

- Song 76 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **"Offer Your Very Best to Jehovah":** (10 min.)
Ho 14:2—Jehovah highly values "the praise of our lips" (w07 4/1 20 ¶2)
Ho 14:4—Jehovah grants forgiveness, approval, and friendship to those offering their best to him (w11 2/15 16 ¶15)
Ho 14:9—Walking in Jehovah's ways is good for us (jd 87 ¶11)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Ho 10:12—What must we do to "reap loyal love" from Jehovah? (w05 11/15 28 ¶7)

Ho 11:1—How were these words fulfilled in Jesus? (w11 8/15 10 ¶10)

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) Ho 8:1-14

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) T-35
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) T-35—The tract was placed on the preceding visit. Continue the conversation, and overcome an objection raised by the householder.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) Iv 152 ¶13-15—Show how to reach the heart.

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 69
- **"Live to Praise Jehovah!":** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Use Your Talent for Jehovah* (video category INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) kr chap. 20 ¶7-16, box on p. 215
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 124 and Prayer

HOSEA 8-14 | Offer Your Very Best to Jehovah

14:2, 4, 9

Offering your very best to Jehovah pleases him and benefits you


- 1 You offer Jehovah sacrifices of praise
- 2 Jehovah grants you forgiveness, approval, and friendship
- 3 You appreciate the benefits of obeying Jehovah's commands, and your motivation to praise him increases



DID YOU KNOW?

Bulls were the largest and most valuable animals that the Israelites sacrificed. At times, bulls were offered in behalf of the priesthood or the entire nation of Israel. Jehovah considers the praise of our lips to be one of the finest sacrifices.



 In what ways can I offer my very best to Jehovah?

How Does It Make You Feel?

(Hebrews 13:15)

E_b A_b B_b E_b A_b B_b

How does it make you feel when you preach and teach with zeal,
 How does it make you feel when the words you speak ap - peal
 How does it make you feel, know - ing God's sup - port is real,

E_b A_b E_b/A_b F_m

When you know you've done your part to reach an hon - est
 To the ones whose heart is right for ev - er - last - ing
 And that he's en - trust - ed you to do the work we

B_b F_m7 B_b E_b A_b B_b

heart?
 life?
 do? Know - ing you've done your best;
 Some peo - ple turn a - way,
 Proud - ly we preach and teach,

E_b A_b B_b

then our God will do the rest. Hon - est
 oth - ers might be led a - stray. Still we're
 us - ing bold but gra - cious speech, Search - ing

How Does It Make You Feel?

Eb
Ab
Eb/Ab
Fm
Gm/Bb
Bb7

hearts he sure - ly knows— all those to him dis -
 glad to bear his name and wit - ness just the
 out de - serv - ing ones; this work will soon be

Chorus

Eb
Ab
Eb
Eb/G
Ab
Bb

posed.
 same.
 done.

It makes us glad, and we re -

Eb
Eb/G
Ab
Cm7
Bbsus4
Bb
Eb
Eb/G

joyce to give our heart and mind and voice. So may our

Ab
Cm7
Bbsus4
Eb
Ab
Eb

sac - ri - fice of praise con - tin - ue all our days.

- 8** "Put a horn to your mouth!^a
One comes like an eagle
against the house of
Jehovah.^b
For they have violated
my covenant^c and trans-
gressed against my law.^d
- 2** To me they cry out, 'My God,
we, Israel, know you!'^e
- 3** Israel has rejected what is
good.^f
Let an enemy pursue him.
- 4** They have appointed kings,
but not through me.
They have appointed
princes, but I did not
recognize them.
With their silver and their
gold they have made idols,^g
To their own destruction.^h
- 5** Your calf has been rejected,
O Sa-mar'i-a.ⁱ
My anger flares up against
them.^j
How long will they be
incapable of innocence?^{*}
- 6** For this is from Israel.
A craftsman made it, and it
is not God;
The calf of Sa-mar'i-a will be
reduced to splinters.
- 7** For it is wind that they are
sowing,
And they will reap a storm
wind.^k
No stalk produces ripe^{*}
grain;^l
Whatever sprouts produces
no flour.
If any is produced, foreign-
ers^m will swallow it down.^m
- 8** Israel will be swallowed
down.ⁿ
Now they will be among the
nations,^o
Like an unwanted vessel.
- 9** For they have gone up to
As-syr'i-a,^p like a lone wild
donkey.

8:5 *Or "purity?" 8:7 *Or "standing."
"Or "strangers."

CHAP. 8

- a Ho 5:8
b De 28:49, 50
c Ho 6:7
d 2Ki 17:15
e Isa 48:1
Mic 3:11
f Ps 50:17
g 1Ki 12:26, 28
Ho 13:2
h 1Ki 13:34
i Ho 10:5, 6
j De 32:21, 22
2Ki 17:18
k Pr 22:8
l Isa 17:11
m De 28:15, 33
n 2Ki 15:29
2Ki 18:11
Jer 50:17
o Le 26:33
p 2Ki 15:19
Eze 23:4, 5
Ho 5:13
Ho 12:1

Second Col.

- a Eze 23:9
b 2Ki 14:26
1Ch 5:26
c Isa 10:10, 11
d Ho 12:11
e 2Ki 17:15
Ne 9:26
f Isa 1:11
Am 5:22
g Ho 9:9
Am 8:7
h Ho 7:16
Ho 9:3
i De 32:18
j 1Ki 12:25, 31
k 2Ch 26:9, 10
l 2Ki 18:13
2Ch 36:17, 19
Jer 17:27
Jer 34:7

CHAP. 9

- m Ho 10:5
n Eze 23:4, 5
Ho 4:12
o Ho 2:12
Mic 1:7
p Ho 2:8, 9
Am 5:11
q Le 20:22
De 28:63, 64
Jos 23:15, 16
1Ki 9:6, 7

- E'phra-im has hired lovers.^a
- 10** Although they hire them
from among the nations,
I will now round them up;
They will begin to suffer^b
because of the burden im-
posed by king and princes.
- 11** For E'phra-im has multiplied
altars to sin.^c
They became his altars for
sinning.^d
- 12** I wrote for him the many
things of my law,^{*}
But they were regarded as
something strange.^e
- 13** They offer sacrificial gifts to
me, and they eat the meat,
But Jehovah takes no
pleasure in them.^f
Now he will remember their
error and punish them for
their sins.^g
They have turned back^{*} to
Egypt.^h
- 14** Israel has forgotten his Mak-
erⁱ and has built temples,^j
And Judah has multiplied
fortified cities.^k
But I will send fire into his
cities,
And it will consume the
towers of each one."^l
- 9** "Do not rejoice, O Israel,^m
Do not act joyfully like the
peoples.
For by prostitution^{*} you have
strayed from your God.ⁿ
You have loved the wages
of a prostitute on every
threshing floor of grain.^o
- 2** But the threshing floor and
winepress will not feed
them,
And new wine will fail her.^p
- 3** They will not continue dwell-
ing in the land of Jehovah;^q
Instead, E'phra-im will return
to Egypt,

8:12 *Or "instruction." 8:13 *Or pos-
sibly, "They will return." 9:1 *Or "im-
morality; promiscuity."

And in As-syr'i-a they will eat what is unclean.^a

- 4 They will no longer pour out wine offerings to Jehovah;^b Their sacrifices will not please him.^c

They are like the bread of mourning;
All those eating it will defile themselves.

For their bread is for themselves alone;*

It will not come into the house of Jehovah.

- 5 What will you do in the day of meeting,*
In the day of Jehovah's festival?

- 6 For look! they will have to flee because of destruction.^d

Egypt will gather them together,^e and Mem'phis will bury them.^f

Nettles will take possession of their precious things of silver,

And thornbushes will be in their tents.

- 7 The days of reckoning will come,^g

The days of retribution will come,

And Israel will know it.

Their prophet will be a fool, and the man of inspiration will go mad;

Because your error is abundant, the animosity against you is abundant."

- 8 The watchman^h of E'phra-im was with my God.ⁱ

But now all the ways of his prophets^j are as the traps of a birdcatcher;

There is animosity in the house of his God.

