

- Song 98 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “Jehovah’s Word Comes True in Every Detail”: (10 min.)

Jer 51:11, 28—Jehovah foretold who would conquer Babylon (*it-2* 360 ¶2-3)

Jer 51:30—Jehovah foretold that Babylon would not resist invasion (*it-2* 459 ¶4)

Jer 51:37, 62—Jehovah foretold Babylon’s eventual desolation (*it-1* 237 ¶1)

- Digging for Spiritual Gems: (8 min.)

Jer 51:25—Why is Babylon described as a “destructive mountain”? (*it-2* 444 ¶9)

Jer 51:42—What is evidently meant by “the sea” that would “come up over” Babylon? (*it-2* 882 ¶3)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- Bible Reading: (4 min. or less) Jer 51:1-11

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- Prepare This Month’s Presentations: (15 min.) Discussion based on “Sample Presentations.” Play each presentation video, and then discuss the highlights. Encourage publishers to show the household information on jw.org under BIBLE TEACHINGS > HELP FOR THE FAMILY.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 3
- “How Strong Is Your Faith in Jehovah’s Promises?”: (15 min.) Questions and answers. Encourage all to discuss Bible prophecies with fellow believers from time to time with the goal of strengthening one another’s faith.—Ro 1:11, 12.
- Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *kr* chap. 13 ¶¶24-32
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 8 and Prayer

How Strong Is Your Faith in Jehovah’s Promises?

Joshua and Solomon both confirmed that not one word of Jehovah’s promises had failed. (Jos 23:14; 1Ki 8:56) The testimony of these two reliable witnesses adds to the solid foundation on which we can build our faith. —2Co 13:1; Tit 1:2.

How did Jehovah fulfill his promises in the days of Joshua? Along with your family, watch the video drama ‘*Not One Word Has Failed.*’ Then consider the following questions: **(1)** How can you imitate Rahab’s acts of faith? (Heb 11:31; Jas 2:24-26) **(2)** How does the example of Achan prove that willful disobedience leads to disaster? **(3)** Even though the men of Gibeon were warriors, why did they deceive Joshua and make peace with Israel? **(4)** How did Jehovah’s word come true when five Amorite kings threatened Israel? (Jos 10:5-14) **(5)** How has Jehovah acted in your behalf as you put God’s Kingdom and his righteousness first in your life?—Mt 6:33.

As we reflect on all that Jehovah has done, is doing, and will do, our faith in his promises will grow stronger. —Ro 8:31, 32.



Do you have faith like that of Joshua?

QUESTIONS FOR MEDITATION:

Which Bible prophecies are you seeing fulfilled in our day?

Which Bible prophecies do you anticipate seeing fulfilled?

98 *The Scriptures—Inspired of God*

(2 Timothy 3:16, 17)

1. God's Word shines like a brilliant light,
 Guides our feet through earth's dark night.
If we follow it faithfully,
 Surely its truth will set us free.
2. He provides us with words inspired,
 Helps us learn what is required.
Holy writings can motivate,
 Show how to teach and set things straight.
3. By these words from our God above,
 We have come to know his love.
As we read in it ev'ry day,
 God's Word will keep us on the way.

Jeremiah 51-52

51 This is what Jehovah says:

“Here I am raising up a destructive wind
Against Babylon and the inhabitants of Leb-
ka'mai.

² I will send winnowers to Babylon,
And they will winnow her and make her land
empty;
They will come against her on all sides in the day
of calamity.

³ Let the archer not bend his bow.
And let no one stand up in his coat of mail.
Show no compassion for her young men.
Devote all her army to destruction.

⁴ And they will fall slain in the land of the
Chal-de'ans,
Pierced through in her streets.

⁵ For Israel and Judah are not widowed from their
God, from Jehovah of armies.
But their land is full of guilt from the standpoint of
the Holy One of Israel.

⁶ Flee out of the midst of Babylon,
And escape for your life.
Do not perish because of her error.
For it is the time for Jehovah's vengeance.

He is paying her back for what she has done.

⁷ Babylon has been a golden cup in the hand of
Jehovah;

She made all the earth drunk.

From her wine the nations have drunk;

That is why the nations have gone mad.

⁸ Suddenly Babylon has fallen and is broken.

Wail over her!

Get balsam for her pain; perhaps she may be
healed.”

⁹ “We tried to heal Babylon, but she could not be
healed.

Leave her and let us go, each to his own land.

For her judgment has reached to the heavens;

It is as high as the clouds.

¹⁰ Jehovah has brought about justice for us.

Come, let us recount in Zion the work of Jehovah
our God.”

¹¹ “Polish the arrows; take up the circular shields.

Jehovah has stirred up the spirit of the kings of
the Medes,

Because he intends to bring Babylon to ruin.

For this is the vengeance of Jehovah, the
vengeance for his temple.

¹² Lift up a signal against the walls of Babylon.

Strengthen the guard, post the watchmen.

Prepare those in ambush.
For Jehovah has devised the strategy,
And he will carry out what he has promised
against the inhabitants of Babylon.”

¹³ “O woman who resides on many waters,
With abundant treasures,
Your end has come, the limit of your profit-
making.

¹⁴ Jehovah of armies has sworn by himself,
‘I will fill you with men, as numerous as locusts,
And they will shout in triumph over you.’

¹⁵ He is the Maker of the earth by his power,
The One who established the productive land by
his wisdom
And who stretched out the heavens by his
understanding.

¹⁶ When he makes his voice heard,
The waters in the heavens are in turmoil,
And he causes clouds to ascend from the ends
of the earth.
He makes lightning for the rain,
And he brings the wind out of his storehouses.

¹⁷ Every man acts unreasonably and without
knowledge.
Every metalworker will be put to shame because
of the carved image;

For his metal image is a falsehood,
And there is no spirit in them.

¹⁸ They are a delusion, a work of mockery.
When their day of reckoning comes, they will
perish.

¹⁹ The Share of Jacob is not like these things,
For he is the One who formed everything,
Even the staff of his inheritance.
Jehovah of armies is his name.”

²⁰ “You are a war club for me, a weapon for battle,
For with you I will smash nations.
With you I will bring kingdoms to ruin.

²¹ With you I will smash the horse and its rider.
With you I will smash the war chariot and its
rider.

²² With you I will smash man and woman.
With you I will smash old man and boy.
With you I will smash young man and woman.

