

- Song 27 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“The Illustration of the Wheat and the Weeds”:** (10 min.)
 Mt 13:24-26—A man sowed fine seed in his field, and his enemy oversowed the field with weeds (w13 7/15 9-10 ¶2-3)
 Mt 13:27-29—The wheat and the weeds grew together until the harvest (w13 7/15 10 ¶4)
 Mt 13:30—During the harvest, the reapers first collected the weeds and then gathered the wheat (w13 7/15 12 ¶10-12)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Mt 12:20—How can we imitate Jesus’ compassion? (nwtsty study note)

Mt 13:25—Is it believable that someone in ancient times would actually oversow another man’s field with weeds? (w16.10 32)

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) Mt 12:1-21

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call Video:** (4 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **First Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) bhs 22-23 ¶10-12

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 68
- **Local Needs:** (5 min.)
- **“Kingdom Illustrations and Their Meaning for Us”:** (10 min.) Discussion. Consider how these illustrations should affect our share in the ministry.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 7
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 10 and Prayer

Kingdom Illustrations and Their Meaning for Us



Jesus used simple illustrations to teach deep spiritual lessons. However, only humble ones seek to understand and apply the lessons he taught. (Mt 13:10-15) For each of the Kingdom illustrations, answer the following questions: How can I benefit from this illustration? How should it affect my life?

THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS IS LIKE . . .

“a mustard grain.”—Mt 13:31, 32; w14 12/15 8 ¶9.

“leaven.”—Mt 13:33; w14 12/15 9-10 ¶14-15.

“a treasure” and “a traveling merchant.”—Mt 13:44-46; w14 12/15 10 ¶18.



The Revealing of God's Sons

(Romans 8:19)

Verse 1

C Eb6/9 Fadd9 Gsus4 Abma7 Bbadd9

The time is near when God re - veals His faith - ful cho - sen ones.

G7sus4 Ab6/9 Bb/D Eb Fadd9 G

In heav - en they will rule with Christ As might - y

Abma7 Bbadd9 Csus4 C *Chorus* Ab Bb

spir - it sons. The sons of God will

Csus4 C Ab Bb Csus4 C

be re - vealed A - long with Christ, their Lord. They'll

The Revealing of God's Sons

Fm9 Ebadd9/G Abadd9 Bbadd9 Gm11 C Bb/C

join him in his vic - to - ry And share in his re - ward.

Detailed description: This system contains the first two lines of music. The top staff is in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb, Eb). It features a melody line with eighth and quarter notes, and a chord line with complex chords: Fm9, Ebadd9/G, Abadd9, Bbadd9, Gm11, C, and Bb/C. The bottom staff is in bass clef, providing a bass line with eighth and quarter notes. The lyrics are: "join him in his vic - to - ry And share in his re - ward."

C Bb/C Verse 2 C Eb6/9 Fadd9 Gsus4

And soon the last re - main - ing ones Will hear his

Detailed description: This system contains the third and fourth lines of music. The top staff is in treble clef. It starts with a double bar line and the word "Verse 2". The melody continues with quarter and eighth notes. Chords above the staff are C, Bb/C, C, Eb6/9, Fadd9, and Gsus4. The bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are: "And soon the last re - main - ing ones Will hear his"

Abma7 Bbadd9 G7sus4 Ab6/9 Bb/D Eb

fi - nal call. The King of kings and Lord of

Detailed description: This system contains the fifth and sixth lines of music. The top staff is in treble clef. The melody features a long note with a slur. Chords above the staff are Abma7, Bbadd9, G7sus4, Ab6/9, Bb/D, and Eb. The bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are: "fi - nal call. The King of kings and Lord of"

Fadd9 G Abma7 Bbadd9 Csus4 C Chorus Ab Bb

lords Will then col - lect them all. The sons of God will

Detailed description: This system contains the seventh and eighth lines of music. The top staff is in treble clef. The melody continues with quarter and eighth notes. Chords above the staff are Fadd9, G, Abma7, Bbadd9, Csus4, C, and then "Chorus" with Ab and Bb. The bottom staff is in bass clef. The lyrics are: "lords Will then col - lect them all. The sons of God will"

The Revealing of God's Sons

Csus4 C Ab Bb Csus4 C

be re - vealed A - long with Christ, their Lord. They'll

Detailed description: This system contains the first two lines of music. The treble staff has a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb) and a common time signature. The melody starts on a half note G4, followed by quarter notes A4 and Bb4, then a dotted quarter note C5. The bass staff provides accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The lyrics are: "be re - vealed A - long with Christ, their Lord. They'll".

Fm9 Ebadd9/G Abadd9 Bbadd9 Gm11 C Bb/C

join him in his vic - to - ry And share in his re - ward.

Detailed description: This system contains the next two lines of music. The treble staff continues the melody with chords and moving lines. The bass staff provides accompaniment. The lyrics are: "join him in his vic - to - ry And share in his re - ward."

C Bb/C *Bridge* Ab/C Bb/C Ab/C Bb/C

And then with Christ, these sons of God Will wage the

Detailed description: This system contains the third line of music, which is the start of a bridge section. The treble staff has a double bar line. The lyrics are: "And then with Christ, these sons of God Will wage the".

C Bb/C C Bb/C Ab/C Bb/C

fi - nal war. The joy - ous mar - riage

Detailed description: This system contains the final line of music. The treble staff continues the melody. The lyrics are: "fi - nal war. The joy - ous mar - riage".

The Revealing of God's Sons

to the Lamb Will last for - ev - er - more.

Ab/C Bb/C C Bb/C

The sons of God will be re - vealed a -

C Bb/C *Chorus* Ab Bb Csus4 C

long with Christ, their Lord. They'll join him in his

Ab Bb Csus4 C Fm9 Ebadd9/G

vic - to - ry And share in his re - ward.

Abadd9 Bbadd9 Gm11 C

it would have remained until this very day. **24** But I say to you, it will be more enduring for the land of Sodom on Judgment Day than for you.”^a

25 At that time Jesus said in response: “I publicly praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intellectual ones and have revealed them to young children.”^b

26 Yes, O Father, because this is the way you approved. **27** All things have been handed over to me by my Father,^c and no one fully knows the Son except the Father;^d neither does anyone fully know the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son is willing to reveal him.^e **28** Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. **29** Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart,^f and you will find refreshment for yourselves.* **30** For my yoke is kindly,* and my load is light.”

12 At that time Jesus went through the grainfields on the Sabbath. His disciples got hungry and started to pluck heads of grain and to eat.^g **2** At seeing this, the Pharisees said to him: “Look! Your disciples are doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath.”^h **3** He said to them: “Have you not read what David did when he and the men with him were hungry?ⁱ **4** How he entered into the house of God and they ate the loaves of presentation,^j something that it was not lawful for him or those with him to eat, but for the priests only?^k **5** Or have you not read in the Law that on the Sabbaths the priests in the

CHAP. 11

- a Mt 10:15
- Lu 10:12
- b Isa 29:14
- Mt 13:15
- Lu 10:21
- 1Co 1:27
- c Joh 3:35
- d Joh 1:18
- e Lu 10:22
- Joh 10:15
- 1Jo 5:20
- f Zec 9:9

CHAP. 12

- g Ex 12:16
- De 23:25
- Mr 2:23-28
- Lu 6:1-5
- h Ex 20:10
- Ex 31:15
- De 5:14
- i 1Sa 21:1-6
- j Ex 25:30
- Ex 40:22, 23
- k Le 24:5-9

Second Col.

- a Nu 28:9
- Joh 7:22
- b Lu 11:31, 32
- c Mt 23:23
- d Ho 6:6
- Mic 6:6, 8
- Mt 9:13
- e Mr 2:27, 28
- Lu 6:5
- f Mr 3:1-6
- Lu 6:6-11
- g Lu 14:3
- Joh 9:16
- h Ex 23:4
- De 22:4
- Lu 14:5
- i Mr 3:7
- j Mt 8:3, 4
- Mr 3:11, 12
- Mr 7:35, 36
- k Ac 3:13
- l Mt 3:17
- Mt 17:5
- m Isa 61:1
- Mr 1:10
- n 2Ti 2:24
- o Mt 11:28

temple violate the Sabbath and continue guiltless?^a **6** But I tell you that something greater than the temple is here.^b **7** However, if you had understood what this means, ‘I want mercy^c and not sacrifice,’^d you would not have condemned the guiltless ones. **8** For the Son of man is Lord of the Sabbath.”^e

9 After departing from that place, he went into their synagogue, **10** and look! there was a man with a withered* hand!^f So they asked him, “Is it lawful to cure on the Sabbath?” so that they might accuse him.^g **11** He said to them: “If you have one sheep and that sheep falls into a pit on the Sabbath, is there a man among you who will not grab hold of it and lift it out?”^h

12 How much more valuable is a man than a sheep! So it is lawful to do a fine thing on the Sabbath.” **13** Then he said to the man: “Stretch out your hand.” And he stretched it out, and it was restored sound like the other hand. **14** But the Pharisees went out and conspired against him to kill him. **15** Having come to know this, Jesus departed from there. Many also followed him,ⁱ and he cured them all, **16** but he sternly ordered them not to make him known,^j **17** in order to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, who said:

18 “Look! My servant^k whom I chose, my beloved, whom I have* approved!^l I will put my spirit upon him,^m and what justice is he will make clear to the nations. **19** He will not quarrelⁿ nor cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the main streets. **20** No bruised reed will he crush, and no smoldering wick will he extinguish,^o until he brings justice with success.