- 9 They have sunk deep into ruin, as in the days of Gib'e-ah.^k

CHAP. 9

a 2Ki 17:6

b Nu 15:5
Nu 28:14
Joe 1:13

c Isa 1:11

d Ho 7:13

e Ho 7:16
Ho 8:13

f Jer 2:14, 16

g Isa 10:3

h Isa 21:6, 8
Jer 6:17
Eze 33:7

i 1Ki 17:1
2Ki 2:14

j 1Ki 18:19

k Jg 19:22
Jg 20:4-6
Ho 10:9

Second Col.

a Ho 8:13

b Jer 2:2

c Nu 25:1-3
De 4:3
Ps 106:28

d 1Ki 16:31
Jer 11:13

e De 28:15, 18

f De 28:32
De 32:25

g De 31:17
2Ki 17:18

h Eze 28:12

i Ho 4:15
Ho 12:11
Am 5:5

j Le 26:27, 33
2Ki 17:18
Am 5:27

k De 29:19, 20

l Isa 7:8

m 2Ki 17:14, 15
Zec 1:4

He will remember their error and punish their sins.^a

- 10 "Like grapes in the wilderness I found Israel.^b Like the first of the early figs on a fig tree I saw your forefathers.

But they went to Ba'al of Pe'or;^c

They dedicated themselves to the shameful thing,^{*d} And they became disgusting like the object of their love.

- 11 E'phra-im's glory flies away like a bird;

There is no giving birth, no pregnancy, and no conception.^e

- 12 Even if they raise children, I will bereave them until no man is left;^f

Yes, woe to them when I turn away from them!^g

- 13 E'phra-im, planted in a pasture, was to me like Tyre;^h Now E'phra-im must bring his sons out to the slaughter."

- 14 Give them, O Jehovah, what you should give them; A womb that miscarries and dry* breasts.

- 15 "All their wickedness was in Gil'gal,ⁱ for there I came to hate them.

I will drive them away from my house because of their evil deeds.^j

I will no longer love them;^k All their princes are stubborn.

- 16 E'phra-im will be struck down.^l

Their root will dry up, and they will produce no fruit. Even if they give birth, I will put to death their cherished offspring."

- 17 My God will reject them, For they have not listened to him,^m

9:4 *Or "for their own soul." 9:5 *Or "your appointed feast."

9:10 *Or "the shameful god." 9:14 *Or "shriveled."

And they will become fugitives among the nations.^a

- 10** "Israel is a degenerate* vine yielding its fruit.^b The more his fruit increases, the more he multiplies his altars;^c The better his land produces, the more splendid his sacred pillars.^d
- 2** Their heart is hypocritical;* Now they will be found guilty. There is one who will break their altars and destroy their pillars.
- 3** Now they will say, 'We have no king,^e for we have not feared Jehovah. And what could a king do for us?'
- 4** They speak empty words, make false oaths,^f and make covenants; So the judgment that springs up is like poisonous weeds in the furrows of the field.^g
- 5** The residents of Sa-mar'i-a will fear for the calf idol of Beth-a'ven.^h Its people will mourn over it, As will its foreign-god priests who rejoiced over it and its glory, For it will go away from them into exile.
- 6** It will be brought to As-syr'i-a as a gift to a great king.ⁱ E'phra-im will be put to shame, And Israel will be ashamed because of the advice it followed.^j
- 7** Sa-mar'i-a and her king will certainly be done away with,^k Like a snapped-off twig on the surface of waters.

10:1 *Or possibly, "a spreading." 10:2 *Or "slippery; smooth." 10:7 *Lit., "be silenced."

CHAP. 9

a De 28:64
Am 9:9

CHAP. 10

b Isa 5:3, 4

c Ho 8:11
Ho 12:11

d Ho 8:4

e Ho 3:4
Ho 13:11

f 2Ki 17:4

g Am 5:7
Am 6:12

h 1Ki 12:28, 29
Ho 4:15
Ho 8:5
Am 3:14

i 2Ki 17:3
Ho 5:13

j Mic 6:16

k 2Ki 17:4

Second Col.

a Ho 4:15

b 1Ki 12:28-30
Mic 1:5

c Am 7:9

d 2Ki 23:15

e Lu 23:30
Re 6:16

f Jg 20:4-6
Ho 9:9

g 2Ki 17:6

h Jer 4:3, 4

i Isa 55:6
Am 5:4

j De 32:2
Isa 45:8

k Pr 22:8
Ho 8:7
Ga 6:7

- 8** The high places of Beth-a'ven,^a the sin of Israel,^b will be annihilated.^c Thorns and thistles will grow on their altars.^d People will say to the mountains, 'Cover us!' And to the hills, 'Fall over us!'^e
- 9** From the days of Gib'e-ah you have sinned,^f O Israel. There they have persisted. War did not overtake* the sons of unrighteousness in Gib'e-ah.
- 10** I will also discipline them when I please. And peoples will be gathered against them, When their two errors are harnessed on them.*
- 11** E'phra-im was a trained heifer that loved to thresh, So I spared her fair neck. Now I will make someone ride* E'phra-im.^g Judah will plow; Jacob will harrow for him.
- 12** Sow seed for yourselves in righteousness and reap loyal love. Plow for yourselves arable land^h While there is time to search for Jehovah,ⁱ Until he comes and instructs you in righteousness.^j
- 13** But you have plowed wickedness, You have reaped unrighteousness,^k And you have eaten the fruitage of deception; For you have trusted in your own way, In the multitude of your warriors.

10:9 *Or "utterly destroy." 10:10 *That is, when they bear their punishment like a yoke. 10:11 *Or "put a harness on."

14 An uproar will rise against your people,
And your fortified cities will all be devastated,^a
Like the devastation by Shal'man of the house of Ar'bel,
In the day of battle when mothers were dashed to pieces alongside their children.

15 This is what will be done to you, O Beth'el,^b because of your utter wickedness.
At dawn the king of Israel will surely be done away with."^c

11 "When Israel was a boy,
I loved him,^d
And out of Egypt I called my son.^e

2 The more they* called them,
The more they went away from them.^f

They kept sacrificing to the Ba'al images^g
And offering sacrifices to the graven images.^h

3 But it was I who taught E'phra-im to walk,ⁱ taking them in my arms;^j
And they did not acknowledge that I had healed them.

4 With the ropes of men* I kept drawing them, with the cords of love;^k
And I was to them like one lifting a yoke from their jaws,
And I gently brought food to each one.

5 They will not return to the land of Egypt, but As-syr'i-a will be their king,^l
Because they refused to return to me.^m

10:15 *Lit., "be silenced." **11:2** *That is, prophets and others sent to instruct Israel. **11:4** *Or "the ropes of kindness," like those of a parent.

CHAP. 10
a 2Ki 18:9, 10
b Am 7:9
c 2Ki 18:9, 10

CHAP. 11
d De 7:8
e Ex 4:22
Mt 2:14, 15
f Isa 30:9-11

g Jg 2:13
Jg 3:7
1Ki 16:30-32
1Ki 18:19
2Ki 17:13, 16
Ho 2:13

h 1Ki 12:32, 33
Ho 13:1, 2

i De 8:2

j De 1:31
De 33:27
Isa 46:3

k Isa 63:9

l 2Ki 17:3

m 2Ki 17:13, 14
Am 4:6

Second Col.

a Le 26:31

b Isa 31:1

c Ps 78:57, 58
Jer 3:6

d Ho 6:4

e Ge 10:19
De 29:22, 23

f De 32:36
Jer 31:20

g Jer 30:11

h Joe 3:16

i Zec 8:7

j Isa 11:11, 12
Isa 60:8, 9
Zec 10:10

k Jer 23:6
Eze 28:25, 26
Eze 37:21
Am 9:14

l Mic 6:12

m 2Ki 18:1, 6
2Ch 29:1, 2
Ho 4:15

6 And a sword will whirl against his cities^a
And destroy his bars and devour them because of their schemes.^b

7 My people are bent on unfaithfulness to me.^c
Though they called them upward,^{*} no one rises up.

8 How can I give you up,
O E'phra-im?^d
How can I hand you over,
O Israel?

How can I treat you like Ad'mah?