²³ With you I will smash shepherd and his flock.
With you I will smash farmer and his team of
animals.
With you I will smash governors and deputy
rulers.

²⁴ And I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of
Chal-de'a

For all the evil that they have committed in Zion before your eyes,” declares Jehovah.

²⁵ “Here I am against you, O destructive mountain,” declares Jehovah,
“You destroyer of the whole earth.
I will stretch out my hand against you and roll you down from the crags
And make you a burned-out mountain.”

²⁶ “People will not take from you a cornerstone or a foundation stone,
Because you will become desolate forever,” declares Jehovah.

²⁷ “Lift up a signal in the land.
Blow a horn among the nations.
Appoint the nations against her.
Summon against her the kingdoms of Ar'a-rat, Min'ni, and Ash'ke-naz.
Commission against her a recruiting officer.
Make the horses come up like bristling locusts.

²⁸ Appoint against her the nations,
The kings of Me'di-a, its governors and all its deputy rulers
And all the lands they rule over.

²⁹ And the earth will quake and tremble,
For the thoughts of Jehovah against Babylon will be carried out

To make the land of Babylon an object of horror,
without an inhabitant.

³⁰ The warriors of Babylon have quit fighting.

They sit in their strongholds.

Their strength has failed.

They have become like women.

Her homes have been set on fire.

Her bars have been broken.

³¹ One courier runs to meet another courier,
And one messenger to meet another messenger,
To report to the king of Babylon that his city has
been captured on every side,

³² That the fords have been seized,
That the papyrus boats have been burned with
fire,
And that the soldiers are terrified.”

³³ For this is what Jehovah of armies, the God of
Israel, says:

“The daughter of Babylon is like a threshing
floor.

It is the time to tread her down solid.

Very soon the time of the harvest will come for
her.”

³⁴ “King Neb·u·chad·nez'zar of Babylon has devoured
me;
He has thrown me into confusion.

He has set me down as an empty vessel.
He has swallowed me down like a big snake;
He has filled his stomach with my fine things.
He has rinsed me away.

³⁵ ‘May the violence done to me and to my person
come upon Babylon!’ says the inhabitant of
Zion.

‘And let my blood come upon the inhabitants of
Chal-de'a!’ says Jerusalem.”

³⁶ Therefore this is what Jehovah says:

“Here I am pleading your legal case,
And I will execute vengeance for you.
I will dry up her sea and make her wells dry.

³⁷ And Babylon will become piles of stones,
A lair of jackals,
An object of horror and something to whistle at,
Without an inhabitant.

³⁸ All together they will roar just like young lions.
They will growl like lion cubs.”

³⁹ “When they are inflamed, I will set out their
banquet and make them drunk,
In order that they may exult;
Then they will sleep a lasting sleep,
From which they will not wake up,” declares
Jehovah.

⁴⁰ “I will bring them down like lambs to the slaughter,

Like rams along with the goats.”

- 41 “O how She'shach has been captured,
How the Praise of the whole earth has been
seized!
How Babylon has become an object of horror
among the nations!
- 42 The sea has come up over Babylon.
By the multitude of its waves she has been
covered.
- 43 Her cities have become an object of horror, a
waterless land and a desert.
A land where no one will live and where no man
will pass through.
- 44 I will turn my attention to Bel in Babylon,
And I will take out of his mouth what he has
swallowed.
To him nations will stream no more,
And the wall of Babylon will fall.
- 45 Get out of her midst, my people!
Escape for your lives from the burning anger of
Jehovah!
- 46 Do not be fainthearted or afraid about the report to
be heard in the land.
In one year the report will come,
And the next year another report,
Of violence in the land and of ruler against ruler.

- 47 Therefore look! the days are coming
When I will turn my attention to the graven
images of Babylon.
All her land will be put to shame,
And all her slain will fall in her midst.
- 48 The heavens and the earth and everything in them
Will shout joyfully over Babylon,
For the destroyers will come to her out of the
north,” declares Jehovah.
- 49 “Not only did Babylon cause the slain of Israel to
fall
But also at Babylon the slain ones of all the earth
have fallen.
- 50 You who escape the sword, keep going, do not
stand still!
Remember Jehovah from far away,
And may Jerusalem come up into your heart.”
- 51 “We have been put to shame, for we have heard
taunts.
Humiliation has covered our faces,
For foreigners have come against the holy
places of the house of Jehovah.”
- 52 “Therefore look! the days are coming,” declares
Jehovah,
“When I will turn my attention to her graven
images,

And throughout all her land the wounded will groan.”

53 “Even if Babylon should ascend to the heavens,
Even if she should fortify her towering
strongholds,
From me her destroyers will come,” declares
Jehovah.

54 “Listen! There is an outcry from Babylon,
The sound of great disaster from the land of the
Chal-de'ans,

55 For Jehovah is destroying Babylon,
He will silence her great voice,
And their waves will roar like many waters.
The sound of their voice will be heard.

56 For the destroyer will come upon Babylon;
Her warriors will be captured,
Their bows will be shattered,
For Jehovah is a God of retribution.
He will surely repay.

57 I will make her princes and her wise men drunk,
Her governors and her deputy rulers and her
warriors,
And they will sleep a lasting sleep,
From which they will not wake up,” declares the
King, whose name is Jehovah of armies.

58 This is what Jehovah of armies says:

“The wall of Babylon, though broad, will be completely demolished,
And her gates, though high, will be set on fire.
The peoples will toil for nothing;
The nations will weary themselves just to feed the fire.”

⁵⁹ This is the word that Jeremiah the prophet gave as a command to Se-rai'ah son of Ne-ri'ah son of Mah-sei'ah when he went with King Zed-e-ki'ah of Judah to Babylon in the fourth year of his reign; Se-rai'ah was the quartermaster. ⁶⁰ Jeremiah wrote in one book all the calamity that would come upon Babylon, all these words written against Babylon.

⁶¹ Furthermore, Jeremiah said to Se-rai'ah: “When you come to Babylon and see her, you must read aloud all these words. ⁶² Then say, ‘O Jehovah, you have said against this place that it will be destroyed and left without an inhabitant, man or beast, and that she will become desolate forever.’ ⁶³ And when you finish reading this book, tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Eu-phra'tes. ⁶⁴ Then say, ‘This is how Babylon will sink down and never rise again because of the calamity that I am bringing on her; and they will grow weary.’”

Down to this point are the words of Jeremiah.