12:10 *Or “paralyzed.” **12:18** *Or “my soul has.”

11:29 *Or “your souls.” 11:30 *Or “easy to bear.” 12:4 *Or “the show-bread.”

21 Indeed, in his name nations will hope.^a

22 Then they brought him a demon-possessed man who was blind and speechless, and he cured him, so that the speechless man could speak and see.

23 Well, all the crowds were astounded and began to say: "May this not perhaps be the Son of David?"

24 At hearing this, the Pharisees said: "This fellow does not expel the demons except by means of Be-el'ze-bub,* the ruler of the demons."^b

25 Knowing their thoughts, he said to them: "Every kingdom divided against itself comes to ruin, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand. **26** In the same way, if Satan expels Satan, he has become divided against himself; how, then, will his kingdom stand? **27** Moreover, if I expel the demons by means of Be-el'ze-bub, by whom do your sons expel them? This is why they will be your judges.

28 But if it is by means of God's spirit that I expel the demons, the Kingdom of God has really overtaken you.^c **29** Or how can anyone invade the house of a strong man and seize his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man? Only then can he plunder his house. **30** Whoever is not on my side is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.^d

31 "For this reason I say to you, every sort of sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the spirit will not be forgiven.^e **32** For example, whoever speaks a word against the Son of man, it will be forgiven him;^f but whoever speaks against the holy spirit, it will not be forgiven him, no, not in this system of things* nor in that to come.^g

12:24 *A designation applied to Satan.
12:32 *Or "this age." See Glossary.

CHAP. 12

a Isa 11:10
Isa 42:1-4
Ac 4:12

b Mr 3:22-27
Lu 11:15-23

c Lu 11:20

d Mr 9:40
Lu 9:50
Lu 11:23

e Mr 3:28, 29
Ac 7:51
Heb 6:4, 6

f 1Ti 1:13

g Lu 12:10
Heb 10:26

Second Col.

a Mt 7:17
Lu 6:43

b Mt 3:7
Mt 23:33

c Mt 15:11

d Lu 6:45
Jas 3:6

e Ec 12:14
Ro 14:12

f Mt 16:1

g Mt 16:4
Lu 11:29-32

h Jon 1:17

i Mt 16:21
Mt 17:23
Mt 27:63
Lu 24:46

j Jon 3:5

k Lu 11:30

l 1Ki 10:1
2Ch 9:1

m Mt 12:6
Lu 11:31

33 "Either you make the tree fine and its fruit fine or make the tree rotten and its fruit rotten, for by its fruit the tree is known.^a **34** Offspring of vipers,^b how can you speak good things when you are wicked? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.^c **35** The good man out of his good treasure sends out good things, whereas the wicked man out of his wicked treasure sends out wicked things.^d **36** I tell you that men will render an account^e on Judgment Day for every unprofitable saying that they speak; **37** for by your words you will be declared righteous, and by your words you will be condemned."

38 Then as an answer to him, some of the scribes and the Pharisees said: "Teacher, we want to see a sign from you."^f **39** In reply he said to them: "A wicked and adulterous* generation keeps on seeking a sign, but no sign will be given it except the sign of Jo'nah the prophet.^g **40** For just as Jo'nah was in the belly of the huge fish for three days and three nights,^h so the Son of man will be in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.ⁱ

41 Men of Nin'e-veh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, because they repented at what Jo'nah preached.^j But look! something more than Jo'nah is here.^k

42 The queen of the south will be raised up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Sol'o-mon.^l But look! something more than Sol'o-mon is here.^m

43 "When an unclean spirit comes out of a man, it passes through waterless places in

12:39 *Or "unfaithful."

search of a resting-place and finds none.^a **44** Then it says, 'I will go back to my house from which I moved,' and on arriving, it finds the house unoccupied but swept clean and adorned. **45** Then it goes and takes along with it seven different spirits more wicked than itself, and after getting inside, they dwell there; and the final circumstances of that man become worse than the first.^b That is how it will be also with this wicked generation."

46 While he was yet speaking to the crowds, his mother and brothers^c were standing outside, seeking to speak to him.^d **47** So someone said to him: "Look! Your mother and your brothers are standing outside, seeking to speak to you." **48** In reply he said to the one who spoke to him: "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" **49** And extending his hand toward his disciples, he said: "Look! My mother and my brothers!^e **50** For whoever does the will of my Father who is in heaven, that one is my brother and sister and mother."^f

13 On that day Jesus left the house and was sitting by the sea. **2** And such large crowds gathered to him that he went aboard a boat and sat down, and all the crowd was standing on the beach.^g **3** Then he told them many things by illustrations,^h saying: "Look! A sower went out to sow.ⁱ **4** As he was sowing, some seeds fell alongside the road, and the birds came and ate them up.^j **5** Others fell on rocky ground where there was not much soil, and they immediately sprang up because the soil was not deep.^k **6** But when the sun rose, they were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. **7** Others fell among the thorns,

CHAP. 12

- a Lu 11:24-26
- b Heb 6:4, 6
2Pe 2:20
- c Mt 13:55
Joh 2:12
Ac 1:14
1Co 9:5
Ga 1:19
- d Mr 3:31-35
- e Joh 20:17
Heb 2:11
- f Mr 3:35
Lu 8:21

CHAP. 13

- g Mr 4:1
- h Mt 13:34
- i Mr 4:3-9
Lu 8:4-8
- j Mt 13:19
- k Mt 13:20, 21

Second Col.

- a Mt 13:22
Mr 4:18, 19
Lu 8:14
- b Mt 13:23
Mr 4:8
Lu 8:8
- c Mt 11:15
- d Mr 4:10, 11
Lu 8:9, 10
- e 1Co 2:9, 10
Eph 1:9-12
Col 1:26, 27
- f Mt 25:29
Mr 4:25
Lu 8:18
- g Isa 6:10
Mr 4:12
- h Joh 12:40
Ro 11:8
2Co 3:14
- i Isa 6:9, 10
Mr 4:12
Ac 28:26, 27
- j Lu 10:23, 24
- k Joh 8:56
Eph 3:5
1Pe 1:10
- l Mr 4:14
Lu 8:11
- m 1Pe 5:8

and the thorns came up and choked them.^a **8** Still others fell on the fine soil, and they began to yield fruit, this one 100 times more, that one 60, the other 30.^b **9** Let the one who has ears listen."^c

10 So the disciples came and said to him: "Why do you speak to them by the use of illustrations?"^d **11** In reply he said: "To you it is granted to understand the sacred secrets^e of the Kingdom of the heavens, but to them it is not granted. **12** For whoever has, more will be given him, and he will be made to abound; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him.^f **13** That is why I speak to them by the use of illustrations; for looking, they look in vain, and hearing, they hear in vain, nor do they get the sense of it.^g **14** And the prophecy of Isaiah is being fulfilled in their case. It says: 'You will indeed hear but by no means get the sense of it, and you will indeed look but by no means see.'^h **15** For the heart of this people has grown unreceptive, and with their ears they have heard without response, and they have shut their eyes, so that they might never see with their eyes and hear with their ears and get the sense of it with their hearts and turn back and I heal them."ⁱ

16 "However, happy are your eyes because they see and your ears because they hear.^j **17** For truly I say to you, many prophets and righteous men desired to see the things you are observing but did not see them,^k and to hear the things you are hearing but did not hear them.

18 "Now listen to the illustration of the man who sowed.^l **19** Where anyone hears the word of the Kingdom but does not get the sense of it, the wicked one^m comes and snatch-

es away what has been sown in his heart; this is the one sown alongside the road.^a **20** As for the one sown on rocky ground, this is the one hearing the word and at once accepting it with joy.^b **21** Yet, he has no root in himself but continues for a time, and after tribulation or persecution has arisen on account of the word, he is at once stumbled. **22** As for the one sown among the thorns, this is the one hearing the word, but the anxiety of this system of things^{*c} and the deceptive power of riches choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful.^d **23** As for the one sown upon the fine soil, this is the one hearing the word and getting the sense of it, who really does bear fruit and produces, this one 100 times more, that one 60, the other 30.^e

24 He presented another illustration to them, saying: "The Kingdom of the heavens may be likened to a man who sowed fine seed in his field. **25** While men were sleeping, his enemy came and oversowed weeds in among the wheat and left. **26** When the stalk sprouted and produced fruit, then the weeds also appeared. **27** So the slaves of the master of the house came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow fine seed in your field? How, then, does it have weeds?' **28** He said to them, 'An enemy, a man, did this.'^f The slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go out and collect them?' **29** He said, 'No, for fear that while collecting the weeds, you uproot the wheat with them. **30** Let both grow together until the harvest, and in the harvest season, I will tell the reapers: First collect the weeds and bind them in bundles to burn them up; then gather the wheat into my storehouse.'^g

13:22 *Or "this age." See Glossary.

