

- Song 19 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “The Passover and the Memorial—Similarities and Differences”: (10 min.)

Mt 26:17-20—Jesus ate his last Passover with his apostles (*nwtsty media*)

Mt 26:26—The Memorial bread represents Jesus’ body (*nwtsty study note*)

Mt 26:27, 28—The Memorial wine represents Jesus’ “blood of the covenant” (*nwtsty study note*)

- Digging for Spiritual Gems: (8 min.)

Mt 26:17—Why could Nisan 13 be referred to as “the first day of the Unleavened Bread”? (*nwtsty study note*)

Mt 26:39—What may have moved Jesus to pray: “Let this cup pass away from me”? (*nwtsty study note*)

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 26:1-19

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* 59 ¶21-22 and endnote

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 20
- Local Needs: (8 min.)
- Become Jehovah’s Friend—The Ransom: (7 min.) Play the video (video category CHILDREN). Afterward, invite selected young children to the stage, and ask them the following questions: Why do people get sick, grow old, and die? What hope has Jehovah given us? Whom do you want to meet in Paradise?
- Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *jy* chap. 15
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 74 and Prayer

MATTHEW 26 | The Passover and the Memorial—Similarities and Differences



26:18 

Identify the numbered items.

- ①
- ②
- ③
- ④

Which of these items are also used for the Lord’s Evening Meal?



DID YOU KNOW?

Although the Passover did not foreshadow the Memorial, certain features of the Passover have meaning for us. For example, the apostle Paul called Jesus “our Passover lamb.” (1Co 5:7) Just as the lamb’s blood on the doorframes saved lives, Jesus’ blood saves lives. (Ex 12:12, 13) Also, not a bone of the Passover lamb was broken. Similarly, Jesus did not have any of his bones broken, even though this was a custom at such executions. —Ex 12:46; Joh 19:31-33, 36.

The Lord's Evening Meal

(Matthew 26:26-30)

B \flat Ebm/B \flat B \flat

Je - ho - vah, our Fa - ther in heav - en, Oh,
The bread and the wine are re - mind - ers, How
We're gath - ered to - geth - er be - fore you. At

Ebm/B \flat G \flat Gm Dm/F

this is a most sa - cred night! It was
great is the price that you paid. And the
your in - vi - ta - tion we've come To give

Cm/E \flat Ebm6 B \flat /D Gm

then, long a - go, you de - ter - mined to show Your
good that was done through the gift of your Son, In
praise for your love that brought Christ from a - bove And

Cm B \flat 6/D Cm/E \flat Eb/D Cm D

love, jus - tice, wis - dom, and might. The
life and in death he o - beyed. We
hon - or to you and your Son. The

The Lord's Evening Meal

Gm Gsus4 Gm Gsus4 Gm Dm Dsus4 Dm

Pass - o - ver lamb gave pro - tec - tion, And
 grate - ful - ly keep this Me - mo - rial; This
 Lord's Ev - 'ning Meal brings you glo - ry And

Eb Cm/Eb D7sus4 D7

your fa - vored peo - ple were freed. Cen - t'ries
 night is a time to re - call How the
 strength - ens our heart and our mind. So we'll

Gm Ebm/Gb Bb/F Ebm9

lat - er our Lord his own life - blood out - poured To ful -
 death of your Son paid the ran - som that won The re -
 walk ev - 'ry day as Christ showed us the way, And then

Bb/F Dm/F Eb/F F7 Bb

fill this di - vine proph - e - cy.
 demp - tion from death for us all.
 life ev - er - last - ing we'll find.

(See also Luke 22:14-20; 1 Cor. 11:23-26.)

the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.^a

41 "Then he will say to those on his left: 'Go away from me,^b you who have been cursed, into the everlasting fire^c prepared for the Devil and his angels.^d **42** For I became hungry, but you gave me nothing to eat; and I was thirsty, but you gave me nothing to drink. **43** I was a stranger, but you did not receive me hospitably; naked, but you did not clothe me; sick and in prison, but you did not look after me.' **44** Then they too will answer with the words: 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not minister to you?' **45** Then he will answer them, saying: 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of these least ones, you did not do it to me.'^e

46 These will depart into everlasting cutting-off,^{af} but the righteous ones into everlasting life."^g

26 Now when Jesus had finished saying all these things, he said to his disciples: **2** "You know that two days from now the Passover takes place,^h and the Son of man will be handed over to be executed on the stake."ⁱ

3 Then the chief priests and the elders of the people gathered in the courtyard of the high priest, who was named Ca'ia-phas,^j **4** and they conspired together^k to seize^{*} Jesus by cunning[#] and to kill him. **5** However, they were saying: "Not at the festival, so that there may not be an uproar among the people."

6 While Jesus was in Beth'-any in the house of Simon the leper,^l **7** a woman with an ala-

25:46 *That is, from life. Lit., "lopping off; pruning." **26:4** *Or "arrest." #Or "crafty device."

CHAP. 25

- a Pr 19:17
- Mt 10:40
- Mr 9:41
- Heb 6:10
- b Mt 7:23
- c Mt 18:8, 9
- d Re 12:9
- Re 20:10
- e Zec 2:8
- Ac 9:4, 5
- f 2Pe 2:9
- g Ro 2:6, 7

CHAP. 26

- h Ex 12:14
- Mr 14:1, 2
- Lu 22:1, 2
- Joh 13:1
- i Mt 16:21
- Mt 20:18, 19
- Mt 27:26
- Mr 15:15
- Joh 19:16
- j Mt 26:57
- Lu 3:2
- Joh 11:49
- Joh 18:13, 24
- k Ps 2:2
- l Mr 14:3-9
- Joh 12:1-8

Second Col.

- a De 15:11
- b Mr 14:7
- c Mr 14:8
- Joh 12:7
- d Mr 14:9
- e Mt 10:2, 4
- Joh 13:2
- f Mr 14:10, 11
- Lu 22:3-6
- g Joh 11:57
- h Ex 21:32
- Zec 11:12
- Mt 27:3
- i Ex 12:18
- Ex 23:15
- Lu 22:1
- j Mr 14:12-16
- Lu 22:7-13
- k De 16:6
- l Mr 14:17-21
- Lu 22:14
- m Lu 22:21-23
- Joh 6:70
- Joh 13:21, 22

baster jar of costly perfumed oil approached him, and she began pouring it on his head as he was dining.* **8** On seeing this, the disciples became indignant and said: "Why this waste? **9** For this could have been sold for a great deal of money and given to the poor." **10** Aware of this, Jesus said to them: "Why do you try to make trouble for the woman? She did a fine deed toward me. **11** For you always have the poor with you,^a but you will not always have me.^b **12** When she put this perfumed oil on my body, she did it to prepare me for burial.^c **13** Truly I say to you, wherever this good news is preached in all the world, what this woman did will also be told in memory of her."^d

14 Then one of the Twelve, the one called Judas Is-car'i-ot,^e went to the chief priests^f **15** and said: "What will you give me to betray him to you?"^g They stipulated to him 30 silver pieces.^h **16** So from then on, he kept looking for a good opportunity to betray him.

17 On the first day of the Unleavened Bread,ⁱ the disciples came to Jesus, saying: "Where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover?"^j **18** He said: "Go into the city to So-and-so and say to him, 'The Teacher says: "My appointed time is near; I will celebrate the Passover with my disciples at your home."^k **19** So the disciples did as Jesus instructed them and prepared for the Passover.

