

- Song 8 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Stay in ‘the Valley of the Mountains’”:** (10 min.)
 Zec 14:3, 4—The “very great valley” represents divine protection (w13 2/15 19 ¶10)
 Zec 14:5—Those who “flee to the valley” and stay there will be protected (w13 2/15 20 ¶13)
 Zec 14:6, 7, 12, 15—Those outside Jehovah’s valley of protection will be destroyed (w13 2/15 20 ¶15)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Zec 12:3—How does Jehovah “make Jerusalem a heavy stone”? (w07 12/15 22-23 ¶9-10)

Zec 12:7—How will Jehovah “save the tents of Judah first”? (w07 12/15 25 ¶13)

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) Zec 12:1-14

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) g17.6 14-15—Invite the person to our meetings.
- **Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) g17.6—Pages 14 and 15 of the magazine were considered on the preceding visit. Demonstrate a return visit, and invite the person to our meetings.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) j1 lesson 5—Invite the person to our meetings.


LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 68
- **Organizational Accomplishments:** (7 min.) Play the *Organizational Accomplishments* video for December.
- **“New Feature of the Midweek Meeting”:** (8 min.) Discussion. Show the silent video *Bethphage, the Mount of Olives, and Jerusalem*.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy pp. 6-7
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 13 and Prayer

ZECHARIAH 9-14 | Stay in “the Valley of the Mountains”

14:3-5

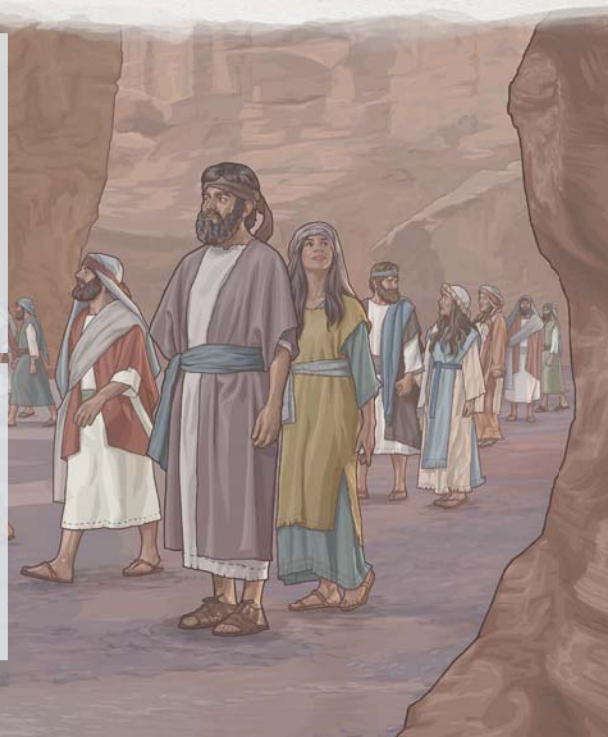
Jehovah formed “a very great valley” in 1914 when he established the Messianic Kingdom, a subsidiary “mountain” to his universal sovereignty. Since 1919, God’s servants have found safety in “the valley of the mountains”

 How do people “flee to the valley” of protection?

14:12, 15

Anyone outside the symbolic valley will be destroyed at Armageddon

How do I stay in the valley of protection?



Jehovah Is Our Refuge

(Psalm 91)

C7 F F/A Dm

Je - ho - vah is our ref - uge, Our
 Though thou - sands will have fall - en And
 He'll keep us and pro - tect us From

Bb C7/G Gm C C7 F F/A

God in whom we trust. His shad - ow is our
 man - y at our side, The righ - teous and the
 snares a - long our way, From ter - rors in the

Dm Gm/Bb Gm D/A Gm/Bb C7 C13

shel - ter; Re - main in it we must. His
 meek ones Will nev - er be de - nied. So
 night - time, And ar - rows by the day. Yes,

F F/A Ab°

faith - ful ones he will de - fend, On
 in our hearts we need not fear; Ca -
 there will be no cause for dread, No

Jehovah Is Our Refuge

Gm D7/A Gm/Bb G7/B C G C7

this we know we can de - pend. Je -
lam - i - ty we will will not come near. From
place where we will fear to tread. Je -

F Dm Gm/Bb D/A

ho - vah is a strong - hold, Ev - er
dan - ger he will shield us, For be -
ho - vah is our ref - uge, Ev - er

Gm Eb7/G C7/G Am/C C7 F

faith - ful, loy - al, and just.
neath God's wings - we'll re - side.
guard - ing us on our way.

they will take firm hold of the robe* of a Jew,[#] saying: "We want to go with you,^a for we have heard that God is with you people."^{***b}

- 9** A pronouncement:
 "The word of Jehovah is against the land of Ha'drach,
 And Damascus is its target*^c
 —For Jehovah's eye is on mankind^d
 And on all the tribes of Israel—
- 2** And against Ha'math,^e which borders on her,
 And against Tyre^f and Si'don,^g for they are so wise.^h
- 3** Tyre built herself a rampart.*
 She piled up silver like dust
 And gold like the dirt of the streets.ⁱ
- 4** Look! Jehovah will take away her possessions,
 And he will strike down her army into the sea;^{*j}
 And she will be consumed in the fire.^k
- 5** Ash'ke-lon will see it and be afraid;
 Gaz'a will feel great anguish,
 Also Ek'ron, because her hope is put to shame.
 A king will perish from Gaz'a,
 And Ash'ke-lon will not be inhabited.^l
- 6** An illegitimate son will settle in Ash'dod,
 And I will do away with the pride of the Phi-lis'tine.^m
- 7** I will remove the blood-stained things from his mouth
 And the disgusting things from between his teeth,

8:23 *Or "extremity of the garment."
[#]Lit., "a Jewish man." **9:1** *Lit., "resting-place." **9:3** *Or "fortress."
9:4 *Or possibly, "on the sea."

CHAP. 8
 a Ex 12:37, 38
 b Isa 45:14

CHAP. 9
 c Jer 49:27
 Am 1:3
 d Heb 4:13
 1Pe 3:12
 e Jer 49:23
 f Isa 23:1
 Am 1:9, 10
 g Eze 28:21
 Joe 3:4
 h Eze 28:2, 3
 i Eze 27:32, 33
 j Eze 26:17
 Eze 27:26
 k Eze 28:18
 l Zep 2:4
 m Am 1:8

Second Col.
 a Isa 60:14
 b 2Sa 5:6, 7
 1Ki 9:20, 21
 c Ps 125:2
 d Isa 54:14
 e Ps 2:6
 Isa 32:1
 Jer 23:5
 Lu 19:37, 38
 Joh 1:49
 f Mt 11:29
 g 1Ki 1:33, 34
 Mt 21:5, 7
 Joh 12:14, 15
 h Isa 9:7

i Ex 23:31
 Ps 2:8
 Ps 72:8
 j Isa 49:9
 k Isa 61:1
 Jer 31:17

And he will be left remaining for our God;
 And he will become like a sheikh* in Judah,^a
 And Ek'ron like the Jeb'u-site.^b

- 8** I will encamp as a guard* for my house,^c
 So that there will be no one passing through and no one returning;
 And no taskmaster[#] will pass through again,^d
 For now I have seen it^Δ with my eyes.
- 9** Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.
 Shout in triumph,
 O daughter of Jerusalem.
 Look! Your king is coming to you.^e
 He is righteous, bringing salvation,*
 Humble^f and riding on a donkey,
 On a colt,[#] the foal of a female donkey.^g
- 10** I will take away the war chariot from E'phra-
 im
 And the horse from Jerusalem.
 The battle bow will be taken away.
 And he will proclaim peace to the nations;^h
 His rulership will be from sea to sea
 And from the River* to the ends of the earth.ⁱ
- 11** As for you, O woman, by the blood of your covenant,
 I will send your prisoners out of the waterless pit.^j
- 12** Return to the stronghold,
 you prisoners with hope.^k
 Today I am telling you,
- 9:7** *A sheikh was a tribal chief. **9:8** *Or "an outpost." [#]Or "oppressor."
^ΔEvidently, the affliction of his people.
9:9 *Or "and victorious; and saved."
[#]Or "a male donkey." **9:10** *That is, the Euphrates.

