12: 13) David also prayed to Jehovah, confessing his sins and expressing a sincere desire to be restored

13. How did David recover spiritually?

to Jehovah's favor. (Ps. 51:1-17) Instead of being paralyzed by guilt, David learned from his mistakes. Indeed, he never repeated those serious sins. Years later, he died faithful, his record of integrity firmly sealed in Jehovah's memory.—Heb. 11:32-34.

¹⁴ What can we learn from David's example? If we fall into serious sin, we need to repent sincerely and seek Jehovah's forgiveness. We must confess our sins to him. (1 John 1:9) We also need to approach the elders, who can offer us spiritual help. (Read James 5:14-16.) By availing ourselves of Jehovah's arrangements, we show that we trust in his promise to heal and forgive us. Thereafter, we do well to learn from our mistakes, move forward in our service to Jehovah, and look to the future with confidence.—Heb. 12:12, 13.

IN OTHER SITUATIONS

¹⁵ Likely, you can think of other faithful servants of old who trusted in Jehovah while taking appropriate action. For example, *Hannah* could not overcome the problem of barrenness on her own. But

14. What can we learn from David's example?

15. What do we learn from Hannah's example?

she trusted that Jehovah would comfort her, so she continued to worship at the tabernacle and pour out her heart in prayer. (1 Sam. 1:9-11) Is that not a good example for us? When we deal with health problems or other challenges beyond our control, we throw our anxiety on Jehovah, trusting that he cares for us. (1 Pet. 5:6, 7) And we do what is within our power to benefit from Christian meetings and other spiritual provisions.—Heb. 10:24, 25.

¹⁶ What about faithful parents whose children have gone astray? Elderly *Samuel* could not force his adult sons to remain loyal to the righteous standards he taught them. (1 Sam. 8:1-3) He had to leave the matter in Jehovah's hands. Even so, Samuel could maintain his own integrity and please his heavenly Father, Jehovah. (Prov. 27:11) Today, a number of Christian parents find themselves in a similar situation. They trust that like the father in the parable of the prodigal son, Jehovah is ever on the lookout to welcome back sinners who repent. (Luke 15:20) At the same time, such parents work hard to remain loyal to Jehovah, hoping that their

16. What can parents learn from elderly Samuel?

example will move their children to return to the fold.

¹⁷ Think, too, of *the needy widow* in Jesus' day. (Read Luke 21:1-4.) She could hardly do anything about the corrupt practices being carried on at the temple. (Matt. 21:12, 13) And there was likely little she could do to improve her financial situation. Yet, she voluntarily contributed those "two small coins," which were "all the means of living she had." That faithful woman demonstrated wholehearted trust in Jehovah, knowing that if she put spiritual things first, he would provide for her physical needs. The widow's trust moved her to support the existing arrangement for true worship. Likewise, we trust that if we seek first the Kingdom, Jehovah will make sure that we have what we need.—Matt. 6:33.

¹⁸ Many of our modern-day fellow believers have similarly demonstrated trust in Jehovah and have taken appropriate action. Consider a brother named *Malcolm*, who remained faithful until his death in 2015. Over the decades that he and his wife served Jehovah, they experienced ups and

17. Why is the example of the needy widow encouraging?

18. Give an example of a modern-day servant who had the right outlook.

downs. “Life is unpredictable at times, uncertain, and even hard to deal with,” he said. “But Jehovah blesses those who lean on him.” Malcolm’s advice? “Pray to be as productive and as active in Jehovah’s service as you can be. Focus on what you can do, not on what you cannot do.”*

¹⁹ As this system of things goes “from bad to worse,” we can expect to face increasingly greater difficulties. (2 Tim. 3:1, 13) So it is more important than ever that we do not allow ourselves to be paralyzed by such challenges. Rather, we need to cultivate strong trust in Jehovah while taking whatever appropriate action we can. How fitting, then, is our yeartext for 2017: “Trust in Jehovah and do what is good”—Ps. 37:3.

* See *The Watchtower*, October 15, 2013, pp. 17-20.

19. (a) Why is our yeartext for 2017 fitting? (b) How will you apply the 2017 yeartext in your life?

Ever Loyal (Psalm 18:25)

1. Ever loyal to Jehovah,
Loyal love we wish to show.
As a people, dedicated,
His commands we want to know.
His advice will never fail us,
And his counsel we obey.
He is loyal; we can trust him.
From his side we'll never stray.
2. Ever loyal to our brothers,
Sticking close in times of need.
Ever caring, always trusting,
Ever kind in word and deed.
We show honor to our brothers
And respect them from the heart.
Ever loyal, ever closer,
From their side we'll never part.
3. Ever loyal to their guidance
When our brothers lead the way.
When they give us clear direction,
May we loyally obey.
Then the blessing from Jehovah
Will be ours to make us strong.
When we're loyal, ever faithful,
To Jehovah we'll belong.