20 When evening came,^k he was reclining at the table with the 12 disciples.^l **21** While they were eating, he said: "Truly I say to you, one of you will betray me."^m

22 Being very much grieved at this, each and every one began to say to him: "Lord, it is not I,

26:7 *Or "reclining at the table."

is it?" **23** In reply he said: "The one who dips his hand with me into the bowl is the one who will betray me." **24** True, the Son of man is going away, just as it is written about him, but woe^b to that man through whom the Son of man is betrayed!^c It would have been better for that man if he had not been born."^d **25** Judas, who was about to betray him, replied: "It is not I, is it, Rabbi?" Jesus said to him: "You yourself said it."

26 As they continued eating, Jesus took a loaf, and after saying a blessing, he broke it,^e and giving it to the disciples, he said: "Take, eat. This means my body."^f **27** And taking a cup, he offered thanks and gave it to them, saying: "Drink out of it, all of you,^g **28** for this means my 'blood^h of the covenant,'ⁱ which is to be poured out in behalf of many^j for forgiveness of sins.^k **29** But I say to you: I will by no means drink again any of this product of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in the Kingdom of my Father."^l **30** Finally, after singing praises,^{*} they went out to the Mount of Olives.^m

31 Then Jesus said to them: "All of you will be stumbled in connection with me on this night, for it is written: 'I will strike the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock will be scattered about.'ⁿ **32** But after I have been raised up, I will go ahead of you into Gal'i-lee."^o **33** But Peter, in response, said to him: "Although all the others are stumbled in connection with you, I will never be stumbled!"^p **34** Jesus said to him: "Truly I say to you, on this night, before a rooster crows, you will disown me three times."^q **35** Peter said to him: "Even if I should have to die with you, I will by no means disown you."^r

26:30 *Or "hymns; psalms."

CHAP. 26

- a Ps 41:9
- Mr 14:20
- Lu 22:21
- Joh 13:26
- b De 27:25
- c Lu 22:22
- Joh 17:12
- d Mr 14:21
- e 1Co 10:16
- f Mr 14:22
- Lu 22:19
- 1Co 11:23-26
- g Mr 14:23
- Lu 22:20
- h 1Co 10:16
- i Ex 24:8
- Jer 31:31
- Heb 7:22
- j Mt 20:28
- Mr 14:24
- k Eph 1:7
- Heb 9:20, 22
- l Mr 14:25
- Lu 22:18
- m Lu 22:39
- Joh 18:1
- n Zec 13:7
- Mr 14:27, 28
- Joh 16:32
- o Mt 28:7
- Mt 28:16
- p Mr 14:29-31
- q Mr 14:30
- Lu 22:34
- Joh 13:38
- r Lu 22:33

Second Col.

- a Joh 18:1
- b Mr 14:32-36
- Lu 22:40
- c Isa 53:3
- d Mr 14:34
- e Heb 5:7
- f Mt 20:22
- Joh 18:11
- g Mr 14:36
- Lu 22:42
- Joh 5:30
- Joh 6:38
- Heb 10:9
- h Mr 14:37-42
- Lu 22:45
- i Mr 13:33
- 1Pe 5:8
- Re 16:15
- j Lu 18:1
- Ro 12:12
- Eph 6:18
- 1Pe 4:7
- k Mt 6:13
- Lu 22:46
- l Mr 14:38
- Ro 7:23
- m Mt 6:10
- Joh 12:27

All the other disciples also said the same thing.

36 Then Jesus came with them to the spot called Gethsem'a-ne,^a and he said to the disciples: "Sit down here while I go over there and pray."^b **37** And taking along Peter and the two sons of Zeb'e-dee, he began to feel grieved and to be greatly troubled.^c **38** Then he said to them: "I am* deeply grieved, even to death. Stay here and keep on the watch with me."^d **39** And going a little way forward, he fell facedown, praying:^e "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup^f pass away from me. Yet, not as I will, but as you will."^g

40 He returned to the disciples and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter: "Could you not so much as keep on the watch for one hour with me?"^h

41 Keep on the watchⁱ and pray continually,^j so that you may not enter into temptation.^k The spirit, of course, is eager,^{*} but the flesh is weak."^l **42** Again, a second time, he went off and prayed: "My Father, if it is not possible for this to pass away unless I drink it, let your will take place."^m **43** And he came again and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. **44** So leaving them, he again went off and prayed for a third time, saying once more the same thing. **45** Then he returned to the disciples and said to them: "At such a time as this, you are sleeping and resting! Look! The hour has drawn near for the Son of man to be betrayed into the hands of sinners. **46** Get up, let us go. Look! My betrayer has drawn near." **47** While he was still speaking, look! Judas, one of the Twelve, came and with him a large crowd

26:38 *Or "My soul is." 26:41 *Or "willing."

with swords and clubs, sent from the chief priests and the elders of the people.^a

48 Now his betrayer had given them a sign, saying: "Whoever it is I kiss, he is the one; take him into custody." **49** And going straight up to Jesus, he said: "Greetings, Rabbi!" and gave him a tender kiss. **50** But Jesus said to him: "**Fellow, for what purpose are you present?**"^b Then they came forward and seized Jesus and took him into custody. **51** But look! one of those with Jesus reached out his hand and drew his sword and struck the slave of the high priest, taking off his ear.^c **52** Then Jesus said to him: "**Return your sword to its place,**^d for all those who take up the sword will perish by the sword."^e **53** Or do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father to supply me at this moment more than 12 legions of angels?^f **54** In that case, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must take place this way?^g **55** In that hour Jesus said to the crowds: "**Did you come out to arrest me with swords and clubs as against a robber? Day after day I used to sit in the temple teaching,**^g and yet you did not take me into custody."^h **56** But all of this has taken place for the writings* of the prophets to be fulfilled."ⁱ Then all the disciples abandoned him and fled.^j

57 Those who took Jesus into custody led him away to Ca'ia-phas^k the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were gathered together.^l **58** But Peter kept following him from a good distance, as far as the courtyard of the high priest, and after going inside, he sat with the house attendants to see the outcome.^m

26:56 *Or "scriptures."

CHAP. 26

- a Mr 14:43-47
Lu 22:47-51
Joh 18:3
- b Ps 41:9
- c Mr 14:47
Lu 22:50
Joh 18:10
- d Joh 18:11
- e Ge 9:6
- f 2Kl 6:17
Da 7:10
Mt 4:11
- g Lu 19:47
Joh 18:20
- h Mr 14:48, 49
Lu 22:52, 53
- i Ps 22:16-18
Isa 53
Da 9:26
- j Zec 13:7
Mr 14:50
Joh 16:32
- k Joh 18:13
- l Mr 14:53, 54
Lu 22:54, 55
- m Joh 18:16

Second Col.

- a Mr 14:55-59
- b Ps 27:12
Ps 35:11
- c Mt 27:39, 40
Joh 2:19
Ac 6:14
- d Mr 14:60-65
- e Isa 53:7
Ac 8:32
- f Lu 22:67-71
- g Da 7:13
Joh 1:51
- h Ps 110:1
Lu 22:69
- i Mr 14:62
Re 1:7
- j Le 24:16
Joh 19:7
- k Isa 50:6
- l Lu 22:63, 64
- m Isa 53:3
- n Mr 14:66-72
Lu 22:54-62
Joh 18:15-17
- o Joh 18:25-27

59 Now the chief priests and the entire San'he-drin were looking for false testimony against Jesus in order to put him to death.^a **60** But they found none, although many false witnesses came forward.^b Later two came forward **61** and said: "This man said, 'I am able to throw down the temple of God and build it up in three days.'"^c **62** With that the high priest stood up and said to him: "Do you say nothing in reply? What is it these men are testifying against you?"^d **63** But Jesus kept silent.^e So the high priest said to him: "I put you under oath by the living God to tell us whether you are the Christ, the Son of God!"^f **64** Jesus said to him: "**You yourself said it. But I say to you: From now on you will see the Son of man^g sitting at the right hand of power^h and coming on the clouds of heaven.**"ⁱ **65** Then the high priest ripped his outer garments, saying: "He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? See! Now you have heard the blasphemy. **66** What is your opinion?" They answered: "He deserves to die."^j **67** Then they spat in his face^k and hit him with their fists.^l Others slapped him on the face,^m **68** saying: "Prophecy to us, you Christ. Who struck you?"