How can I make you like Ze-boi'im?^e

I have had a change of heart;
At the same time my compassions are stirred.^{*f}

9 I will not vent my burning anger.

I will not destroy E'phra-im again,^g

For I am God and not man,
The Holy One in your midst;
And I will not come against you in fury.

10 They will walk after Jehovah, and he will roar like a lion;^h

When he roars, his sons will come trembling from the west.ⁱ

11 They will tremble like a bird when they come out of Egypt,

Like a dove out of the land of As-syr'i-a;^j

And I will settle them in their houses," declares Jehovah.^k

12 "E'phra-im has surrounded me with lies,
And the house of Israel with deceit.^l

But Judah still roams* with God,

And he is faithful to the Most Holy One."^m

11:7 *That is, to an elevated form of worship. **11:8** *Lit., "have grown hot."
11:12 *Or "walks."

- 12** "E'phra-im is feeding on wind.
He chases after the east wind all day long.
He multiplies lies and violence.
They make a covenant with As-syr'i-a^a and take oil to Egypt.^b
- 2** Jehovah has a legal case against Judah;^c
He will call for an accounting against Jacob according to his ways,
And he will repay him according to his deeds.^d
- 3** In the womb he seized his brother by the heel,^e
And with his vigor he contended with God.^f
- 4** He kept contending with an angel and prevailed.
He wept and begged for his favor.^g
He found him at Beth'el, and there He spoke with us,^h
- 5** Jehovah the God of armies,ⁱ
Jehovah is his memorial name.^{*j}
- 6** "So return to your God,^k
Maintain loyal love and justice,^l
And always hope in your God.
- 7** But in the hand of the tradesman* are deceptive scales;
He loves to defraud.^m
- 8** E'phra-im keeps saying,
'Indeed, I have become rich;ⁿ
I have found wealth.^o
And in all my toil, they will not find anything wrong or sinful.'
- 9** But I am Jehovah your God from* the land of Egypt.^p
I will again make you dwell in tents

12:5 *Or "is the name by which he is remembered." 12:7 *Or "merchant." 12:9 *Or "since."

CHAP. 12

- a 2Ki 15:19
Ho 8:9
b 2Ki 17:4
c 2Ki 17:19
Jer 2:35
Ho 4:1
Mic 6:2
d Isa 3:11
e Ge 25:26
f Ge 32:28
g Ge 32:24-26
h Ge 28:13, 19
i Ge 28:16
Ge 32:30
j Ex 3:15
k Isa 31:6
Ho 14:1
Joe 2:12, 13
l De 16:20
Mic 6:8
m Am 8:5, 6
Mic 2:1, 2
n Re 3:17
o De 8:17-19
p Ex 20:2
Ho 13:4

Second Col.

- a 1Ki 17:1
2Ki 17:13
Am 7:14, 15
b Ho 6:8
c Ho 9:15
Am 4:4
d 2Ki 17:9, 10
Ho 8:11
Ho 10:1
e Ge 28:5
De 26:5
f Ge 32:28
g Ge 29:18
h Ge 31:38
i Ex 12:50, 51
Ps 77:20
j Jos 24:17
1Sa 12:8
k 2Ki 17:9-11
Eze 23:4, 5
l De 28:37

CHAP. 13

- m Jos 17:17
n 2Ki 17:16
Ho 11:2
o Ho 2:8
p 1Ki 12:26, 28
1Ki 19:18

As in the days of an appointed time.*

- 10** I spoke to the prophets,^a
I multiplied their visions,
And I spoke parables through the prophets.
- 11** With Gil'e-ad there has been deception*^b and untruth.
In Gil'gal they have sacrificed bulls,^c
And their altars are like piles of stones in the furrows of the field.^d
- 12** Jacob ran away to the territory* of A'ram;^e
Israel^f served there for a wife,^g
And for a wife he guarded sheep.^h
- 13** By a prophet Jehovah brought Israel up from Egypt,ⁱ
And by a prophet he was guarded.^j
- 14** E'phra-im has caused bitter offense;^k
His bloodguilt remains on him;
His Lord will repay him for his reproach.^l
- 13** "When E'phra-im spoke, there was trembling;
He was prominent in Israel.^m
But he became guilty with regard to Ba'alⁿ and died.
- 2** Now they add to their sin
And make metal statues* from their silver;^o
They skillfully make idols, all the work of craftsmen.
To them they say, 'Let the men who sacrifice kiss the calves.'^p
- 3** So they will become like the morning clouds,
Like the dew that vanishes early,
- 12:9 *Or possibly, "a festival." 12:11 *Or "what is uncanny; what is mystical." 12:12 *Lit., "field." #Or "Syria." 13:2 *Or "molten statues."

Like chaff blown from the threshing floor by a storm,
And like smoke out of the hole in the roof.

- 4 But I am Jehovah your God from* the land of Egypt;^a
You knew no God except me,
And besides me there is no savior.^b
- 5 I knew you in the wilderness,^c in the land of drought.
- 6 They were satisfied with their pastures,^d
They were satisfied and their heart became proud.
And so they forgot me.^e
- 7 I will become like a young lion to them,^f
Like a leopard lurking along the path.
- 8 I will come upon them like a bear that has lost its cubs,
And I will rip open their chest.*
I will devour them there like a lion;
A wild beast of the field will tear them to pieces.
- 9 It will destroy you, O Israel,
Because you turned against me, against your helper.
- 10 Where, then, is your king,
that he may save you in all your cities,^g
And your rulers,* of whom you said,
'Give me a king and princes'?'^h
- 11 I gave you a king in my anger,ⁱ
And I will take him away in my fury.^j
- 12 The error of E'phra-im is wrapped up;*
His sin is stored up.
- 13 The pangs of childbirth will come for him.
But he is an unwise child;

13:4 *Or "since." 13:8 *Lit., "the enclosure of their heart." 13:10 *Lit., "judges." 13:12 *Or "is preserved."

CHAP. 13

- a Ex 20:2
Ho 12:9
- b Isa 43:11
Isa 45:21, 22
- c De 2:7
De 32:9, 10
- d Ne 9:25
- e De 6:10-12
De 8:12-14
De 32:15, 18
Isa 17:10
- f Ho 5:14
- g 1Sa 8:19, 20
- h 1Sa 8:4, 5
- i 1Sa 8:7
1Sa 12:13
- j 1Sa 12:25
2Ki 17:4
Jer 52:11

Second Col.

- a Isa 25:8
Isa 26:19
- b 1Co 15:55
- c Re 20:13, 14
- d 2Ki 17:20
- e 2Ki 17:18
Am 3:9, 10
- f Eze 20:21
- g Isa 7:8

CHAP. 14

- h 2Ch 30:6
Isa 55:6, 7
Ho 12:6
Joe 2:12, 13
- i Mic 7:18
- j Heb 13:15
- k Ho 5:13
- l Isa 31:1

He does not present himself when it is time to be born.

- 14 From the power of the Grave* I will redeem them;
From death I will recover them.^a
Where are your stings,
O Death?^b
Where is your destructiveness,
O Grave?^c
Compassion will be concealed from my eyes.
- 15 Even if he should flourish among the reeds,
An east wind will come,
the wind of Jehovah,
From the desert it comes,
to dry up his well and drain his spring.
That one will pillage the treasury of all his precious things.^d
- 16 Sa-mar'i-a will be held guilty,^e
for she has rebelled against her God.^f

By the sword they will fall,^g
Their children will be dashed to pieces,
And their pregnant women will be ripped open.*

- 14** "Come back, O Israel, to Jehovah your God,^h
For you have stumbled because of your error.

2 Come back to Jehovah with these words,
Say to him, 'May you pardon our errorⁱ and accept what is good,
And we will offer the praise of our lips/ as we would young bulls.*

3 As-syr'i-a will not save us.^k
We will not ride on horses,^l
And we will no longer say, "O our God!" to the work of our hands,

13:14 *Or "Sheol," that is, the common grave of mankind. See Glossary. 14:2 *Lit., "offer in return the young bulls of our lips."