- 'I will repay to you, O woman, a double portion.^a
- 13** For I will bend* Judah as my bow.
The bow I will fill with E'phra-im,[#]
And I will awaken your sons, O Zion,
Against your sons, O Greece,
And I will make you like a warrior's sword.[']
- 14** Jehovah will be seen over them,
And his arrow will go out like lightning.
The Sovereign Lord Jehovah will sound the horn,^b
And he will advance with the windstorms of the south.
- 15** Jehovah of armies will defend them,
And they will devour and subdue the slingstones.^c
They will drink and be boisterous, as if with wine;
And they will be filled like the bowl,
Like the corners of the altar.^d
- 16** Jehovah their God will save them in that day
As the flock of his people;^e
For they will be like the gemstones of a crown*
glittering over his soil.^f
- 17** For how great his goodness is,^g
And how great his handsomeness is!
Grain will make the young men thrive,
And new wine the virgins.^h
- 10** "Ask Jehovah for rain in the time of the spring rain.
It is Jehovah who makes the storm clouds,
Who pours rain for them,ⁱ
And gives vegetation in the field to everyone.
- 9:13** *Lit., "tread." #That is, like an arrow. **9:16** *Or "diadem."

CHAP. 9

a Isa 61:7

b Jos 6:5

c Mic 5:9
Zec 10:5
Zec 12:6d Ex 27:2
Le 4:7

e Eze 34:22

f Isa 62:3
Zep 3:20g Ps 25:8
Ps 31:19
Isa 63:7h Isa 62:8
Joe 3:18
Am 9:13

CHAP. 10

i De 11:14
Jer 14:22
Jer 51:16
Eze 34:26
Joe 2:23

Second Col.

a Eze 34:16, 17

b De 20:1

c Hag 2:22

d Jer 3:18
Eze 37:16, 19
Ho 1:10, 11

- 2** For the teraphim statues* have spoken deception;[#]
And the diviners have visioned a lie.
They speak about worthless dreams,
And in vain they try to comfort.
That is why they will wander like sheep.
They will suffer, for there is no shepherd.
- 3** Against the shepherds my anger burns,
And against the oppressive leaders* I will hold an accounting;
For Jehovah of armies has turned his attention to his flock,^a to the house of Judah,
And he has made them like his majestic horse in the battle.
- 4** From him comes the keyman,^{*}
From him comes the supporting ruler,[#]
From him comes the battle bow;
From him goes forth every overseer,[^] all of them together.
- 5** And they will become like warriors,
Trampling down the mud of the streets in the battle.
They will wage war, for Jehovah is with them;^b
And the riders of horses will be put to shame.^c
- 6** I will make the house of Judah superior,
And the house of Joseph I will save.^d

10:2 *Or "household gods; idols." #Or "what is uncanny; what is mystical."

10:3 *Lit., "the he-goats." **10:4** *Lit., "the corner tower," pictorial of a vital or important man; a chief. #Lit., "the peg," pictorial of one who is a support; a ruler. ^Or "taskmaster."

- I will restore them,
For I will show them mercy;^a
And they will be as though
I had never cast them off;^b
For I am Jehovah their God,
and I will answer them.
- 7** Those of E'phra-im must be-
come like a mighty warrior,
And their heart will rejoice
as though from wine.^c
Their sons will see this and
rejoice;
Their heart will be joyful
in Jehovah.^d
- 8** 'I will whistle for them and
gather them together;
For I will redeem them,^e and
they will become many,
And continue to be many.
- 9** Though I scatter them like
seed among the peoples,
They will remember me in
the distant places;
With their sons they will
revive and return.
- 10** I will bring them back from
the land of Egypt
And gather them from
As-syr'i-a;^f
I will bring them to the land
of Gil'e-ad^g and Leb'a-non,
And there will be no more
room for them.^h
- 11** He must pass through the
sea with distress;
And in the sea he will strike
down the waves;ⁱ
All the depths of the Nile
will dry up.
The pride of As-syr'i-a will
be brought down,
And the scepter of Egypt
will depart.^j
- 12** I will make them superior
in Jehovah,^k
And they will walk about
in his name,^l declares
Jehovah."
- 11** "Open your doors,
O Leb'a-non,
So that a fire may consume
your cedars.

CHAP. 10

a Jer 31:9, 20

b Jer 30:18

c Zec 9:15

d Isa 66:14
Zep 3:14e Isa 44:22
Isa 51:11

f Isa 11:11

g Jer 50:19
Mic 7:14h Isa 49:19, 20
Isa 54:1, 2

i Isa 11:15

j Isa 19:1
Eze 30:13k Isa 41:10
Isa 45:24

l Mic 4:5

Second Col.

CHAP. 11

a Eze 34:8

b Eze 22:25

c Ne 5:8

d Eze 34:2, 4

e Zec 11:4

f Zec 11:10, 14

- 2** Wail, you juniper, for the
cedar has fallen;
The majestic trees have been
destroyed!
Wail, you oaks of Ba'shan,
For the dense forest has
come down!
- 3** Listen! The wailing of
shepherds,
For their majesty has been
devastated.
Listen! The roaring of young
lions,^{*}
For the dense thickets along
the Jordan have been
destroyed.

4 "This is what Jehovah my
God says, 'Shepherd the
flock meant for the slaugh-
ter,^a **5** whose buyers slaugh-
tered them^b and are not held
guilty. And those who sell them^c
say, "May Jehovah be praised,
for I will become rich." And their
shepherds have no compassion
for them.'^d

6 "For I will no longer show
compassion on the inhabitants
of the land,' declares Jehovah.
'So I will cause each man to
fall into the hand of his neigh-
bor and his king; and they will
crush the land, and I will not re-
scue them out of their hand.'"

7 And I began to shepherd
the flock meant for slaugh-
ter,^e in your behalf, O afflicted
ones of the flock. So I took two
staffs, and I called one Pleasant-
ness, and the other Union,^f and
I began to shepherd the flock.
8 And I dismissed three shep-
herds in one month, for I^{*} be-
came impatient with them, and
they[#] detested me as well.
9 And I said: "I will not keep
shepherding you. Let the one
who is dying die, and let the one
perishing perish. As for those

11:3 *Or "maned young lions." **11:8**
*Or "my soul." #Or "their soul."

who are left, let them devour one another's flesh." **10** So I took my staff Pleasantness^a and cut it up, breaking my covenant that I had made with all the peoples. **11** So it was broken in that day, and the afflicted ones of the flock who were watching me knew that it was the word of Jehovah.

12 Then I said to them: "If it seems good to you, give me my wages; but if not, withhold them." And they paid* my wages, 30 pieces of silver.^b

13 Then Jehovah said to me: "Throw it into the treasury—the magnificent value with which they valued me."^c So I took the 30 pieces of silver and threw it into the treasury at the house of Jehovah.^d

14 Then I cut up my second staff, the Union,^e breaking the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.^f

15 And Jehovah said to me: "Now take the equipment of a useless shepherd.^g **16** For I am letting a shepherd rise up in the land. He will not take care of the sheep that are perishing;^h he will not seek out the young or heal the injuredⁱ or feed those able to stand. Instead, he devours the flesh of the fat one^j and tears off the hooves of the sheep.^k

17 Woe to my worthless shepherd,^l who is abandoning the flock!^m

A sword will strike his arm and his right eye.

His arm will wither completely,

And his right eye will go completely blind."ⁿ

12 A pronouncement:
"The word of Jehovah concerning Israel," declares Jehovah,

11:12 *Lit., "weighed out." 11:17 *Lit., "dim."

CHAP. 11

a Zec 11:7

b Mt 26:14, 15
Mt 27:9
Mr 14:10, 11

c Ex 21:32

d Mt 27:5, 6
Ac 1:18

e Zec 11:7

f 1Ki 12:19, 20
Eze 37:16

g Eze 34:2, 4

h Jer 23:2
Eze 34:6
Mt 9:36

i Eze 34:21

j Ge 31:38

k Eze 34:3, 10

l Jer 23:1
Mt 23:13

m Joh 10:12

Second Col.

CHAP. 12

a Job 26:7
Isa 42:5b Ps 102:25
Isa 45:18

c Zec 14:14

d Zep 3:19

e Zec 14:2, 3

f Isa 41:10
Joe 3:16
Zec 12:8

g Isa 41:15

h Mic 4:13
Zec 9:15

i Zec 2:4

j Jer 23:6
Joe 3:16
Zec 2:5
Zec 9:15

The One who stretched out the heavens,^a

Who laid the foundation of the earth,^b

And who formed the spirit* of man within him.

2 "Here I am making Jerusalem a cup* that causes all the surrounding peoples to stagger; and there will be a siege against Judah as well as against Jerusalem.^c **3** In that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy* stone to all the peoples. All those who lift it are sure to be severely injured;^d and all the nations of the earth will be gathered against her.^e

4 In that day," declares Jehovah, "I will strike every horse with panic and its rider with madness. I will keep my eyes on the house of Judah, but I will strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. **5** And the sheikhs* of Judah will say in their heart, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem are a strength to me by means of Jehovah of armies their God.'^f **6** In that day I will make the sheikhs of Judah like a fiery pot among wood and like a fiery torch in a row of cut grain,^g and they will consume all the surrounding peoples on the right and on the left;^h and Jerusalem will again be inhabited in her place,* in Jerusalem.ⁱ

7 "And Jehovah will save the tents of Judah first, so that the beauty* of the house of David and the beauty* of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be too great over Judah. **8** In that day Jehovah will be a defense around the inhabitants of Jerusalem;^j in that day the one who stumbles* among them will be like David, and the house

12:1 *Or "breath." 12:2 *Or "bowl."