CHAP. 13

a Mr 4:15
Lu 8:12

b Mr 4:16, 17
Lu 8:13

c Lu 12:22

d Mt 6:21
Mr 4:18, 19
Mr 10:23
Lu 8:14
1Ti 6:9
2Ti 4:10

e Mr 4:20
Lu 8:15

f Mt 13:38, 39

g Re 14:15

Second Col.

a Mr 4:30-32
Lu 13:18, 19

b Lu 13:21

c Mr 4:33, 34

d Ps 78:2

e Mt 24:14
Ro 10:18
Col 1:6

f Joh 8:44

g Mt 13:30

31 He presented another illustration to them, saying: "The Kingdom of the heavens is like a mustard grain that a man took and planted in his field.^a **32** It is, in fact, the tiniest of all the seeds, but when it has grown, it is the largest of the vegetable plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of heaven come and find lodging among its branches."

33 He told them another illustration: "The Kingdom of the heavens is like leaven that a woman took and mixed with three large measures of flour until the whole mass was fermented."^b

34 All these things Jesus spoke to the crowds by illustrations. Indeed, without an illustration he would not speak to them,^c **35** in order to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet who said: "I will open my mouth with illustrations; I will proclaim things hidden since the founding."^d

36 Then after dismissing the crowds, he went into the house. His disciples came to him and said: "Explain to us the illustration of the weeds in the field."

37 In response he said: "The sower of the fine seed is the Son of man; **38** the field is the world.^e As for the fine seed, these are the sons of the Kingdom, but the weeds are the sons of the wicked one,^f **39** and the enemy who sowed them is the Devil. The harvest is a conclusion of a system of things,^{*} and the reapers are angels. **40** Therefore, just as the weeds are collected and burned with fire, so it will be in the conclusion of the system of things.^{*g} **41** The Son of man will send his angels,

13:35 *Or possibly, "the founding of the world." 13:39 *Or "an age." See Glossary. 13:40 *Or "the age." See Glossary.

and they will collect out from his Kingdom all things that cause stumbling and people who practice lawlessness, **42** and they will pitch them into the fiery furnace.^a There is where their weeping and the gnashing of their teeth will be. **43** At that time the righteous ones will shine as brightly as the sun^b in the Kingdom of their Father. Let the one who has ears listen.

44 "The Kingdom of the heavens is like a treasure, hidden in the field, that a man found and hid; and because of his joy, he goes and sells everything he has and buys that field.^c

45 "Again the Kingdom of the heavens is like a traveling merchant seeking fine pearls. **46** Upon finding one pearl of high value, he went away and promptly sold all the things he had and bought it.^d

47 "Again the Kingdom of the heavens is like a dragnet let down into the sea and gathering fish of every kind. **48** When it was full, they hauled it up onto the beach, and sitting down, they collected the fine ones^e into containers, but the unsuitable^f they threw away. **49** That is how it will be in the conclusion of the system of things.* The angels will go out and separate the wicked from among the righteous **50** and will cast them into the fiery furnace. There is where their weeping and the gnashing of their teeth will be.

51 "Did you get the sense of all these things?" They said to him: "Yes." **52** Then he said to them: "That being the case, every public instructor who is taught about the Kingdom of the heavens is like a man, the master of the house, who brings out of his treasure store things both new and old."

13:49 *Or "the age." See Glossary.

CHAP. 13
a Mt 13:30
b Jg 5:31
c Php 3:7
d Php 3:8
e Le 11:9
f Le 11:12

Second Col.
a Mt 2:23
b Mr 6:1-6
c Lu 4:22
Joh 6:42
d Mt 12:46
Joh 2:12
Ac 1:14
1Co 9:5
Ga 1:19

e Joh 7:15
f 1Pe 2:7, 8
g Mr 6:4
Lu 4:24
Joh 4:44

CHAP. 14
h Mr 6:14
Lu 9:7-9
Ac 4:27
i Mt 16:13, 14
Mr 6:16

j Mr 6:17, 18
Lu 3:19, 20
k Le 18:16
Le 20:21
l Mr 6:20
Lu 1:67, 76

m Ge 40:20-22
n Mr 6:21-29
o Mr 6:25

53 When Jesus had finished these illustrations, he departed from there. **54** After coming into his home territory,^a he began to teach them in their synagogue, so that they were astounded and said: "Where did this man get this wisdom and these powerful works?^b **55** Is this not the carpenter's son?^c Is not his mother called Mary, and his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?^d **56** And his sisters, are they not all with us? Where, then, did he get all of this?"^e **57** So they began to stumble because of him.^f But Jesus said to them: "A prophet is not without honor except in his home territory and in his own house."^g **58** And he did not perform many powerful works there on account of their lack of faith.

14 At that time Herod, the district ruler,* heard the report about Jesus^h **2** and said to his servants: "This is John the Baptist. He was raised up from the dead, and this is why these powerful works are operating in him."ⁱ **3** Herod* had arrested John and had bound him and imprisoned him because of He-ro'di-as, the wife of Philip his brother.^j **4** For John had been saying to him: "It is not lawful for you to have her."^k **5** However, although he wanted to kill him, he feared the crowd, because they took him for a prophet.^l **6** But when Herod's birthday^m was being celebrated, the daughter of He-ro'di-as danced for the occasion and pleased Herod so muchⁿ **7** that he promised with an oath to give her whatever she asked. **8** Then she, at her mother's prompting, said: "Give me here on a platter the head of John the Baptist."^o **9** Grieved though he was, the king, out of

14:1 *Lit., "the tetrarch." 14:3 *That is, Herod Antipas. See Glossary.

- Song 27 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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 Mt 13:24-26—A man sowed fine seed in his field, and his enemy oversowed the field with weeds (w13 7/15 9-10 ¶2-3)
 Mt 13:27-29—The wheat and the weeds grew together until the harvest (w13 7/15 10 ¶4)
 Mt 13:30—During the harvest, the reapers first collected the weeds and then gathered the wheat (w13 7/15 12 ¶10-12)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Mt 12:20—How can we imitate Jesus’ compassion? (nwtsty study note)

 Mt 13:25—Is it believable that someone in ancient times would actually oversow another man’s field with weeds? (w16.10 32)

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

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

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APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call Video:** (4 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **First Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) bhs 22-23 ¶10-12

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 68
- **Local Needs:** (5 min.)
- **“Kingdom Illustrations and Their Meaning for Us”:** (10 min.) Discussion. Consider how these illustrations should affect our share in the ministry.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 7
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 10 and Prayer

Kingdom Illustrations and Their Meaning for Us



Jesus used simple illustrations to teach deep spiritual lessons. However, only humble ones seek to understand and apply the lessons he taught. (Mt 13:10-15) For each of the Kingdom illustrations, answer the following questions: How can I benefit from this illustration? How should it affect my life?

THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS IS LIKE . . .

“a mustard grain.”—Mt 13:31, 32; w14 12/15 8 ¶9.

“leaven.”—Mt 13:33; w14 12/15 9-10 ¶14-15.

“a treasure” and “a traveling merchant.”—Mt 13:44-46; w14 12/15 10 ¶18.



MATTHEW 12-13 | The Illustration of the Wheat and the Weeds

Jesus used the wheat and the weeds to illustrate how and when he would take out of mankind the entire wheat class of anointed Christians, beginning in 33 C.E.

13:24

‘A man sowed fine seed in his field’

- **Sower:** Jesus Christ
- **Fine seed is sown:** Jesus’ disciples are anointed with holy spirit
- **The field:** The world of mankind

13:25

“While men were sleeping, his enemy came and oversowed weeds”

- **Enemy:** The Devil
- **Men were sleeping:** Death of the apostles

13:30

“Let both grow together until the harvest”

- **Wheat:** Anointed Christians
- **Weeds:** Imitation Christians

“First collect the weeds . . . ; then gather the wheat”

- **Slaves/reapers:** Angels
- **Weeds collected:** Imitation Christians are separated from anointed Christians
- **Gathering into the storehouse:** Anointed Christians are gathered into the restored congregation

33 C.E.
SOWING BEGINS




1914
HARVEST SEASON BEGINS



1919
GATHERING INTO THE STOREHOUSE

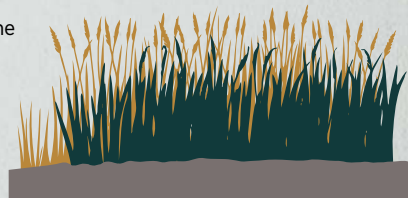


 When the harvest season began, what set true Christians apart from imitation ones?

How do I personally benefit from understanding this illustration?

DID YOU KNOW?

The weeds referred to in this illustration are generally believed to be bearded darnel, a poisonous plant that closely resembles wheat when the wheat is in its early stages of development. As the wheat and the weeds grow together, their roots become intertwined, making it impossible to remove the weeds without losing the wheat. Once the bearded darnel reaches maturity, it can easily be distinguished and removed.