69 Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, and a servant girl came up to him and said: "You too were with Jesus the Gal-i-le'an!"ⁿ **70** But he denied it before them all, saying: "I do not know what you are talking about." **71** When he went out to the gatehouse, another girl noticed him and said to those there: "This man was with Jesus the Naz-a-rene!"^o **72** Again he denied it, with an oath: "I do not know the man!" **73** After a little while, those

standing around came up and said to Peter: "Certainly you are also one of them, for in fact, your dialect* gives you away."

74 Then he started to curse and swear: "I do not know the man!" And immediately a rooster crowed. **75** And Peter called to mind what Jesus had said, namely: "Before a rooster crows, you will disown me three times."^a And he went outside and wept bitterly.

27 When morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people consulted together against Jesus to put him to death.^b **2** After binding him, they led him off and handed him over to Pilate, the governor.^c

3 Then Judas, his betrayer, seeing that Jesus had been condemned, felt remorse and brought the 30 pieces of silver back to the chief priests and elders,^d **4** saying: "I sinned when I betrayed innocent blood." They said: "What is that to us? You must see to it!"^e **5** So he threw the silver pieces into the temple and departed. Then he went off and hanged himself.^e **6** But the chief priests took the silver pieces and said: "It is not lawful to put them into the sacred treasury, because they are the price of blood." **7** After consulting together, they used the money to buy the potter's field as a burial place for strangers. **8** Therefore, that field has been called Field of Blood^f to this very day. **9** Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: "And they took the 30 silver pieces, the price that was set on the man, the one on whom a price was set by some of the sons of Israel, **10** and they gave them for the potter's field,

26:73 *Or "accent." **27:4** *Or "That is your problem!"

CHAP. 26

a Mt 26:34
Mr 14:30
Joh 13:38

CHAP. 27

b Mr 15:1
Lu 22:66

c Ps 2:2
Mt 20:18,19
Lu 23:1
Joh 18:28
Ac 3:13

d Mt 26:14,15
Mr 14:10,11

e Ac 1:16,18

f Ac 1:19

Second Col.

a Zec 11:12,13

b Mr 15:2-5
Lu 23:3
Joh 18:33,37

c Isa 53:7
Mt 26:63
Joh 19:9

d Mr 15:6-10
Joh 18:39

e Lu 23:18
Joh 18:40
Ac 3:14

f Mr 15:11-14

g Lu 23:21

h Lu 23:23
Ac 3:13

according to what Jehovah* had commanded me."^a

11 Jesus now stood before the governor, and the governor put the question to him: "Are you the King of the Jews?" Jesus replied: "You yourself say it."^b **12** But while he was being accused by the chief priests and elders, he made no answer.^c **13** Then Pilate said to him: "Do you not hear how many things they are testifying against you?" **14** But he did not answer him, no, not a word, so that the governor was very surprised.

15 Now from festival to festival, it was the custom of the governor to release a prisoner to the crowd, whomever they wanted.^d **16** Just at that time they were holding a notorious prisoner called Bar-ab'bas. **17** So when they were gathered together, Pilate said to them: "Which one do you want me to release to you, Bar-ab'bas or Jesus the so-called Christ?" **18** For Pilate was aware that out of envy they had handed him over. **19** Moreover, while he was sitting on the judgment seat, his wife sent a message to him, saying: "Have nothing to do with that righteous man, for I suffered a lot today in a dream because of him." **20** But the chief priests and the elders persuaded the crowds to ask for Bar-ab'bas,^e but to have Jesus put to death.^f **21** In response the governor said to them: "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" They said: "Bar-ab'bas." **22** Pilate said to them: "What, then, should I do with Jesus the so-called Christ?" They all said: "To the stake with him!"^g **23** He said: "Why? What bad thing did he do?" Still they kept shouting out all the more: "To the stake with him!"^h

27:10 *See App. A5. **27:22** *Or "Execute him on the stake!"

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DID YOU KNOW?

Although the Passover did not foreshadow the Memorial, certain features of the Passover have meaning for us. For example, the apostle Paul called Jesus “our Passover lamb.” (1Co 5:7) Just as the lamb’s blood on the doorframes saved lives, Jesus’ blood saves lives. (Ex 12:12, 13) Also, not a bone of the Passover lamb was broken. Similarly, Jesus did not have any of his bones broken, even though this was a custom at such executions. —Ex 12:46; Joh 19:31-33, 36.



The Passover Meal

Essential items at the Passover meal were: roast lamb (no bones in the animal were to be broken) (1); unleavened bread (2); and bitter greens (3). ([Ex 12:5, 8](#); [Nu 9:11](#)) The bitter greens, which according to the Mishnah might have been lettuce, chicory, pepperwort, endive, or dandelion, evidently reminded the Israelites of their bitter slavery in Egypt. Jesus used the unleavened bread as a symbol of his perfect human body. ([Mt 26:26](#)) And the apostle Paul called Jesus “our Passover lamb.” ([1Co 5:7](#)) By the first century, wine (4) was also served as part of the Passover meal. Jesus used the wine to symbolize his blood, which would be poured out as a sacrifice.—[Mt 26:27, 28](#).

Related Scripture(s) [Mt 26:18](#); [Mr 14:12](#)



MATTHEW
Study Notes—Chapter 26

26:1

Now when: What is described at Mt 26:1-5 happened on Nisan 12, because verse 2 states that “two days from now the Passover [on Nisan 14] takes place.”—See App. A7, B12, and study note on Mt 26:6.

26:2

Passover: This festival (Greek *pa'skha* from Hebrew *pe'sach* from the verb *pa·sach'*, meaning “to pass over; to pass by”) was instituted the evening preceding the Israelites' Exodus from Egypt. It commemorates the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt and the ‘passing over’ of their firstborn when Jehovah destroyed the firstborn of Egypt.—Ex 12:14, 24-47; see Glossary.

Son of man: See study note on Mt 8:20.

to be executed on the stake: Or “to be fastened on a stake (pole).”—See study note on Mt 20:19 and Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake.”

26:3

chief priests: See study note on Mt 2:4 and Glossary, “Chief priest.”

elders: See study note on Mt 16:21.

high priest: When Israel functioned as an independent nation, the high priest held his office for life. (Nu 35:25) However, during the Roman occupation of Israel, the rulers assigned by Rome had authority to appoint and to depose the high priest.—See Glossary.

Caiaphas: This high priest, appointed by the Romans, was a skillful diplomat who held his office longer than any of his immediate predecessors. He was appointed about 18 C.E. and remained in office until about 36 C.E.—See App. B12 for the possible location of Caiaphas' house.

26:6

While Jesus was in Bethany: The events described at Mt 26:6-13 evidently took place after sunset when Nisan 9 began. That timing is indicated by the parallel account in John, where Jesus is said to *arrive* at Bethany “six days before the Passover.” (Joh 12:1) He must have arrived before the beginning (at sunset) of the Sabbath on Nisan 8, which was the day before the meal at Simon's place.—Joh 12:2-11; see App. A7 and B12.