12:3 *Or "burdensome." 12:5 *A sheikh was a tribal chief. 12:6 *Or "in her rightful place." 12:7 *Or "splendor." 12:8 *Or "the weakest."

of David like God, like Jehovah's angel who goes before them.^a

9 And in that day I will be certain to annihilate all the nations that come against Jerusalem.^b

10 "I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of favor and supplication, and they will look to the one whom they pierced,^c and they will wail over him as they would wail over an only son; and they will grieve bitterly over him as they would grieve over a firstborn son. **11** In that day the wailing in Jerusalem will be great, like the wailing at Ha-dad-rim'mon in the Plain of Me-gid'do.^d **12** And the land will wail, each family by itself; the family of David's house by itself, and their women by themselves; the family of Nathan's^e house by itself, and their women by themselves; **13** the family of Le'vi's^f house by itself, and their women by themselves; the family of the Shim'e-ites^g by itself, and their women by themselves; **14** and all the families that are left remaining, each family by itself, and their women by themselves.

13 "In that day a well will be opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for cleansing sin and impurity.^h

2 "In that day," declares Jehovah of armies, "I will erase the names of the idols from the land,ⁱ and they will no longer be remembered; and I will rid the land of the prophets^j and the spirit of uncleanness. **3** And if a man should prophesy again, his father and his mother who caused his birth will say to him, 'You will not live, because you have spoken lies in the name of Jehovah.' And his father and his mother who caused his birth will pierce him through because of his prophesying.^k

CHAP. 12

a Ex 14:19
Ex 23:20

b Isa 54:17
Hag 2:22

c Joh 19:34, 37
Joh 20:27
Re 1:7

d 2Ki 23:29
2Ch 35:22

e 2Sa 5:13, 14
Lu 3:23, 31

f Ex 6:16

g Ex 6:17
1Ch 23:10

CHAP. 13

h Eze 36:25, 29

i Ex 23:13

j De 13:5

k De 13:6-9
De 18:20

Second Col.

a 2Ki 1:8
Mt 3:4

b Eze 34:23
Mic 5:4
Joh 10:11
Heb 13:20

c Isa 53:8
Da 9:26
Ac 3:18

d Mt 26:31
Mt 26:55, 56
Mr 14:27, 50
Mr 14:50
Joh 16:32

e Mal 3:2, 3

f Jer 30:22

4 "In that day each of the prophets will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies; and they will not wear an official garment of hair^a in order to deceive. **5** And he will say, 'I am no prophet. I am a man cultivating the soil, because a man bought me when I was young.' **6** And if someone asks him, 'What are these wounds between your shoulders?*' he will answer, 'Wounds I received in the house of my friends.'"^h

7 "O sword, awake against my shepherd,^b

Against the man who is my companion," declares Jehovah of armies.

"Strike the shepherd,^c and let the flock* be scattered;^d And I will turn my hand against those who are insignificant."

8 "And in all the land," declares Jehovah,

"Two parts in it will be cut off and perish;*

And the third part will be left remaining in it.

9 And I will bring the third part through the fire; And I will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested.^e

They will call on my name, And I will answer them.

I will say, 'They are my people,'^f

And they will say, 'Jehovah is our God.'"^g

14 "Look! The day is coming, a day belonging to Jehovah, when the spoil from you* will be divided in your midst. **2** I will gather all the nations

13:6 *Lit., "between your hands?" That is, on the chest or on the back. ^aOr "of those who love me." **13:7** *Or "sheep." **13:8** *Or "die." **14:1** *That is, the city referred to in vs. 2.

against Jerusalem for the war; and the city will be captured and the houses plundered and the women raped. And half of the city will go into exile, but the remaining ones of the people will not be cut off from the city.

3 "Jehovah will go out and war against those nations^a as when he fights in the day of a battle.^b 4 In that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives,^c which faces Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in half, from east* to west,[#] forming a very great valley; and half of the mountain will move to the north, and half of it to the south. 5 You will flee to the valley of my mountains, for the valley of the mountains will extend all the way to A'zel. You will have to flee, just as you fled because of the earthquake in the days of King Uz-zi'ah of Judah.^d And Jehovah my God will come, and all the holy ones will be with him.^e

6 "In that day there will be no precious light^f—things will be congealed.* 7 And it will become one day that is known as belonging to Jehovah.^g It will not be day, nor will it be night; and at evening time there will be light. 8 In that day living waters^h will flow out from Jerusalem,ⁱ half of them toward the eastern sea^j and half of them toward the western sea.^{kl} It will happen in summer and in winter. 9 And Jehovah will be King over all the earth.^l In that day Jehovah will be one,^m and his name one.ⁿ

10 "The whole land will become like the Ar'a-bah,^o from Ge'ba^p to Rim'mon^q south of Je-

14:4 *Or "the sunrise." #Lit., "the sea." 14:6 *Or "immobilized," as if stiffened by cold. 14:8 *That is, the Dead Sea. #That is, the Mediterranean Sea.

CHAP. 14

a Eze 38:23
Joe 3:2, 14
Re 16:14

b Ex 15:3
2Ch 20:15

c Lu 19:29
Ac 1:12

d Am 1:1

e De 33:2
Joe 3:11
Jude 14

f Isa 13:9, 10
Am 5:18

g Joe 2:31
1Th 5:2
2Pe 3:10

h Re 21:6
Re 22:17

i Jer 17:13
Eze 47:1
Joe 3:18
Re 22:1

j De 3:17

k Jos 1:4

l Ps 97:1
Re 19:6

m De 6:4

n Isa 42:8
Isa 44:6

o De 1:7

p 1Ki 15:22

q 1Ch 4:24, 32

Second Col.

a Jer 30:18

b Jer 37:13

c Ne 3:1
Jer 31:38

d Isa 60:18
Jer 31:40

e Jer 23:6
Jer 33:16

f 2Ki 19:34, 35
Joe 3:2

g Jg 7:22
Eze 38:21

h 2Ch 14:13
2Ch 20:25
Zec 2:8, 9

i Isa 66:23

j Ps 86:9

k Le 23:34
Ne 8:14, 15

Jerusalem; and she will rise and be inhabited in her place,^a from the Gate of Benjamin^b all the way to the site of the First Gate, all the way to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Ha-nan'el^c all the way to the winepresses* of the king. 11 And people will inhabit her; and there will never again be a curse of destruction,^d and Jerusalem will be inhabited in security.^e

12 "And this is the scourge with which Jehovah will scourge all the peoples who wage war against Jerusalem:^f Their flesh will rot away while they stand on their feet, their eyes will rot away in their sockets, and their tongues will rot away in their mouths.

13 "In that day confusion from Jehovah will be widespread among them; and each one will grab hold of the hand of his companion, and his hand will come against the hand of his companion.*^g 14 Judah will also be involved in the war at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered, gold and silver and garments in vast quantity.^h

15 "And a scourge like that scourge will also come against the horses, the mules, the camels, the donkeys, and all the livestock that are in those camps.

16 "Everyone who is left remaining out of all the nations that come against Jerusalem will go up from year to yearⁱ to bow down to* the King, Jehovah of armies,^j and to celebrate the Festival of Booths.^{kl} 17 But if anyone among the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to bow down to the King, Je-

14:10 *Or "press vats." 14:13 *Or "and one man will attack another." 14:16 *Or "worship." #Or "Temporary Shelters."

hovah of armies, no rain will fall on them.^a **18** And if the family of Egypt does not come up and does not come in, they will have no rain. Instead, they will have the scourge with which Jehovah scourges the nations that do not come up to celebrate the Festival of Booths. **19** This will be the punishment for the sin of Egypt and the sin of all the nations that do not come up to celebrate the Festival of Booths.

20 "In that day the words 'Holiness belongs to Jehovah!'"^b will be written on the bells of the

CHAP. 14
a Isa 60:12

b Ex 28:36
Ex 39:30

Second Col.
a 1Sa 2:13, 14

b Ex 25:29
Nu 4:7

c Eze 44:9

horses. And the cooking pots^{*a} in the house of Jehovah will be like the bowls^b before the altar. **21** And every cooking pot^{*} in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy and will belong to Jehovah of armies, and all those who are sacrificing will come in and use some of them for boiling. In that day there will no longer be a Ca'naan-ite[#] in the house of Jehovah of armies."^c

14:20 *Or "wide-mouthed cooking pots." **14:21** *Or "wide-mouthed cooking pot." #Or possibly, "trader."