33 C.E.
SOWING
BEGINS

SOWER:
Jesus

**FINE SEED
IS SOWN:**
Anointing with
holy spirit



THE FIELD: The world of mankind

'A man sowed fine seed in his field'
(Matt. 13:24)

THE WHEAT AND THE WEEDS

ENEMY:
The Devil

MEN WERE SLEEPING:
Death of the apostles



'While men were sleeping,
the enemy oversowed weeds'
(Matt. 13:25)



WHEAT:
Anointed Christians



WEEDS:
Imitation Christians



'Both grow together until
the harvest'
(Matt. 13:30)

1914
HARVEST
BEGINS



**SLAVES/
REAPERS:**
Angels

Weedlike Christians are
separated from the anointed
"sons of the kingdom"



The weeds are
collected and bundled
(Matt. 13:30)
(See paragraphs 10, 11)

1919
**GATHERING INTO
THE STOREHOUSE:**
Anointed Christians
are gathered into the
restored congregation



H A R V E S T S E A S O N

'Gathering the wheat
into the storehouse'
(Matt. 13:30)
(See paragraph 12)



SHINING BRIGHTLY

Shortly before Armageddon, the
remaining faithful anointed ones
are gathered to the heavens

ARMAGEDDON

At Armageddon, the weeds
are pitched into the fire



The righteous ones shine brightly in the Kingdom
(Matt. 13:43) (See paragraphs 16, 17)

The weeds are pitched into the fiery furnace
(Matt. 13:42) (See paragraph 15)

had become burdensome because of the human traditions that had been added to the Law of Moses. ([Mt 23:4](#)) Even the Sabbath, which was meant to be a source of refreshment, had become a burden.—[Ex 23:12](#); [Mr 2:23-28](#); [Lu 6:1-11](#).

I will refresh you: The Greek word for “refresh” can refer both to rest ([Mt 26:45](#); [Mr 6:31](#)) and to relief from toil in order to recover and regain strength ([2Co 7:13](#); [Phm 7](#)). The context shows that taking on Jesus’ “yoke” ([Mt 11:29](#)) would involve service, not rest. The active Greek verb with Jesus as the subject conveys the thought of his rejuvenating and energizing weary ones so that they would desire to take up his light and kindly yoke.

11:29

Take my yoke upon you: Jesus used “yoke” figuratively in the sense of submission to authority and direction. If he had in mind a double yoke, one that God placed upon Jesus, then he would be inviting his disciples to get under the yoke *with him* and he would assist them. In that case, the phrase could be rendered: “Get under my yoke with me.” If the yoke is one that Jesus himself puts on others, then the reference is to submitting oneself to Christ’s authority and direction as his disciple.—See Glossary, “[Yoke](#).”

mild-tempered: See [study note on Mt 5:5](#).

lowly in heart: The Greek word for “lowly” refers to the quality of being humble and unpretentious; it also occurs at [Jas 4:6](#) and [1Pe 5:5](#), where it is rendered “humble ones.” The condition of a person’s figurative heart is reflected in his disposition or his attitude toward God and other people.

yourselves: Or “your souls.” See Glossary, “[Soul](#).”

12:1

through the grainfields: Perhaps by means of footpaths that separated one tract of land from another.

Sabbath: See [Glossary](#).

12:2

what is not lawful: Jehovah had commanded that the Israelites do no work on the Sabbath. ([Ex 20:8-10](#)) Jewish religious leaders claimed the right to define exactly what constituted work. According to them, Jesus’ disciples were guilty of harvesting (plucking) and threshing (rubbing) grain. ([Lu 6:1, 2](#)) However, such a definition overstepped Jehovah’s command.

12:4

house of God: Here referring to the tabernacle.

loaves of presentation: Or “showbread.” The Hebrew expression literally means “bread of the face.” The bread was figuratively before Jehovah as a constant offering to him.—[Ex 25:30](#); see [Glossary](#) and [App. B5](#).

12:5

violate the Sabbath: That is, to treat the Sabbath as any other day. They did so by carrying on butchering and other work in connection with the animal sacrifices.—[Nu 28:9, 10](#).

12:7

what this means: Lit., “what is.” Here the Greek word *e-stin*

(literally meaning “is”) has the sense of “signifies; means.”—See [study note on Mt 26:26](#).

mercy and not sacrifice: See [study note on Mt 9:13](#).

12:8

Son of man: See [study note on Mt 8:20](#).

12:10

hand: The Greek word rendered “hand” is broad in meaning and can refer to a person’s arm, hand, and fingers.—See also [Mt 12:13](#).

12:12

How much more: See [study note on Mt 7:11](#).

12:17

to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet: See [study note on Mt 1:22](#).

12:18

Look!: See [study note on Mt 1:20](#).

I have: Or “my soul has.” In this quote from [Isa 42:1](#), the Greek word *psy-khe'* is used to render the Hebrew word *ne'phesh*, both traditionally rendered “soul.”—See Glossary, “[Soul](#).”

whom I have approved: Or “with whom I am well-pleased.”—See [study note on Mt 3:17](#).

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 [Isa 42:3](#) foretold Jesus’ compassion; he would never extinguish the last spark of hope in humble and downtrodden people.

with success: Or “to victory.” The Greek word *ni'kos* is rendered “victory” at [1Co 15:55, 57](#).

12:24

Beelzebub: A designation applied to Satan.—See [study note on Mt 10:25](#).

12:26

Satan: See [study note on Mt 4:10](#).

12:27

sons: Here used in the sense of “followers; disciples.”

they: That is, “your sons.”

be your judges: That is, what their sons did refuted the Pharisees’ argument.

12:31

blasphemy: Refers to defamatory, injurious, or abusive speech against God or against sacred things. Since holy **spirit** emanates from God himself, willfully opposing or denying its operation amounted to blasphemy against God. As shown at [Mt 12:24, 28](#), Jewish religious leaders saw God’s spirit at work in Jesus as he

performed miracles; yet, they attributed this power to Satan the Devil.

12:32

system of things: The Greek word *ai-on'*, having the basic meaning “age,” can refer to a state of affairs or to features that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age. Jesus is stating that blasphemy against the holy spirit will not be forgiven in the present ungodly system of things under Satan’s rule ([2Co 4:4](#); [Eph 2:2](#); [Tit 2:12](#)) nor in the coming system of things under God’s rule, in which “everlasting life” is promised ([Lu 18:29, 30](#)).—See [Glossary](#).

12:34

Offspring of vipers: See [study note on Mt 23:33](#).

12:39

adulterous: Refers to spiritual adultery, or unfaithfulness to God.

sign of Jonah: Jonah compared his deliverance from the belly of the fish after about three days to being raised from the Grave. ([Jon 1:17-2:2](#)) Jesus’ resurrection from the literal grave was to be just as real as Jonah’s deliverance from the belly of the fish. However, even when Jesus was resurrected after being dead for parts of three days, his hardhearted critics did not exercise faith in him.

12:40

three days and three nights: Other Bible accounts show that this expression can mean parts of three days and that part of one day can be considered a whole day.—[Ge 42:17, 18](#); [1Ki 12:5, 12](#); [Mt 27:62-66](#); [28:1-6](#).

12:41

look!: See [study note on Mt 1:20](#).

12:42

queen of the south: That is, the queen of Sheba. Her kingdom is thought to have been located in SW Arabia.—[1Ki 10:1](#).

12:46

brothers: That is, Jesus’ half brothers. Their names are mentioned at [Mt 13:55](#) and [Mr 6:3](#).—See [study note on Mt 13:55](#) regarding the meaning of the term “brother.”

12:47

So someone . . . to you: This verse is omitted in some ancient manuscripts.

13:2

sat down: The custom among Jewish teachers.—[Mt 5:1, 2](#).

on the beach: Along the shore of the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum, there is a spot that forms a natural amphitheater. The good acoustic properties of this location would have allowed a large crowd to hear Jesus speak to them from a boat.

13:3

illustrations: Or “parables.” The Greek word *pa-ra-bo-le'*, which literally means “a placing beside (together),” may be in the form of a parable, a proverb, or an illustration. Jesus often explains a

thing by ‘placing it beside,’ or comparing it with, another similar thing. ([Mr 4:30](#)) His illustrations were short and usually fictitious narratives from which a moral or spiritual truth could be drawn.

Look!: See [study note on Mt 1:20](#).

13:5

rocky ground: Not referring to spots where rocks were scattered in the soil but to bedrock or a shelf of rock where there was little soil. The parallel account at [Lu 8:6](#) says that some seed fell “on the rock.” Such terrain would prevent seeds from sinking their roots deep enough to find needed moisture.

13:7

among the thorns: Jesus is evidently referring, not to full-grown thornbushes, but to weeds that had not been cleaned out of the plowed soil. These would grow and choke out the newly planted seeds.

13:17

truly: See [study note on Mt 5:18](#).

13:22

system of things: The Greek word *ai-on'*, having the basic meaning “age,” can refer to a state of affairs or to features that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age. Here the term is connected with the anxieties and problems that characterize life in the present system of things.—See [Glossary](#).

13:25

oversowed: This hostile act was not unknown in the ancient Near East.

weeds: Generally believed to be bearded darnel (*Lolium temulentum*), a species of the grass family. This poisonous plant closely resembles wheat when the wheat is in its early stages of development, before it reaches maturity.

13:28

The slaves said: Although a few manuscripts read “They said,” the current reading has stronger manuscript support.

13:29

uproot the wheat with them: The roots of the weeds and wheat would have become intertwined. So even if the weeds were identified, uprooting them would result in loss of the wheat.