- For it is by you that the fatherless child is shown mercy.^a
- 4 I will heal their unfaithfulness.^b
I will love them of my own free will,^c
Because my anger has turned away from him.^d
- 5 I will become like the dew to Israel;
He will blossom like the lily
And will send down his roots like the trees of Leb'a-non.
- 6 His twigs will spread,
His splendor will be like that of the olive tree,
And his fragrance like that of Leb'a-non.
- 7 They will again dwell in his shadow.
They will grow grain and will bud like the vine.^e
- CHAP. 14
a De 10:17, 18
b Ps 103:3
Isa 57:18
c Zep 3:17
d Isa 12:1
e Zec 8:12
- Second Col.
a Ho 14:3
b Jer 31:18
c De 32:4

- His fame* will be like the wine of Leb'a-non.
- 8 E'phra-im will say, 'What more do I have to do with idols?'^a
I will answer and watch over him.^b
I will be like a thriving juniper tree.
From me your fruit will be found."
- 9 Who is wise? Let him understand these things.
Who is discreet? Let him know them.
For the ways of Jehovah are upright,^c
And the righteous will walk in them;
But the transgressors will stumble in them.

14:7 *Lit., "memorial."

JOEL

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

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| <p>1 A severe insect plague (1-14)
"The day of Jehovah is near" (15-20)
The prophet calls to Jehovah (19, 20)</p> <p>2 Jehovah's day and his great army (1-11)
A call to return to Jehovah (12-17)
"Rip apart your hearts" (13)
Jehovah's response to his people (18-32)
"I will pour out my spirit" (28)</p> | <p>Wonders in heaven and on earth (30)
Those calling on Jehovah's name will be saved (32)</p> <p>3 Jehovah judges all the nations (1-17)
Valley of Jehoshaphat (2, 12)
Valley of decision (14)
Jehovah, a fortress for Israel (16)
Jehovah blesses his people (18-21)</p> |
|---|---|

1 The word of Jehovah that came to Joel* the son of Pe-thu'el:

- 2 "Hear this, you elders,
And pay attention, all you inhabitants of the land.*

1:1 *Meaning "Jehovah Is God." 1:2 *Or "earth."

Second Col.

CHAP. 1

a Joe 2:2

Has anything like this happened in your days
Or in the days of your forefathers?^a

- 3 Tell about it to your sons,
And let your sons tell about it to their sons,
And their sons to the next generation.

- Song 76 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **"Offer Your Very Best to Jehovah":** (10 min.)
Ho 14:2—Jehovah highly values "the praise of our lips" (w07 4/1 20 ¶2)
Ho 14:4—Jehovah grants forgiveness, approval, and friendship to those offering their best to him (w11 2/15 16 ¶15)
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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) Ho 8:1-14

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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 69
- **"Live to Praise Jehovah!":** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Use Your Talent for Jehovah* (video category INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES).
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HOSEA 8-14 | Offer Your Very Best to Jehovah

14:2, 4, 9

Offering your very best to Jehovah pleases him and benefits you


- 1 You offer Jehovah sacrifices of praise
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- 3 You appreciate the benefits of obeying Jehovah's commands, and your motivation to praise him increases



DID YOU KNOW?

Bulls were the largest and most valuable animals that the Israelites sacrificed. At times, bulls were offered in behalf of the priesthood or the entire nation of Israel. Jehovah considers the praise of our lips to be one of the finest sacrifices.



 In what ways can I offer my very best to Jehovah?

October 23-29

Treasures From God's Word

Hosea 14:2—Jehovah highly values “the praise of our lips”

Reference: w07 4/1 20 **paragraph 2**.

Furthermore, the Bible indicates that our expressions of praise can be viewed as sacrifices offered to Jehovah. The prophet Hosea used the phrase “the young bulls of our lips,” showing that God considers the praise of our lips to be one of the finest sacrifices. (Hosea 14:2) The apostle Paul urged the Hebrew Christians: “Offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name.” (Hebrews 13:15) Today, Jehovah’s Witnesses stay very busy preaching the good news and making disciples of people of all nations. (**Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20**) They are offering sacrifices of praise to God day and night around the earth.—Revelation 7:15.

Hosea 14:4—Jehovah grants forgiveness, approval, and friendship to those offering their best to him

Reference: w11 2/15 16 **paragraph 15**.

A bull was the costliest animal that an Israelite could offer to Jehovah. Hence, “the young bulls of our lips” referred to sincere, well-thought-out words spoken in praise of the true God. How did Jehovah respond to those making such sacrifices? He said: “I shall love them of my own free will.” (**Hosea 14:4**) To those offering such sacrifices of praise, Jehovah granted his forgiveness, approval, and friendship.

Hosea 14:9—Walking in Jehovah’s ways is good for us

Reference: jd 87 **paragraph 11**.

Hosea 14:9 also turns our attention to the positive aspects of observing an upright course. Blessings and benefits come from measuring up to God’s requirements. As the Creator, he knows our makeup. What he expects of us is for our good. To illustrate the relationship between us and God, we might think of an automobile and its manufacturer. The maker knows how the auto is designed and put together. He knows that the car requires an oil change every so often. What would happen if you ignored that standard, perhaps reasoning that the car is running well? Much sooner than might otherwise be so, the engine would deteriorate and fail. The same is true of humans. Our Creator has given us commandments. Keeping them is for our benefit. (**Isaiah 48:17, 18**) Appreciating that we do benefit gives us additional reason to live up to his standards, to keep his commandments.—Psalm 112:1.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Hosea 10:12—What must we do to “reap loyal love” from Jehovah?

Reference: w05 11/15 28 **paragraph 7**.

If we worship Jehovah in an unhypocritical and upright way, we will be recipients of his loving-kindness, or loyal love. The wayward Israelites were told: “Sow seed for yourselves in righteousness; reap in accord with loving-kindness. Till for yourselves arable land, when there is time for searching for Jehovah until he comes and gives instruction in righteousness to you.”—Hosea 10:12.

Hosea 11:1—How were these words fulfilled in Jesus?

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

Like the Israelites, the Messiah would be called out of Egypt. (**Hosea 11:1**) Before Herod’s death-dealing decree, an angel directed that Joseph, Mary, and Jesus go to Egypt. There they remained “until the decease of Herod, for that to be fulfilled which was spoken by Jehovah through his prophet [Hosea], saying: ‘Out of Egypt I called my son.’” (**Matthew 2:13-15**) Of course, Jesus himself could not have orchestrated any of the foretold events associated with his birth and early life.

- Song 76 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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DID YOU KNOW?

Bulls were the largest and most valuable animals that the Israelites sacrificed. At times, bulls were offered in behalf of the priesthood or the entire nation of Israel. Jehovah considers the praise of our lips to be one of the finest sacrifices.



 In what ways can I offer my very best to Jehovah?

Can the dead really live again?



Would you say . . .

- yes?
- no?
- maybe?

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS

“There is going to be a resurrection.”

—Acts 24:15, *New World Translation*.



WHAT THAT CAN MEAN FOR YOU

- Comfort when loved ones die.
—2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.
- Freedom from a morbid fear of death.—Hebrews 2:15.
- A real hope of being reunited with your dead loved ones.—John 5:28, 29.

CAN WE REALLY BELIEVE WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS?

Yes, for at least three reasons:

- **God is the Creator of life.**
The Bible calls Jehovah God “the source of life.” (Psalm 36:9; Acts 17:24, 25) The One who gave life to all living creatures is certainly capable of restoring life to someone who has died.
- **God has resurrected humans in the past.** The Bible reports eight instances of humans—young, old, male, and female—who were brought back to life on earth. Some had been dead for a short while, but one had been in a tomb for four days!—John 11:39-44.
- **God is eager to do it again.** Jehovah hates death; he views it as an enemy. (1 Corinthians 15:26) He has “a yearning” to conquer that enemy, to undo death by means of the resurrection. He longs to bring back those who are in his memory and to see them live on earth again.
—Job 14:14, 15.

If you do not have a Bible, you can read it online at www.jw.org/en
(Go to PUBLICATIONS > BIBLE)

TO THINK ABOUT

Why do we grow old and die?

The Bible answers that question at
GENESIS 3:17-19 and ROMANS 5:12.



TO LEARN MORE WITHOUT COST

Read lesson 6 of this brochure.

Please send me this brochure.

.....
(Indicate which language.)

Discuss the Bible
with Jehovah's Witnesses.

Please send someone to visit me.