Simon the leper: This Simon is mentioned only here and in the parallel account at Mr 14:3. He may have been a former leper whom Jesus had healed.—See study note on Mt 8:2 and Glossary, “Leprosy; Leper.”

26:7

a woman: According to Joh 12:3, this woman is Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus.

alabaster jar: See Glossary, “Alabaster.”

costly perfumed oil: Mark and John's accounts specify that it was a pound of "genuine nard," worth 300 denarii. That sum represented about a year's wages for an ordinary laborer. (Mr 14:3-5; Joh 12:3-5) The source of such perfumed oil is generally thought to be an aromatic plant (*Nardostachys jatamansi*) found in the Himalayas. Nard was often adulterated, even counterfeited, but both Mark and John say that this oil was "genuine."

pouring it on his head: According to Matthew and Mark, the woman poured the oil on Jesus' head. (Mr 14:3) John, who wrote years later, supplied the added detail that she also poured it on his feet. (Joh 12:3) Jesus explains that this loving act was figuratively to prepare him for burial.—See study note on Mt 26:12.

26:8

the disciples: Only in John's account is Judas Iscariot identified as the one objecting to Mary's use of expensive oil. (Joh 12:4-7) Evidently, other apostles merely agreed to what seemed to be a valid point.

26:12

she put this perfumed oil on my body: The woman (see study note on Mt 26:7) performed this generous act out of love and appreciation for Jesus. He explained that she was unknowingly preparing his body for **burial**, since such perfumed oil and ointments were often applied to dead bodies.—2Ch 16:14.

26:13

Truly: See study note on Mt 5:18.

is preached in all the world: Similar to his prophecy at Mt 24:14, Jesus here foretells that the good news would be proclaimed in all the world and would include this woman's act of devotion. God inspired three Gospel writers to mention what she did.—Mr 14:8, 9; Joh 12:7; see study note on Mt 24:14.

26:14

Then: That is, on Nisan 12, the same day as the events described at Mt 26:1-5 took place.—See App. A7, B12, and study notes on Mt 26:1, 6.

Judas Iscariot: See study note on Mt 10:4.

26:15

30 silver pieces: Matthew is the only Gospel writer to mention the amount for which Jesus was betrayed. These were possibly 30 silver shekels minted in Tyre. This sum appears to show the chief priests' contempt for Jesus, since under the Law, it was the price of a slave. (Ex 21:32) Likewise, when Zechariah asked for his wages from unfaithful Israelites for his prophetic work among God's people, they weighed out to him "30 pieces of silver," suggesting that they considered him to be worth no more than a slave.—Zec 11:12, 13.

26:17

On the first day of the Unleavened Bread: The Festival of Unleavened Bread began on Nisan 15, the day after the Passover (Nisan 14), and lasted for seven days. (See App.

B15.) In Jesus' time, however, the Passover had become so closely connected to this festival that all eight days, including Nisan 14, sometimes were referred to as "the Festival of the Unleavened Bread." (Lu 22:1) In this context, the phrase "On the first day of" could be rendered "On the day before." (Compare Joh 1:15, 30, where the Greek word for "first" [*pro'tos*] is rendered "before" in a similar construction, namely, "he existed before [*pro'tos*] me.") So the original Greek, as well as Jewish custom, allows for the disciples' question to have been asked of Jesus on Nisan 13. During the daytime of Nisan 13, the disciples made preparations for the Passover, which was later celebrated "after evening had fallen" at the beginning of Nisan 14.—Mr 14:16, 17.

26:20

When evening came: That is, the evening marking the start of Nisan 14.—See App. A7 and B12.

26:23

dips his hand with me: People usually ate food with their fingers, or they used a piece of bread somewhat like a spoon. This expression could also be an idiom meaning "to share food together." Eating with a person signified close fellowship. To turn against such an intimate companion was considered the vilest form of treachery.—Ps 41:9; Joh 13:18.

bowl: The Greek word denotes a relatively deep bowl from which a meal was eaten.

26:25

You yourself said it: A Jewish idiom here used to affirm the truth of a statement made by a questioner. Jesus was, in effect, saying: "You have said so, and what you say is true." Jesus' reply evidently pointed out that Judas' own words were an admission of responsibility for Jesus' betrayal. At some point after this, **Judas** must have left the room before Jesus instituted the observance of the Lord's Evening Meal, as shown by a comparison with the account at Joh 13:21-30. Here in Matthew's account, Judas is next mentioned at Mt 26:47, together with the crowd in the garden of Gethsemane.

26:26

took a loaf . . . broke it: The loaves common in the ancient Near East were thin and, if unleavened, brittle. There was no spiritual significance to Jesus' breaking the bread; this was the normal way to divide that type of loaf.—See study note on Mt 14:19.

saying a blessing: This expression evidently refers to a prayer offering praise and thanks to God.

means: The Greek word *e·stin'* (literally meaning "is") here has the sense of "signifies; symbolizes; stands for; represents." This meaning was evident to the apostles, since on this occasion Jesus' perfect body was there in front of them and so was the unleavened bread that they were about to eat. Therefore, the bread could not have been his literal body. It is worth noting that the same Greek word is used at Mt 12:7, and many Bible translations render it "means."

26:28

blood of the covenant: The new covenant, between Jehovah and anointed Christians, was made operative by Jesus' sacrifice. (Heb 8:10) Jesus here uses the same expression Moses used when acting as mediator and inaugurating the Law covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai. (Ex 24:8; Heb 9:19-21) Just as the blood of bulls and goats validated the Law covenant between God and the nation of Israel, Jesus' blood made valid the new covenant that Jehovah would make with spiritual Israel. That covenant went into effect at Pentecost 33 C.E.—Heb 9:14, 15.

26:29

drink it new: That is, the vine's new product. In the Scriptures, wine sometimes symbolizes joy.—Ps 104:15; Ec 10:19.

26:30

praises: Or "hymns; psalms." According to one Jewish tradition, the first Hallel Psalms (113, 114) were sung, or recited, during the Passover meal; the last four (115-118) at its conclusion. The latter contain some of the prophecies that apply to the Messiah. Ps 118 begins and ends with the words: "Give thanks to Jehovah, for he is good; his loyal love endures forever." (Ps 118:1, 29) These may well have been the last words of praise that Jesus sang with his faithful apostles on the night before his death.

26:34

before a rooster crows: All four Gospels mention this statement, but only Mark's account adds the detail that the rooster would crow twice. (Mt 26:74, 75; Mr 14:30, 72; Lu 22:34, 60, 61; Joh 13:38; 18:27) The Mishnah indicates that roosters were bred in Jerusalem in Jesus' day, lending support to the Bible account. This crowing likely occurred very early in the morning.

26:36

Gethsemane: This garden was evidently located on the Mount of Olives across the Kidron Valley from Jerusalem. It was probably equipped with an olive press, since its name is derived from a Hebrew or Aramaic expression (*gath shema-neh*) meaning "oil press." Although the exact location cannot be determined, one tradition identifies Gethsemane with a garden located at the foot of the Mount of Olives, at the fork of the road on its W slope.—See App. B12.

26:37

two sons of Zebedee: That is, the apostles James and John.—Mt 4:21; 10:2.

26:38

I am: Or "My soul is." The Greek word *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered "soul," here refers to a person's entire being. So "my soul" can be rendered "my whole being" or simply "I."—See Glossary, "Soul."

keep on the watch: Lit., "stay awake." Jesus had emphasized the need for his disciples to stay awake spiritually because of not knowing the day and hour of his coming. (See study

notes on Mt 24:42; 25:13) He repeats that exhortation here and again at Mt 26:41, where he links staying awake spiritually with persevering in prayer. Similar exhortations are found throughout the Christian Greek Scriptures, showing that spiritual alertness is vital for true Christians.—1Co 16:13; Col 4:2; 1Th 5:6; 1Pe 5:8; Re 16:15.