13:30

collect the weeds: When bearded darnel (see [study note on Mt 13:25](#)) reaches maturity, it can readily be distinguished from wheat.

13:31

mustard grain: Several kinds of mustard plants are found growing wild in Israel. Black mustard (*Brassica nigra*) is the variety commonly cultivated. The relatively small seed, 1-1.6 mm (0.039 to 0.063 in.) in diameter and weighing 1 mg (0.000035 oz) produces a treelike plant. Some varieties of the mustard plant attain a height of up to 4.5 m (15 ft).

13:32

the tiniest of all the seeds: The mustard seed was used in ancient Jewish writings as a figure of speech for the very smallest measure of size. Although there are smaller seeds known today, it was evidently the tiniest of seeds gathered and sown by Galilean farmers in Jesus' day.

13:33

leaven: That is, a small piece of fermented dough held over from a previous kneading and mixed into a new batch of dough to make it rise. Jesus here refers to the normal process of baking bread. Although the Bible often uses leaven to represent sin and corruption (see [study note on Mt 16:6](#)), it does not always have a negative connotation ([Le 7:11-15](#)). Here the fermenting process evidently pictures the spread of something good.

large measures: Or "seah measures." A seah measure equaled 7.33 L (6.66 dry qt).—See Glossary, "[Seah](#)," and [App. B14](#).

13:35

to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: This is a quote from [Ps 78:2](#), where the psalmist (here referred to as "the prophet") used illustrative language to recount much of the history of God's dealings with the nation of Israel. Similarly, Jesus freely used figurative language in the many illustrations he used to teach his disciples and the crowds that followed him.—See [study note on Mt 1:22](#).

since the founding: Or possibly, "since the founding of the world." This longer reading is found in some ancient manuscripts that add the Greek word for "world." (Compare [study note on Mt 25:34](#).) Other ancient manuscripts have the shorter wording used here in the main text.

13:37

Son of man: See [study note on Mt 8:20](#).

13:38

world: Refers to the world of mankind.

13:39

a conclusion: The Greek word *syn-te'lei-a*, rendered "conclusion," also occurs at [Mt 13:40, 49; 24:3; 28:20; Heb 9:26](#).—See [study note on Mt 24:3](#) and Glossary, "[Conclusion of the system of things](#)."

a system of things: Or "an age."—See [study notes on Mt 13:22; 24:3](#) and Glossary, "[Conclusion of the system of things](#)"; "[System\(s\) of things](#)."

13:41

lawlessness: See [study note on Mt 24:12](#).

13:42

gnashing of their teeth: See [study note on Mt 8:12](#).

13:44

everything: Although one early manuscript omits the Greek word *pan'ta* (all; everything) here, the current reading has stronger support in both early and later manuscripts.

13:46

pearl: In Bible times, fine pearls were harvested from the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf, and the Indian Ocean. This doubtless explains why Jesus spoke of the merchant who had to travel and expend effort to seek such a pearl.

13:48

unsuitable: May refer to fish without fins and scales, which were unclean according to the Mosaic Law and could not be eaten, or may possibly refer to any other inedible fish that were caught.—[Le 11:9-12; De 14:9, 10](#).

13:49

conclusion of the system of things: See [study notes on Mt 13:39; 24:3](#) and Glossary, "[Conclusion of the system of things](#)"; "[System\(s\) of things](#)."

13:52

public instructor: Or "learned person." The Greek word *gram-ma-teus'* is rendered "scribe" when referring to a group of Jewish teachers who were versed in the Law, but here the expression is used with regard to Jesus' disciples who were trained to teach others.

13:54

his home territory: Lit., "his father's place," that is, his hometown, Nazareth, the area from which his immediate family came.

13:55

carpenter's son: The Greek word *te'kton*, rendered "carpenter," is a general term that can refer to any artisan or builder. When it refers to a woodworker, it can mean one who works in the building trade, in the construction of furniture, or in the making of other types of wooden objects. Justin Martyr, of the second century C.E., wrote that Jesus worked "as a carpenter when among men, making ploughs and yokes." Early Bible translations in ancient languages also support the idea of a woodworker. Jesus was known both as "the carpenter's son" and as "the carpenter." ([Mr 6:3](#)) Evidently, Jesus learned carpentry from his adoptive father, Joseph. Such an apprenticeship would typically have begun when a boy was about 12 to 15 years of age and would stretch over many years.

brothers: The Greek word *a-del-phos'* can refer to a spiritual relationship in the Bible, but here it is used of Jesus' half brothers, the younger sons of Joseph and Mary. Some who believe that Mary remained a virgin after the birth of Jesus claim that here *a-del-phos'* refers to cousins. However, the Christian Greek Scriptures use a distinct term for "cousin" (Greek, *a-ne-psi-os'* at [Col 4:10](#)) and a different term for "the son of Paul's sister" ([Ac 23:16](#)). Also, [Lu 21:16](#) uses the plural forms of the Greek words *a-del-phos'* and *syg-ge-nes'* (rendered "brothers and relatives"). These examples show that the terms denoting familial relationships are not used loosely or indiscriminately in the Christian Greek Scriptures.

James: This half brother of Jesus is evidently the James who is mentioned at [Ac 12:17](#) and [Ga 1:19](#) and who wrote the Bible book by that name.—[Jas 1:1](#).

Judas: This half brother of Jesus is evidently the Jude (Greek, *I-ou'das*) who wrote the Bible book by that name.—[Jude 1](#).

February 5-11

Treasures From God's Word

Matthew 13:24-26—A man sowed fine seed in his field, and his enemy oversowed the field with weeds (w13 7/15 9-10 [paragraphs 2-3](#))

2 The events taking place in that farmer's field illustrate how and when Jesus would gather out of mankind the entire wheat class—anointed Christians who will rule with him in his Kingdom. The sowing began at Pentecost 33 C.E. The gathering will be complete when the anointed who are alive at the end of this system of things receive their final sealing and then are taken to heaven. (**Matthew 24:31**; **Revelation 7:1-4**) Just as a lookout point on a mountain provides a person with a sweeping view of his surroundings, so this parable gives us a panoramic view of developments that would occur during a period of some 2,000 years. From our vantage point, what developments related to the Kingdom do we discern? The parable describes a time of sowing, growth, and harvesting. This article will focus mainly on the harvesttime.

Under Jesus' Watchful Care

3 At the dawn of the second century C.E., “the weeds appeared” when imitation Christians became visible in the world field. (**Matthew 13:26**) By the fourth century, weedlike Christians had greatly outnumbered anointed Christians. Recall that in the parable, the slaves asked their master for permission to uproot the weeds. (**Matthew 13:28**) How did the master respond?

Matthew 13:27-29—The wheat and the weeds grew together until the harvest (w13 7/15 10 [paragraph 4](#))

Speaking about the wheat and the weeds, Jesus said: “Let both grow together until the harvest.” This command reveals that from the first century until today, there have always been some anointed wheatlike Christians on earth. That conclusion is confirmed by what Jesus later told his disciples: “I am with you *all* the days until the conclusion of the system of things.” (**Matthew 28:20**) So anointed Christians would be protected by Jesus all the days leading up to the time of the end. However, since they were overgrown by weedlike Christians, we do not know for certain who belonged to the wheat class during that long period of time. However, some decades before the start of the harvest season, the wheat class became discernible. How did that come about?

Matthew 13:30—During the harvest, the reapers first collected the weeds and then gathered the wheat (w13 7/15 12 [paragraphs 10-12](#))

10 First, **collecting the weeds**. Jesus says: “In the harvest season I will tell the reapers, First collect the weeds and bind them in bundles.” After 1914, the angels began to “collect” weedlike Christians by separating them from the anointed “sons of the kingdom.”—**Matthew 13:30, 38, 41**.

11 As the collecting work progressed, the distinction between the two groups became ever clearer. (**Revelation 18:1, 4**) By 1919, it became evident that Babylon the Great had fallen. What especially set true Christians apart from imitation ones? The preaching work. Those taking the lead among the Bible Students began to stress the importance of sharing personally in the Kingdom preaching work. For instance, *To Whom the Work Is Entrusted*, a pamphlet published in 1919, urged all anointed Christians to preach from house to house. It stated: “The work appears stupendous, but it is the Lord's, and in his strength we will perform it. You have the privilege of sharing in it.” What was the response? From that time onward, reported *The Watch Tower* in 1922, the Bible Students stepped up their preaching activities. Before long, preaching from house to house became a hallmark of those faithful Christians—as it is till this day.

12 Second, **gathering the wheat**. Jesus commands his angels: “Go to gathering the wheat into my storehouse.” (Matthew 13:30) Since 1919, anointed ones have been gathered into the restored Christian congregation. For those anointed Christians who will be alive at the end of this system of things, the final gathering will take place when they receive their heavenly reward.—Daniel 7:18, 22, 27.

• **Digging for Spiritual Gems: (8 minutes)**

Matthew 12:20—How can we imitate Jesus’ compassion? (nwtsty study note)

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 13:25—Is it believable that someone in ancient times would actually oversow another man’s field with weeds? (w16.10 32)

At Matthew 13:24-26, Jesus is quoted as saying: “The Kingdom of the heavens may be likened to a man who sowed fine seed in his field. While men were sleeping, his enemy came and oversowed weeds in among the wheat and left. When the stalk sprouted and produced fruit, then the weeds also appeared.” Different writers have questioned whether this illustration should be considered real, yet ancient Roman legal writings suggest that it should.