52 Zed-e-ki'ah was 21 years old when he became king, and he reigned for 11 years in Jerusalem. His

mother's name was Ha·mu'tal the daughter of Jeremiah of Lib'nah. ² He continued to do what was bad in Jehovah's eyes, according to all that Je·hoi'a·kim had done. ³ It was because of Jehovah's anger that these things took place in Jerusalem and in Judah, until he cast them out of his sight. And Zed·e·ki'ah rebelled against the king of Babylon. ⁴ In the ninth year of Zed·e·ki'ah's reign, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month, King Neb·u·chad·nez'zar of Babylon came with all his army against Jerusalem. They camped against it and built a siege wall all around it. ⁵ And the city was under siege until the 11th year of King Zed·e·ki'ah.

⁶ In the fourth month, on the ninth day of the month, the famine was severe in the city, and there was no food for the people of the land. ⁷ Finally the city wall was broken through, and all the soldiers fled from the city by night through the gate between the double wall near the king's garden, while the Chal·de'ans were surrounding the city; and they continued by the way of the Ar'a·bah. ⁸ But the Chal·de'an army pursued the king, and they overtook Zed·e·ki'ah in the desert plains of Jer'i·cho, and all his troops were scattered from his side. ⁹ Then they seized the king and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Rib'lah in the land of Ha'math, and he passed sentence on him. ¹⁰ And the king of Babylon slaughtered Zed·e·ki'ah's sons before his

eyes, and he also slaughtered all the princes of Judah there at Rib'lah. ¹¹ Then the king of Babylon blinded Zed·e·ki'ah's eyes, bound him with copper fetters, brought him to Babylon, and kept him imprisoned until the day of his death.

¹² In the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month, that is, in the 19th year of King Neb·u·chad·nez'zar the king of Babylon, Neb·u'zar·ad'an the chief of the guard, who was an attendant of the king of Babylon, came into Jerusalem. ¹³ He burned down the house of Jehovah, the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem; he also burned down every large house. ¹⁴ And the walls surrounding Jerusalem were pulled down by the entire Chal·de'an army that was with the chief of the guard.

¹⁵ Neb·u'zar·ad'an the chief of the guard took into exile some of the lowly people and the rest of the people who were left in the city. He also took the deserters who had defected to the king of Babylon as well as the rest of the master craftsmen. ¹⁶ But Neb·u'zar·ad'an the chief of the guard left some of the poorest people of the land to serve as vinedressers and as compulsory laborers.

¹⁷ And the Chal·de'ans broke into pieces the copper pillars of the house of Jehovah and the carriages and the copper Sea that were in the house of Jehovah, and they carried all the copper away to Babylon. ¹⁸ They also took the cans, the shovels, the extinguishers, the

bowls, the cups, and all the copper utensils used in the temple service. ¹⁹ The chief of the guard took the basins, the fire holders, the bowls, the cans, the lampstands, the cups, and the bowls that were of genuine gold and silver. ²⁰ As for the two pillars, the Sea, the 12 copper bulls under the Sea, and the carriages that King Sol'o-mon had made for the house of Jehovah, the copper of all these articles was beyond weighing.

²¹ As for the pillars, each pillar was 18 cubits high, a measuring cord of 12 cubits could encircle it; its thickness was four fingerbreadths, and it was hollow. ²² And the capital on it was of copper; and the height of the one capital was five cubits; and the network and pomegranates all around on the capital were all made of copper. The second pillar was just like it, also the pomegranates. ²³ There were 96 pomegranates on the sides; in all, there were 100 pomegranates around the network.

²⁴ The chief of the guard also took Se-rai'ah the chief priest, Zeph-a-ni'ah the second priest, and the three doorkeepers. ²⁵ And he took from the city one court official who was the commissioner over the soldiers, seven close associates of the king who were found in the city, as well as the secretary of the chief of the army, the one mustering the people of the land, and 60 men of the common people of the land who were yet

found in the city. ²⁶ Neb·u'zar·ad'an the chief of the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Rib'lah. ²⁷ The king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Rib'lah in the land of Ha'math. Thus Judah went into exile from its land.

²⁸ These are the people whom Neb·u·chad·nez'zar took into exile: in the seventh year, 3,023 Jews.

²⁹ In the 18th year of Neb·u·chad·nez'zar, 832 people were taken from Jerusalem.

³⁰ In the 23rd year of Neb·u·chad·nez'zar, Neb·u'zar·ad'an the chief of the guard took Jews into exile, 745 people.

In all, 4,600 people were taken into exile.

³¹ Then in the 37th year of the exile of King Je·hoi'a·chin of Judah, in the 12th month, on the 25th day of the month, King E'vil·mer'o·dach of Babylon, in the year he became king, released King Je·hoi'a·chin of Judah and brought him out of prison. ³² He spoke kindly with him and put his throne higher than the thrones of the other kings who were with him in Babylon. ³³ So Je·hoi'a·chin took off his prison garments, and he regularly ate before him all the days of his life. ³⁴ A regular allowance of food was given him from the king of Babylon, day after day, until the day of his death, all the days of his life.

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How did Jehovah fulfill his promises in the days of Joshua? Along with your family, watch the video drama ‘Not One Word Has Failed.’ Then consider the following questions: **(1)** How can you imitate Rahab’s acts of faith? (Heb 11:31; Jas 2:24-26) **(2)** How does the example of Achan prove that willful disobedience leads to disaster? **(3)** Even though the men of Gibeon were warriors, why did they deceive Joshua and make peace with Israel? **(4)** How did Jehovah’s word come true when five Amorite kings threatened Israel? (Jos 10:5-14) **(5)** How has Jehovah acted in your behalf as you put God’s Kingdom and his righteousness first in your life?—Mt 6:33.

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Do you have faith like that of Joshua?

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JEREMIAH 51-52 | Jehovah’s Word Comes True in Every Detail



Archer of the royal Persian guard

Jehovah precisely foretold future events

51:11, 28

“Polish the arrows”

- The Medes and Persians were expert archers and used the bow as their principal weapon. They polished their arrows to make them penetrate deeper

51:30

“The warriors of Babylon have quit fighting”

- The Nabonidus Chronicle says: “The army of Cyrus entered Babylon without battle.” This likely means without a general conflict and agrees with the prophecy of Jeremiah

The Nabonidus Chronicle



Photograph taken by courtesy of the British Museum

51:37, 62

“Babylon will become piles of stones [and] desolate forever”

- Beginning in 539 B.C.E., Babylon’s glory began to fade. Alexander the Great intended to make Babylon his capital, but he died suddenly. At the start of the Christian era, a community of Jews still existed there, giving the apostle Peter reason to visit Babylon. But by the fourth century C.E., the city was in ruins, and it eventually passed out of existence



How should the fulfillment of Bible prophecy affect me?

