

- Song 69 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Go Make Disciples—Why, Where, and How?”:** (10 min.)
 Mt 28:18—Jesus has wide-ranging authority (w04 7/1 8 ¶14)
 Mt 28:19—Jesus called for a worldwide preaching and teaching campaign (nwtsty study notes)
 Mt 28:20—We must help people learn and apply all that Jesus taught (nwtsty study note)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Mt 27:51—What did the tearing in two of the curtain signify? (nwtsty study notes)

Mt 28:7—How did Jehovah’s angel dignify the women who came to Jesus’ grave? (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 27:38-54

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **First Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **Talk:** (6 min. or less) g17.2 14—Theme: Did Jesus Die on a Cross?

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 70
- **“Preaching and Teaching—Essential to Making Disciples”:** (15 min.) Discussion. When considering the information, play the videos *Continue Preaching “Without Letup”—Informally and From House to House* and *Continue Preaching “Without Letup”—Publicly and Making Disciples*.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 16
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 73 and Prayer

MATTHEW 27-28 | Go Make Disciples—Why, Where, and How?



28:18-20

Why? Jesus received wide-ranging authority from Jehovah

Where? Jesus commanded his followers to make disciples of “people of all the nations”

Teaching others to observe all the things that Jesus commanded is an ongoing process



How do we teach others Jesus’ commands?



How do we help our students to apply Jesus’ teaching?



How do we help our students to follow Jesus’ example?

Go Forward in Preaching the Kingdom!

(2 Timothy 4:5)

1. Go forward in preaching the Kingdom
To people in ev'ry land.
With love in your hearts for your neighbor,
Help meek ones to take their stand.
Our service to God is a priv'lege;
His word we are glad to proclaim.
Go out in the field and keep preaching;
Give witness to God's holy name.

(CHORUS)

*Forward, boldly preach the
Kingdom message ever far and wide.
Forward, faithful, loyally remaining
on Jehovah's side.*

2. Together we press ever forward,
Anointed and other sheep.
The old and the young men and women
In step with the truth do keep.
The good news of God's coming Kingdom
Is something that all need to hear.
We preach in the strength of Jehovah;
With him there is nothing to fear!

(Chorus)

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!"* **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!"

MATTHEW 26:74-27:23

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!”

MATTHEW 27:24-51

24 Seeing that it did no good but, rather, an uproar was arising, Pilate took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying: "I am innocent of the blood of this man. You yourselves must see to it." **25** At that all the people said in answer: "Let his blood come upon us and upon our children."^a **26** Then he released Bar·ab·bas to them, but he had Jesus whipped^b and handed him over to be executed on the stake.^c

27 Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus into the governor's residence and gathered the whole body of troops together around him.^d **28** And disrobing him, they draped him with a scarlet cloak,^e **29** and they braided a crown out of thorns and put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying: "Greetings,* you King of the Jews!" **30** And they spat on him^f and took the reed and began hitting him on his head. **31** Finally, after they had mocked him, they stripped him of the cloak and put his outer garments on him and led him off to be nailed to the stake.^g

32 As they were going out, they found a man of Cy·re·ne named Simon. This man they compelled into service to carry his torture stake.^{*h} **33** And when they came to a place called *Gol·go·tha*, that is, Skull Place,ⁱ **34** they gave him wine mixed with gall* to drink;^j but after tasting it, he refused to drink it. **35** When they had nailed him to the stake, they distributed his outer garments by casting lots,^k **36** and they sat there keeping watch over him. **37** They also posted above his head the charge against him, in writing:

27:29 *Or "Hail." 27:32, 40, 42 *See Glossary. 27:34 *A bitter liquid.

"This is Jesus the King of the Jews."^a

38 Then two robbers were put on stakes alongside him, one on his right and one on his left.^b **39** And those passing by spoke abusively of him,^c shaking their heads^d **40** and saying: "You who would throw down the temple and build it in three days,^e save yourself! If you are a son of God, come down off the torture stake!"^{*f} **41** In the same way also, the chief priests with the scribes and the elders began mocking him, saying:^g **42** "Others he saved; himself he cannot save! He is King of Israel;^h let him now come down off the torture stake,^{*} and we will believe in him. **43** He has put his trust in God; let Him now rescue him if He wants him,ⁱ for he said, 'I am God's Son.'^j **44** In the same way, even the robbers who were on stakes alongside him were reproaching him.^k

45 From the sixth hour^{*} on, a darkness fell over all the land until the ninth hour.^{#l} **46** About the ninth hour, Jesus called out with a loud voice, saying: "*E'li, E'li, la'ma sa·bach·tha'ni?*" that is, "*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?*"^m **47** At hearing this, some of those standing there began to say: "This man is calling E-li'jah."ⁿ **48** And immediately one of them ran and took a sponge and soaked it in sour wine and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink.^o **49** But the rest of them said: "Let him be! Let us see whether E-li'jah comes to save him." **50** Again Jesus called out with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.^{*p}

51 And look! the curtain of the sanctuary^q was torn in two,^r from top to bottom,^s and the earth quaked, and the rocks

27:45 *That is, about 12:00 noon.

#That is, about 3:00 p.m. 27:50 *Or

"and expired."

were split. **52** And the tombs* were opened, and many bodies of the holy ones who had fallen asleep were raised up **53** (and people coming out from among the tombs after his being raised up entered into the holy city), and they became visible to many people. **54** But when the army officer and those with him keeping watch over Jesus saw the earthquake and the things happening, they grew very much afraid and said: "Certainly this was God's Son."^a

55 And many women were there watching from a distance, who had accompanied Jesus from Gal'i-lee to minister to him;^b **56** among them were Mary Mag'da-lene and Mary the mother of James and Jo'ses and the mother of the sons of Zeb'e-dee.^c

57 Now as it was late in the afternoon, a rich man of Ar-i-ma-the'a came, named Joseph, who had also become a disciple of Jesus.^d **58** This man approached Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus.^e Then Pilate commanded that it be given to him.^f **59** Joseph took the body, wrapped it up in clean, fine linen,^g **60** and laid it in his new tomb,^{*h} which he had quarried in the rock. And after rolling a big stone to the entrance of the tomb,* he left. **61** But Mary Mag'da-lene and the other Mary continued there, sitting before the grave.ⁱ

62 The next day, which was after the Preparation,^j the chief priests and the Pharisees gathered together before Pilate, **63** saying: "Sir, we recall what that impostor said while he was still alive, 'After three days I am to be raised up.'^k **64** Therefore, command that the grave be made secure until the third day, so that his disciples may not

27:52 *Or "memorial tombs." 27:60

*Or "memorial tomb."