MALACHI

OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Jehovah's love for his people (1-5)
Priests presenting inferior sacrifices (6-14)
God's name to be great among the nations (11)
- 2 Priests' failure to instruct the people (1-9)
Priests' lips should safeguard knowledge (7)
People guilty of unjust divorcing (10-17)
"I hate divorce," says Jehovah" (16)
- 3 The true Lord comes to cleanse his temple (1-5)
The messenger of the covenant (1)

- Encouragement to return to Jehovah (6-12)
Jehovah does not change (6)
"Return to me, and I will return to you" (7)
'Bring the entire tithe, and Jehovah will pour out blessings' (10)
The righteous and the wicked (13-18)
A book of remembrance written before God (16)
Distinction between the righteous and the wicked (18)
- 4 The coming of Elijah before Jehovah's day (1-6)
"The sun of righteousness will shine" (2)

1 A pronouncement:
The word of Jehovah to Israel through Mal'a-chi:*

2 "I have shown love to you people,"^a says Jehovah.

But you say: "How have you shown us love?"

1:1 *Meaning "My Messenger."

CHAP. 1
a De 10:15

Second Col.
a Ge 25:25, 26

b Ro 9:13
c Jer 49:20
Joe 3:19

d Isa 34:10, 13

"Was not E'sau the brother of Jacob?"^a declares Jehovah. "But I loved Jacob, **3** and E'sau I hated;^b and I made his mountains desolate^c and left his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness."^d

4 "Though E'dom says, 'We have been shattered, but we

- Song 8 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Stay in ‘the Valley of the Mountains’”:** (10 min.)
 Zec 14:3, 4—The “very great valley” represents divine protection (w13 2/15 19 ¶10)
 Zec 14:5—Those who “flee to the valley” and stay there will be protected (w13 2/15 20 ¶13)
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- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Zec 12:3—How does Jehovah “make Jerusalem a heavy stone”? (w07 12/15 22-23 ¶9-10)

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

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- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Zec 12:1-14

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 68
- **Organizational Accomplishments:** (7 min.) Play the *Organizational Accomplishments* video for December.
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ZECHARIAH 9-14 | Stay in “the Valley of the Mountains”

14:3-5

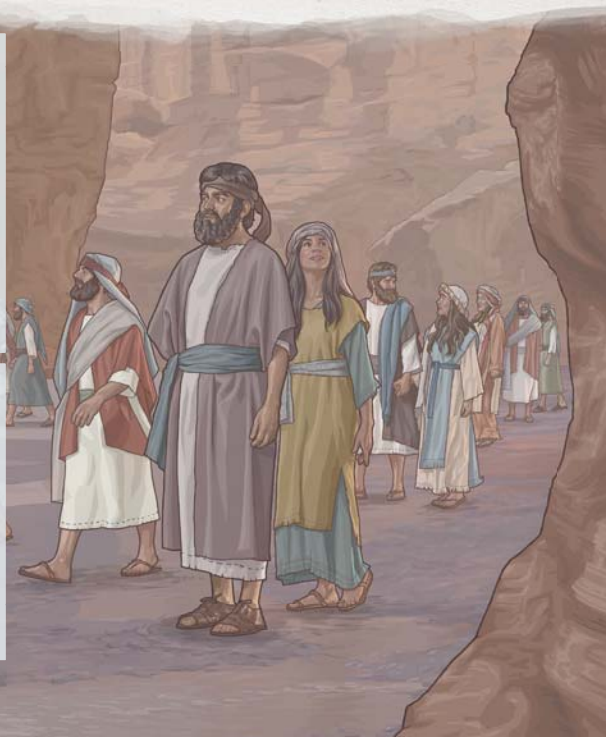
Jehovah formed “a very great valley” in 1914 when he established the Messianic Kingdom, a subsidiary “mountain” to his universal sovereignty. Since 1919, God’s servants have found safety in “the valley of the mountains”

 How do people “flee to the valley” of protection?

14:12, 15

Anyone outside the symbolic valley will be destroyed at Armageddon

How do I stay in the valley of protection?



December 18-24

Treasures From God's Word

Zechariah 14:3, 4—The “very great valley” represents divine protection

Reference: w13 2/15 19 **paragraph 10**.

When the symbolic mountain splits, half to the north and half to the south, Jehovah's feet remain set upon both mountains. “A very great valley” comes into existence beneath Jehovah's feet. This symbolic valley represents divine protection, by which Jehovah's servants find safety under his universal sovereignty and his Son's Messianic Kingdom. Jehovah will make sure that pure worship will never be snuffed out. When did this division of the mountain of the olive trees take place? It occurred when the Messianic Kingdom was established at the end of the Gentile Times in 1914. When did the flight of true worshippers to the symbolic valley begin?

Zechariah 14:5—Those who “flee to the valley” and stay there will be protected

Reference: w13 2/15 20 **paragraph 13**.

If we stick to Jehovah and stand firm in the truth, he and his Son, Jesus Christ, will do their part, and God will not allow anyone or anything to ‘snatch us out of His hand.’ (**John 10:28, 29**) Jehovah is ready to extend whatever help is needed so that we may obey him as the Universal Sovereign and remain loyal subjects of the Messianic Kingdom. It is imperative that we remain in the valley of protection, for that valley will take on even greater meaning for true worshippers during the fast-approaching great tribulation.

Zechariah 14:6, 7, 12, 15—Those outside Jehovah's valley of protection will be destroyed

Reference: w13 2/15 20 **paragraph 15**.

On the day of God's warring, what will be the situation of those outside the “great valley” of protection? They will have “no precious light” of divine favor shining upon them. In that coming day of fight, “the horse, the mule, the camel, and the male ass, and every sort of domestic animal”—symbols of the nations' military equipment—will be affected. Such equipment will be “congealed,” put out of operation as if stiffened by cold. Jehovah will also use pestilence and “the scourge.” Whether literal or not, the scourge will silence terrifying threats. On that day, “one's very eyes . . . and tongue will rot away” in that the attackers will be able to strike out only blindly and their defiant speech will be silenced. (**Zechariah 14:6, 7, 12, 15**) No section of the earth will escape destruction. The forces lined up on Satan's side in the battle will be tremendous. (**Revelation 19:19-21**) “Those slain by Jehovah will certainly come to be in that day from one end of the earth clear to the other end.”—**Jeremiah 25:32, 33**.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Zechariah 12:3—How does Jehovah “make Jerusalem a heavy stone”?

Reference: w07 12/15 22-23 paragraphs 9-10.

Jerusalem—“A Burdensome Stone”

9 Zechariah’s prophecy sheds light on the reason why the nations take their stand against true Christians. Note what Zechariah 12:3 says: “It must occur in that day that I shall make Jerusalem a burdensome stone to all the peoples.” To which Jerusalem does this prophecy point? Zechariah’s prophecy concerning Jerusalem applies to “heavenly Jerusalem,” the heavenly Kingdom to which anointed Christians have been called. (Hebrews 12:22) A small remnant of these heirs of the Messianic Kingdom are still on earth. Along with their companions, the “other sheep,” they urge people to turn to God’s Kingdom while there is yet time. (John 10:16; Revelation 11:15) How have the nations reacted to this invitation? And what kind of support does Jehovah give to true worshippers today? Let us find out as we further examine the meaning of Zechariah chapter 12. Doing so, we can gain the assurance that ‘no weapon will succeed’ against God’s anointed ones and their dedicated associates.

10 Zechariah 12:3 indicates that the nations receive “severe scratches.” How does this happen? God has decreed that the good news of the Kingdom must be preached. Jehovah’s Witnesses take seriously the obligation to preach. However, the heralding of the Kingdom as mankind’s only hope has become “a burdensome stone” to the nations. They try to lift it out of the way by interfering with the Kingdom preachers. In so doing, the meddling nations have received “severe scratches for themselves,” getting all cut up. Even their reputations have been hurt as they meet with humiliating failure. They cannot silence true worshippers, who cherish the privilege of proclaiming the “everlasting good news” of God’s Messianic Kingdom before the end of this system of things. (Revelation 14:6) When seeing the violence done to Jehovah’s servants, a prison guard in one African land said, in effect: ‘You are wasting your efforts in persecuting these people. They will never compromise. They just increase.’

Zechariah 12:7—How will Jehovah “save the tents of Judah first”?

Reference: w07 12/15 25 paragraph 13.

Read **Zechariah 12:7, 8**. In ancient Israel, tents were a distinctive feature in the land, at times being used by shepherds and agricultural workers. Such people would be the first affected and would be in need of protection if an enemy nation came to attack the city of Jerusalem. The expression “the tents of Judah” indicates that the anointed remnant in our time are out in the open field, so to speak, not in fortified cities. There they fearlessly defend the interests of the Messianic Kingdom. Jehovah of armies will save “the tents of Judah first” because these are in the direct line of Satan’s attack.