What can I teach others about this prophecy?



Babylon conquered
539

Death of Alexander the Great
323



Peter in Babylon
c. 62-64



Babylon lies in ruins

600 B.C.E. | 400 B.C.E. | 200 B.C.E. | B.C.E./C.E. | 200 C.E.

June 5-11

Treasures From God's Word

Jeremiah 51:11, 28—Jehovah foretold who would conquer Babylon

Reference: *it-2* 360 paragraphs 2-3

With Persians defeat Babylon. In the eighth century B.C.E., the prophet Isaiah had foretold that Jehovah would arouse against Babylon “the Medes, who account silver itself as nothing and who, as respects gold, take no delight in it. And their bows will dash even young men to pieces.” (Isaiah 13:17-19; 21:2) The term “Medes” here may well include the Persians, even as the classical Greek historians commonly used the term to embrace both Medes and Persians. Their disdain for silver and gold evidently indicates that in Babylon’s case conquest was the prime motive with them rather than spoil, so that no bribe or offer of tribute would buy them off from their determined purpose. The Medes, like the Persians, used the bow as a principal weapon. The wooden bows, though sometimes mounted with bronze or copper (compare Psalm 18:34), likely ‘dashed the young men of Babylon to pieces’ by the hail of arrows, individually polished so as to penetrate even deeper.—Jeremiah 51:11.

It may be noted that Jeremiah (51:11, 28) makes reference to “the *kings* of Media” as among those attacking Babylon,

the plural perhaps indicating that even under Cyrus, a subordinate Median king or kings may have continued to exist, a situation by no means incompatible with ancient practice. (Compare also **Jeremiah 25:25**.) Thus, too, we find that when Babylon was captured by the combined forces of Medes, Persians, Elamites, and other neighboring tribes, it was a Mede named Darius who was “made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans,” evidently as an appointee of King Cyrus the Persian.—**Daniel 5:31; 9:1**; see **DARIUS Number 1**.

Jeremiah 51:30—Jehovah foretold that Babylon would not resist invasion

Reference: *it-2* 459 **paragraph 4**

Interestingly, the Chronicle says concerning the night of Babylon’s fall: “The army of Cyrus entered Babylon without battle.” This likely means without a general conflict and agrees with the prophecy of Jeremiah that ‘the mighty men of Babylon would cease to fight.’—**Jeremiah 51:30**.

Jeremiah 51:37, 62—Jehovah foretold Babylon’s eventual desolation

Reference: *it-1* 237 **paragraph 1**

From that memorable date, 539 B.C.E., Babylon’s glory

began to fade as the city declined. Twice it revolted against the Persian emperor Darius I (Hystaspis), and on the second occasion it was dismantled. A partially restored city rebelled against Xerxes I and was plundered. Alexander the Great intended to make Babylon his capital, but he suddenly died in 323 B.C.E. Nicator conquered the city in 312 B.C.E. and transported much of its material to the banks of the Tigris for use in building his new capital of Seleucia. However, the city and a settlement of Jews remained in early Christian times, giving the apostle Peter reason to visit Babylon, as noted in his letter. (1 Peter 5:13) Inscriptions found there show that Babylon's temple of Bel existed as late as 75 C.E. By the fourth century C.E. the city was in ruins, and eventually passed out of existence. It became nothing more than "piles of stones."—Jeremiah 51:37.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Jeremiah 51:25—Why is Babylon described as a "destructive mountain"?

Reference: *it-2* 444 paragraph 9

Represent governments. In Biblical symbolism mountains can represent kingdoms or ruling governments. (Daniel 2:35, 44, 45; compare Isaiah 41:15; Revelation 17:9-11, 18.)

Babylon, by her military conquests, brought other lands to ruin and is, therefore, called a "ruinous mountain."

(**Jeremiah 51:24, 25**) A psalm relating Jehovah's activities against warring men depicts him as being "enveloped with light, more majestic than the mountains of prey." (**Psalms 76:4**) "The mountains of prey" may represent aggressive kingdoms. (Compare **Nahum 2:11-13**.) Regarding Jehovah, David said: "You have made my mountain to stand in strength," probably meaning that Jehovah had exalted David's kingdom and firmly established it. (**Psalms 30:7**; compare **2 Samuel 5:12**.) The fact that mountains may represent kingdoms aids one in understanding the significance of what is described at Revelation 8:8 as "something like a great mountain burning with fire." Its resemblance to a burning mountain would suggest that it is associated with a form of rulership having a destructive nature like fire.

Jeremiah 51:42—What is evidently meant by "the sea" that would "come up over" Babylon?

Reference: *it-2* 882 **paragraph 3**

Overflowing armies. Jeremiah described the sound of the attackers of Babylon as being "like the sea that is boisterous." (**Jeremiah 50:42**) Hence, when he foretold that "the sea" would come up over Babylon, he evidently meant the flood of conquering troops under the Medes and Persians.—**Jeremiah 51:42**; compare **Daniel 9:26**.

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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 3
- **“How Strong Is Your Faith in Jehovah’s Promises?”:** (15 min.) Questions and answers. Encourage all to discuss Bible prophecies with fellow believers from time to time with the goal of strengthening one another’s faith.—Ro 1:11, 12.
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- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
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How Strong Is Your Faith in Jehovah’s Promises?

Joshua and Solomon both confirmed that not one word of Jehovah’s promises had failed. (Jos 23:14; 1Ki 8:56) The testimony of these two reliable witnesses adds to the solid foundation on which we can build our faith. —2Co 13:1; Tit 1:2.

How did Jehovah fulfill his promises in the days of Joshua? Along with your family, watch the video drama ‘*Not One Word Has Failed.*’ Then consider the following questions: **(1)** How can you imitate Rahab’s acts of faith? (Heb 11:31; Jas 2:24-26) **(2)** How does the example of Achan prove that willful disobedience leads to disaster? **(3)** Even though the men of Gibeon were warriors, why did they deceive Joshua and make peace with Israel? **(4)** How did Jehovah’s word come true when five Amorite kings threatened Israel? (Jos 10:5-14) **(5)** How has Jehovah acted in your behalf as you put God’s Kingdom and his righteousness first in your life?—Mt 6:33.