MATTHEW 27:52-28:10

come and steal him^a and say to the people, 'He was raised up from the dead!' Then this last deception will be worse than the first." **65** Pilate said to them: "You may have a guard. Go make it as secure as you know how."

66 So they went and made the grave secure by sealing the stone and posting a guard.

28 After the Sabbath, when it was growing light on the first day of the week, Mary Mag'da-lene and the other Mary came to view the grave.^b

2 And look! a great earthquake had taken place, for Jehovah's* angel had descended from heaven and had come and rolled away the stone, and he was sitting on it.^c **3** His appearance was like lightning, and his clothing was as white as snow.^d

4 Yes, out of their fear of him, the watchmen trembled and became as dead men.

5 But the angel said to the women: "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus who was executed on the stake.^e **6** He is not here, for he was raised up, just as he said.^f Come, see the place where he was lying. **7** Then go quickly and tell his disciples that he was raised up from the dead, for look! he is going ahead of you into Gal'i-lee.^g You will see him there. Look! I have told you."^h

8 So, quickly leaving the memorial tomb, with fear and great joy, they ran to report to his disciples.ⁱ **9** And look! Jesus met them and said: "Good day!" They approached and took hold of his feet and did obeisance* to him. **10** Then Jesus said to them: "Have no fear! Go, report to my brothers so that they may go to Gal'i-lee, and there they will see me."

28:2 *See App. A5. 28:9 *Or "bowed down."

MATTHEW 28:11-MARK

11 While they were on their way, some of the guards^a went into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. **12** And after these had gathered with the elders and had consulted together, they gave a considerable number of silver pieces to the soldiers **13** and said: "Say, 'His disciples came in the night and stole him while we were sleeping.'^b **14** And if this gets to the governor's ears, we will explain the matter to* him and you will not need to worry." **15** So they took the silver pieces and did as they were instructed, and this story has been spread abroad among the Jews up to this very day.

16 However, the 11 disciples went to Gal'i-lee^a to the mountain where Jesus had arranged for them to meet.^b **17** When they saw him, they did obeisance,* but some doubted. **18** Jesus approached and spoke to them, saying: "All authority has been given me in heaven and on the earth.^c **19** Go, therefore, and make disciples of people of all the nations,^d baptizing them^e in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, **20** teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you.^f And look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things."^g

28:17 *Or "bowed down." **28:20** *Or "the age." See Glossary.

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Where? Jesus commanded his followers to make disciples of “people of all the nations”

Teaching others to observe all the things that Jesus commanded is an ongoing process



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April 9-15

Treasures From God's Word

Matthew 28:18—Jesus has wide-ranging authority (w04 7/1 8 paragraph 4)

Jesus has authority over his congregation, and since 1914 he has had authority over God's newly established Kingdom. (Colossians 1:13; Revelation 11:15) He is the archangel and as such commands a heavenly army of hundreds of millions of angels. (1 Thessalonians 4:16; 1 Peter 3:22; Revelation 19:14-16) He has been empowered by his Father to bring to nothing "all government and all authority and power" that oppose righteous principles. (1 Corinthians 15:24-26; Ephesians 1:20-23) Jesus' authority is not limited to the living. He is also "judge of the living and the dead" and has God-given power to resurrect those who have fallen asleep in death. (Acts 10:42; John 5:26-28) Surely a command given by the One vested with such vast authority should be viewed as of the highest importance. Therefore, we respectfully and willingly obey Christ's command to 'go and make disciples.'

MATTHEW

Study Notes—Chapter 27

27:1

elders: Lit., “older men.” In the Bible, the Greek term *pre-sby'te-ros* refers primarily to those who hold a position of authority and responsibility in a community or a nation. Although the term sometimes refers to physical age (as at Lu 15:25; Ac 2:17), it is not limited to those who are elderly. Here it refers to the leaders of the Jewish nation who are often mentioned together with chief priests and scribes. The Sanhedrin was made up of men from these three groups.—Mt 21:23; 26:3, 47, 57; 27:1, 41; 28:12; see Glossary, “Elder; Older man.”

27:2

Pilate, the governor: The Roman governor (prefect) of Judea appointed by Emperor Tiberius in 26 C.E. His rule lasted about ten years. Pilate is mentioned by non-Biblical writers, including Roman historian Tacitus, who wrote that Pilate ordered the execution of Christ during the reign of Tiberius. A Latin inscription with the words “Pontius Pilate, Prefect of Judea” was found in the ancient Roman theater in Caesarea, Israel.—See App. B10 for the domain ruled by Pontius Pilate.

27:3

felt remorse: While the Greek word *me-ta-me'lo-mai* used here can have positive connotations (rendered “feel regret” or “regret” at Mt 21:29, 32; 2Co 7:8), there is no indication that Judas was truly repentant. When referring to repentance before God, the Bible uses a different term, *me-ta-no-e'o* (rendered “repent” at Mt 3:2; 4:17; Lu 15:7; Ac 3:19), which signifies a strong change in thinking, attitude, or purpose. Judas’ actions of returning to the very men he had conspired with and then committing suicide

show that his thinking remained distorted, not changed for the better.

27:4

innocent: Some ancient manuscripts read “righteous.”— Compare Mt 23:35.

27:5

temple: The Greek word *na·os'* used here can refer to the entire complex, including its courtyards, and not only to the inner sanctuary of the temple itself.

hanged himself: Luke’s account of Judas’ death, recorded at Ac 1:18, reports that Judas fell and his body burst open. Matthew seems to deal with *how* he committed suicide, while Luke describes the *result*. Combining the two accounts, it appears that Judas hanged himself over a cliff, but at some point the rope or tree limb broke so that he plunged down and burst open on the rocks below. The topography around Jerusalem allows for such a conclusion.

27:6

sacred treasury: This term may refer to the portion of the temple called “the treasury” at Joh 8:20, apparently located in the area called the Court of the Women, where there were 13 treasury chests. (See App. B11.) It is believed that the temple also contained a major treasury where the money from the treasury chests was brought.

price of blood: Or “blood money,” that is, money received for shedding blood.

27:7

they used the money: Matthew alone specifies that the chief priests used the 30 silver pieces to purchase a piece of property. Ac 1:18, 19 attributes the purchase to Judas, but this is evidently

because the chief priests purchased the field with the money Judas provided.

potter's field: Since the fourth century C.E., this field has been identified with a location on the S slope of the Hinnom Valley, just before it joins the Kidron Valley. This seems to have been an area where potters pursued their craft. As shown at Mt 27:8 and Ac 1:19, the field came to be known as “Field of Blood,” or *Akeldama*.—See App. B12.

strangers: That is, Jews visiting from other lands or Gentiles.

27:8

to this very day: This expression indicates a lapse of some time between the events considered and the time of writing. Matthew's Gospel was probably written about 41 C.E.