“Sowing darnel in a field for purposes of revenge . . . was a crime under Roman legislation. The necessity for a law on the subject suggests that the action was not infrequent,” says one Bible dictionary. Legal scholar Alastair Kerr explains that in 533 C.E., Roman Emperor Justinian published his *Digest*, a summary of Roman law and excerpts from jurists of the classical period of the law (about 100-250 C.E.). According to this work (*Digest*, 9.2.27.14), the jurist Ulpian referred to a case considered by the second-century Roman statesman Celsus. Weeds had been sown in another person’s field, and as a result, a crop was ruined. The *Digest* considers the legal remedies available to the owner, or tenant farmer, in order to obtain compensation from the perpetrator for the loss suffered.

That such malicious mischief occurred within the Roman Empire in ancient times indicates that the situation Jesus described was true to life.

- Song 27 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“The Illustration of the Wheat and the Weeds”:** (10 min.)
 Mt 13:24-26—A man sowed fine seed in his field, and his enemy oversowed the field with weeds (w13 7/15 9-10 ¶2-3)
 Mt 13:27-29—The wheat and the weeds grew together until the harvest (w13 7/15 10 ¶4)
 Mt 13:30—During the harvest, the reapers first collected the weeds and then gathered the wheat (w13 7/15 12 ¶10-12)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Mt 12:20—How can we imitate Jesus’ compassion? (nwtsty study note)

Mt 13:25—Is it believable that someone in ancient times would actually oversow another man’s field with weeds? (w16.10 32)

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) Mt 12:1-21

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call Video:** (4 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **First Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) bhs 22-23 ¶10-12

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 68
- **Local Needs:** (5 min.)
- **“Kingdom Illustrations and Their Meaning for Us”:** (10 min.) Discussion. Consider how these illustrations should affect our share in the ministry.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 7
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 10 and Prayer

Kingdom Illustrations and Their Meaning for Us



Jesus used simple illustrations to teach deep spiritual lessons. However, only humble ones seek to understand and apply the lessons he taught. (Mt 13:10-15) For each of the Kingdom illustrations, answer the following questions: How can I benefit from this illustration? How should it affect my life?

THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS IS LIKE . . .

“a mustard grain.”—Mt 13:31, 32; w14 12/15 8 ¶9.

“leaven.”—Mt 13:33; w14 12/15 9-10 ¶14-15.

“a treasure” and “a traveling merchant.”—Mt 13:44-46; w14 12/15 10 ¶18.



was flat, the Bible said that it was round.—Isaiah 40:22.

⁹ When the Bible talks about history, it is always accurate. But many history books are not completely accurate because the writers were not honest. For example, they did not always write about the times their nation was defeated in battle. Instead, Bible writers were honest even when Israel was defeated. They also wrote about their own mistakes. For example, in the book of Numbers, Moses tells us that he made a serious mistake and that God had to discipline him for it. (Numbers 20:2-12) The honesty of Bible writers shows that the Bible comes from God. This means that we can trust the Bible.

A BOOK FULL OF GOOD ADVICE

¹⁰ The Bible is “inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproof, for setting things straight.” (2 Timothy 3:16) Yes, the Bible’s advice is helpful for us today. Jehovah knows how we are made, so he understands how we think and feel. He knows us better than we know ourselves, and he wants us to be happy. He knows what is good for us and what is bad for us.

¹¹ In Matthew chapters 5 to 7, we read very good advice that Jesus gave on how to be happy, how to get along with others, how to pray, and how to view

9. What does the honesty of the Bible writers help us to understand?

10. Why is the Bible’s advice helpful for us today?

11, 12. (a) What good advice did Jesus give in Matthew chapters 5 to 7? (b) What else can we learn from the Bible?

money. Although he gave this advice 2,000 years ago, it is just as powerful and helpful today.

12 In the Bible, Jehovah also teaches us principles that help us to have a better family life, to be good workers, and to live in peace with others. Bible principles can always help us, no matter who we are, where we live, or what problems we have.—**Read Isaiah 48:17**; see Endnote 3.

YOU CAN TRUST BIBLE PROPHECY

13 Many Bible prophecies have already come true. For example, Isaiah prophesied that Babylon would be destroyed. (Isaiah 13:19) He described exactly how the city would be defeated. The city was protected by large gates and a river. But Isaiah foretold that the river would be dried up and the gates left open. The attackers would take the city without a battle. Isaiah even prophesied that a man named Cyrus would defeat Babylon.—**Read Isaiah 44:27–45:2**; see Endnote 4.

14 Two hundred years after the prophecy was written, an army arrived ready to attack Babylon. Who was leading the army? Just as the prophecy said, it was Cyrus, the king of Persia. Everything was set for the rest of the prophecy to come true.

15 On the night of the attack, the Babylonians were having a feast. They felt safe because they were protected by massive walls and a river. Outside the

13. What did Isaiah say would happen to the city of Babylon?

14, 15. How did Isaiah's prophecy come true?

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

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“The Illustration of the Wheat and the Weeds”:** (10 min.)
 Mt 13:24-26—A man sowed fine seed in his field, and his enemy oversowed the field with weeds (w13 7/15 9-10 ¶2-3)
 Mt 13:27-29—The wheat and the weeds grew together until the harvest (w13 7/15 10 ¶4)
 Mt 13:30—During the harvest, the reapers first collected the weeds and then gathered the wheat (w13 7/15 12 ¶10-12)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Mt 12:20—How can we imitate Jesus’ compassion? (nwtsty study note)

Mt 13:25—Is it believable that someone in ancient times would actually oversow another man’s field with weeds? (w16.10 32)

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) Mt 12:1-21

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call Video:** (4 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **First Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) bhs 22-23 ¶10-12

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 68
- **Local Needs:** (5 min.)
- **“Kingdom Illustrations and Their Meaning for Us”:** (10 min.) Discussion. Consider how these illustrations should affect our share in the ministry.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 7
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 10 and Prayer

Kingdom Illustrations and Their Meaning for Us



Jesus used simple illustrations to teach deep spiritual lessons. However, only humble ones seek to understand and apply the lessons he taught. (Mt 13:10-15) For each of the Kingdom illustrations, answer the following questions: How can I benefit from this illustration? How should it affect my life?

THE KINGDOM OF THE HEAVENS IS LIKE . . .

“a mustard grain.”—Mt 13:31, 32; w14 12/15 8 ¶9.

“leaven.”—Mt 13:33; w14 12/15 9-10 ¶14-15.

“a treasure” and “a traveling merchant.”—Mt 13:44-46; w14 12/15 10 ¶18.



ASTROLOGERS VISIT JESUS

MATTHEW 2:1-12

Some men come from the East. They are astrologers—men who study the position of stars, claiming that by doing so they are able to tell the meaning of events in people’s lives. (Isaiah 47:13) While at home in the East, they saw a “star” and followed it hundreds of miles, not to Bethlehem, but to Jerusalem.

When the astrologers get there, they ask: “Where is the one born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when we were in the East, and we have come to do obeisance to him.”—Matthew 2:1, 2.

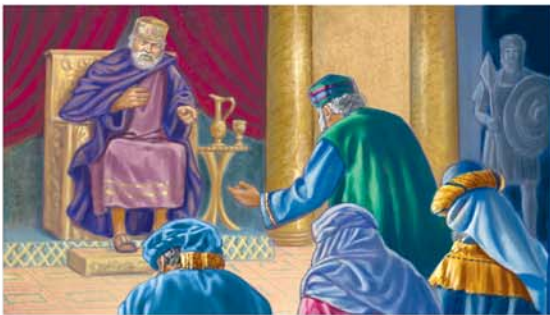
King Herod of Jerusalem hears about this and is very upset. So he calls the chief priests and other Jewish religious leaders and asks them where the Christ is to be born. Basing their reply on the Scriptures, they answer: “In Bethlehem.” (Matthew 2:5; Micah 5:2) At that, Herod has the astrologers secretly brought to him, and he tells them: “Go make a careful search for the young child, and when you have found him,

report back to me so that I too may go and do obeisance to him.” (Matthew 2:8) However, Herod actually wants to find the young child to kill him!

After the astrologers leave, an amazing thing happens. The “star” that they had seen when they were in the East travels ahead of them. Clearly, this is no ordinary star, but it has been specially provided to direct them. The astrologers follow it until it stops right above the house where Joseph and Mary are now living with their young son.

When the astrologers enter the house, they find Mary with a young child—Jesus. At that, the astrologers bow down to him. And they give him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Afterward, when they are about to return to Herod, they are warned by God in a dream not to do that. So they leave for their own country by another route.

Who do you think provided the “star” that guided the astrologers? Remember, it did not guide them directly to Jesus in Bethlehem. Rather, it led them to Jerusalem, where they came in touch with King Herod, who wanted to kill Jesus. And he would have done so had God not stepped in and warned the astrologers not to tell Herod where Jesus was. Clearly, it was God’s enemy, Satan, who wanted Jesus killed, and he used this means to try to accomplish his purpose.