As we reflect on all that Jehovah has done, is doing, and will do, our faith in his promises will grow stronger. —Ro 8:31, 32.



Do you have faith like that of Joshua?

QUESTIONS FOR MEDITATION:

Which Bible prophecies are you seeing fulfilled in our day?

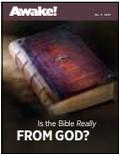
Which Bible prophecies do you anticipate seeing fulfilled?



Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Presentations



AWAKE!

Question: Is the Bible from God? Or is it a book that contains purely the thoughts of men?

Scripture: 2Ti 3:16

Offer: This issue of *Awake!* considers three lines of evidence that the Bible really is from God.



TEACH THE TRUTH

Question: How should we view the gift of life?

Scripture: Re 4:11

Truth: Since life is a gift from God, we treat it with respect. We are safety conscious, and we would never intentionally take the life of another human. We treasure the gift of life.



WHAT IS THE KEY TO HAPPY FAMILY LIFE?

Question: Notice the question on the front of this tract as well as some possible answers. What's your opinion?

Scripture: Lu 11:28

Offer: This tract outlines what this can mean for your family and why we can believe what the Bible says.

BUILD YOUR OWN PRESENTATION

Question:

Scripture:

Offer:



Help for the Family

The family can be a haven of love and a refuge from daily stresses. You can make that ideal into a reality for your family by applying practical advice from the Bible.

Note: Some names of persons quoted in the "Couples & Parents" and "Teenagers" sections have been changed.

Couples & Parents



Managing Money

Family finances are at the root of many arguments. Find out how the Bible can help resolve money issues.



Raising Responsible Children

How can Jesus' example help you become a more effective parent?

Teenagers



Young People Talk About Bible Reading

Reading is not always easy, but reading the Bible is worth the effort. Four young people explain how they benefit from Bible reading.



When Children Grieve

How did the Bible help three young people deal with the death of a family member?

Children



Lot and His Family—An Illustrated Story

Download this activity, and see what you can learn from Lot and his family.



Time Line of Jesus' Life

Read the Bible scriptures and match them to the corresponding drawing.

3

Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

(Proverbs 14:26)

1. O Jehovah, you have given us
a hope that we hold dear.
It's a hope we find so thrilling
we want the world to hear.
But at times this life's anxieties
are the cause of fears within,
And the hope that burned so brightly
has suddenly grown dim.

(CHORUS)

*You're our strength, you're our hope,
you're our confidence.*

Whatever we lack, you supply.

*When we preach, when we teach,
we have confidence*

because it's on you we rely.

2. So Jehovah, please instill in us
a heart that won't forget,
For you've always been our comfort
when troubled times we've met.
And these thoughts that lift and strengthen us
can revive that dying flame,
For they fill our hearts with courage
to speak about your name.

(Chorus)

- Song 98 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “Jehovah’s Word Comes True in Every Detail”: (10 min.)

Jer 51:11, 28—Jehovah foretold who would conquer Babylon (*it-2* 360 ¶2-3)

Jer 51:30—Jehovah foretold that Babylon would not resist invasion (*it-2* 459 ¶4)

Jer 51:37, 62—Jehovah foretold Babylon’s eventual desolation (*it-1* 237 ¶1)

- Digging for Spiritual Gems: (8 min.)

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Which Bible prophecies do you anticipate seeing fulfilled?

more than preaching; it is more than distribution of religious literature. It is a combination of both.” He added: “This form of religious activity occupies the same high estate . . . as do worship in the churches and preaching from the pulpits.”

²³ This Supreme Court ruling constituted a major legal victory for God’s people. It affirmed what we truly are—Christian ministers, not commercial salesmen. On that memorable day in 1943, Jehovah’s Witnesses won 12 of their 13 cases before the Supreme Court, including the *Murdock* case. These court decisions have served as a powerful precedent in more recent court cases in which our opposers have again challenged our right to preach the Kingdom message publicly and from house to house.

“We Must Obey God as Ruler Rather Than Men”

²⁴ As Jehovah’s servants, we deeply appreciate it when governments grant us the legal right to preach the Kingdom message freely. However, when a government bans our preaching work, we simply adjust our methods, continuing our work in any way

23. Why are the court victories of 1943 important for us today?

24. How do we react when a government bans our preaching work?

possible. Like the apostles, “we must obey God as ruler rather than men.” (Acts 5:29; Matt. 28:19, 20) At the same time, we appeal to the courts to lift the ban on our activities. Consider two examples.

²⁵ **Nicaragua.** On November 19, 1952, missionary and branch servant Donovan Munsterman stepped into the Office of Immigration in Managua, the capital. He had been ordered to appear before Captain Arnaldo García, who headed the office. The captain told Donovan that all of Jehovah’s Witnesses in Nicaragua were “prohibited to continue preaching their doctrines and promoting their religious activities.” When asked why, Captain García explained that the Witnesses did not have permission from the minister of government to perform their ministry and that they were accused of being communists. Who were our accusers? The Roman Catholic clergy.

²⁶ Brother Munsterman immediately appealed to the Ministry of Government and Religions as well as to President Anastasio Somoza García, but to no avail. So the brothers adjusted their methods. They

25, 26. What events in Nicaragua led to a Supreme Court case there, and what was the outcome?

closed the Kingdom Hall, met in smaller groups, and stopped street witnessing, but they still preached the Kingdom message. At the same time, they filed a petition for injunction with the Supreme Court of Nicaragua, asking the Court to invalidate the ban. Newspapers widely reported the ban and the contents of the petition, and the Supreme Court agreed to hear the case. What was the outcome? On June 19, 1953, the Supreme Court published its unanimous decision in favor of the Witnesses. The Court found that the ban violated constitutional guarantees of freedom of expression, conscience, and manifestation of beliefs. It also ordered that relations between the government of Nicaragua and the Witnesses be restored to their former state.

²⁷ Nicaraguans were amazed that the Supreme Court had sided with the Witnesses. Until then, the influence of the clergy had been so strong that the Court avoided conflicts with them. Also, the power of government officials was so great that the Court seldom went against their decisions. Our brothers

27. Why were the people of Nicaragua amazed at the Court's decision, and how did the brothers view this victory?

were confident that they received this victory because they had received protection from their King and had continued preaching.—Acts 1:8.