27:9

what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: The quotation following these words appears to be drawn principally from Zec 11:12, 13 but is paraphrased by Matthew, who under inspiration applied it to the circumstances fulfilling it. In Matthew's time, Jeremiah was placed first among the prophetic books, and his name may have applied to the whole collection of these books, including Zechariah.—See study note on Mt 1:22.

27:10

Jehovah: In this quote from the Hebrew Scriptures (see study note on Mt 27:9), the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See App. C.

27:11

Are you the King of the Jews?: No king in the Roman Empire could rule without Caesar's consent. So Pilate apparently concentrated his interrogation on the issue of Jesus' kingship.

You yourself say it: This reply is evidently an affirmation of the truth of Pilate's statement. (Compare study notes on Mt 26:25, 64.) Though Jesus confesses to Pilate that he really is a king, it is in a sense that differs from what Pilate imagines, since Jesus' Kingdom is "no part of this world" and thus no threat to Rome.—Joh 18:33-37.

27:15

custom . . . to release a prisoner: This incident is mentioned by all four Gospel writers. (Mr 15:6-15; Lu 23:16-25; Joh 18:39, 40) There is no basis or precedent for this custom in the Hebrew Scriptures. However, it seems that by Jesus' day, the Jews had developed this tradition. The practice would not have seemed strange to the Romans, since there is evidence that they released prisoners to please the crowds.

27:19

judgment seat: Usually a raised outdoor platform from which seated officials could address crowds and announce their judicial decisions.

a dream: Evidently of divine origin. Matthew is the only Gospel writer to include this incident in the inspired account.

27:24

washed his hands: A symbolic gesture used to claim innocence and freedom from responsibility in a matter. This Jewish custom is mentioned at De 21:6, 7 and Ps 26:6.

27:25

Let his blood come upon us and upon our children: That is, “We and our descendants take responsibility for his death.”

27:26

whipped: The Romans flogged victims using a terrible instrument known in Latin as a *flagellum*, from which the Greek verb used here (*phra-gel-lo'o*, “to whip”) is derived. This instrument consisted of a handle into which several cords or knotted leather thongs were fixed. Sometimes the thongs were weighted with jagged pieces of bone or metal to make the blows more painful. Such floggings caused deep contusions, tore the flesh to ribbons, and could even lead to death.

27:27

governor’s residence: The Greek term *prai-to'ri-on* (derived from the Latin *praetorium*) designates the official residence of the Roman governors. In Jerusalem, the residence was probably the palace built by Herod the Great, situated in the NW corner of the upper city, that is, of the southern part of Jerusalem. (See App. B12 for the location.) Pilate stayed in Jerusalem only on certain occasions, such as festivals, since there was a potential for unrest. His usual residence was in Caesarea.

27:28

scarlet cloak: The type of cloak or robe worn by kings, magistrates, or military officers. Mr 15:17 and Joh 19:2 say that it was a purple garment, but in ancient times, “purple” was used to describe any color that had a mixture of red and blue. Also, angle, light reflection, and background could have influenced the observer’s perception of the exact color. This variation in describing the color shows that the Gospel writers did not simply copy one another’s accounts.

27:29

crown . . . reed: Along with the scarlet cloak (mentioned at Mt 27:28), Jesus was given mock attributes of royalty—thorns for a crown and a reed for a scepter.

kneeling before him: Kneeling, normally a gesture of respect toward a superior, was another way that the soldiers mocked Jesus.—See study note on Mt 17:14.

Greetings: Or “Hail.” Lit., “Be rejoicing.” They hailed him as they would have hailed Caesar, evidently to ridicule the claim that he was a king.

27:32

Cyrene: A city located near the North African coast, SSW of the island of Crete.—See App. B13.

compelled you into service: A reference to the compulsory service that the Roman authorities could demand from a citizen. They could, for example, press men or animals into service or commandeer whatever was considered necessary to expedite official business. That is what happened to Simon of Cyrene, whom Roman soldiers “compelled into service” to carry Jesus’ torture stake.—Mt 27:32.

torture stake: Or “execution stake.” This is the first occurrence of the Greek word *stau·ros*’. In classical Greek, it primarily referred to an upright stake or pole. Used figuratively, it sometimes stood for the suffering, shame, torture, and even death that a person experienced because of being a follower of Jesus.—See Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake”

27:33

Golgotha: From a Hebrew word meaning “skull.” (See Joh 19:17; compare Jg 9:53, where the Hebrew word *gul·go’leth* is rendered “skull.”) In Jesus’ day, the site was outside the city walls

of Jerusalem. However, the location remains uncertain. (See App. B12.) The Bible record does not state that Golgotha was on a hill, though it does mention that some observed the execution from a distance.—Mr 15:40; Lu 23:49.

27:34

gall: The Greek word *kho·le'* here refers to a bitter liquid made from plants or a bitter substance in general. Showing that this event was a fulfillment of prophecy, Matthew quotes Ps 69:21, where the *Septuagint* uses this Greek word to render the Hebrew word for “poison.” Apparently, women of Jerusalem had prepared the mixture of wine and gall to dull the pain of those being executed, and the Romans did not object to its use. The parallel account at Mr 15:23 says that the wine was “drugged with myrrh,” so the drink evidently contained both myrrh and bitter gall.

he refused to drink it: Jesus evidently wanted to have full possession of all his faculties during this test of his faith.

27:35

they distributed his outer garments: The account at Joh 19:23, 24 adds complementary details not mentioned by Matthew, Mark, and Luke: Roman soldiers evidently cast lots over both the outer garment and the inner one; the soldiers divided the outer garments “into four parts, one for each soldier”; they did not want to divide the inner garment, so they cast lots over it; and the casting of lots for the Messiah’s apparel fulfilled Ps 22:18. It was evidently customary for the executioners to keep their victims’ clothes, so criminals were stripped of their clothing and possessions before being executed, making the ordeal all the more humiliating.

by casting lots: See Glossary, “Lots.”— Pebbles or small bits of wood or stone that were used in making decisions. These were gathered into the folds of a garment or into a vessel and then shaken. The lot that fell out or was drawn out was the one

chosen. This was often done prayerfully. The term “lot” is used both literally and figuratively with the meaning “share” or “portion.”—Jos 14:2; Ps 16:5; Pr 16:33; Mt 27:35.

27:38

robbers: Or “bandits.” The Greek word *lei-stes'* may include robbing by using violence and at times could refer to revolutionaries. The same word is used of Barabbas (Joh 18:40), who according to Lu 23:19 was in prison for “sedition” and “murder.” The parallel account at Lu 23:32, 33, 39 describes the men as “criminals” from a Greek word (*ka-kour'gos*), which literally means “one who engages in doing bad or evil.”