26:39

fell facedown: Or “threw himself down with his face to the ground,” perhaps resting on his hands or elbows. In the Bible, several postures for prayer are mentioned, including standing and kneeling. However, a person in fervent prayer might actually lie facedown with his body outstretched.

let this cup pass away: In the Bible, “cup” is often used figuratively of God’s will, or the “assigned portion,” for a person. (See study note on Mt 20:22.) Jesus no doubt felt great concern over the reproach that his death as one charged with blasphemy and sedition could bring on God, moving him to pray that this “cup” pass away from him.

26:40

you: Here the Greek text uses the second person plural pronoun, indicating that Jesus is addressing not only Peter but also other disciples.

26:41

spirit: Here referring to the impelling force that issues from a person’s figurative heart and causes him to say and do things in a certain way.—See Glossary.

flesh: In the Bible, the term is often used to represent man in his imperfect sinful state.

26:45

Look!: See study note on Mt 1:20.

26:49

gave him a tender kiss: The Greek verb rendered “to give a tender kiss” is an intensive form of the verb for “kiss,” used at Mt 26:48. By greeting Jesus in such a warm, friendly manner, Judas showed the depth of his deceitfulness and hypocrisy.

26:53

legions: Principal units of the Roman army. In the first century C.E., one legion usually consisted of some 6,000 soldiers. Here “12 legions” apparently denotes an indefinite, large number. Jesus is saying that if he asked, his Father would send more than enough angels to protect him.

26:54

the Scriptures: An expression often used to refer to the inspired Hebrew writings as a whole.

26:56

for the writings of the prophets to be fulfilled: See study note on Mt 1:22.

26:57

Caiaphas the high priest: See study note on Mt 26:3.

26:59

chief priests: This term refers to principal men of the priesthood.—See study note on Mt 2:4 and Glossary, “Chief priest.”

Sanhedrin: That is, the Jewish high court in Jerusalem. The Greek word rendered “Sanhedrin” (*sy·ne'dri·on*) literally means a “sitting down with.” Although it was a general term for an assembly or a meeting, in Israel it could refer to a religious judicial body or court.—See study note on Mt 5:22 and Glossary; see also App. B12 for the possible location of the Sanhedrin Hall.

26:63

the Christ: See study note on Mt 11:2.

26:64

You yourself said it: Jesus did not sidestep Caiaphas’ question, since he recognized the high priest’s authority to put him under oath to state the facts. (Mt 26:63) This expression was apparently a Jewish idiom affirming that a statement was true. This is supported by Mark’s parallel account, which renders Jesus’ reply “I am.”—Mr 14:62; see study notes on Mt 26:25; 27:11.

the Son of man . . . coming on the clouds of heaven: Jesus here alludes to the Messianic prophecy at Da 7:13, 14, affirming that he would be the one who would gain access to God’s presence and be given rulership in heaven.—See Glossary, “Son of man.”

right hand of power: To be on a ruler’s right hand meant being second in importance to the ruler himself. (Ps 110:1; Ac 7:55, 56) The Greek word for “power” in this context may be understood to refer to God himself, and it could be rendered “the Power” or “the Powerful One.” The Greek expression for “right hand of power” also occurs in the parallel account at Lu 22:69, but with the addition of the word for “God.” It is rendered “the powerful right hand of God.” The phrase “right hand of power” may also imply that Jesus would be infused with power, or authority, because of being at the right hand of the Powerful One, God.

26:65

ripped his outer garments: Here a gesture expressing indignation. Caiaphas likely tore open the part of his garment that covered his chest to dramatize his sanctimonious outrage at Jesus’ words.

26:68

Prophecy . . . Who struck you?: Here “prophecy” does not mean to make a prediction but to identify by divine revelation who had hit him. The parallel accounts at Mr 14:65 and Lu 22:64 show that Jesus’ persecutors had covered his face, evidently explaining their taunt to identify who had hit him.

26:71

gatehouse: Lit., “gate.” Mark’s account uses a term that can mean “entryway” or “vestibule,” indicating that this was more than a simple gate. (Mr 14:68) It was evidently a structure, perhaps a passageway or a hall, leading from the courtyard to the exterior doors that opened to the street.

26:73

your dialect: Or “your accent; the way you speak.” Peter’s Galilean dialect or accent may have reflected regional vocabulary or pronunciation that differed from the Hebrew spoken in Judea. Some suggest that the distinct Galilean accent or vocabulary was due to foreign influence.

26:74

curse: Most likely, Peter is invoking a curse on himself, saying, in effect, that he ‘wishes to be cursed if he is lying and actually knows the man.’

swear: Or “swear with an oath.” Motivated by fear, Peter is trying to convince those around him that his denials are truthful. By swearing to the matter, he is taking an oath that his words are true and that a calamity might befall him if they are not.

- Song 19 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “The Passover and the Memorial—Similarities and Differences”: (10 min.)

Mt 26:17-20—Jesus ate his last Passover with his apostles (*nwtsty media*)

Mt 26:26—The Memorial bread represents Jesus’ body (*nwtsty study note*)

Mt 26:27, 28—The Memorial wine represents Jesus’ “blood of the covenant” (*nwtsty study note*)

- Digging for Spiritual Gems: (8 min.)

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- Local Needs: (8 min.)
- Become Jehovah’s Friend—The Ransom: (7 min.) Play the video (video category CHILDREN). Afterward, invite selected young children to the stage, and ask them the following questions: Why do people get sick, grow old, and die? What hope has Jehovah given us? Whom do you want to meet in Paradise?
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MATTHEW 26 | The Passover and the Memorial—Similarities and Differences



26:18

Identify the numbered items.

- ①
- ②
- ③
- ④

Which of these items are also used for the Lord’s Evening Meal?



DID YOU KNOW?

Although the Passover did not foreshadow the Memorial, certain features of the Passover have meaning for us. For example, the apostle Paul called Jesus “our Passover lamb.” (1Co 5:7) Just as the lamb’s blood on the doorframes saved lives, Jesus’ blood saves lives. (Ex 12:12, 13) Also, not a bone of the Passover lamb was broken. Similarly, Jesus did not have any of his bones broken, even though this was a custom at such executions. —Ex 12:46; Joh 19:31-33, 36.



Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Conversations

●○○ INITIAL CALL

Question: Where can we find solid advice on how to live a happy life?

Scripture: Ps 1:1, 2

Link: What effect can the love of money and possessions have on our happiness?



●●○ FIRST RETURN VISIT

Question: What effect can the love of money and possessions have on our happiness?

Scripture: 1Ti 6:9, 10

Link: What are the benefits of maintaining a positive attitude?



○○● SECOND RETURN VISIT

Question: What are the benefits of maintaining a positive attitude?

Scripture: Pr 17:22

Link: How can a family prosper despite difficulties?



As we learn
about Jehovah,
we will become
his friend and
our love for him
will deepen

21 Attend the Memorial of Christ's death. The evening before Jesus died, he taught us that we should have a memorial of his death. We do this each year, and it is called the Memorial or "the Lord's Evening Meal." (1 Corinthians 11:20; Matthew 26:26-28) Jesus wants us to remember that he gave his perfect life as a ransom for us. He said: "Keep doing this in remembrance of me." (**Read Luke 22:19.**) When you attend the Memorial, you show that you remember the ransom and the great love that Jehovah and Jesus have for us.—See End-note 16.