You can also request a visit or
download the brochure at www.jw.org.



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Address

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Province/State Postal/ZIP Code

SEND YOUR REQUEST TO JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES:

For a complete list of worldwide addresses, see www.jw.org/en/contact.

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EASTER—FERTILITY WORSHIP IN DISGUISE

¹³ Promoted as a celebration of Christ's resurrection, Easter is actually rooted in false religion. The name Easter itself has been linked to Eostre, or Ostara, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of the dawn and of spring. And how did eggs and rabbits come to be associated with Easter? Eggs "have been prominent as symbols of new life and resurrection," says the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, while the hare and the rabbit have long served as symbols of fertility. Easter, therefore, is really a fertility rite thinly disguised as a celebration of Christ's resurrection.*

¹⁴ Would Jehovah condone the use of a filthy fertility rite to commemorate his Son's resurrection? Never! (2 Corinthians 6:17, 18) In fact, the Scriptures neither command nor authorize the commemorating of Jesus' resurrection in the first place. To do so in the name of Easter, therefore, is to be doubly disloyal.

HALLOWEEN IS FAR FROM HOLY

¹⁵ Known for its witches, goblins, and other grotesque decorations and paraphernalia, Halloween—also called All Hallows' Eve or the eve of All Saints' Day—can be traced back to the ancient Celts of Britain and Ireland. On the full moon nearest November 1, they celebrated the festival of Samhain, meaning "Summer's End." They

* Easter has also been linked to the worship of the Phoenician fertility goddess, Astarte, who had as her symbols the egg and the hare. Statues of Astarte have variously depicted her as having exaggerated sex organs or with a rabbit beside her and an egg in her hand.

13, 14. What are the roots of popular Easter customs?

15. What is the origin of Halloween, and what may be significant about the date chosen to celebrate this holiday?

believed that during Samhain, the veil between the human and the supernatural worlds was parted and that spirits, both good and evil, roamed the earth. The souls of the dead were thought to return to their homes, and families would put out food and drink for their ghostly visitors in hopes of appeasing them. Thus, when children today, dressed as ghosts or witches, go from house to house threatening a mischievous trick unless they receive a treat, they unwittingly perpetuate the rituals of Samhain.

KEEP YOUR WEDDING UNDEFILED

¹⁶ Soon, “no voice of a bridegroom and of a bride will ever be heard in [Babylon the Great] again.” (Revelation 18:23) Why? In part because of her spiritistic practices, which can defile a marriage right from the wedding day.—Mark 10:6-9.

¹⁷ Customs vary from country to country. Some customs that may appear innocent may have their roots in Babylonish practices that are supposed to bring ‘good luck’ to the bridal couple or their guests. (Isaiah 65:11) One such tradition involves the throwing of rice or its substitutes. This practice may have had its roots in the notion that food appeased evil spirits and kept them from doing injury to the bride and groom. Additionally, rice has a long mystical association with fertility, happiness, and longevity. Clearly, all who want to remain in God’s love will shun such tainted customs.—2 Corinthians 6:14-18.

16, 17. (a) Why should Christian couples planning to get married examine local wedding customs in the light of Bible principles? (b) In regard to such customs as throwing rice or its substitutes, what should Christians take into consideration?

Go Forward in Preaching the Kingdom!

(2 Timothy 4:5)

D D/C# Em/B G/A A7 D A7/E D/F# A7/G D6/F# D Bm7 E9

Go for - ward in preach - ing the King - dom To peo - ple in ev - 'ry
To - geth - er we press ev - er for - ward, A - noint - ed and oth - er

A E7/B A/C# B Em G/D Am6/C B7sus4 B7 Em B7/F# Em/G E7/G#

land. With love in your hearts for your neigh - bor, Help
sheep. The old and the young men and wom - en In

A G/A A Em7/B A7/C# D D/C# D/B A7 D Am6/C

meekest ones to take their stand. Our ser - vice to God is a
step with the truth do keep. The good news of God's com - ing

B7 F#m7/C# B7/D# Esus4 Em/D Em/C# G/B A Em/G F#m7 A7/E

priv - 'lege; His word we are glad to pro - claim. Go
King - dom Is some - thing that all need to hear. We

Go Forward in Preaching the Kingdom!

D D/C# Em/B G/A A7 D D/F# Am/C B7

out preach in the field and keep preach - ing; Give
 preach in the strength of Je - ho - vah; With

Em6 Em7 A7 G/A A7 D G/A D Chorus D A/C# D D/F#

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

A/G G G/B A7/C# D A/C# D D/F# A7sus4 A7

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

D Em11 A7/E D/F# G G/B D/A G/A A7 D

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

R.H.

- Song 76 and Prayer
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Live to Praise Jehovah!

Life is a precious gift. How we use this gift each day reveals how much we appreciate it. As Jehovah's Witnesses, we strive to use our talents and abilities to honor and glorify Jehovah, the Life-Giver. (Ps 36:9; Re 4:11) Yet, the anxieties related to everyday life in this wicked world could easily push spiritual pursuits to the background. (Mr 4:18, 19) Each of us does well to ask himself: 'Am I really giving my best to Jehovah?' (Ho 14:2) Where is my job or career leading me? What are my spiritual goals? How can I further expand my ministry?' If you see room for improvement, pray to Jehovah for help and make the necessary adjustments. Without a doubt, praising Jehovah each day leads to a life of satisfaction and happiness!—Ps 61:8.

WATCH THE VIDEO *USE YOUR TALENT FOR JEHOVAH*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- Why is it unwise to offer your talents to Satan's world? (1Jo 2:17)

- What blessings come to those who give their very best to Jehovah?

- In what avenues of sacred service might you volunteer your talents and skills?



To whom are you offering your talents?



FAMILY WORSHIP SUGGESTIONS:

- Interview a publisher who has been serving Jehovah for many years, perhaps in the full-time service. What sacrifices has he made to give his best to Jehovah? How has Jehovah blessed him?
- Go to JW Broadcasting, and look under INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES > BLESSINGS OF SACRED SERVICE. You will see and hear the expressions of joy of many who have spent a lifetime in various avenues of sacred service

5. Why is it significant that Paul called relief work a ministry?

6. (a) As Paul explained, why is relief work part of our worship? (b) Describe how our relief work is carried out globally today. (See the box “When Disaster Strikes!” page 214.)

7, 8. What is the first objective of our relief ministry? Explain.

that is, our preaching and teaching work. (2 Cor. 5:18-20; 1 Tim. 2:3-6) The other part involves a ministry that we perform in behalf of fellow believers. Specifically, Paul referred to a “relief ministry.” (2 Cor. 8:4) As to the expressions “*ministry of the reconciliation*” and “relief *ministry*,” in both instances the word “ministry” is a translation of a form of the Greek word *di-a-ko-ni'a*. Why is that significant?

⁵ By using the same Greek word for both activities, Paul grouped relief work with other forms of ministry that were carried out in the Christian congregation. He had stated earlier: “There are different ministries, and yet there is the *same* Lord; and there are different activities, . . . But [they] are performed by the very *same* spirit.” (1 Cor. 12:4-6, 11) In fact, Paul linked the various congregational ministries with “sacred service.”^[2] (Rom. 12:1, 6-8) No wonder he felt that it was appropriate to give part of his time “to minister to the holy ones!”—Rom. 15:25, 26.

⁶ Paul helped the Corinthians to see why relief work was part of their ministry and worship to Jehovah. Note his reasoning: Christians who provide relief do so because they are “submissive to the good news about the Christ.” (2 Cor. 9:13) Hence, moved by their desire to put Christ’s teachings into practice, Christians help fellow believers. The kind acts that they perform in behalf of their brothers, stated Paul, are nothing less than expressions of “the surpassing undeserved kindness of God.” (2 Cor. 9:14; 1 Pet. 4:10) Thus, in commenting on serving our brothers in need, which includes relief work, *The Watchtower* of December 1, 1975, rightly stated: “We should never doubt that Jehovah God and his Son Jesus Christ give real importance to this kind of service.” Yes, relief work is a valuable form of sacred service.—Rom. 12:1, 7; 2 Cor. 8:7; Heb. 13:16.