27:39

shaking their heads: Generally accompanied by words, this gesture expressed derision, contempt, or mockery. The passersby inadvertently fulfilled the prophecy recorded at Ps 22:7.

27:40

torture stake: Or “execution stake.” This is the first occurrence of the Greek word *stau-ros'*. In classical Greek, it primarily referred to an upright stake or pole. Used figuratively, it sometimes stood for the suffering, shame, torture, and even death that a person experienced because of being a follower of Jesus.—See Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake”

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torture stake: Or “execution stake.” This is the first occurrence of the Greek word *stau-ros'*. In classical Greek, it primarily referred to an upright stake or pole. Used figuratively, it sometimes stood for the suffering, shame, torture, and even death that a person experienced because of being a follower of Jesus.—See Glossary, “Stake”; “Torture stake”

27:45

the sixth hour: That is, about 12:00 noon.— In the first century C.E., the Jews used the count of 12 hours to the day, starting with sunrise at about 6:00 a.m. (Joh 11:9) Therefore, the third hour would be about 9:00 a.m., the sixth hour about noon, and the ninth hour about 3:00 p.m. Since people did not have precise timepieces, only the approximate time of an event was usually given.—Joh 1:39; 4:6; 19:14; Ac 10:3, 9.

the ninth hour: That is, about 3:00 p.m.— In the first century C.E., the Jews used the count of 12 hours to the day, starting with sunrise at about 6:00 a.m. (Joh 11:9) Therefore, the third hour would be about 9:00 a.m., the sixth hour about noon, and the ninth hour about 3:00 p.m. Since people did not have precise timepieces, only the approximate time of an event was usually given.—Joh 1:39; 4:6; 19:14; Ac 10:3, 9.

27:46

Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? Though some consider these words to be Aramaic, they were likely contemporary Hebrew, somewhat influenced by Aramaic. The Greek transliteration of these words recorded by Matthew and Mark does not allow for a positive identification of the original language.

My God, my God: In calling out to his heavenly Father, acknowledging him as his God, Jesus fulfilled Ps 22:1. Jesus' cry of agony may have brought to his listeners' minds the many things prophesied about him in the rest of Ps 22—that he would be mocked, derided, and attacked in his hands and feet and that his garments would be divided by lot.—Ps 22:6-8, 16, 18.

27:47

Elijah: From the Hebrew name meaning “My God Is Jehovah.”

27:48

sour wine: Or “wine vinegar.” Likely referring to a thin, tart, or sour wine known in Latin as *acetum* (vinegar) or as *posca* when diluted with water. This was a cheap drink that poor people, including Roman soldiers, commonly drank to quench their thirst. The Greek word *o'xos* is also used at Ps 69:21 in the *Septuagint*, where it was prophesied that Messiah would be given “vinegar” to drink.

reed: Or “stick; staff.” In John’s account, it is called “a hyssop stalk.”—Joh 19:29; see Glossary, “Hyssop.”

27:49

to save him: Some ancient manuscripts add: “Another man took a spear and pierced his side, and blood and water came out.” Other important manuscripts do not contain those words. A similar statement is found at Joh 19:34, but according to Joh 19:33, Jesus was already dead when this occurred. Most authorities, including the editors of the Nestle-Aland and United Bible Society Greek texts, believe that the words of John’s account were later added to Matthew’s account by copyists. Even Westcott and Hort, who included these words in their Greek text in double brackets, stated that the sentence “must lie under a strong presumption of having been introduced by scribes.” Considering that there are different manuscript readings for Matthew’s account and that there is no uncertainty regarding the reading in John’s Gospel, the account at Joh 19:33, 34 evidently presents the events in correct order, namely, that Jesus was already dead when the Roman soldier pierced him with the spear. Therefore, these words are omitted in this translation at Mt 27:49.

27:50

yielded up his spirit: Or “expired; ceased to breathe.” The term “spirit” (Greek, *pneu'ma*) may here be understood to refer to

“breath” or “life force,” which is supported by the use of the Greek verb *ek·pne’o* (lit., “to breathe out”) in the parallel account at Mr 15:37 (where it is rendered “expired” or, as in the footnote, “breathed his last”). Some suggest that the use of the Greek term rendered “yielded up” means that Jesus voluntarily stopped struggling to stay alive, since all things had been accomplished. (Joh 19:30) He willingly “poured out his life even to death.”—Isa 53:12; Joh 10:11.

27:51

look!: The Greek word *i·dou’*, here rendered “look!,” is often used to focus attention on what follows, encouraging the reader to visualize the scene or to take note of a detail in a narrative. It is also used to add emphasis or to introduce something new or surprising. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the term occurs most frequently in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke and in the book of Revelation. A corresponding expression is often used in the Hebrew Scriptures.

curtain: This beautifully ornamented drape embroidered with figures of cherubs separated the Most Holy from the Holy in the temple. Jewish tradition indicates that this heavy curtain was some 18 m (60 ft) long, 9 m (30 ft) wide, and 7.4 cm (2.9 in.) thick. By tearing the curtain in two, Jehovah not only manifests his wrath against his Son’s killers but also signifies that entry into heaven itself is now possible.—Heb 10:19, 20; see Glossary.

sanctuary: The Greek word *na·os’* here refers to the central edifice with its Holy and Most Holy compartments.

27:52

tombs: Or “memorial tombs.”— A burial place in which the remains of a deceased person were placed. This term renders the Greek word *mne·mei’on*, which comes from the verb “to remind,” suggesting that the person who has died is remembered.—Joh 5:28, 29.

were raised up: The Greek verb *e-gei'ro*, meaning “to raise up,” can refer to a resurrection, but it is often used in other contexts. For example, it can mean to “lift out” of a pit or to “get up” from the ground. (Mt 12:11; 17:7; Lu 1:69) Matthew does not say that “the holy ones” are “raised up.” He says that their “bodies” are. Evidently, the earthquake was so powerful that the tombs were broken open and corpses were thrown out of them.

27:53

people coming out: Or “they who came out.” The Greek verb indicates a plural masculine subject referring to people, not to the bodies (neuter in Greek) mentioned in verse 52. This evidently refers to passersby, who saw the dead bodies exposed by the earthquake (vs. 51) and who entered the city and reported what they had seen.

after his being raised up: That is, Jesus’ resurrection. The information within parentheses refers to events taking place at a later time.

holy city: That is, Jerusalem.— “holy city” Refers to Jerusalem, which is often called holy because it was the location of Jehovah’s temple.—Ne 11:1; Isa 52:1.

they became visible: Evidently referring to the dead bodies mentioned in verse 52.—See study note on Mt 27:52.

27:54

army officer: Or “centurion,” that is, one in command of about 100 soldiers in the Roman army. This high-ranking officer may have been at Jesus’ trial before Pilate and may have heard the Jews say that Jesus claimed to be God’s Son.—Mt 27:27; Joh 19:7.