²⁸ **Zaire.** In the mid-1980's, there were about 35,000 Witnesses in Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of Congo. To keep up with the steady growth of Kingdom activities, the branch was constructing new facilities. In December 1985, an international convention was held in the capital city, Kinshasa, and 32,000 delegates from many parts of the world filled the city's stadium. But then, conditions for Jehovah's servants began to change. What happened?

²⁹ Brother Marcel Filteau, a missionary from Quebec, Canada, who had experienced the persecution of the Duplessis regime, served in Zaire at the time. He related what took place: "On March 12, 1986, the responsible brothers were handed a letter that declared the association of Jehovah's Witnesses of Zaire illegal." The ban was signed by the country's president, Mobutu Sese Seko.

³⁰ The next day the national radio announced:
28, 29. In the mid-1980's, what turn of events took place in Zaire?
30. The Branch Committee needed to make what weighty decision, and what did they decide to do?

“We shall never again hear of Jehovah’s Witnesses in [Zaire].” Instant persecution followed. Kingdom Halls were destroyed, and our brothers were robbed, arrested, imprisoned, and beaten. Even Witness children were put in prison. On October 12, 1988, the government seized our organization’s belongings, and the Civil Guard, an army unit, occupied the branch property. The responsible brothers filed an appeal with President Mobutu, but they did not receive a reply. At that point, the Branch Committee had to make a weighty decision, “Shall we appeal to the Supreme Court, or shall we wait?” Timothy Holmes, who was a missionary and the country’s Branch Committee coordinator at the time, recalls, “We looked to Jehovah for wisdom and direction.” After prayerful deliberation, the committee felt that the time for legal action was not right. Instead, they focused on caring for the brotherhood and on finding ways to continue the preaching work.

³¹ Several years passed. Pressure on the Witnesses lessened, and respect for human rights increased in

31, 32. What remarkable decision did the Supreme Court of Zaire make, and what effect did it have on our brothers?

the country. The Branch Committee concluded that the time had come to challenge the ban by appealing to the Supreme Court of Justice of Zaire. Remarkably, the Supreme Court agreed to hear the case. Then, on January 8, 1993, nearly seven years after the presidential ban order, the Court ruled that the government's action against the Witnesses had been unlawful, and the ban was lifted. Just think of what that meant! Putting their own lives at risk, the justices had annulled a decision of the country's president! Says Brother Holmes, "During the period of that litigation, we saw how Jehovah can change things." (Dan. 2:21) This victory fortified the faith of our brothers. They felt that the King, Jesus, had directed his people to know when and how to act.

³² With the ban lifted, the branch office was allowed to bring in missionaries, build new branch facilities, and import Bible literature.*^[6] What a joy it is for God's servants worldwide to observe how Jehovah protects the spiritual welfare of his people! —Isa. 52:10.

*^[6] The Civil Guard eventually vacated the branch property; but new branch facilities were constructed in another location.

8

Jehovah Is Our Refuge

(Psalm 91)

1. Jehovah is our refuge,
Our God in whom we trust.
His shadow is our shelter;
Remain in it we must.
His faithful ones he will defend,
On this we know we can depend.
Jehovah is a stronghold,
Ever faithful, loyal, and just.
2. Though thousands will have fallen
And many at our side,
The righteous and the meek ones
Will never be denied.
So in our hearts we need not fear;
Calamity will not come near.
From danger he will shield us,
For beneath God's wings we'll reside.
3. He'll keep us and protect us
From snares along our way,
From terrors in the nighttime,
And arrows by the day.
Yes, there will be no cause for dread,
No place where we will fear to tread.
Jehovah is our refuge,
Ever guarding us on our way.

(See also Ps. 97:10; 121:3, 5; Isa. 52:12.)

APRIL 2017

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
MAY 29–JULY 2, 2017

LARGE
PRINT
EDITION



COVER IMAGE:
ZAMBIA

An enthusiastic field service group leaving for witnessing activity in Lusaka, Zambia. The well-maintained Kingdom Hall serves as a powerful witness to Jehovah

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 WEEK OF MAY 29–JUNE 4

“What You Vow, Pay”

How many vows have you made to Jehovah? One, two, or more? Do you feel that you are living up to them to the best of your ability? What about your dedication vow or your marriage vow? This article reminds us of the excellent examples that Jephthah and Hannah set for us as we faithfully strive to fulfill our vows to God.

18 WEEK OF JUNE 5-11

What Will Go When God’s Kingdom Comes?

We often think about what Jehovah will give us in Paradise, but in this article, we will focus on what he will take away. What will Jehovah remove in order to build a peaceful, happy world? Contemplating the answer will strengthen our faith and our determination to endure.

139 *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)

*"We thank you, our God, for all 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 will awaken those sleeping in death;
 Their voices will join ours with
 ev'ry grateful breath:

(Chorus)

(See also Ps. 37:10, 11; Isa. 65:17; John 5:28; 2 Pet. 3:13.)



SONGS:
139, 144

**HOW WOULD YOU
ANSWER?**

What will Jehovah do about wicked people and corrupt organizations?

How will Jehovah rid the earth of wrong activities and distressful conditions?

How can you make sure that you will remain when this wicked world passes away?

What Will Go When God's Kingdom Comes?

“The world is passing away and so is its desire, but the one who does the will of God remains forever.”

—1 JOHN 2:17.

“DEAD MAN WALKING!” That cry rings out as a dangerous criminal is led from his prison cell, metal doors clanging behind

1, 2. (a) In what way might this system of things be compared to a condemned criminal? (See opening picture.) (b) What will be the response to the execution of this wicked system?



him. Why do the man's guards say such a thing? The man seems relatively healthy; no physical problem is about to rob him of his life. However, the guards are leading him to a place of execution. That condemned criminal is as good as dead.*

² In a sense, today's system of things is like that man on death row. This wicked world has long since been condemned, and its execution is now close at hand. The Bible says: "The world is passing away." (1 John 2:17) The system's end is a certainty. And yet, there is a key difference between this world's end and that of the prisoner. At the prisoner's execution, some may protest the sentence, questioning its justice or perhaps hoping for a last-minute stay of execution. In the case of this world, though, the sentence has been determined by the perfectly just Sovereign of the universe. (Deut. 32:4) There will be no stay of execution, and there will be no lingering doubts about the justice of the sentence. After it is carried out, every thinking creature in the universe will heartily agree that justice was done. The relief will be immense!