22 The ransom is the greatest gift we could ever receive. (2 Corinthians 9:14, 15) That precious gift will even benefit millions of people who have already died. Chapters 6 and 7 will discuss how that is possible.

21, 22. (a) Why should we attend the Memorial of Christ's death each year? (b) What will be discussed in Chapters 6 and 7?

You Gave Your Precious Son

(1 John 4:9)

F C/E Dm7

Je - ho - vah, dear Fa - ther, There seemed no
Your kind - ness, your mer - cy, They draw us

Am/C Bb F/A

hope for us. The ran - som has giv - en
close to you. Your great name, your friend - ship,

Gm C7sus4 C7 F

Hope to ev - 'ry - one! We give our
These we've come to love. But some - thing

C/E Dm Am/C

lives to you, Our best in all we do.
more than this Is your most pre - cious gift.

You Gave Your Precious Son

Musical notation for the first system, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature has two flats (Bb and F). The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "And He we'll tell that oth - ers too, That He died we might live. You". Chords are indicated above the staff: Bb and F/A.

Musical notation for the second system, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature has two flats (Bb and F). The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "your will might be done. You gave your pre - cious sent him from a - bove." Chords are indicated above the staff: Gm, Csus4, C, Chorus F/A, Bbadd9, C.

Musical notation for the third system, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature has two flats (Bb and F). The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "Son, And now we sing as one, A". Chords are indicated above the staff: Dm, F/A, Bbma7, C, F, Csus4/E.

Musical notation for the fourth system, featuring a treble and bass clef. The key signature has two flats (Bb and F). The melody is in the treble clef, and the bass line is in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "song we'll sing for - ev - er, for giv - ing us your". Chords are indicated above the staff: Dm, C, Bb, Gm7, Fma7/A.

You Gave Your Precious Son

B \flat C7 F F $\text{sus}4$ F B $\text{badd}9$

pre - cious Son. *Repeat from beginning*

Detailed description: This system contains the first musical phrase. The treble clef staff has a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The melody consists of quarter notes: B-flat, C, D, E, F, G, A, B-flat. The bass clef staff provides accompaniment with chords: B-flat major, C7, F, F sus4, F, and B-flat add9. The lyrics 'pre - cious Son.' are written below the treble staff. A double bar line with repeat dots is at the end of the system, with the instruction 'Repeat from beginning' written to the right.

Ending
F C/E Dm7 Am/C

Je - ho - vah, dear Fa - ther, we pray in grat - i - tude.

Detailed description: This system is labeled 'Ending'. The treble clef staff has a key signature of one flat. The melody consists of quarter notes: G, A, B-flat, C, D, E, F, G. The bass clef staff provides accompaniment with chords: F, C/E, Dm7, and Am/C. The lyrics 'Je - ho - vah, dear Fa - ther, we pray in grat - i - tude.' are written below the treble staff. A double bar line with repeat dots is at the end of the system.

B \flat F/A Gm7

We of - fer our thanks for giv - ing us your

Detailed description: This system continues the musical phrase. The treble clef staff has a key signature of one flat. The melody consists of quarter notes: G, A, B-flat, C, D, E, F, G. The bass clef staff provides accompaniment with chords: B-flat, F/A, and Gm7. The lyrics 'We of - fer our thanks for giv - ing us your' are written below the treble staff. A double bar line with repeat dots is at the end of the system.

C7 $\text{sus}4$ C F

pre - cious Son.

Detailed description: This system concludes the musical phrase. The treble clef staff has a key signature of one flat. The melody consists of quarter notes: G, A, B-flat, C, D, E, F, G. The bass clef staff provides accompaniment with chords: C7 sus4, C, and F. The lyrics 'pre - cious Son.' are written below the treble staff. A double bar line with repeat dots is at the end of the system.

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PERFORMING HIS FIRST MIRACLE

JOHN 2:1-12



It is now the third day since Nathanael has become one of Jesus' earliest disciples. Jesus and at least some of those early disciples head north to the district of Galilee, their home area. Their destination is the town of Cana, the hometown of Nathanael. Cana is located in the hills north of Nazareth, where Jesus himself grew up. They have been invited to a wedding feast in Cana.

Jesus' mother has also come to the wedding. As a friend of the family of those getting married, Mary seems to have been involved in helping to care for the many guests. So she is quick to note a shortage, which she reports to Jesus: "They have no wine."—John 2:3.

In effect, Mary is suggesting that Jesus do something about the lack of wine. Using an idiom that indicates his objection, Jesus replies: "Woman, why is that of concern to me and to you?" (John 2:4) As God's appointed King, Jesus is to have his activities directed by his heavenly Father, not by family or friends. Mary wisely leaves the matter in her son's hands, simply saying to those ministering: "Do whatever he tells you."—John 2:5.

There are six stone water jars, each of which can hold more than ten gallons. Jesus instructs the attendants: "Fill the jars with water." Then Jesus says: "Now draw some out and take it to the director of the feast."—John 2:7, 8.

The director is impressed by the fine quali-

ty of the wine but is unaware that it has been miraculously produced. Calling the bridegroom, he says: "Everyone else puts out the fine wine first, and when people are intoxicated, the inferior. You have saved the fine wine until now."—John 2:10.

This is the first miracle that Jesus performs. When his new disciples see this miracle, their faith in him is strengthened. Afterward, Jesus, his mother, and his half brothers travel to the city of Capernaum on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee.



-
- ◇ When during Jesus' ministry does the wedding in Cana occur?
 - ◇ How does Jesus respond to his mother's suggestion about the wine?
 - ◇ Jesus performs what miracle, and how does that affect others?

Join in the Kingdom Song!

(Psalm 98:1)

Ab/Bb Bb7 Ebma7 E° Fm11

This is a song, a hap - py song of vic - t'ry;
 With this new song, we ad - ver - tise the King - dom.
 This King - dom song, all hum - ble ones can mas - ter.

Bb7 E° Fm7 Ab/Bb Bb7 Ebma7

It mag - ni - fies the One who is su - preme.
 Christ Je - sus rules; the earth is his do - main.
 The words are clear, their mes - sage warm and bright.

Eb6 Bb/D Bbm6/Db Bbm6/C C7b9b13 Bb° Abma7 Ab6

The words give hope and prompt all to be loy - al.
 And as fore - told, there is a new - born na - tion:
 In all the earth, a mul - ti - tude have learned it,

Db7 Eb/Bb C° Bb7sus4 Ab/Bb Gm/Bb Bb7 Eb Chorus Eb/G

Come sing with us; en - joy its King - dom theme:
 The King - dom heirs, who wel - come Je - sus' reign: 'Come
 And they in turn still oth - ers now in - vite:

Join in the Kingdom Song!

Bb7/F Eb Bb7sus4 Bb7 Ebma7/Bb

wor - ship God Be - fore his throne.

Eb6/Bb Cm6/A D7sus4 D7 Gm

His Son is King; Let's make it known!

Fm7 Ab/Bb Bb7 Eb Eb/Db Ab/C

Come learn this song, this song a - bout the King - dom;

Abm/Cb Eb/Bb C° Bb7sus4 Ab/Bb Gm/Bb Bb7 Eb

Bow down to God, and praise his ho - ly name.'