27:56

Mary Magdalene: The woman often called Mary Magdalene is first mentioned in the account of Jesus' second year of preaching. Her distinguishing name Magdalene (meaning "Of, or Belonging to, Magdala") likely stems from the town of Magdala on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee about halfway between Capernaum and Tiberias. It has been suggested that Magdala was Mary's hometown or place of residence. Mary Magdalene is mentioned most prominently in connection with the death and resurrection of Jesus.—See study notes on Mt 15:39; Lu 8:2.

James: Also called "James the Less."—Mr 15:40.

Joses: Some ancient manuscripts read "Joseph" instead of "Joses." In the parallel account at Mr 15:40, most ancient manuscripts read "Joses."

mother of the sons of Zebedee: That is, the mother of the apostles James and John.—See study notes on Mt 4:21; 20:20.

27:57

Arimathea: The name of this city comes from a Hebrew word meaning "height." At Lu 23:51, it is called "a city of the Judeans."—See App. B10.

Joseph: The individuality of the Gospel writers is evident in the varying details they provide about Joseph. Tax collector Matthew notes that he is rich; Mark, writing for the Romans, says that he was "a reputable member of the Council" who was waiting for God's Kingdom; Luke, the sympathetic physician, says that he "was a good and righteous man" who did not vote in support of the Council's action against Jesus; John alone reports that he was "a secret [disciple] because of his fear of the Jews."—Mr 15:43-46; Lu 23:50-53; Joh 19:38-42.

27:60

tomb: Or “memorial tomb.” A vault, or chamber, cut into the soft limestone rock, rather than a natural cave. Such tombs often contained benchlike shelves or niches where bodies could be laid.—See Glossary, “Memorial tomb.”

a big stone: Apparently a circular stone, since this verse says that it was rolled into place and Mr 16:4 says that it “had been rolled away” when Jesus was resurrected. It might have weighed a ton or more.

27:62

next day: That is, Nisan 15. The day after Nisan 14 was always observed as a Sabbath, or holy day of rest, no matter what day of the week it fell on. Additionally, in 33 C.E., Nisan 15 fell on the regular weekly Sabbath, making the day a “great,” or double, Sabbath.—Joh 19:31; see App. B12.

Preparation: A name applied to the day preceding the weekly Sabbath. During this day, the Jews got ready for the Sabbath by preparing extra meals and finishing any work that could not wait until after the Sabbath. In this case, the day of Preparation fell on Nisan 14.—Mr 15:42; see Glossary.

27:63

three days: This expression can mean parts of three days. This is evident from the request that the tomb “be made secure *until the third day,*” and not until the fourth.—Mt 27:64; see study note on Mt 12:40.

27:64

Then this last deception will be worse than the first: Evidently meaning that this supposed “deception,” namely, Jesus’ resurrection, would be worse than the first one, his assertion that he was the Messiah. Jesus’ adversaries apparently knew that if

Jesus were to be resurrected, his claim to be the Messiah would be proved true.

27:65

a guard: Pilate evidently provided a group of Roman soldiers. (Mt 28:4, 11) Had the guards been members of the Jewish temple police, the Jews would not have had to consult Pilate. Likewise, the priests promised to set matters right with the governor if he heard of the disappearance of Jesus' body.—Mt 28:14.

MATTHEW Study Notes—Chapter 28

28:1

Sabbath: Lit., “Sabbaths.” In this verse, the plural form of the Greek word *sab'ba·ton* occurs twice. In the first instance, it refers to a single Sabbath day, the seventh day of the week, and it is rendered “the Sabbath.” In the second instance, where it refers to a period of seven days, it is rendered **of the week**. The Sabbath day (Nisan 15) ended at sunset. Although some have understood Matthew's account to refer to a time at dusk “after the Sabbath,” the other Gospel accounts clearly show that the women **came to view the grave** “early” in the morning on Nisan 16, “when the sun had risen.”—Mr 16:1, 2; Lu 24:1; Joh 20:1; see also Glossary and App. B12.

the first day of the week: That is, Nisan 16. For the Jews, the day immediately after the Sabbath was the first day of the week.

28:2

Jehovah's angel: This expression occurs many times in the Hebrew Scriptures, starting at Ge 16:7. When it occurs in early copies of the *Septuagint*, the Greek word *ag'ge·los* (angel;

messenger) is followed by the divine name written in Hebrew characters. That is how the expression is handled at Zec 3:5, 6 in a copy of the *Septuagint* found in Nahal Hever, Israel, dated between 50 B.C.E. and 50 C.E. (See App. C.) A number of Bible translations retain the divine name when rendering the expression “Jehovah’s angel” in this verse.—See App. A5 and App. C.

28:7

tell his disciples that he was raised up: These women are not only the first disciples to be told of Jesus’ resurrection but also the ones instructed to inform the other disciples. (Mt 28:2, 5, 7) According to unscriptural Jewish tradition, a woman’s testimony was not permissible in a court of law. By contrast, Jehovah’s angel dignifies the women by giving them this joyful assignment.

look!: The Greek word *i·dou'*, here rendered “look!,” is often used to focus attention on what follows, encouraging the reader to visualize the scene or to take note of a detail in a narrative. It is also used to add emphasis or to introduce something new or surprising. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the term occurs most frequently in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke and in the book of Revelation. A corresponding expression is often used in the Hebrew Scriptures.

28:9

did obeisance to him: Or “bowed down to him; prostrated themselves to him; paid him homage.”—See study notes on Mt 8:2; 14:33; 15:25.

28:10

my brothers: Here Jesus calls his disciples “brothers” because of the spiritual relationship they enjoy.—See Mt 28:16; compare Mt 25:40; Joh 20:17; Heb 2:10-12.

28:12

elders: Lit., “older men.” In the Bible, the Greek term *pre-sby'te-ros* refers primarily to those who hold a position of authority and responsibility in a community or a nation. Although the term sometimes refers to physical age (as at Lu 15:25; Ac 2:17), it is not limited to those who are elderly. Here it refers to the leaders of the Jewish nation who are often mentioned together with chief priests and scribes. The Sanhedrin was made up of men from these three groups.—Mt 21:23; 26:3, 47, 57; 27:1, 41; 28:12; see Glossary, “Elder; Older man.”

28:14

this: That is, their lie about having been asleep. Roman soldiers could be put to death if they fell asleep at their post.

the governor's: The governor here referred to is Pontius Pilate.

28:16

to meet: Apparently more than 500 attend this meeting in Galilee.—1Co 15:6.

28:17

some doubted: In the light of 1Co 15:6, it is likely that those who doubted were not among the apostles; rather, they were disciples in Galilee to whom Jesus had not yet appeared.