- Song 8 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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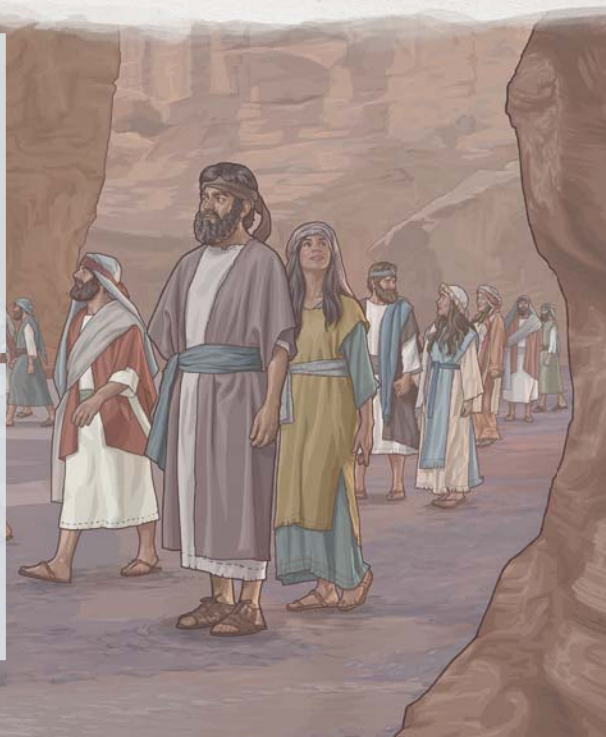
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G O D ' S N A M E

Millions of people address God using respectful titles, such as Lord, the Eternal, Allah, or simply God. However, God has a personal name. Should you use it?

What is God's name?

WHAT SOME PEOPLE SAY Many professed Christians believe that God's name is Jesus. Others claim that since there is only one Almighty God, using a personal name for him is unnecessary. Still others argue that using a proper name for God is inappropriate.

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS Almighty God's name is not Jesus, since Jesus is not God Almighty. In fact, Jesus taught fellow worshippers to pray to God saying: "Father, let *your* name be sanctified." (Luke 11:2) Jesus himself prayed to God: "Father, glorify *your* name."—John 12:28.

In the Bible, God declares: "I am Jehovah. That is my name; I give my glory to no one else." (Isaiah 42:8) "Jehovah" is an English translation of the four Hebrew consonants YHWH, which constitute the divine name. That name appears some 7,000 times in the Hebrew Scriptures.* It is used more often than any title, such as "God," "Almighty," or "Lord," and more frequently than any other name, such as Abraham, Moses, or David.

* Many Bible translations omit God's name and replace it with the title "LORD" in capital letters, while others include God's name only in select verses or footnotes. The *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* uses the divine name extensively throughout the text.

Nowhere in the Bible does Jehovah prohibit the respectful use of his name. Instead, the Scriptures reveal that the divine name was freely used by God's servants. They included it in the names they gave their children, such as Elijah, which means "My God Is Jehovah," and Zechariah, which means "Jehovah Has Remembered." And they did not hesitate to use God's name in daily conversations.—Ruth 2:4.

God wants us to use his name. We are encouraged to "give thanks to Jehovah, call on his name." (Psalm 105:1) He even takes favorable note of those "meditating on his name."—Malachi 3:16.

"May people know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth."—Psalm 83:18.



What does God’s name mean?

Some scholars believe that in Hebrew the name Jehovah means “He Causes to Become.” That definition implies that God can cause himself or his creation to become whatever is needed to accomplish his will. Only the almighty Creator could live up to such a name.

WHAT IT MEANS FOR YOU Knowing God’s name will change the way you think about him. You will find it easier to draw close to him. After all, how can you be close to someone whose name you do not know? Why, the very fact that God has revealed his name to you shows that he *wants* you to draw close to him.—James 4:8.

You can be certain that Jehovah will always live up to his name as a God who makes things happen. That is why the Bible states: “Those knowing your name will

trust in you.” (Psalm 9:10) You develop that trust as you learn that Jehovah’s name is inseparably linked to his qualities, such as loyal love, mercy, compassion, and justice. (Exodus 34:5-7) How reassuring to know that while Jehovah will always keep his promises, he will never act contrary to his qualities.

Clearly, to know Almighty God by name is a privilege. It can open up blessings for you now and in the future. God promises: “I will protect him because he knows my name.”—Psalm 91:14. ■

“Everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved.”—Joel 2:32.

Courtesy of The Israel Antiquities Authority

The personal name of God written in ancient Hebrew characters appears abundantly in early manuscripts of the Bible



God’s name rendered in various languages

Jehovah	Ziova
יהוה	Xehová
Yehuwa	Jiova
Yihowa	Jeová
Joova	여호와
Jehová	エホバ
יהוה	Yawe

What Will You Experience at Our Christian Meetings?

Many people have stopped attending religious services because they find no spiritual guidance or comfort. Why, then, should you attend the Christian meetings organized by Jehovah's Witnesses? What will you find there?

The joy of being among loving and caring people. In the first century, Christians were organized into congregations, and they held meetings to worship God, to study the Scriptures, and to encourage one another. (Hebrews 10:24, 25) Gathered in a loving atmosphere, they felt that they were among true friends—their spiritual brothers. (2 Thessalonians 1:3; 3 John 14) We follow the same pattern and experience similar joy.

The benefit of learning how to apply Bible principles. As was true in Bible times, men, women, and children all meet together. Qualified teachers use the Bible to help us discern how to apply its principles in our daily life. (Deuteronomy 31:12; Nehemiah 8:8) All may participate in audience discussions and in singing, allowing us to express our Christian hope.—Hebrews 10:23.

The blessing of having your faith in God strengthened. The apostle Paul told one of the congregations in his day: "I am longing to see you, . . . that we may have an interchange of encouragement by one another's faith, both yours and mine." (Romans 1:11, 12) At meetings, our regular contact with fellow believers strengthens our faith and determination to live a Christian life.

Why not accept this invitation to attend our congregation's next meeting and experience these things for yourself? You will be warmly welcomed. All meetings are free —no collections are ever taken.

- On what pattern are our congregation meetings based?
- How can we benefit ourselves by attending Christian meetings?

FIND OUT MORE

If you would like to see inside the local Kingdom Hall before you attend one of our meetings, ask one of Jehovah's Witnesses to take you there and show you around.



Malaysia

Argentina

Sierra Leone

Belgium

Sowing Kingdom Seed

(Matthew 13:4-8)

E \flat *A \flat /E \flat* *E \flat ma7/E \flat* *A \flat /E \flat*

Come share in the work of our Mas - ter; Re -
How much of your work is suc - cess - ful May

E \flat *Gm* *A \flat* *C7/G*

spond to his call and o - bey. He
of - ten de - pend much on you. Those

Fm *D \flat /F* *Fm6* *Fm7*

of - fers to help and to guide you; His
hear - ing will need your as - sis - tance To

B \flat 7 *B \flat 9/A \flat* *E \flat /G* *B \flat 7/F*

teach - ing will show you the way. The
learn and to love what is true. So

Sowing Kingdom Seed

E \flat *E \flat +5* *Cm*

seed of the truth has pow - er to grow In
help them to deal with pres - sures and doubts They're

D \flat *Fm7* *B \flat 7*

hearts that are hon - est and true. So
cer - tain to face on their way. The

E \flat *Fm7* *E \flat /G* *A \flat*

give of your best as you faith - ful - ly share In the
seed of the truth will bring joy when you see How it

E \flat /B \flat *B \flat 7sus4* *B \flat 7* *E \flat*

work you've been giv - en to do.
grows in their heart day by day.

- Song 8 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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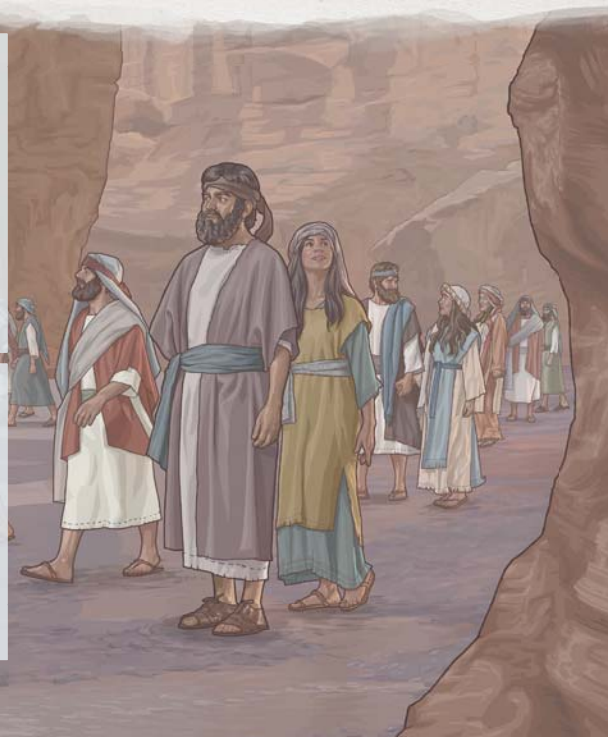
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New Feature of the Midweek Meeting

Beginning in January 2018, the midweek meeting will include study notes and media from the online study edition of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures (nwtsty)*, even if the study edition is not yet available in your language. No doubt this information will enrich your meeting preparation. More important, may it draw you ever closer to our loving Father, Jehovah!