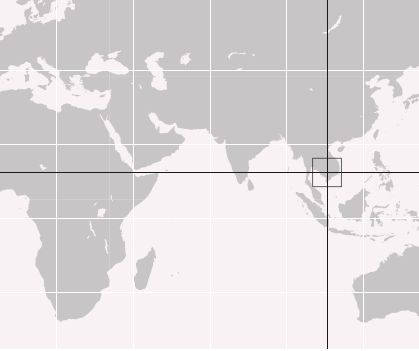
FEBRUARY 2018

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
APRIL 2-29, 2018



COVER IMAGE:
CAMBODIA

A Witness couple share the Bible's message of good news with a mother who picked up her son from school. She wears a traditional head scarf

PUBLISHERS
1,021

BIBLE STUDIES
2,524

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE (2016)
2,790

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THE WATCHTOWER
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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Listen, Obey, and Be Blessed

(Luke 11:28)

A13sus4 A7 D Bm Gma7 Em/G A7 A#°

If we have lis - tened to Christ, will we show it? His teach - ing
 Our way of life, like a house, gives pro - tec - tion When it is
 Just as a tree root - ed deep by the wa - ters Gives of its

Bm D/A G B7b9b13

shines as it shows us the way. It makes us
 built on the rock, not on sand. If we ap -
 fruit when each sea - son ar - rives, If we o -

Em Em/D Em/C# F#7 E/G# F#7/A#

hap - py to hear and to know it, But we'll be
 ply Je - sus' lov - ing di - rec - tion, We'll build a
 bey as God's own sons and daugh - ters, We'll all be

Bm7 E7 Em11 G/A A7

blessed if we know and o - bey.
 life which on bed - rock will stand.
 blessed and en - joy end - less lives.

Listen, Obey, and Be Blessed

Chorus

D Em7 A7/E F#m7 Bm7

Lis - ten, o - bey, and be blessed

Em7 D/F# G G/A A7

When you hear God's will ex - pressed.

D Em7 A7/E D/F# D13sus4 D7 G

If you'd be hap - py and en - ter his rest,

D/A G/A A7 D

Lis - ten, o - bey, and be blessed.



Imitate the Faith and Obedience of Noah, Daniel, and Job

“Noah, Daniel, and Job . . . would be able to save only themselves because of their righteousness.”—EZEK. 14:14.

ARE you dealing with trials, such as ill health, financial problems, or persecution? Do you at times find it hard to maintain your joy in Jehovah’s service? If so, take courage from the examples of Noah, Daniel, and Job. They were imperfect, and they faced many of the challenges we face, including some that were life threatening. Yet, they held on to their integrity, becoming models of faith and obedience in the eyes of God.—**Read Ezekiel 14:12-14.**

² Ezekiel wrote the words of our theme text in Babylonia in 612 B.C.E.* (Ezek. 1:1; 8:1) Apostate Jerusalem was nearing its foretold destruction, which occurred in 607 B.C.E. Only

* Ezekiel was taken into exile in 617 B.C.E. Ezekiel 8:1-19:14 is dated “in the sixth year” of that exile, or 612 B.C.E.

1, 2. (a) Why can we take courage from the examples of Noah, Daniel, and Job? (b) Under what circumstances did Ezekiel write the words recorded at Ezekiel 14:14?

SONGS: 89, 119

IN WHAT WAYS WILL YOU TRY TO IMITATE THE FAITH OF . . .

Noah?

Daniel?

Job?

relatively few individuals reflected the qualities of Noah, Daniel, and Job and were thus marked for survival. (Ezek. 9: 1-5) Among those few were Jeremiah, Baruch, Ebed-melech, and the Rechabites.

³ Likewise today, only those whom Jehovah considers blameless—people like Noah, Daniel, and Job—will be marked for survival when the present system of things comes to an end. (Rev. 7:9, 14) So let us consider why Jehovah used those men as examples of righteousness. As we discuss each one, we will focus on (1) what challenges the man faced and (2) how we can imitate his faith and obedience.

NOAH—FAITHFUL AND OBEDIENT FOR NINE CENTURIES

⁴ *Challenges that Noah faced.* By the time of Noah's great-grandfather Enoch, people had become very ungodly. They were even saying "shocking things" against Jehovah. (Jude 14, 15) Violence was increasing. In fact, in Noah's day, "the earth was filled with violence." Wicked angels materialized as humans, took wives, and produced brutal, hybrid offspring. (Gen. 6:2-4, 11, 12) But Noah stood out as different. "Noah found favor in the eyes of Jehovah. . . . He proved himself faultless among his contemporaries. Noah walked with the true God."—Gen. 6:8, 9.

⁵ Consider what those words say about that righteous man. For one thing, Noah did not walk with God in that wicked pre-Flood world for a mere 70 or 80 years—the life span of many today. He lived in

3. What will we consider in this article?

4, 5. What challenges did Noah face, and why was his endurance remarkable?

that world for almost 600 years! (Gen. 7: 11) And unlike us today, he did not have a congregation of fellow worshippers—evidently not even his siblings—to turn to for spiritual support.*

⁶ Noah was not content just to lead a good life. He also became a bold "preacher of righteousness," publicly confessing his faith in Jehovah. (2 Pet. 2:5) "Through this faith he condemned the world," wrote the apostle Paul. (Heb. 11:7) It stands to reason, therefore, that Noah faced ridicule and opposition, perhaps even threats of violence. But he was not "trembling at men." (Prov. 29:25) Rather, he had the courage that Jehovah gives to his faithful servants.

⁷ After Noah had walked with God for more than five centuries, Jehovah told him to build an ark for the saving of human and animal life. (Gen. 5:32; 6: 14) How difficult that project must have seemed—and not just from the construction point of view! Noah surely knew that it would bring on even more ridicule and opposition. Still, he obediently went ahead in faith. "He did just so."—Gen. 6:22.

⁸ Another challenge for Noah was that of providing materially for his wife and children. Before the Flood, people had to work extra hard to grow food, and Noah was surely no exception. (Gen. 5: 28, 29) Even so, he centered his life, not

* Noah's God-fearing father, Lamech, died about five years before the Flood. If Noah's mother and siblings were alive when the Flood began, they did not survive it.

6. In what ways did Noah show great courage?

7. When building the ark, what challenges did Noah face?

8. In what ways did Noah trust in Jehovah as his Provider?

on material concerns, but on God. Even when building the ark, which may have taken as long as 40 or 50 years, Noah kept his spiritual focus. And he continued to do so for another 350 years after the Flood. (Gen. 9:28) What a fine example of faith and obedience!

⁹ *How we can imitate Noah's faith and obedience.* We do so by upholding God's righteousness, by being no part of Satan's world, and by keeping Kingdom interests in first place. (Matt. 6:33; John 15:19) To be sure, our way of life does not win us the world's approval. Indeed, even now, our firm stand for God's laws, such as those concerning marriage and sexual morality, has led to negative publicity in some lands. **(Read Malachi 3:17, 18.)** Like Noah, however, we fear Jehovah, not men. We know that he alone gives everlasting life.—Luke 12:4, 5.

¹⁰ But what about you personally? Will you keep 'walking with God,' even when others mock or criticize you or when economic pressures test your faith in your Provider? If you imitate the faith and obedience of Noah, you can be confident that Jehovah will care for you.—Phil. 4:6, 7.

DANIEL—FAITHFUL AND OBEDIENT IN A WICKED CITY

¹¹ *Challenges that Daniel faced.* Daniel lived as a captive in Babylon, a city filled with idolatry and spiritism. Moreover, the Babylonians looked down on the Jews, mocking both them and their God, Jehovah. (Ps. 137:1, 3) How this

9, 10. (a) How can we imitate Noah's faith and obedience? (b) How does God view all who uphold his standards?

11. What big challenges did Daniel and his three companions face in Babylon? (See opening picture.)

must have hurt faithful Jews like Daniel! Also, he and his three companions—Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah—were in the spotlight, as it were, because they were to be trained in the king's service. Even their diet was set for them. In fact, food and drink soon became an issue because Daniel did not want to "defile himself with the king's delicacies."—Dan. 1:5-8, 14-17.