28:19

make disciples: The Greek verb *ma-the-teu'o* can be rendered “teach” with the intent of making pupils or disciples. (Compare usage at Mt 13:52, where it is rendered “taught.”) The verbs “baptizing” and “teaching” show what is involved in the command to “make disciples.”

people of all the nations: A literal translation reads “all nations,” but the context indicates that this term refers to individuals out of all nations, since the Greek pronoun “them” in the expression

baptizing them is in the masculine gender and refers to people, not to “nations,” which is neuter in Greek. This command to reach “people of all the nations” was new. Prior to Jesus’ ministry, the Scriptures indicate that Gentiles were welcomed to Israel if they came to serve Jehovah. (1Ki 8:41-43) With this command, however, Jesus commissions his disciples to extend the preaching work to people other than natural Jews, emphasizing the worldwide scope of the Christian disciple-making work.—Mt 10:1, 5-7; Re 7:9; see study note on Mt 24:14.

in the name of: The Greek term for “name” (*o’no·ma*) can refer to more than a personal name. In this context, it involves recognition of authority and position of the Father and the Son as well as the role of the holy spirit. Such recognition results in a new relationship with God.—Compare study note on Mt 10:41.

the Father . . . the Son . . . the holy spirit: Recognition of the Father, Jehovah God, is natural, since he is our Creator and Life-Giver. (Ps 36:7, 9; Re 4:11) However, the Bible also shows that no human can gain salvation without recognizing the role of the Son in God’s purpose. (Joh 14:6; Ac 4:12) It is also vital to recognize the role of God’s holy spirit because, among other things, God uses his active force to give life (Job 33:4), to inspire his message to humans (2Pe 1:21), and to empower them to do his will (Ro 15:19). Although some believe that this enumeration supports the Trinity doctrine, the Bible never indicates that the three are equal in eternity, power, and position. That they are mentioned together in the same verse does not prove that they share divinity, eternity, and equality.—Mr 13:32; Col 1:15; 1Ti 5:21.

the holy spirit: Or “the holy active force.” The term “spirit” (neuter in Greek) refers to an impersonal force in action, emanating from God.—**Holy spirit:** The invisible energizing force that God puts into action to accomplish his will. It is holy because it comes from Jehovah, who is clean and righteous to the highest

degree, and because it is God's means to accomplish what is holy.—Lu 1:35; Ac 1:8.—**Spirit:** The Hebrew word *ru'ach* and the Greek word *pneu'ma*, often translated “spirit,” have a number of meanings. All of them refer to that which is invisible to human sight and gives evidence of force in motion. The Hebrew and Greek words are used with reference to (1) wind, (2) the active life-force in earthly creatures, (3) the impelling force that issues from a person's figurative heart and causes him to say and do things in a certain way, (4) inspired expressions originating from an invisible source, (5) spirit persons, and (6) God's active force, or holy spirit.—Ex 35:21; Ps 104:29; Mt 12:43; Lu 11:13.

28:20

teaching them: The Greek word rendered “to teach” involves instruction, explanation, showing things by argument, and offering proofs. (See study notes on Mt 3:1; 4:23.) Teaching them to **observe all the things** that Jesus had commanded would be an ongoing process, which would include teaching what he taught, applying his teaching, and following his example.—Joh 13:17; Eph 4:21; 1Pe 2:21.

look!: The Greek word *i·dou'*, here rendered “look!,” is often used to focus attention on what follows, encouraging the reader to visualize the scene or to take note of a detail in a narrative. It is also used to add emphasis or to introduce something new or surprising. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the term occurs most frequently in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke and in the book of Revelation. A corresponding expression is often used in the Hebrew Scriptures.

conclusion: Rendered from the Greek word *syn·te'lei·a*, meaning “joint end; combination end; ending together.” (Mt 13:39, 40, 49; 28:20; Heb 9:26) This refers to a time period during which a combination of events would lead to the complete “end” mentioned at Mt 24:6, 14, where a different Greek word,

te'los, is used.—See study notes on Mt 24:6, 14 and Glossary, “Conclusion of the system of things.” See Glossary, “Conclusion of the system of things.”

system of things: Or “age.”— Rendering of the Greek word *ai-on'* when it refers to the current state of affairs or features that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age. The Bible speaks of “the present system of things,” referring to the prevailing state of affairs in the world in general and the worldly way of life. (2Ti 4:10) By means of the Law covenant, God introduced a system of things that some might call the Israelite or Jewish epoch. By means of his ransom sacrifice, Jesus Christ was used by God to introduce a different system of things, one primarily involving the congregation of anointed Christians. This marked the beginning of a new epoch, characterized by the realities foreshadowed by the Law covenant. When in the plural, this phrase refers to the various systems of things, or prevailing states of affairs, that have existed or will exist.—Mt 24:3; Mr 4:19; Ro 12:2; 1Co 10:11.

- Song 69 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Go Make Disciples—Why, Where, and How?”:** (10 min.)
 Mt 28:18—Jesus has wide-ranging authority (w04 7/1 8 ¶14)
 Mt 28:19—Jesus called for a worldwide preaching and teaching campaign (nwtsty study notes)
 Mt 28:20—We must help people learn and apply all that Jesus taught (nwtsty study note)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Mt 27:51—What did the tearing in two of the curtain signify? (nwtsty study notes)

Mt 28:7—How did Jehovah’s angel dignify the women who came to Jesus’ grave? (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 27:38-54

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **First Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **Talk:** (6 min. or less) g17.2 14—Theme: Did Jesus Die on a Cross?

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 70
- **“Preaching and Teaching—Essential to Making Disciples”:** (15 min.) Discussion. When considering the information, play the videos *Continue Preaching “Without Letup”—Informally and From House to House* and *Continue Preaching “Without Letup”—Publicly and Making Disciples*.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 16
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 73 and Prayer

MATTHEW 27-28 | Go Make Disciples—Why, Where, and How?



28:18-20

Why? Jesus received wide-ranging authority from Jehovah

Where? Jesus commanded his followers to make disciples of “people of all the nations”

Teaching others to observe all the things that Jesus commanded is an ongoing process



How do we teach others Jesus’ commands?



How do we help our students to apply Jesus’ teaching?



How do we help our students to follow Jesus’ example?

Apply Yourself to the Field Ministry

Talk: (6 minutes or less) g17.2 14—Theme: Did Jesus Die on a Cross?

Reference: g17.2 14

Did Jesus die on a cross?

What Some People Say

The Romans executed Jesus by hanging him on a cross made of two pieces of wood.