STUDY NOTES

The study notes provide cultural, geographic, and linguistic insight into many Bible verses.

Matthew 12:20

Smoldering wick: A common household lamp was a small earthenware vessel filled with olive oil. A flax wick drew the oil up to feed the flame. The Greek expression “smoldering wick” may refer to a wick that gives off smoke because an ember is still present but the flame is fading or is extinguished. The prophecy of Isaiah 42:3 foretold Jesus’ compassion; he would never extinguish the last spark of hope in humble and downtrodden people.

Matthew 26:13

Truly: Greek, *a-men'*, a transliteration of the Hebrew *'a-men'*, meaning “so be it,” or “surely.” Jesus frequently uses this expression to preface a statement, a promise, or a prophecy, thereby emphasizing its absolute truthfulness and reliability. Jesus’ use of “truly,” or *amen*, in this way is said to be unique in sacred literature. When repeated in succession (*a-men' a-men'*), as is the case throughout the Gospel of John, Jesus’ expression is translated “most truly.”—Joh 1:51.

MEDIA

Photos, artwork, and silent videos and animations illustrate various details recorded in the Bible.

Bethphage, the Mount of Olives, and Jerusalem

This short video follows a path approaching Jerusalem from the east, from the village of modern-day et-Tur—thought to correspond to the Biblical Bethphage—to one of the higher points on the Mount of Olives. Bethany lies east of Bethphage on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. When in Jerusalem, Jesus and his disciples customarily spent the night at Bethany, today marked by the town of el-'Azariyeh (El 'Eizariya), an Arabic name meaning “The Place of Lazarus.” Jesus undoubtedly stayed at the home of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus. (Mt 21:17; Mr 11:11; Lu 21:37; Joh 11:1) When traveling from their home to Jerusalem, Jesus may have followed a route similar to the one shown in the video. On Nisan 9, 33 C.E., when Jesus rode the colt of a donkey over the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem, he may well have done so from Bethphage, following the road to Jerusalem.

1. Road from Bethany to Bethphage
2. Bethphage
3. Mount of Olives
4. Kidron Valley
5. Temple Mount



Nail in a Heel Bone

This is a photograph of a replica of a human heel bone pierced by an iron nail that was 11.5 cm (4.5 in.) long. The original artifact was found in 1968, during excavations in northern Jerusalem, and dates to Roman times. It provides archaeological evidence that nails were likely used in executions to fasten the person to a wooden stake. This nail may be similar to the nails employed by the Roman soldiers to fasten Jesus Christ to the stake. The artifact was found in a stone box, called an ossuary, into which the dried bones of a deceased person were placed after the flesh had decomposed. This indicates that someone executed on a stake could be given a burial.—Mt 27:35.



THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE

You likely are pleased to get good news. And there definitely is very good news for you and your loved ones.

This good news is in the Bible, a book that the Creator of the universe, Jehovah God, caused to be written years ago. In this publication, we will focus on four Bible books that contain very good news for all of us. They are identified by the names of the men whom God used to write them—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

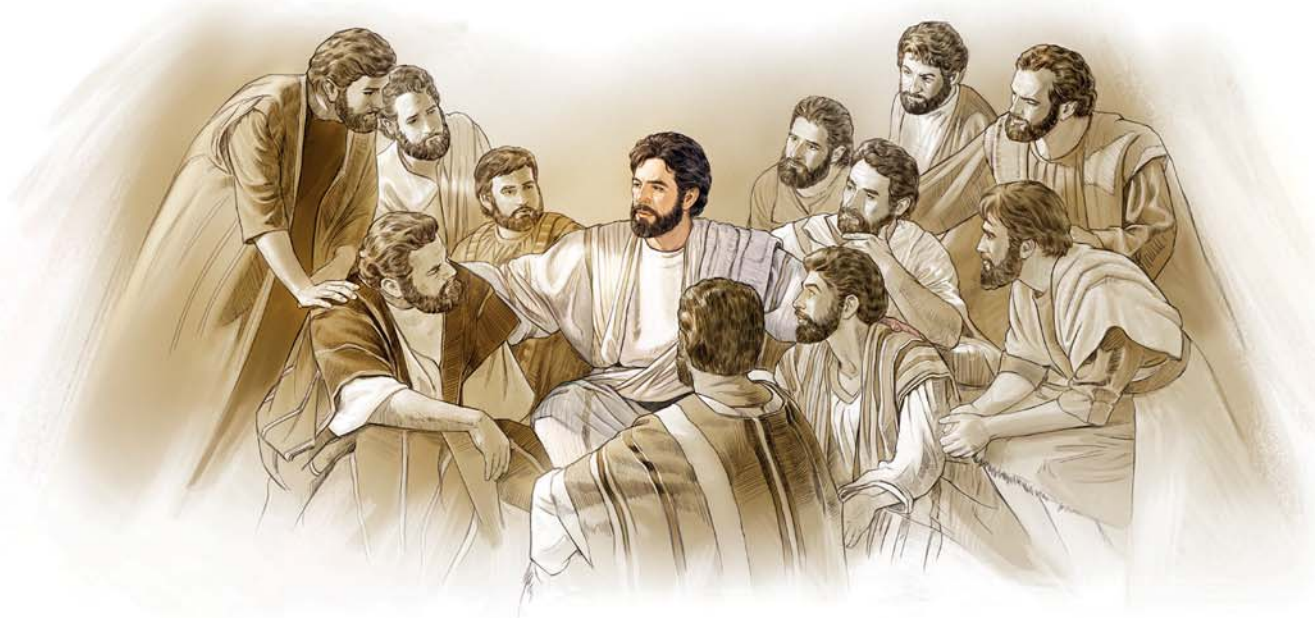
Many refer to these four accounts as the four Gospels. All four relate the gospel, or good news, about Jesus—that he is God’s means for salvation and that as King of God’s heavenly Kingdom, Jesus will bring permanent blessings to all who exercise faith in him.—Mark 10:17, 30; 13:13.

WHY FOUR GOSPELS?

You may have wondered why God inspired four accounts of Jesus’ life and teachings.

There are benefits to having these separate accounts of what Jesus said and did. To illustrate, imagine that four men are standing near a famous teacher. The man standing in front of the teacher has a tax office. The one on the right is a physician. The man listening from the left side is a fisherman and is the teacher’s very close friend. And the fourth man, located at the back, is an observer who is younger than the others. All four are honest men, and each has a distinct interest or focus. If each writes an account of the teacher’s sayings and activities, the four records would likely feature different details or events. By considering all four accounts, bearing in mind the varying perspectives or objectives, we could get a complete picture of what the teacher said and did. This illustrates how we can benefit from having four separate accounts of the life of the Great Teacher, Jesus.

Continuing the illustration, the tax man wants



to appeal to people of a Jewish background, so he groups some teachings or events in a way to help that primary audience. The physician highlights the healing of the sick or crippled, so he omits some things that the tax man recorded or presents them in a different order. The close friend emphasizes the teacher's feelings and qualities. The younger man's account is briefer, more succinct. Still, each man's account is accurate. This well illustrates how having all four accounts of Jesus' life enriches our understanding of his activities, teachings, and personality.

People may speak of 'the Gospel of Matthew' or 'John's Gospel.' That is not inaccurate, for each contains "good news about Jesus Christ." (Mark 1:1) However, in a larger sense, there is but one overall gospel, or good news, about Jesus—available to us in the four records.

Many students of God's Word have compared and harmonized the events and facts found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. About 170 C.E., the Syrian writer Tatian endeavored to do so. He recognized these four books as accurate and inspired, and he compiled the *Diatessaron*, a harmonized account of Jesus' life and ministry.

Jesus—The Way, the Truth, the Life does similarly, but it is more accurate and complete. That is possible because we now better understand the fulfillment of many of Jesus' prophecies and illustrations. This understanding clarifies the things he said and did, as well as the order in which events occurred. Archaeological discoveries have also shed light on certain details and on the writers' perspectives. Of course, no one can be dogmatic about the sequence of every event.

But *Jesus—The Way, the Truth, the Life* presents what is reasonable and logical.

THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE

As you read and enjoy this book, try to bear in mind the primary message for you and your loved ones. Recall that Jesus Christ himself told the apostle Thomas: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."—John 14:6.

Jesus—The Way, the Truth, the Life will help you to appreciate how Jesus definitely is "the way." Only through him is it possible to approach Jehovah God in prayer. Moreover, Jesus is the way for us to be reconciled to God. (John 16:23; Romans 5:8) Hence, only through Jesus can we have an approved relationship with God.

Jesus is "the truth." He spoke and lived in harmony with truth; it was as if truth arrived in the person of Jesus. He fulfilled scores of prophecies, which became "yes" by means of him." (2 Corinthians 1:20; John 1:14) Such prophecies help us to see his central role in the outworking of God's purpose.—Revelation 19:10.

And Jesus Christ is "the life." By means of the ransom, his giving up his perfect life and blood, he made it possible for us to gain "the real life," that is, "everlasting life." (1 Timothy 6:12, 19; Ephesians 1:7; 1 John 1:7) He will also prove to be "the life" for millions who have died but who will be raised to life with the prospect of living in Paradise forever.—John 5:28, 29.

All of us need to appreciate Jesus' role in God's purpose. May you enjoy learning more about Jesus—"the way and the truth and the life."

Christ, Our Model

(1 Peter 2:21)

C/E C/G C G7sus4 C C/B F/A G/B

What love Je - ho - vah showed, What good - ness from him flowed,
 Je - ho - vah's Word, he said, Sus - tained his life like bread.
 Like Je - sus, may our days Pro - vide Je - ho - vah praise,

G G/F C/E F C/G F6/A G/B F/C C

When for all man - kind he of - fered his First - born.
 It gave him wis - dom and knowl - edge and in - sight.
 And may his foot - steps be - come our own road - way.

C/E Dm11 C Bm11 E7 Am Cma7/G Fma7 C/E Dm7

Christ took on hu - man form— The Son of man was born—
 His Fa - ther's will - ing slave, A mod - el Je - sus gave;
 Let Je - sus' mod - el be Our path e - ter - nal - ly,

G7 G/D G/F Em7 C/E F C/G G13sus4 G7 C

By his ex - am - ple, God's name he a - dorned.
 To please his Fa - ther would bring him de - light.
 And then God's fa - vor we'll know day by day.

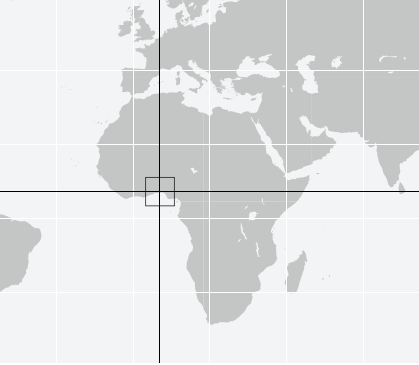
OCTOBER 2017

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
NOVEMBER 27-DECEMBER 24, 2017



COVER IMAGE:
NIGERIA

One of the many metropolitan witnessing stands in Lagos, the most populous city in Africa. At this one location, an average of six Bible studies are requested every month

PUBLISHERS
370,336

BIBLE STUDIES
870,185

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE
(2016)
774,874

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

The Watchtower (ISSN 0043-1087) Issue 15 October 2017 is published monthly with an additional issue published in January, March, May, July, September, and November by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; L. Weaver, Jr., President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299, and by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada, PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, NY, and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Watchtower, 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299. © 2017 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. Printed in Canada.

October 2017
Vol. 138, No. 15 ENGLISH

Forward, You Witnesses!

(Luke 16:16)

Dm A7/D Dm/A A7 Dm

Firm and de - ter - mined in this time of the end, Pre -
 Ser - vants of Jah do not seek a life of ease; The
 God and his King - dom are mocked and pushed a - side; His

Gm D7/G Gm/D D7 Gm Gm/E

pared are God's ser - vants the good news to de - fend. The
 world and its rul - ers we do not try to please. Un -
 great name is slan - dered, its ho - li - ness de - nied. Let's

A A/G A/F A/E A7 Dm A Dm/A

Dev - il has fought and op - posed them. With Je -
 spot - ted at all times re - main - ing, Our in -
 share in its sanc - ti - fi - ca - tion, And de -

Gm/B \flat Gm/E A A7+5 A7 Dm

Chorus
C7

ho - vah, they take their stand a - gainst him.
 teg - ri - ty we will keep main - tain - ing. Then
 clare it to ev - 'ry tribe and na - tion.

Forward, You Witnesses!

F C7/E F C7/E F C7/G F/A C7/E

for - ward, you Wit - ness - es, ev - er strong of heart! Re -

F C7/E A7 Dm A7/E Dm/F G7 C F

joyce that in God's work, you too may have a part! Go

Bb Gm7 F/A C7/Bb F/C C7/Bb F/A F A7/E Dm Dm/C

tell far and wide that the Par - a - dise is near And that

Bb F/A Gm7 C7 Fsus4 F

soon all its bless - ings will be here.

(See also Ex. 9:16; Phil. 1:7; 2 Tim. 2:3, 4; Jas. 1:27.)



Chariots and a Crown Safeguard You

*“It will occur—if you do not fail to listen
to the voice of Jehovah your God.”—ZECH. 6:15.*

SONGS: 61, 22

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

Of what does Zechariah’s
final vision assure God’s
people?

How do the two copper
mountains and the chariots
provide encouragement
for us?

How do you feel about the
greatest building work going
on today?

AS Zechariah’s seventh vision closes, the prophet has much to think about. Jehovah had guaranteed that he would hold dishonest people accountable for their wicked deeds. This promise surely strengthened Zechariah. Yet, nothing had really changed. Dishonesty and other wicked practices were still present, and the rebuilding of Jehovah’s temple in Jerusalem was far from complete. How could the Jews have abandoned their divinely appointed task so quickly? Had they returned to their homeland simply to further their own interests?

² Zechariah knew that the Jews who moved to Jerusalem were men and women of faith. They were the ones “whose spirit the true God had stirred” to leave behind the security of their homes and businesses. (Ezra 1:2, 3, 5) They left a land that was familiar to them in order to move to a place most of them had never seen. If the rebuilding of Jehovah’s temple was not important, they would not have made the difficult

1, 2. At the close of Zechariah’s seventh vision, what was the situation of the Jews in Jerusalem?

journey of some 1,000 miles (1,600 km) through a harsh land.

³ What would that journey have been like? As the Jews traveled along, they no doubt spent many hours thinking about their new home. They had heard how beautiful the city of Jerusalem once was. The oldest ones among them had seen the former glory of the temple. (Ezra 3:12) If you had traveled with them, how would you have felt when you first caught sight of Jerusalem, your new home? Would you have been saddened when you saw the ruined buildings overgrown with weeds? Would you have compared the massive double walls of Babylon with Jerusalem's broken-down walls, with large gaps where gates and watchtowers once stood? Yet, the people took heart. They had already seen Jehovah's saving hand in their behalf throughout their long trip homeward. The first thing they did upon arriving was set up an altar on the site of the former temple, and they began to offer daily sacrifices to Jehovah. (Ezra 3:1, 2) In their initial excitement, it seemed that nothing could discourage them.

⁴ In addition to the temple work, the Israelites had to rebuild their cities. They had houses to restore, fields to plant, and mouths to feed. (Ezra 2:70) The work before them seemed overwhelming. Then the opposition came—hard and fast. Although they initially took a firm stand, 15 years of hostility took their toll. (Ezra 4:1-4) A crushing blow was dealt in 522 B.C.E. when the Persian king banned further building in Jerusalem. The future of that city seemed uncertain.—Ezra 4:21-24.

3, 4. What obstacles did the returning Jews face?

⁵ Jehovah knew what his people needed. God gave Zechariah a final vision to assure the Jews of His love and appreciation for all that they had done so far and to guarantee protection for them if they would return to His work. In connection with rebuilding the temple, Jehovah promised: "It will occur—if you do not fail to listen to the voice of Jehovah your God."—Zech. 6:15.

A CAVALRY OF ANGELIC FORCES

⁶ The last of Zechariah's eight visions may perhaps be the most faith-strengthening. (**Read Zechariah 6:1-3.**) Picture the scene: Charging forward "from between two mountains . . . of copper" come four chariots, likely fitted for battle. The horses pulling the chariots are of different colors. This would help to distinguish one rider from the next. "What are these?" asked Zechariah. (Zech. 6:4) We too want to know, as this vision directly affects us.

⁷ In the Bible, mountains can represent kingdoms, or governments. The mountains in Zechariah's account are similar to two mountains described in Daniel's prophecy. One mountain represents Jehovah's universal and eternal rulership. The other mountain represents the Messianic Kingdom in the hands of Jesus. (Dan. 2:35, 45) Since Jesus' enthronement in the autumn of 1914, both mountains have been present

5. How did Jehovah respond to the inactivity of his people?

6. (a) How does Zechariah's eighth vision begin? (See opening image.) (b) Why are the horses of different colors?