Relief Work With Clear Objectives

⁷ What are the objectives of our relief ministry? Paul addressed that question in his second letter to the Corinthians. (**Read 2 Corinthians 9:11-15.**) In these verses, Paul highlights three main objectives, or goals, that we attain by sharing in “the ministry of this public service,” that is, relief work. Let us consider them one at a time.

⁸ **First, our relief ministry brings glory to Jehovah.** Note how often in the five verses cited above Paul directs his brothers’ attention to Jehovah God. The apostle reminds them of “an expression of thanks to God” and of “many expressions of thanks to God.” (Verses 11, 12) He

FOOTNOTE

[2] Paul used the plural form of *di-a-ko-nos* (minister) to describe “ministerial servants.”—1 Tim. 3:12.

9. What change in thinking may relief work cause? Give an example.

10, 11. (a) What examples show that we are reaching the second objective of our relief work? (b) What publication helps relief workers? (See the box “An Added Tool for Relief Workers.”)

mentions how relief efforts cause Christians to “glorify God” and to praise “the surpassing undeserved kindness of God.” (Verses 13, 14) And Paul concludes his consideration about the relief ministry by declaring: “Thanks be to God.”—Verse 15; 1 Pet. 4:11.

9 Like Paul, God’s servants today view relief efforts as opportunities to bring glory to Jehovah and to adorn his teachings. (1 Cor. 10:31; Titus 2:10) In fact, relief work often plays a considerable part in removing negative notions that some people have about Jehovah and his Witnesses. To illustrate: A woman living in an area struck by a hurricane had a sign on her door that read: “Jehovah’s Witnesses—Do Not Call.” Then one day she saw relief workers restoring a damaged house across the street from her home. For days, she observed the friendly workers, and then she went over to find out who they were. On learning that the volunteers were Jehovah’s Witnesses, she was impressed and said, “I have misjudged you people.” The result? She took down the sign on her door.

10 **Second, we “provide well for the needs” of fellow believers.** (2 Cor. 9:12a) We are eager to meet the immediate needs and to help alleviate the suffering of our brothers and sisters. Why? Because the members of the Christian congregation form “one body,” and “if one member suffers, all the other members suffer with it.” (1 Cor. 12:20, 26) Hence, brotherly affection and compassion move numerous brothers and sisters today to drop what they are doing at a moment’s notice, gather their tools, and head for disaster-stricken areas to bring relief to fellow believers. (Jas. 2:15, 16) For instance, after a tsunami struck Japan in 2011, the United States branch office sent a letter to Regional Building Committees in the United States, asking if “a few qualified brothers” would be available to help with rebuilding Kingdom Halls there. What was the response? Within weeks, nearly 600 volunteers applied to help—and agreed to fly to Japan at their own expense! “We have been overwhelmed with the response,” noted the United States branch office. When a brother in Japan asked a relief worker from abroad why he had come to help, he was told: “Our brothers in Japan are part of ‘our body.’ We feel their pain and suffering.” Moved by self-sacrificing love, relief workers have at times even risked their lives to help fellow believers.^[3]—1 John 3:16.

11 Non-Witnesses also express appreciation for our relief work. For instance, after a disaster struck the state of Ar-

FOOTNOTE

[3] See the article “Aiding Our Family of Believers in Bosnia,” in the November 1, 1994, issue of *The Watchtower*, pages 23-27.

kansas, U.S.A., in 2013, a newspaper reported on the rapid response of Witness volunteers, stating: “The organizational structure of the Jehovah’s Witnesses has developed the disaster response volunteer service to a fine art.” Indeed, as the apostle Paul noted, we “provide *well*” for our brothers in need.

12 **Third, we help afflicted ones get back into their spiritual routine.** Why is this important? Paul states that those receiving relief aid will be moved to make “many expressions of thanks to God.” (2 Cor. 9:12b) What better way could there be for afflicted ones to express their thanks to Jehovah than by getting back to their spiritual routine as quickly as possible? (Phil. 1:10) *The Watchtower* stated in 1945: “Paul approved . . . the collecting of the contributions because it was helping . . . needy Christian brethren to enjoy some material relief and to thus be able to engage more freely and energetically in Jehovah’s witness-work.” Our objective is the same today. By getting back in the preaching work, our brothers strengthen not only their distressed neighbors but also themselves.—**Read 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4.**

13 Consider some comments from those who were recipients of much-needed relief aid, resumed sharing in the ministry, and were strengthened by doing so. “It was a blessing for our family to go in field service,” noted a brother. “It gave us a brief respite from anxiety over our own affairs as we tried to comfort others.” A sister said: “Focusing on spiritual activity took my mind off the destruction around me. It gave me a sense of security.” Another sister observed: “While many things were beyond our control, the ministry provided direction for my family. Talking with others about our hope of the new world strengthened our confidence that all things will be made new.”

14 Attending meetings is another spiritual activity that our afflicted fellow believers need to resume as quickly as possible. Consider what happened to Kiyoko, a sister then in her late 50’s. After she lost everything in a tsunami except the clothes and sandals she was wearing, she was at a loss as to how she would survive. Then an elder told her that they would have their regular Christian meeting in his car. Says Kiyoko: “An elder and his wife and another sister and I sat in the car. The meeting was simple but, like a miracle, the memory of the tsunami just slipped away from me. I felt peace of mind. That meeting showed me the power of Christian association.” Commenting on the meetings she

12-14. (a) Why is reaching the third objective of our relief work so important? (b) What expressions highlight the importance of continuing with spiritual activities?

PREPARATION FOR A DISASTER

The Governing Body has directed that all branches worldwide give guidelines to congregation elders and traveling overseers as to how to prepare for and deal with disasters. For example, even before a disaster occurs, the elders need to make sure that they have up-to-date contact information for each congregation member.

WHEN DISASTER STRIKES!

1

Local elders contact all publishers



2

Elders report to the coordinator of the body of elders



3

Coordinators report to traveling overseers and other responsible brothers who are in contact with the branch office

4

Food, water, shelter, medical care, and emotional and spiritual support are provided as soon as possible



5

Branch office sends a report about the situation and the needs to the Coordinators' Committee of the Governing Body



Coordinators' Committee assesses the needs and, if needed, approves that volunteers from other countries extend help

7

6

Disaster Relief Committee organizes relief efforts and helps the brothers and sisters with their long-term recovery



AN ADDED TOOL FOR RELIEF WORKERS

IN June 2013, the brochure *Jehovah's Witnesses and Disaster Relief* became available. It was especially prepared for government officials in the United States who oversee emergency management efforts. The brochure describes some of the relief efforts that we have carried out since the mid-1940's. It also features a map that illustrates the global scale of our relief work. "Brothers serving on

Disaster Relief Committees use this brochure to establish contacts with key officials in disaster-prone areas well before disasters strike," explains an elder who is involved in organizing relief efforts. "When such officials are already familiar with our relief activities, it becomes easier for us to obtain from them the permissions needed to enter areas where disasters have occurred."

IT SHAPED THE COURSE OF HIS LIFE

WHAT impact may taking part in relief work have on young ones? Consider what happened to **Peter Johnson**, who did so for the first time at age 18. He recalls: “Seeing the gratefulness of the brothers and feeling the joy that comes from giving touched me deeply. It reinforced my desire to use my life to serve Jehovah to the fullest extent.” Thereafter, Peter started pioneering. He also worked at Bethel and later began serving as a member of a Regional Building Committee. “Doing relief work that first time back in 1974,” says Peter today, “shaped the course of my life.” Are you young? Could you follow Peter’s example? Who knows how relief work may shape the course of *your* life in Jehovah’s service!



15, 16. (a) What benefit would Christians in Corinth and elsewhere receive from supporting relief efforts? (b) How do we similarly benefit from relief work today?

attended after a disaster occurred, another sister stated: “They were my lifeline!”—Rom. 1:11, 12; 12:12.

The Ministry of Relief Brings Lasting Benefits

15 In his consideration of the ministry of relief, Paul also explained to the Corinthians the benefits that they and other Christians would receive from sharing in this work. He stated: “With *supplication for you*, they [the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem who received the assistance] express *affection for you* because of the surpassing undeserved kindness of God upon you.” (2 Cor. 9:14) Yes, the generosity of the Corinthians would move the Jewish Christians to pray in behalf of their brothers in Corinth, including Gentiles, and would deepen their affection for them.