* This paragraph describes a prison custom that was common practice years ago in some parts of the United States.

³ What, though, is included in “the world” that is “passing away”? Much of what people today commonly consider to be permanent features of life in this world will be gone. Is that sad news? Far from it! In fact, it is a vital part of the “good news of the Kingdom.” (Matt. 24:14) So let us focus on what will be gone when God’s Kingdom comes. We will consider four broad categories: wicked people, corrupt organizations, wrong activities, and distressful conditions. In each case, we will examine (1) how these features of life affect us now, (2) what Jehovah will do about them, and (3) how he will replace them with what is truly good.

WICKED PEOPLE

⁴ *How do wicked people affect us now?* After foretelling that this present era would involve “critical times hard to deal with,” the apostle Paul was inspired to write: “Wicked men and impostors will advance from bad to worse.” (2 Tim. 3:1-5, 13) Have you seen those prophetic words come true? Many of us have been victims of wicked people, such as violent bullies, hateful bigots, and vicious

3. We will discuss what four categories that will be gone when God’s Kingdom comes?

4. In what ways do wicked people affect us now?

criminals. Some of those are openly wicked; others are impostors, hiding what they do under an appearance of righteousness. Even if we ourselves have not been victims, such wicked people still affect us. We are sickened at heart when we learn of their horrible acts. The way the wicked brutalize children, the elderly, and other defenseless ones fills us with horror. Wicked people exhibit a spirit that seems subhuman, animalistic, even demonic. (Jas. 3:15) Happily, Jehovah's Word counters such bad news with good news.

⁵ *What will Jehovah do?* Right now Jehovah is giving wicked people an opportunity to change. (Isa. 55:7) As individuals, they have not yet received their final judgment. It is this system that stands condemned. But what of those individuals who refuse to change, who continue to support this system right up to the time of the great tribulation? Jehovah has promised to rid the earth of wicked people for all time. (Read Psalm 37:10.) The wicked may think that they are safe from such judgment. Many have learned to hide what they do, and in this world they often seem to escape justice and consequences. (Job 21:7, 9) Yet, the Bible reminds

5. (a) What opportunity is still open to wicked individuals? (b) What will be the final outcome for wicked people who refuse to change?

us: “God’s eyes are upon the ways of a man, and He sees all his steps. There is no darkness or deep shadow where wrongdoers can conceal themselves.” (Job 34:21, 22) There is no hiding from Jehovah God. No impostor can fool him; no shadow is so dark or deep that God’s limitless vision cannot pierce right to the heart of matters. After Armageddon, then, we may look where the wicked used to be, but we will not see them. They will be gone—forever!—Ps. 37:12-15.

⁶ *Who will remain in place of wicked people?* Jehovah makes this heartwarming promise: “The meek will possess the earth, and they will find exquisite delight in the abundance of peace.” Later in the same psalm, we read: “The righteous will possess the earth, and they will live forever on it.” (Ps. 37: 11, 29) Who are “the meek” and “the righteous”? The meek are those who humbly accept Jehovah’s teaching and guidance; the righteous are those who love doing what is right in the eyes of Jehovah God. In today’s world, righteous people are greatly outnumbered by the wicked. But in the new world to come, the meek and the righteous will be neither a minority nor a majority; they will be the

6. Who will remain in place of wicked people, and why is that good news?

only people alive. Truly, a population of such people will make the earth a paradise!

CORRUPT ORGANIZATIONS

⁷ *How do corrupt organizations affect us now?* Much of the evil that is done in this world is the work not of individuals but of organizations. Think, for instance, of the religious organizations that deceive millions of people about the nature of God, the trustworthiness of the Bible, the future of the earth and mankind—and many other subjects. Or what about the governments that promote war and ethnic violence, that oppress the poor and defenseless, that thrive on bribery and favoritism? What about greedy corporations that pollute the environment, deplete natural resources, and exploit the gullibility of consumers in order to bring untold wealth to a few while millions struggle in poverty? Without question, corrupt organizations are responsible for much of the misery in today's world.

⁸ *What will Jehovah do?* The great tribulation will begin when the political elements turn against all

7. How do corrupt organizations affect us today?

8. According to the Bible, what will happen to organizations that seem solid to many people today?

false religious organizations as represented by the prostitute called Babylon the Great. (Rev. 17:1, 2, 16; 18:1-4) Those religious organizations will be completely destroyed. What, though, about all the other corrupt organizations? The Bible uses mountains and islands to picture many of the organizations and institutions that seem so solid to mankind today. (Read Revelation 6:14.) God's Word foretells that the governments and all their dependent organizations will be rocked from their foundations. The great tribulation will reach its climax with the destruction of all the governments of this old world and all those who side with them against God's Kingdom. (Jer. 25:31-33) Afterward, there will be no corrupt organizations at all!

⁹ *What will replace corrupt organizations?* After Armageddon, will there be any organization on earth? The Bible tells us: "There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell." (2 Pet. 3:13) The old heavens and earth, the corrupt governments and the earthly society under their control, will be gone. They will be replaced by what? The expression "new heavens and a new

9. Why can we be sure that the new earth will be well-organized?

earth” means that there will be a new government and a new earthly society over which that government rules. The Kingdom under Jesus Christ will perfectly reflect the personality of Jehovah God, who is a God of order. (1 Cor. 14:33) So the “new earth” will be organized. There will be good men to care for matters. (Ps. 45:16) They will be directed by Christ and his 144,000 corulers. Imagine a time when all corrupt organizations will be replaced by a single, unified, and incorruptible organization!

WRONG ACTIVITIES

¹⁰ *How do wrong activities affect us now?* We live in a world full of wrongdoing. Immoral, dishonest, and brutally violent deeds seem to saturate this system of things. Parents in particular often struggle to shield their children from such wrongdoing. The entertainment industry seems to become ever more skillful at glamorizing all kinds of wrongdoing while making a mockery of Jehovah’s standards of right and wrong. (Isa. 5:20) True Christians work against that trend. They fight to protect their integrity in an atmosphere that promotes disrespect for Jehovah’s standards.