7, 8. (a) What do the two mountains represent? (b) Why are the mountains made of copper?

Jehovah still uses his angels to protect and strengthen his people

and have played a special role in the fulfillment of God's will on earth.

⁸ Why are the mountains made of copper? Like gold, copper is a metal that is highly valued. Jehovah directed that this shiny metal be used in the construction of the tabernacle and later in the temple in Jerusalem. (Ex. 27:1-3; 1 Ki. 7:13-16) Appropriately, then, the copper of the two symbolic mountains reminds us of the excellent quality of Jehovah's universal sovereignty and of the Messianic Kingdom, which will provide stability and blessings to all mankind.

⁹ Now back to the chariots. What do they and their riders represent? The riders of the chariots are angels, likely groups or divisions of angels. (**Read Zechariah 6:5-8.**) They are going out from "before the Lord of the whole earth" with a special mission to fulfill. What assignment are they given? The chariots and their riders are sent out to care for specific territories. Their responsibility is to protect Jehovah's people, particularly from "the land of the north," Babylon. Jehovah would make sure that Babylon would not enslave his people again. What comfort this must have brought to the temple builders in Zechariah's day! They did not have to worry about interference from their enemies.

9. Who are the riders of the chariots, and what is their assignment?

¹⁰ As in Zechariah's day, Jehovah of armies still uses his angels to protect and strengthen his people. (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 1:7, 14) Ever since spiritual Israel was released from symbolic captivity to Babylon the Great in 1919, the expansion of true worship has been unstoppable despite relentless opposition. (Rev. 18:4) Because we have angelic protection, we need not fear that Jehovah's organization might go through another time of spiritual oppression. (Ps. 34:7) Instead, we can be sure that God's servants worldwide will continue to flourish spiritually. As we reflect on Zechariah's vision, we do not doubt that we are safe in the shadow of the two mountains.

¹¹ Very soon the political powers of Satan's world will form a coalition that is bent on the destruction of God's people. (Ezek. 38:2, 10-12; Dan. 11:40, 44, 45; Rev. 19:19) Ezekiel's prophecy describes these forces as covering the land like the clouds and coming up against us in a fury, riding on horses. (Ezek. 38:15, 16)* Do we have anything to fear? Not at all! We have a cavalry on our side. At that critical moment during the great tribulation, the angelic soldiers of Jehovah of armies will come together to protect God's people and destroy those who oppose his sovereignty. (2 Thess. 1:7, 8) What a day that will be! But who takes the lead among Jehovah's heavenly army?

* For more information, see "Questions From Readers" in *The Watchtower*, May 15, 2015, pp. 29-30.

10. What assurance can God's people today draw from Zechariah's prophecy about the chariots and their riders?

11. Why do we not need to fear the coming attack on God's people?

JEHOVAH CROWNS HIS KING AND PRIEST

¹² Zechariah has had eight visions that he alone observed. Now he participates in a prophetic act as an encouragement to those who are restoring God's temple. **(Read Zechariah 6:9-12.)** Zechariah is told to collect silver and gold from Hel-dai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah—three new arrivals returning from Babylon—and to make “a grand crown” out of the contributions. (Zech. 6:11, fn.) Is Zechariah told to place the crown on the head of Governor Zerubbabel of the tribe of Judah and a descendant of David? No. Observers must have been intrigued when he placed the crown on High Priest Joshua.

¹³ Did the crowning of High Priest Joshua make him a king? No, Joshua was not from the royal line of David and thus did not qualify to be king. His crowning was prophetic, pointing to a future and eternal king and priest. The high priest who is made king is named Sprout. The Scriptures clearly indicate that Sprout is Jesus Christ.—Isa. 11:1; Matt. 2:23, fn.

¹⁴ Acting as both King and High Priest, Jesus is the leader of Jehovah's heavenly army. As such, he works diligently so that God's people as a whole may dwell in security despite living in the midst of this hostile world. (Jer. 23:5, 6) In the near future, Christ will take the lead in conquering the nations in support of God's sovereignty and in defending Jehovah's people. (Rev. 17:12-14; 19:11, 14, 15) Before executing judgment, how-

12, 13. (a) What action is Zechariah now told to take? (b) Explain how the man named Sprout is prophetic of Jesus Christ.

14. What work does Jesus take on as King and High Priest?

ever, Sprout has a great work to accomplish.

HE WILL BUILD THE TEMPLE

¹⁵ In addition to being commissioned King and High Priest, Jesus was assigned to “build the temple of Jehovah.” **(Read Zechariah 6:13.)** In modern times, Jesus' building work involved liberating true worshippers from Babylon the Great and restoring the Christian congregation in 1919. He also appointed a “faithful and discreet slave” to take the lead in directing the work in the earthly courtyards of the great spiritual temple. (Matt. 24:45) Jesus has also been busy refining God's people and helping them to render worship that is clean.—Mal. 3:1-3.

¹⁶ During the Thousand Year Reign, Jesus and his 144,000 associate kings and priests will bring faithful humans to perfection. When this is accomplished, only true worshippers of God will be left on the cleansed earth. Finally, true worship will be fully restored!

TAKE PART IN THE BUILDING WORK

¹⁷ How, though, did Zechariah's message affect the Jews in his day? Jehovah had guaranteed stability and protection for their work. His assurance that the temple would be built must have brought hope to their tired hearts. But how would just a few accomplish so much work? Zechariah's next words remove any remaining fear or doubt. In addition

15, 16. (a) What restoration and refining work has been accomplished in modern times, and by whom? (b) What will result by the end of Christ's Thousand Year Reign?

17. What reassurance does Jehovah next give the Jews, and how does his message affect them?

to the support of faithful ones like Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, God tells of many others who would “come and take part in building the temple of Jehovah.” **(Read Zechariah 6:15.)** Confident of divine backing, the Jews quickly swing into action, resuming their building work despite the ban. Soon Jehovah removes the mountainlike obstacle of the official ban, and the temple is completed in 515 B.C.E. (Ezra 6:22; Zech. 4:6, 7) The words of Jehovah, however, describe things far greater for our day.

¹⁸ Today, millions join in true worship, and they are moved from the heart to contribute their “valuable things,” which include their time, energy, and resources in support of Jehovah’s great spiritual temple. (Prov. 3:9) How can we be certain that Jehovah values our loyal support? Remember that Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah brought the materials for the crown that Zechariah made. The crown then served “as a memorial,” or

18. How is Zechariah 6:15 being fulfilled in our day?

“reminder,” of their contribution toward true worship. (Zech. 6:14; fn.) Likewise, the work and the love we show for Jehovah will never be forgotten. (Heb. 6:10) They will remain forever, cherished in Jehovah’s memory.

¹⁹ All that has been accomplished for true worship in these last days is tangible evidence of Jehovah’s blessing and Christ’s leadership. We are part of a stable, secure, and everlasting organization. Jehovah’s purpose regarding pure worship “will occur.” Cherish your place among Jehovah’s people, and “do not fail to listen to the voice of Jehovah your God.” Then you can remain under the protection of our King and High Priest and of the heavenly riders of the chariots. Have as full a share as possible in supporting true worship. As you do so, you can be certain that Jehovah of armies will keep you safe and secure during the remainder of this system of things—and for eternity!

19. What effect should Zechariah’s visions have on us today?

Jehovah will never forget the love that we show for him!
(See paragraphs 18, 19)



22 The Kingdom Is in Place—Let It Come!

(Revelation 11:15; 12:10)

A D/A Fma7 G

Je - ho - vah, you al - ways have been, And al - ways you will
 The time for the Dev - il is short; We know what this will
 The an - gels in heav - en re - joice And sing with joy - ful

A F#m C#m Em

be. You've giv - en the throne to your Son; He
 mean. Though liv - ing in times of dis - tress, We
 cries. The heav - ens a - bove are re - lieved From

Bm7 A/C# E D/E C#m/E Bm/E A/E

rules by your de - cree. The King - dom has been
 see the things un - seen. The King - dom has been
 Sa - tan and his lies. The King - dom has been

R.H.

The Kingdom Is in Place—Let It Come!

Bm/E C#m/E D/E F#m/E E D/E C#m/E D/E

brought to birth; His ru - ler - ship will
 brought to birth; His ru - ler - ship will
 brought to birth; His ru - ler - ship will

E D/E E *Chorus* A E A

fill the earth.
 fill the earth. For now have come to pass Sal -
 fill the earth.

D A/C# E A E/G#

va - tion and king - dom and might. The King - dom is in

F#m Bm Bm/D A/E E7 A

place. We pray: "Let it come, Let it come!"