16 Applying Paul’s words about the benefits of relief work to our day, *The Watchtower* of December 1, 1945, stated: “When one section of God’s consecrated people contributes to the needs of another group of them, think of the unifying effect it has!” That is exactly what relief workers today experience. “Doing relief work made me feel closer to my brothers than ever before,” says an elder who helped in flood relief. One grateful sister who received relief aid put it this way, “Our brotherhood is the closest thing we have to Paradise on earth.”—**Read Proverbs 17:17.**

Ever Loyal

(Psalm 18:25)

Bb7sus4 Bb7 Eb Fm11 Bb7/F Eb/G Ab

Ev - er loy - al to Je - ho - vah, Loy - al
 Ev - er loy - al to our broth - ers, Stick - ing
 Ev - er loy - al to their guid - ance When our

R.H.

Eb/Bb Gm Gm7 Ab C7sus4 C7

love we wish to show. As a
 close in times of need. Ev - er
 broth - ers lead the way. When they

Fm Gm11 C7/G Fm/Ab Bb/C C7

peo - ple, ded - i - cat - ed, His com -
 car - ing, al - ways trust - ing, Ev - er
 give us clear di - rec - tion, May we

R.H.

Fm Ab/Eb Dm11 G7

mands we want to know. His ad -
 kind in word and deed. We show
 loy - al - ly o - bey. Then the

Ever Loyal

Cm Ab Eb/G G7

vice will nev - er fail us, And his
hon - or to our broth - ers, And re -
bless - ing from Je - ho - vah, Will be

R.H.

Cm Eb/F F9 Bb Bb/Ab Eb/G

coun - sel we o - bey. He is
spect - them from the us heart. Ev - er
ours to make us strong. When we're

Fm7 Bb Bb/Ab Eb/G Cm9 Cm

loy - al; we can trust him. From his
loy - al, ev - er clos - er, From their
loy - al, ev - er faith - ful, To Je -

R.H.

Fm7 Bb7sus4 Bb7 Eb

side we'll nev - er stray.
side we'll nev - er part.
ho - vah we'll be - long.

R.H.

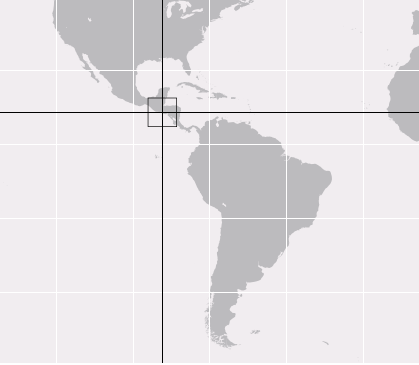
SEPTEMBER 2017

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
OCTOBER 23–NOVEMBER 26, 2017



COVER IMAGE:
EL SALVADOR

Two couples share in public witnessing, using carts in front of one of the biggest malls in San Salvador

PUBLISHERS
41,084

BIBLE STUDIES
42,813

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE
(2016)
92,606

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28 WEEK OF **NOVEMBER 20-26** **“Be Courageous . . . and Go to Work”**

Courage is essential for Christians. How can we benefit from the example of those who in the past displayed this quality? How can young ones, parents, older sisters, and baptized brothers show that they are courageous and ready to perform good works?

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Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

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We Need Self-Control

(Romans 7:14-25)

Eb Eb/D Cm9 Cm Eb/Bb Ab Bb Ab/Bb

We love Je - ho - vah with heart, mind, and soul; But
 Sa - tan's temp - ta - tions con - front us each day, And
 Each word and ac - tion re - flects on God's name, So

R.H.

Eb Eb/D Cm9 Cm Eb/Bb Ab Ab/Bb Bb

since we are sin - ful, we need self - con - trol.
 sin's law with - in us can lead us a - stray.
 we must en - deav - or to keep free from blame.

G G7/B Cm Bb Bb7/D Eb Eb/Bb

Flesh - ly de - sires bring trou - ble and strife;
 Pow - er of truth is great - er than sin.
 In all we do, we make this our goal:

Ab Ab/G Fm7 Fm/Ab Ab/Bb Bb7 Eb

Liv - ing by spir - it brings peace and life.
 Thanks to Je - ho - vah, our minds can win.
 Al - ways main - tain - ing our self - con - trol.

R.H. R.H.



Cultivate Self-Control

“The fruitage of the spirit is . . . self-control.”—GAL. 5:22, 23.

SELF-CONTROL is a godly quality. (Gal. 5:22, 23) Jehovah possesses self-control in perfect measure. Humans, however, are imperfect and therefore struggle to maintain self-control. Indeed, many of the problems that people face today stem from a lack of self-control. That lack may result in procrastination and underperformance in school or at work. It may also lead to verbal abuse, drunkenness, violence, divorce, needless debt, addiction, imprisonment, emotional trauma, sexually transmitted disease, and unwanted pregnancy, to name a few.—Ps. 34:11-14.

² Clearly, people who lack self-control are causing problems for themselves and for others. And the problem of lacking self-control is worsening. Self-discipline was studied in the 1940’s, but recent studies have shown that people have become much worse at exercising self-discipline. This is no surprise to students of God’s Word because the Bible foretold that one evidence that we are living in “the last days” is that men would be “without self-control.”—2 Tim. 3:1-3.

³ Why should you be interested in cultivating self-control? Consider two important reasons. First, it has been observed

1, 2. (a) What can result from a lack of self-control? (b) Why is the topic of self-control relevant today?

3. Why should Christians want to cultivate self-control?

SONGS: 121, 36

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

What should we learn from God’s reaction to rebellion?

What are some Bible examples of self-control and a lack of it?

How can Bible study help us to cultivate the godly quality of self-control?

that people who are able to control their impulses generally have fewer major problems. They are more stable emotionally, they are better at forming wholesome relationships, and they are not as angry and prone to anxiety and depression as are impulsive people. Second, the ability to resist temptation and to control inappropriate impulses is fundamental to retaining God's favor. The failure of Adam and Eve illustrates this truth. (Gen. 3:6) And think of the sad results reaped by others who since then have failed to exercise this important quality.

⁴ No imperfect human can exercise perfect self-control. Jehovah is aware of his servants' struggles in this regard, and he wants to help them dominate their sinful tendencies. (1 Ki. 8:46-50) As a loving Friend, he warmly encourages sincere individuals who want to serve him but who have a hard time exercising self-control in some area of life. Let us consider Jehovah's perfect example. Then we will learn from good examples and bad ones recounted in the Bible. And we can review practical suggestions that can help us to strengthen our self-control.

JEHOVAH SETS THE EXAMPLE

⁵ Jehovah exercises the quality of self-control perfectly, for he is perfect in all that he does. (Deut. 32:4) We, however, are imperfect. Even so, in order to understand the quality of self-control, we need to examine Jehovah's example so that we can better imitate him. What are

4. What should be encouraging to any who are struggling to exercise self-control?

5, 6. What example does Jehovah provide regarding self-control?

some noteworthy instances when Jehovah displayed self-control?

⁶ Think about how Jehovah exercised self-control in dealing with Satan's brazen rebellion. That challenge needed to be met. The Devil's challenge no doubt aroused indignation, anger, and contempt among heavenly creatures loyal to God. Perhaps you feel similar emotions when you consider all the suffering Satan has caused. Jehovah, however, did not react hastily. His response was measured and entirely fitting. He has been slow to anger and has been just in dealing with Satan's revolt. (Ex. 34:6; Job 2:2-6) Why? Jehovah has allowed time to pass because he does not want anyone to be destroyed but "desires all to attain to repentance."—2 Pet. 3:9.

⁷ Jehovah's exercise of self-control teaches us that we too ought to weigh our words and consider our steps carefully; we should not rush into things. When you face an important issue, give yourself the time you need to act wisely. Pray for wisdom to say or do the right thing. (Ps. 141:3) In the heat of the moment, it is all too easy to react emotionally. Many of us have lived to regret hasty words or rash actions!—Prov. 14:29; 15:28; 19:2.