What the Bible Says

Jesus was executed “by hanging on a tree.” (Acts 5:30, *The New Jerusalem Bible*) Both of the words used by Bible writers to describe the instrument of Jesus’ death suggest *one* piece of wood, not two. The Greek word *stauros*, according to *Crucifixion in Antiquity*, means “a pole in the broadest sense. It is not the equivalent of a ‘cross.’” The word *xy’lon*, used at Acts 5:30, is “simply *an upright pale or stake* to which the Romans nailed those who were thus said to be crucified.” *

[Footnote.] * *A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*, 11th Edition, by Ethelbert W. Bullinger, pages 818-819. [End of Footnote.]

The Bible also relates the method of Jesus’ execution to an ancient Israelite law. The law stipulated: “If a man commits a sin deserving the sentence of death and he has been put to death and you have hung him on a stake, ... the one hung up is something accursed of God.” (Deuteronomy 21:22, 23) Referring to that law, the Christian apostle Paul wrote that Jesus became “a curse instead of us, because it is written: ‘Accursed is every man hung upon a stake [*xy’lon*].’” (Galatians 3:13) Paul thus indicated that Jesus died on a stake—a single piece of wood.

70 *Search Out Deserving Ones* (Matthew 10:11-15)

1. In preaching the Kingdom and teaching the truth,
Our Lord showed us how to proceed:
'Search out those deserving and ready to hear,
Those aware of their spiritual need.
By greeting the household and wishing it peace,
Then it may be that peace you'll impart.
But when they refuse you or turn you away,
Shake the dust from your feet and depart.'
2. All those who receive you receive him as well,
Respond when their heart opens wide.
Their right disposition for unending life
Will impel them to serve at your side.
And never be anxious about what to say,
For Jehovah will help you to speak.
Your answer when gracious and seasoned with salt
Will appeal to the humble and meek.

- Song 69 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Go Make Disciples—Why, Where, and How?”:** (10 min.)
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What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

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

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Mt 27:38-54

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **First Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **Talk:** (6 min. or less) g17.2 14—Theme: Did Jesus Die on a Cross?

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

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How do we teach others Jesus’ commands?



How do we help our students to apply Jesus’ teaching?



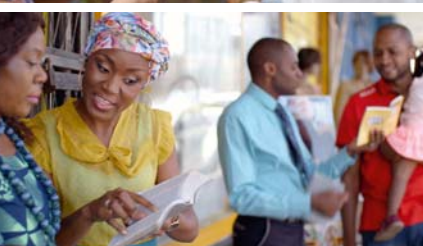
How do we help our students to follow Jesus’ example?

Preaching and Teaching—Essential to Making Disciples

Jesus commanded his followers to go and make disciples. (Mt 28:19) This involves preaching and teaching. From time to time, we should all ask ourselves, 'How can I improve in these essential aspects of the disciple-making work?'



“Sow your seed in the morning and do not let your hand rest until the evening” (Ec 11:6)



“I planted, Apollos watered, but God kept making it grow” (1Co 3:6)

PREACHING

Instead of waiting for people to come to us, we must actively search for “deserving” ones. (Mt 10:11) When we share in the ministry, are we alert to opportunities to speak with people who ‘happen to be on hand’? (Ac 17:17) Lydia became a disciple as a result of the apostle Paul’s diligent preaching.—Ac 16:13-15.

WATCH THE VIDEO CONTINUE PREACHING “WITHOUT LETUP”—INFORMALLY AND FROM HOUSE TO HOUSE, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- In his daily routine, how did Samuel show that he was actively seeking to plant seeds of truth?

- Why must we persevere in all types of preaching?

- With whom might you share the Kingdom message during your daily routine?

TEACHING

To make disciples, we must do more than simply leave literature with people. To help them progress spiritually, we need to make return visits and conduct Bible studies. (1Co 3:6-9) Yet, what if our diligent efforts to teach someone Kingdom truth yield little results? (Mt 13:19-22) We should continue our search for those whose hearts are like “fine soil.” —Mt 13:23; Ac 13:48.

WATCH THE VIDEO CONTINUE PREACHING “WITHOUT LETUP”—PUBLICLY AND MAKING DISCIPLES, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- How did Solomon and Mary water the seeds of truth in the hearts of Ezekiel and Abigail?

- What should be our goal in all facets of the ministry, including public witnessing?

- How might we give greater emphasis to teaching others the truth?



16

JESUS SHOWS ZEAL FOR TRUE WORSHIP

JOHN 2:12-22

- JESUS CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE

After the wedding in Cana, Jesus heads to Capernaum. Jesus' mother and his half brothers—James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas—are traveling with him.

But why does Jesus go to Capernaum? This city is more prominently situated than Nazareth or Cana and is evidently larger. Also, many of Jesus' newly acquired disciples live in or near Capernaum. So Jesus can provide them with some training in their home area.

During his stay in Capernaum, Jesus also performs marvelous works. Thus many people of the city and in the surrounding area hear about the things he does there. But Jesus and his companions, who are devoted Jewish men, must soon be on their way to Jerusalem to attend the Passover of 30 C.E.

While at the temple in Jerusalem, Jesus' disciples

JESUS SHOWS ZEAL FOR TRUE WORSHIP

JOHN 2:12-22



see something about Jesus that is most impressive, different from what they have seen before.

God's Law calls upon Israelites to make animal sacrifices at the temple, and visitors need food provisions during their stay. So the Law allows for those traveling to Jerusalem from a distant location to bring money to spend on "cattle, sheep, goats," and other things useful during their stay in the city. (Deuteronomy 14:24-26) As a result, merchants in Jerusalem sell animals or birds right inside a large courtyard of the temple. And some of them are cheating the people by charging too much.

Filled with indignation, Jesus pours out the coins of the money changers, overturns their tables, and drives the men out. Jesus then says: "Take these things away from here! Stop making the house of my Father a house of commerce!"—John 2:16.

When Jesus' disciples see this, they remember the prophecy about God's Son: "The zeal for your house will consume me." But the Jews ask: "What sign can you show us, since you are doing these things?" Jesus answers: "Tear down this temple, and

in three days I will raise it up.”—John 2:17-19; Psalm 69:9.

The Jews assume that Jesus means the literal temple there in Jerusalem, so they ask: “This temple was built in 46 years, and will you raise it up in three days?” (John 2:20) However, Jesus is referring to his body as a temple. Three years later, his disciples remember these words when he is resurrected.

- ◇ After the wedding in Cana, Jesus travels to what places?
- ◇ Why is Jesus angry over what he sees at the temple, and what does he do?
- ◇ To what does Jesus refer as “this temple,” and what does he mean?

Grant Us Boldness

(Acts 4:29)

1. As we tell about the Kingdom,
 As we witness for your name,
 There are many who oppose us
 And who try to bring us shame.
 But instead of fearing men,
 It's really you we must obey.
 So we beg you now for your spirit;
 O Jehovah, hear what we pray.