¹² A more subtle challenge for Daniel could have involved his exceptional abilities, which led to his receiving special privileges. (Dan. 1:19, 20) But instead of becoming arrogant and opinionated, he remained humble and modest, always giving due credit to Jehovah. (Dan. 2:30) In fact, it was while Daniel was still a young man that Jehovah counted him worthy of being mentioned as an example of righteousness, along with Noah and Job. Was God's confidence in Daniel misplaced? Not at all! Daniel stayed faithful and obedient to the very end of his life. Indeed, he was likely in his late 90's when God's angel warmly said to him: "O Daniel, you very precious man."—Dan. 10:11.

¹³ As a result of divine favor, Daniel was made a high official under both Babylonian and Medo-Persian rule. (Dan. 1:21; 6:1, 2) Perhaps Jehovah maneuvered matters this way so that Daniel could be a blessing to his own people, as were Joseph in Egypt and Esther and Mordecai in Persia.* (Dan. 2:48) Imagine how

* The same may have been true of Daniel's three companions, who were also given positions of authority.—Dan. 2:49.

12. (a) What fine qualities did Daniel display? (b) How did Jehovah view Daniel?

13. How may Daniel have been a blessing to his fellow Jews?



Jehovah views as precious those who maintain their integrity (See paragraphs 14, 15)

comforting it must have been for the Jewish captives, including Ezekiel, to see Jehovah's hand in matters in this way!

¹⁴ *How we can imitate Daniel's faith and obedience.* Today, we live as foreigners, as it were, in a world that has been morally and spiritually corrupted by Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, "a dwelling place of demons." (Rev. 18:2) Hence, we too stand out as different, even becoming targets for ridicule. (Mark 13:13) Like Daniel, therefore, let us draw close to Jehovah, our God. When we humbly and obediently trust in him, we too will be precious in his eyes.—Hag. 2:7.

¹⁵ Parents can learn from the example of Daniel's parents. How so? Despite the wickedness that prevailed in Judah during Daniel's early childhood, the boy grew to love God. This, of course, was no accident. It reflected good parental training. (Prov. 22:6) Even Daniel's name, which means "My Judge Is God," points to God-fearing parents. (Dan. 1:6, ftn.) So parents, do not give

14, 15. (a) In what ways are our circumstances similar to those of Daniel? (b) What can parents today learn from Daniel's parents?

up on your children, but teach them patiently. (Eph. 6:4) Also, pray with them and for them. When you strive to impress Bible truth on their hearts, you invite Jehovah's rich blessing.—Ps. 37:5.

JOB—FAITHFUL AND OBEDIENT WHETHER RICH OR POOR

¹⁶ *Challenges that Job faced.* The life of Job is a study in contrasts. Before his trial, he was "the greatest of all the people of the East." (Job 1:3) He was wealthy, well-known, and highly respected. (Job 29:7-16) Yet, despite all of this, Job did not develop a lofty view of himself or feel that he did not need God. In fact, Jehovah called him "my servant," adding: "He is an upright man of integrity, fearing God and shunning what is bad."—Job 1:8.

¹⁷ In a very short space of time, Job's life changed dramatically. He was driven to the depths of poverty and despair. The cause, we know, was the slanderer Satan, who lyingly accused Job of worshipping God out of self-interest. (**Read Job 1:9, 10.**) Jehovah did not sweep aside that

16, 17. What contrasting challenges did Job experience?

wicked accusation. Instead, he gave Job the opportunity to prove his integrity, to show that his worship stemmed from a pure, unselfish heart.

¹⁸ Satan launched a series of vicious attacks against Job, leading Job to assume that God was to blame. (Job 1:13-21) Then three false comforters arrived and attacked Job with cruel words, basically saying that God was giving him what he deserved! (Job 2:11; 22:1, 5-10) Yet, Job maintained his integrity. Yes, he spoke rashly at times, but Jehovah understood the pain Job felt. (Job 6:1-3) God saw a deeply depressed man who never turned his back on Him, even though Satan, in effect, threw Job to the ground and then verbally kicked him with lying insults. When the trial was over, Jehovah gave Job double what he had before the trial began, as well as an added 140 years of life. (Jas. 5:11) During that time, he continued to give Jehovah exclusive devotion. How can we be sure? Job had been dead for many centuries when Ezekiel recorded the words of our theme text.

¹⁹ *How we can imitate Job's faith and obedience.* No matter what our circumstances may be, let us always keep Jehovah at the center of our lives, trusting him fully and obeying him with a complete heart. Indeed, we have even more reason to do so than Job had! Consider: We know a lot about Satan and his tactics. (2 Cor. 2:11) Thanks in part to the book of Job, we know why God permits suffering. From Daniel's prophecy, we understand that God's Kingdom is a world gov-

ernment in the hands of Christ Jesus. (Dan. 7:13, 14) And we know that this Kingdom will soon bring a permanent end to all suffering.

²⁰ Job's experience also highlights our need to show compassion to fellow Christians who may be enduring hardships. Like Job, some may even speak rashly at times. (Eccl. 7:7) But instead of judging them, let us show insight and compassion. In this way, we imitate our loving and merciful Father, Jehovah. —Ps. 103:8.

JEHOVAH "WILL MAKE YOU STRONG"

²¹ Although Noah, Daniel, and Job lived at different times and under very different circumstances, they endured the challenges they faced. Their life stories call to mind the words of the apostle Peter, who wrote: "After you have suffered a little while, the God of all undeserved kindness . . . will himself finish your training. He will make you firm, he will make you strong, he will firmly ground you."—1 Pet. 5:10.

²² Through Peter's inspired words, Jehovah assures us that he will make his servants firm and strong. These words also apply to God's people today. All of us desire to be made strong by Jehovah and to remain firm in our worship. Therefore, we want to imitate the faith and obedience of Noah, Daniel, and Job! As we shall see in the next article, the key to their integrity was that they truly knew Jehovah. In fact, they 'understood everything' he required of them. (Prov. 28:5) The same can be true of us.

18. (a) What impresses you about Job's integrity? (b) What do Jehovah's dealings with Job reveal about Him?

19, 20. (a) How can we imitate Job's faith and obedience? (b) In our dealings with others, how can we reflect God's compassion?

21. How do the words at 1 Peter 5:10 reflect what occurred in the lives of Noah, Daniel, and Job?

22. What will we consider in the next article?

We Must Have Faith

(Hebrews 10:38, 39)

G D/F# Em7 Bm/D C D G/B D/A

On man - y oc - ca - sions God spoke to men By
 We glad - ly o - bey Christ Je - sus' com - mand To
 Our faith is an an - chor firm and se - cure; We

G G/F# Em7 A7 D Em11 D/F# Am/C

means of his proph - ets of old. To -
 share King - dom truth far and wide. We
 nev - er will shrink back in fear. Our

B7b9 Em/C# B7/D# Em B7/F# Em/G Gm6/Bb₂

day he is say - ing, 'Let all re - pent,' By
 bold - ly de - clare God's mes - sage of hope; His
 trust in Je - ho - vah helps us en - dure; We

D/A A7sus4 A7 D Chorus

God's own Son we are told.
 prom - ise we'll nev - er hide. Do we
 know sal - va - tion is near.

We Must Have Faith

G D7/A G/B Bb° D7/A C/G D7/F# Cadd9/E

have strong faith? Is it real? We must

D7 C/D D7 G G/D D7

build such faith to sur - vive. Is our

G D7/A G/B B7 Am/C Bm11 Am Am7

faith proved true by our works? By means of

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

faith, we'll be pre - served a - live.