EXAMPLES AMONG GOD'S SERVANTS —GOOD AND BAD

⁸ What Bible examples underscore the value of controlling our reactions? You can no doubt recall several Bible characters who exercised appropriate restraint when tested. One is Jacob's son Joseph.

7. What can we learn from Jehovah's example?

8. (a) Where can we look for examples of godly qualities? (b) What enabled Joseph to respond as he did when Potiphar's wife tried to seduce him? (See opening picture.)

He showed restraint when he was serving in the house of Potiphar, the chief of Pharaoh's guards. Potiphar's wife set her eyes on Joseph, who was "well-built and handsome," and she tried to seduce him. What prevented Joseph from succumbing to her repeated advances? No doubt, he took the time to consider what the consequences would be if he were to lower his guard. And when the situation became critical, he fled from her. He reasoned: "How could I commit this great badness and actually sin against God?"—Gen. 39:6, 9; **read Proverbs 1:10.**

⁹ What does Joseph's example teach us? One thing is that we may need to flee from the temptation to break one of God's laws. In the past, some who are now Witnesses struggled with overeating, heavy drinking, smoking, drug abuse, sexual immorality, and the like. Even after baptism, they may at times be tempted to return to their former practices. Still, if you are ever tempted to break one of Jehovah's laws, strengthen yourself by taking time to ponder the disastrous spiritual consequences that you could face for failing to restrain sinful impulses. You can try to foresee situations in which temptations could likely present themselves and decide how you can avoid them. (Ps. 26:4, 5; Prov. 22:3) Should you ever face such a test, ask Jehovah to give you the wisdom and self-control to resist.

¹⁰ Many young Christians face a trial like Joseph's. Consider Kim. Most of her

9. How can you prepare yourself to resist temptations?

10, 11. (a) What reality do many adolescents have to face at school? (b) What can help young Christians to resist pressures to engage in wrong conduct?

classmates were sexually active, and after a typical weekend, they boasted of their latest sexual encounters. Kim had no such stories to tell. She admits that being different at times made her feel "abandoned and alone" and that her peers considered her stupid because she did not date. Yet, Kim was wise enough to know that among many youths the temptation to engage in sex is great. (2 Tim. 2:22) Schoolmates often asked whether she was still a virgin. That gave her the opportunity to explain why she would not engage in sex. We are proud of young Christians who are determined to resist pressure to share in sexual immorality, and Jehovah is proud of them too!

¹¹ The Bible gives warning examples of individuals who lacked self-control concerning sexual conduct. It also shows the sad consequences that can result from such uncontrolled behavior. Anyone facing a situation similar to that of Kim would do well to ponder the case of the naive young man described in Proverbs chapter 7. Think, too, of the course Amnon took and the terrible outcome of his behavior. (2 Sam. 13:1, 2, 10-15, 28-32) Parents might help their children to develop self-control and wisdom in regard to romantic relationships by discussing the topic during family worship, using the Bible passages just mentioned.

¹² On another occasion, Joseph again set a fine example of self-control. To understand what was in his brothers' hearts, Joseph concealed his identity when they appeared before him in Egypt to buy food. And when his feelings were

12. (a) How did Joseph restrain his emotions in dealing with his brothers? (b) In what situations must we restrain our emotions?

particularly intense, he withdrew to a private place to hide his tears. (Gen. 43:30, 31; 45:1) If a fellow Christian or a loved one displays poor judgment, your showing restraint similar to that of Joseph might help you to avoid an impulsive reaction. (Prov. 16:32; 17:27) If you have disfellowshipped relatives, you may need to control your feelings in order to avoid unnecessary contact with them. Self-restraint in such situations is not automatic, yet it is easier if we realize that our actions are in line with God's example and in harmony with his counsel.

¹³ The Bible offers a notable example in King David. He wielded great power but refrained from using it out of anger when provoked by Saul and Shimei. (1 Sam. 26:9-11; 2 Sam. 16:5-10) That is not to say that David always controlled himself, as we know from his sin with Bath-sheba and his initial reaction to Nabal's greed. (1 Sam. 25:10-13; 2 Sam. 11:2-4) Nevertheless, we can learn valuable lessons from David. First, overseers among God's people need to be especially careful to exercise self-control so that they do not abuse their authority. Second, no one can be complacent, thinking that he is safe from temptation. —1 Cor. 10:12.

PRACTICAL THINGS YOU CAN DO

¹⁴ What can you do to work on your self-control? Consider this real-life situation. A vehicle rear-ended Luigi's car. Despite being in the wrong, the other

13. What lessons can we learn from accounts concerning King David?

14. What experience did one brother have, and why are our reactions in similar situations important?

driver insulted Luigi and tried to start a fight. Luigi prayed, asked Jehovah to help him keep his composure, and tried to calm the other driver—but to no avail. Luigi made a note of the man's insurance details and left while the man was still shouting. A week later, Luigi was making a return visit on a woman and he learned that her husband was the other driver! The man was embarrassed and apologized for his tirade. He offered to contact Luigi's insurance company to speed up the claim. The man took part in the spiritual conversation and appreciated what was being said. In hindsight, Luigi could see how important it was that he had kept calm after the accident and how detrimental it could have been had he lost his temper.—**Read 2 Corinthians 6:3, 4.**

¹⁵ Diligent and conscientious Bible study can help Christians to develop self-control. Recall that God told Joshua: "This book of the Law should not depart from your mouth, and you must read it in an undertone day and night, in order to observe carefully all that is written in it; for then your way will be successful and then you will act wisely." (Josh. 1:8) How is it that Bible study can help you to cultivate self-control?

¹⁶ As we have just noted, the Scriptures contain accounts that vividly illustrate both the benefits and the consequences of our actions. Jehovah had these accounts recorded for a purpose. (Rom. 15:4) How wise it is to read them, meditate on them, and study them! Try to grasp how they apply to you and your family. Ask Jehovah to help you to ap-

15, 16. How can Bible study help you and your family to cultivate self-control?



Keeping calm or losing our temper can directly or indirectly affect our Christian ministry (See paragraph 14)

ply his Word. If you discern that you are deficient in some aspect of self-control, admit it. Then pray about it, and strive to see how you can improve. (Jas. 1:5) No doubt, research in our Christian publications can help you to locate relevant material that will further help you.

¹⁷ How can you help your children to develop self-control? Parents know that this quality does not come naturally to young people. And as is the case with all qualities that their children need to learn, parents should set the example. (Eph. 6:4) So if you see that your children are struggling to control their impulses, ask yourself whether you are setting a fine example. Do not minimize the good effect of your being regular in the field service, in attending meetings, and in conducting family worship. Do not be afraid to say no to your children's requests if need be! Jehovah set limits for Adam and Eve—limits that could have

instilled in them a proper regard for his authority. Similarly, parental discipline and example have the goal of teaching children self-control. Love for God's authority and respect for his standards are among the most precious things that you can cultivate in your children.

—**Read Proverbs 1:5, 7, 8.**

¹⁸ Certainly, whether you are a parent or not, you should not overlook the need to choose your associations wisely. Seek the company of those who will encourage you to pursue worthwhile goals and avoid trouble. (Prov. 13:20) Spiritually-minded associates will have a positive influence on you, moving you to imitate their course of life marked by self-control. And no doubt your good conduct will encourage your friends. The self-control that results is fundamental to your enjoying everyday life in God's favor and to sharing good things with your loved ones.

17. In what ways can parents help their children to develop self-control?

18. Why can you be confident that good associations will prove to be a blessing?

We Guard Our Hearts

(Proverbs 4:23)

Eb
Ebma7
Eb
F#°
B7/F#
Eb/G

We guard our hearts, it means our life;
 Pre - pared hearts in heart, we search for God
 Our hearts we shield from harm - ful thoughts,

F#°
Bb7/F

We shun the path of sin.
 By means of on ear - nest prayer.
 We dwell on what is true.

Fm
Ab/Bb
Bb7
Bb7/D
Fm7
Bb7

God reads the heart, and there he finds
 Each day we give him to praise and our thanks,
 We love God's Word to touch our hearts,

Eb/G
B7/F#
Fm7
Bb7
Eb

The per - son deep with - in.
 Re - veal - ing ev - 'ry care.
 To strength - en and re - new.