10. What kind of wrong activities are common where you live, and how are you and your family affected?

¹¹ *What will Jehovah do about wrong activities?* Consider what he did about the wrongdoing that was common in Sodom and Gomorrah. (Read 2 Peter 2:6-8.) The righteous man Lot was tormented by all the wrongdoing that surrounded him and his family. When Jehovah brought destruction on that entire region, he was doing more than just putting an end to the wrongdoing there. He was “setting a pattern for ungodly people of things to come.” Just as Jehovah put an end to all the immoral activities back then, so he will put an end to similar wrongdoing today when he brings judgment against this present system of things.

¹² *What will replace wrong activities?* The Paradise earth will be bustling with happy activity. Think of the thrilling work of turning this planet into a paradise or of building homes for ourselves and our loved ones. Consider the prospect of welcoming back millions from the dead and helping to educate them about Jehovah’s ways as well as the history of his dealings with mankind. (Isa. 65:21, 22; Acts 24:15) Our lives will be full of activity that will contribute to our joy and to Jehovah’s praise!

11. What do we learn from Jehovah’s judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah?

12. What are some activities that you look forward to taking part in when this old system of things is gone?

DISTRESSFUL CONDITIONS

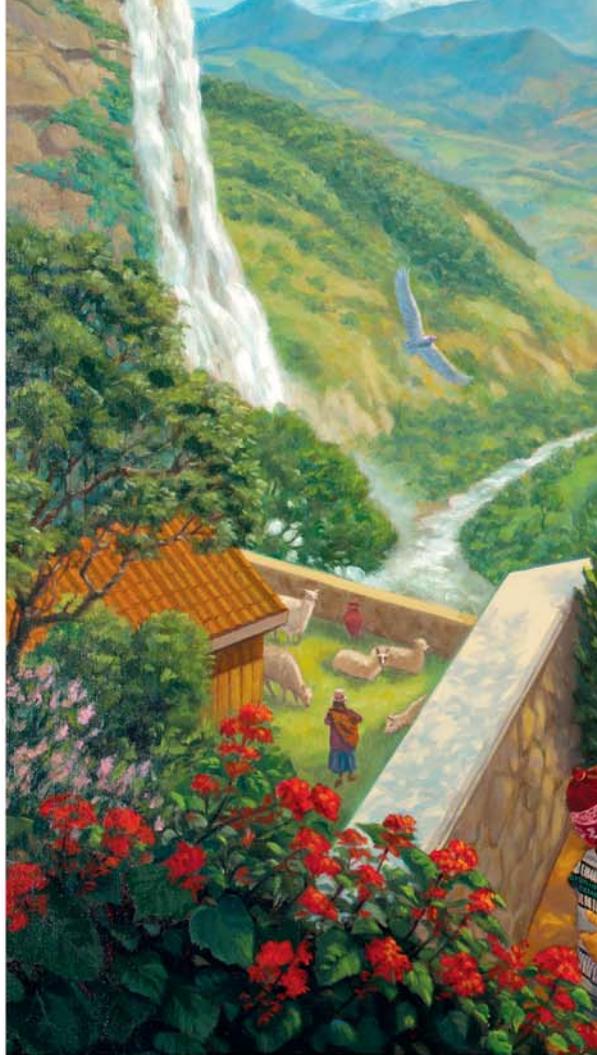
¹³ *How do distressful conditions affect us now?* Wicked people, corrupt organizations, and wrong activities all work together to produce distressing living conditions on this earth. Who of us can claim to be untouched by warfare, poverty, or racism? And what about sickness and death? Those conditions touch us all. They are the direct results of the rebellion against Jehovah on the part of three wicked individuals—Satan, Adam, and Eve. None of us can now escape the disorder that their rebellion unleashed.

¹⁴ *What will Jehovah do about distressful conditions?* Consider warfare. Jehovah promises to put an end to it for all time. (Read Psalm 46:8, 9.) What about sickness? He will wipe it out. (Isa. 33:24) And death? Jehovah will swallow it up forever! (Isa. 25:8) He will end poverty. (Ps. 72:12-16) He will do the same for all the other distressful conditions that make life miserable today. He will even drive away the bad “air” of this world system, for the bad spirit of Satan and his demons will be gone at last. —Eph. 2:2.

13. The rebellion of Satan, Adam, and Eve has resulted in what distressful world conditions today?

14. What will Jehovah do about distressful conditions? Give an example.

Imagine a world without
warfare, sickness, or death!
(See paragraph 15)



¹⁵ Can you imagine a world without warfare, sickness, or death? Just think—no armies, navies, or air forces! No weapons or war memorials. No hospitals, doctors, nurses, or health insurance; no morgues, funeral homes, undertakers, or cemeteries! And with crime gone, there will be no secu-

15. What are some things that will be gone forever after Armageddon?



rity industry, no alarm systems, no police forces, perhaps no locks or keys! Think of the anxiety that will no longer trouble our mind and heart.

¹⁶ What will life be like when distressing conditions are gone? It is not easy to imagine. We have

16, 17. (a) What relief will Armageddon survivors feel? Illustrate. (b) How can we be sure that we will remain after this old world is gone?



lived in this old world so long that we may have stopped noticing how much stress we feel over world conditions. Similarly, people who live near a busy train station may no longer notice the noise, and those who live near a garbage dump may no longer notice the smell. Ah, but take away all those negative factors—what relief!

¹⁷ What will replace the stresses we feel now? Psalm 37:11 answers: “They will find exquisite delight in the abundance of peace.” Do not those words touch your heart? That is what Jehovah wants for you. By all means, then, do everything in your power to stay close to Jehovah God and his organization during these stressful last days! Cherish your hope, ponder over it, make it real in your mind and heart—and share it generously with others! (1 Tim. 4:15, 16; 1 Pet. 3:15) That way, you can be sure that you will not pass away with this condemned old world. On the contrary, you will remain—alive and joyful—for all eternity!

144 *Keep Your Eyes on the Prize!*

(2 Corinthians 4:18)

1. When the eyes of blind ones see again
And the ears of deaf ones hear again,
When the songs of children fill the air
And joy and peace are ev'rywhere,
When our loved ones will return to life,
To an earth that's free from sin and strife,

(CHORUS)

*You will see how God these things supplies,
If you keep your eyes on the prize.*

2. When the wolves and lambs will feed as one,
When the bears and calves bask in the sun,
Then a mere young boy will lead them all,
And they will heed his childish call.
When our tears belong to yesterday,
When our fears and pain have passed away,

(Chorus)