- ◇ How do we know that the “star” the astrologers saw was no ordinary star?
- ◇ Where is the young child Jesus living when the astrologers find him?
- ◇ Why can we conclude that Satan guided the astrologers?



Praise Jehovah Our God!

(Psalm 145:12)

G7 C G7/D C/E G7 C F C/E G7

Praise our God! Praise Je - ho - vah and God! Make his
Praise our God! Sing it loud and clear! With a

C C/E Am D7 G Dm7 G7 F/A G7/B C C#°

glo - rious name known to all! Sound a - larm, For his
joy - ful song, laud his name! From the heart, From a

G7/D Dm/C G7/B G9/F G9+5/F C/E Am7 Dm7 G7 G7sus4

day is near, Help all peo - ple hear his warn - ing
grate - ful heart, All his glo - ry bold - ly we pro -

C D7 G C D/C G/B D G G/B C

call. Je - ho - vah de - creed that now is the time For his
claim. Though grand is our God and great are his works, He is

Praise Jehovah Our God!

G C D/C G/B G D Em11 D/F# D7 G C D/C G/B D

First - born to rule as King. Reach out to all peo - ple,
 hum - ble and good to all. Our mer - ci - ful Fa - ther

G G/F C/E Cm/Eb G/D Em7 A7 D7

tell them the news, Tell what bless - ings our God will
 knows what we need; He re - sponds when he hears our

Chorus
 G G7 C G7/D C/E G7 C F C/E D#°

bring! Praise our God! Praise Je - ho - vah God! Make his
 call.

C/E Am7 Dm7 F/G G7 C

great - ness known in all the earth!

DECEMBER 2017

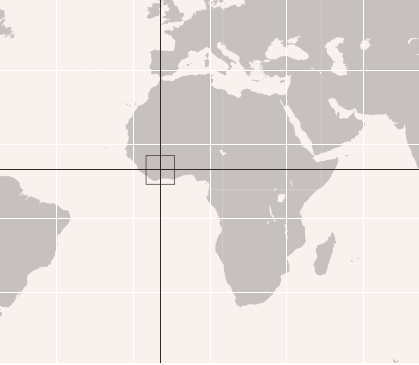
THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
JANUARY 29–FEBRUARY 25, 2018





COVER IMAGE:
CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Côte d'Ivoire (formerly Ivory Coast) is a major producer of cocoa beans, which are used to make chocolate. The beans are spread to dry under the sun. A pioneer shares with a worker the important contents of the *Good News* brochure

PUBLISHERS
11,133

BIBLE STUDIES
28,274

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE
(2016)
76,526

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Parents—Help Your Children
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Among the thousands who get baptized each year are young ones—teenagers and preteens. Baptism opens the door to many blessings; it also involves responsibility. Parents, how can you help your children reach out for the goal of baptism? Baptized young ones and those who are contemplating baptism, how can you strengthen your relationship with Jehovah?

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FOR *THE WATCHTOWER* 2017

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ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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Vol. 138, No. 18 ENGLISH

He Will Call

(Job 14:13-15)

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

Life, like a mist, ap - pears for just a day, Then
 Friends of our God, though they may pass a - way, Will

D/F# G A/G G Em Bm/D

dis - ap - pears to - mor - row. All that we are can
 nev - er be for - sak - en. All those a - sleep who

D/C C D/C C Bm Bsus4 Bm

quick - ly fade a - way, Re - placed with tears and sor - row.
 in God's mem - ry stay, From death he will a - wak - en.

Bsus4 Bm/A G A/G G D/F# F#m7 D/F#

If a man should die, can he live a - gain?
 Then we'll come to see all that life can be:

He Will Call

Chorus

Em7 D/F# G A7sus4 A7 G/A A7

Hear the prom - ise God has made: He will
Par - a - dise e - ter - nal - ly.

D A7/E D/F# G A Bm F#m/A

call; The dead will an - swer. They will live at his com -

G Gma7 A/G F#m7 D/F# C/E D7 G Gm/Bb

mand. For he will have a long - ing For the

D/A Em/A A7 D G/A A7 D A7/E

work of his own hand. So have faith, and do not

He Will Call

D/F# G A Bm F#m/A G Gma7 A/G

won - der, For our God can make us stand. And

The first system of musical notation for the song 'He Will Call'. It consists of a treble and bass staff. The treble staff has a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature. The bass staff has a 7/4 time signature. The lyrics are: 'won - der, For our God can make us stand. And'. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff: D/F# (first measure), G (second measure), A (third measure), Bm (fourth measure), F#m/A (fifth measure), G (sixth measure), Gma7 (seventh measure), and A/G (eighth measure).

F#m7 D/F# C/E D7 G Gm/Bb

we will live for - ev - er, As the

The second system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melody with lyrics: 'we will live for - ev - er, As the'. Chord symbols are: F#m7 (first measure), D/F# (second measure), C/E (third measure), D7 (fourth measure), G (fifth measure), and Gm/Bb (sixth measure). The bass staff continues the accompaniment.

D/A Em/A A7 D

work of his own hand.

The third system of musical notation. The treble staff continues the melody with lyrics: 'work of his own hand.'. Chord symbols are: D/A (first measure), Em/A (second measure), A7 (third measure), and D (fourth measure). The bass staff continues the accompaniment.



“I Have Hope Toward God”

“The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.”—1 COR. 15:45.

SONGS: 151, 147

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

How does Psalm 118 bear out that a resurrection can occur long after being foretold?

How did Psalm 16:10 find fulfillment?

What does the Bible indicate would happen regarding the resurrection during Christ’s presence?

IF YOU were asked, ‘What are the key teachings of your faith?’ what would you say? Surely you would stress that Jehovah is the Creator and Life-Giver. You would likely mention your belief in Jesus Christ, who died as a ransom. And you would happily add that an earthly paradise is ahead, where God’s people will live forever. But would you mention the resurrection as one of your most cherished beliefs?

2 We have good reasons to include the resurrection as a key teaching even if we personally hope to survive the great tribulation and live on earth forever. The apostle Paul showed why the resurrection is central to our faith: “If, indeed, there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised up.” Had Christ not been resurrected, he would not be our ruling King, and our teaching about Christ’s rule would be in vain. (**Read 1 Corinthians 15:12-19.**) However, we know that Jesus was resurrected. In holding that conviction, we differ from the Jewish Sadducees, who strongly denied that the dead are raised. Even in the face of mockery, we hold firm to our belief in the resurrection.—Mark 12:18; Acts 4: 2, 3; 17:32; 23:6-8.

1-3. (a) What should we include among our core beliefs? (b) Why is the resurrection so important? (See opening picture.)

³ When Paul wrote of “the primary doctrine about the Christ,” he included “the teaching on . . . the resurrection of the dead.” (Heb. 6:1, 2) And Paul stressed the resurrection as something he had faith in. (Acts 24:10, 15, 24, 25) But the fact that the resurrection is included as a primary doctrine, one of the “elementary things of the sacred pronouncements of God,” does not mean that it is a simplistic teaching. (Heb. 5:12) Why not?

⁴ As people begin to study the Bible, most read accounts of past resurrections, such as the raising of Lazarus. And they learn that Abraham, Job, and Daniel were confident that *in the future* the dead would live again. Still, how would you respond if asked for evidence that resurrection promises are valid many years or even centuries after they were made? And does the Bible really indicate *when* the resurrection will take place? Those aspects have a bearing on our faith, so let us see what we find in the Scriptures.

RESURRECTION AFTER CENTURIES

⁵ It is one thing to imagine bringing to life a person who recently died. (John 11:11; Acts 20:9, 10) Yet, what of a promise that a resurrection will occur years, even centuries, in the future? Could you rely on such a long-term promise, whether the promise was about someone who just died or one who had been dead for a long time? Actually, a resurrection that was promised centuries in advance did take place, and you put faith in it. How so? And how does that relate to what you

4. What questions might arise regarding the resurrection?

5. What aspect of the resurrection will we first address?

can expect regarding a future resurrection?

⁶ With regard to a resurrection being foretold long in advance, consider Psalm 118, which some feel that David composed. It includes the plea: “Jehovah, save us, please, we beg! . . . Blessed is the one who comes in the name of Jehovah.” You likely recall that people quoted this Messianic passage when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on Nisan 9, shortly before his death. (Ps. 118:25, 26; Matt. 21:7-9) But how did Psalm 118 point to a resurrection that would occur many years in the future? Note what else that prophetic psalm said: “The stone that the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone.”—Ps. 118:22.

⁷ “The builders,” the Jewish leaders, rejected the Messiah. Their rejection was far more than just turning their backs on Jesus or refusing to accept him as the Christ. Many Jews rejected him to the point of clamoring for his death. (Luke 23:18-23) Yes, they contributed to Jesus’ being killed.

⁸ If Jesus was rejected and killed, how could he become “the chief cornerstone”? That could come about only by his being resurrected to life again. Jesus himself made such a connection. He gave a parable in which cultivators mistreated those whom the owner sent to them, just as the Israelites mistreated the prophets whom God sent to them. Finally, in the illustration, the owner sent his beloved son and heir. Was the son accepted? Far from it. The

6. How was Jesus involved in the fulfillment of Psalm 118?

7. To what extent did the Jews reject Jesus?

8. How could Jesus become “the chief cornerstone”?

cultivators went to the extreme of putting him to death. Jesus followed that illustration with a reference to the prophetic statement at Psalm 118:22, which he quoted. (Luke 20:9-17) The apostle Peter made a similar connection when speaking to Jewish “rulers, elders, and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem.” He spoke of “Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom *you executed* on a stake but whom *God raised up from the dead.*” Thereupon, Peter clearly stated: “This is ‘the stone that was treated by you builders as of no account that has become the chief cornerstone.’”—Acts 3:15; 4:5-11; 1 Pet. 2:5-7.

⁹ Yes, hundreds of years in advance, the prophetic statement at Psalm 118:22 indicated that a resurrection would occur. The Messiah would be rejected and die, but he would be raised to life again to be the chief cornerstone. This resurrected Son thus became the only one whose name was “given among men by which we must get saved.”—Acts 4:12; Eph. 1:20.

¹⁰ Consider another verse that pointed forward to a resurrection. It was written over a thousand years in advance, a fact that should reinforce your confidence that a resurrection can occur long after it was foretold or promised. In Psalm 16, which is attributed to David, we read: “You will not leave me in the Grave. You will not allow your loyal one to see the pit.” (Ps. 16:10) David was not saying that *he* would never die or be in the common grave of mankind. God’s Word is plain that David did grow old. After he

9. Psalm 118:22 pointed to what outstanding event?

10. (a) What did Psalm 16:10 foretell? (b) Why can we be sure that Psalm 16:10 was not fulfilled in David?

died, he “was laid to rest with his forefathers and was buried in the City of David.” (1 Ki. 2:1, 10) What, then, is Psalm 16:10 saying?

¹¹ We are not left in the dark. Over a millennium after that psalm was written and weeks after Jesus died and was raised, Peter spoke to thousands of Jews and proselytes about Psalm 16:10. **(Read Acts 2:29-32.)** He mentioned that David had indeed died and been buried. Those listening to Peter knew that. And the record does not say that any of them disputed Peter’s statement that David “foresaw and spoke about the resurrection” of the coming Messiah.

¹² Peter reinforced his point by quoting David’s statement at Psalm 110:1. **(Read Acts 2:33-36.)** Peter’s reasoning in line with the Scriptures helped to convince the large crowd that Jesus was “both Lord and Christ.” More to the point, the people acknowledged that Psalm 16:10 was fulfilled when Jesus was resurrected from the dead. Later, the apostle Paul drew on the same solid reasoning when speaking to Jews in the city of Antioch in Pisidia. His argument impressed them, and they wanted to hear more. **(Read Acts 13:32-37, 42.)** It should also impress us that those Bible prophecies about a coming resurrection were trustworthy, even though centuries had passed since that miracle was foretold.

RESURRECTION—WHEN?

¹³ We should be encouraged that a res-

11. When did Peter comment on Psalm 16:10?

12. In what way was Psalm 16:10 fulfilled, confirming what about the promise of the resurrection?

13. What question about the resurrection might arise?



“The builders rejected” the Messiah
(See paragraph 7)



Jesus was resurrected to be
“the chief cornerstone”
(See paragraphs 8, 9)

urrection can occur many centuries after being promised. Still, someone might wonder: ‘Does that mean that I may have to wait a long time to see my loved one? When will the resurrection that I am hoping for occur?’ Well, Jesus did tell his apostles that there were things they did not and could not know. There are details about “the times or seasons that the Father has placed in his own jurisdiction.” (Acts 1:6, 7; John 16:12) However, this does not mean that we have no information about the timing of the resurrection.

¹⁴ As a basis for understanding that, recall what resurrections the Bible foretells. The most important one, of course, is that of Jesus. Had he not been raised, none of us would have any prospect of seeing our dead loved ones again. Those who were raised before Jesus, such as by Elijah and Elisha, did not live on endlessly. They died again and saw corruption in the grave. In contrast, Jesus “has been raised up from the dead, [and] dies no more; death is no longer master over him.” In heaven, he lives “forever and ever,” never seeing corruption.—Rom. 6:9; Rev. 1:5, 18; Col. 1:18; 1 Pet. 3:18.

14. How did the resurrection of Jesus differ from earlier ones?

¹⁵ The resurrection of Jesus was the first of that sort, and it undoubtedly is first in importance. (Acts 26:23) He is not, though, the only one promised to be resurrected to heaven as a spirit creature. Jesus assured his faithful apostles that they would rule with him in heaven. (Luke 22:28-30) For them to be thus rewarded, they would first have to die. Afterward, like Christ, they could be resurrected with a spirit body. Paul wrote that “Christ has been raised from the dead, the *firstfruits* of those who have fallen asleep in death.” Paul went on to indicate that there would be others raised to heavenly life, adding: “Each one in his own proper order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who belong to the Christ *during his presence*.”—1 Cor. 15:20, 23.

¹⁶ That gives us a general indication of the timing of the heavenly resurrection. It would occur “during his presence.” Jehovah’s Witnesses have long established Scripturally that since 1914 we have been living during Jesus’ promised “presence.” It is still continuing, and the end of this wicked system of things is now very near.

15. Why is it significant that Jesus is “the firstfruits”?

16. What indication do we have about the timing of the heavenly resurrection?

¹⁷ The Bible adds details about the heavenly resurrection: “We do not want you to be ignorant about those who are sleeping in death . . . For if we have faith that Jesus died and rose again, so too God will bring with him those who have fallen asleep in death . . . We the living who survive to *the presence* of the Lord will in no way precede those who have fallen asleep in death; because the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a commanding call, . . . and those who are dead in union with Christ will rise first. Afterward we the living who are surviving will, together with them, be caught away in clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and thus we will always be with the Lord.”—1 Thess. 4:13-17.

¹⁸ The first resurrection would take place sometime after “the presence” of Christ began. Anointed ones who are alive during the great tribulation will be “caught away in clouds.” (Matt. 24:31) Those “caught away” will not “fall asleep in death” in the sense of having a long sleep in death. They “will all be changed, in a moment, in the blink of an eye, during the last trumpet.”—1 Cor. 15: 51, 52.

¹⁹ Today, most faithful Christians are not anointed and called to serve in heaven with Christ. Rather, they await the end of this wicked system of things during “Jehovah’s day.” No one can know the exact timing of that end, but evidence shows that it is close. (1 Thess. 5: 1-3) Thereafter, a different type of resurrection will take place, a resurrection to life in an earthly paradise. Those raised will have the prospect of growing to

human perfection and never having to die again. That certainly will be “a better resurrection” than that of those in the past when “women received their dead by resurrection” only for them to die again sometime later.—Heb. 11:35.

²⁰ Speaking of the heavenly resurrection, the Bible says that those who will experience that will be raised “each one in his own proper order.” (1 Cor. 15:23) We can trust that the earthly resurrection will likewise proceed in an orderly manner. That is an intriguing prospect. Will those who died recently be raised near the start of Christ’s Thousand Year Reign and be welcomed by loved ones who know them? Will faithful men of old with leadership abilities come back early to help organize God’s people in the new world? What about people who never served Jehovah? When and where will they be raised? Many questions could be asked. But, frankly, is there any real need to ponder those issues now? Is it not better just to wait and see? We can trust that it will be thrilling to observe personally how Jehovah handles those matters.

²¹ In the meantime, we should bolster our faith in Jehovah, who through Jesus assured us that the dead in God’s memory will rise. (John 5:28, 29; 11:23) Proving that Jehovah is capable of resurrecting the dead, Jesus once said that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob “are all living to him.” (Luke 20:37, 38) Meanwhile, we have ample reason to say, as did Paul: “I have hope toward God . . . that there is going to be a resurrection.” —Acts 24:15.

17, 18. What will happen to some anointed ones during Christ’s presence?

19. What “better resurrection” is yet ahead?

20. Why can we trust that the coming resurrection will be orderly?

21. What is your hope about the resurrection?

Life Everlasting Is Promised

(Psalm 37:29)

C/G

G9sus4 G9

Life ev - er - last - ing is prom - ised.
 Par - a - dise brought to per - fec - tion;
 Soon in the grand res - ur - rec - tion,

Dm/G G7 C/G

Our earth - ly home will en - dure.
 All of God's chil - dren set free.
 Sor - row will all dis - ap - pear.

C G7/D C/E Cm/Eb G/D G#°

'Meek ones will thrive,' said the psalm - ist.
 Un - der Je - ho - vah's di - rec - tion,
 Show - er - ing ten - der af - fec - tion,

Am7 D9 Dm7 G9

This grand fu - ture is sure.
 Peace on earth we will see.
 God will dry ev - 'ry tear.

Life Everlasting Is Promised

Chorus

C C#° Dm7 G7

We can live for - ev - er.

Dm G13 Dm/G G13 C6

It's worth all en - deav - or.

Ab9 C/G Am

God's prom - ise is faith - ful.

Dm7 G7 C

His Word will come true.

(See also Isa. 25:8; Luke 23:43; John 11:25; Rev. 21:4.)