(CHORUS)

*Grant us boldness as we witness;
 Help us overcome our fear.
 Give us confidence and courage
 So that all the world may hear.
 Armageddon draws ever near,
 But until that great day is here,
 Grant us boldness as we witness.
 This is our prayer.*

2. Even though we may be fearful,
 You remember we are dust.
 Your assurance to support us
 Is a promise we can trust.
 Give attention to the threats
 Of those who persecute and blame.
 May you help us all to continue
 As we boldly speak in your name.

(Chorus)

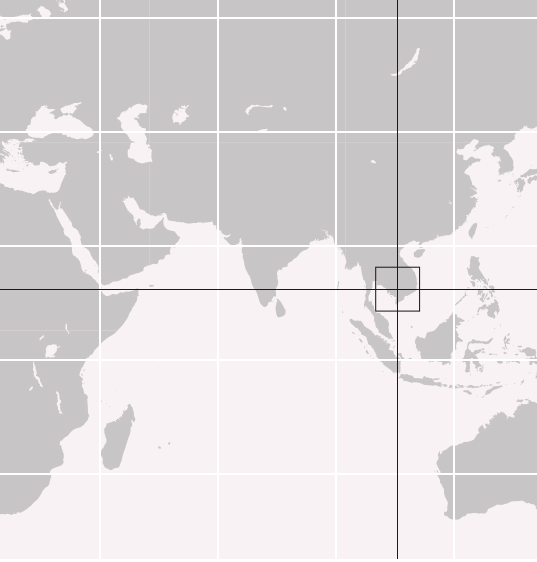
FEBRUARY 2018

THE  **WATCHTOWER**
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
APRIL 2-29, 2018

LARGE
PRINT
EDITION



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

TABLE OF CONTENTS

4 WEEK OF APRIL 2-8

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

16 WEEK OF APRIL 9-15

Do You Know Jehovah as Did Noah, Daniel, and Job?

Noah, Daniel, and Job experienced many of the same kinds of problems we face today. What enabled them to remain faithful and obedient? How did they come to know Jehovah so well that nothing could break their integrity? These two articles will consider those questions.

126 *Stay Awake, Stand Firm, Grow Mighty*

(1 Corinthians 16:13)

1. Stay awake, stand firm, grow mighty,
Be determined to endure.
Carry on with manly courage,
For the victory is sure.
We obey Christ Jesus' clear command;
Under him we firmly take our stand.

(CHORUS)

*Stay awake, stand firm, and grow mighty!
Carry on right to the end!*

2. Stay awake, and keep your senses,
Always ready to obey.
Stay alert to Christ's direction
Through his faithful slave today.
Heed the counsel of the older men,
Who protect his sheep and truth defend.

(Chorus)

3. Stay awake, remain united
As the good news we defend.
Though our enemies will fight it,
We will preach until the end.
Join the shout of praise throughout the land.
Look! Jehovah's day is soon at hand!

(Chorus)



SONGS:
126, 150

**HOW WERE FAITH
AND GODLY
WISDOM SHOWN
BY . . .**

Noah?

Daniel?

Job?

Do You Know Jehovah as Did Noah, Daniel, and Job?

*“Evil men cannot understand justice,
but those who seek Jehovah can
understand everything.”—PROV. 28:5.*

AS THE last days near their end,
the wicked continue to “sprout
like weeds.” (Ps. 92:7) It comes as
no surprise, therefore, that moral

1-3. (a) What will help us to remain faithful
to God during these last days? (b) What will
we consider in this article?

standards are being abandoned. In this environment, how can we “be young children as to badness” yet “full-grown in [our] understanding”?—1 Cor. 14:20.

² The answer is found in our theme text, which says in part: “Those who seek Jehovah can understand everything”—that is, everything necessary to please him. (Prov. 28:5) A similar thought is expressed at Proverbs 2:7, 9, which says that Jehovah “treasures up practical wisdom for the upright.” As a result, the upright are able to “understand what is righteous and just and fair, the entire course of what is good.”

³ Noah, Daniel, and Job acquired that wisdom. (Ezek. 14:14) The same is true of God’s people today. What about you personally? Do you “understand everything” necessary to please Jehovah? The key is to have accurate knowledge of him. With that in mind, let us consider (1) how Noah, Daniel, and Job came to know God, (2) how that knowledge benefited them, and (3) how we can develop a faith like theirs.

NOAH WALKED WITH GOD IN A WICKED WORLD

⁴ *How Noah came to know Jehovah.* Since early in

4. How did Noah come to know Jehovah, and how did accurate knowledge help him?

human history, men and women of faith have learned about God in three primary ways: by observing the visible creation, from other God-fearing humans, and by experiencing the blessings of living in harmony with God's righteous standards and principles. (Isa. 48:18) By observing the physical creation, Noah would have seen abundant evidence not only of God's existence but also of his many invisible qualities, such as "his eternal power and Godship." (Rom. 1:20) As a result, Noah did more than believe in God; he developed strong faith in him.

⁵ Faith "follows the thing heard." (Rom. 10:17) How did Noah hear about Jehovah? He no doubt learned much from his relatives. These included his father, Lamech, who was a man of faith and whose life overlapped Adam's. (See opening picture.) They also included his grandfather Methuselah and his great-great-grandfather Jared, whose life overlapped Noah's by 366 years.* (Luke 3:36, 37) Perhaps from these men and possibly from their wives, Noah learned about mankind's start, God's purpose that a righteous human family fill the earth,

* Noah's great-grandfather Enoch also "kept walking with the true God." However, "God took him" some 69 years before Noah was born.—Gen. 5:23, 24.

5. How did Noah become familiar with God's purpose for mankind?

and the rebellion in Eden—the results of which Noah could see for himself. (Gen. 1:28; 3:16-19, 24) In any event, what Noah learned touched his heart, moving him to serve God.—Gen. 6:9.

⁶ Faith is reinforced by hope. Imagine, then, how Noah must have felt when he learned that his name, which probably means “Rest; Consolation,” embodied hope! (Gen. 5:29, ftn.) Under inspiration, Lamech said: “This one [Noah] will bring us comfort from . . . the painful toil of our hands because of the ground that Jehovah has cursed.” Noah had hope in God. Like Abel and Enoch before him, he believed in the “offspring” who would bruise the serpent’s head.—Gen. 3:15.

⁷ While Noah may not have grasped the details of the prophecy recorded at Genesis 3:15, he no doubt saw in it the hope of deliverance. Moreover, that Edenic promise harmonized with the message proclaimed by Enoch, who also foretold God’s judgment of the wicked. (Jude 14, 15) Enoch’s message, which will have its final fulfillment at Armageddon, surely reinforced Noah’s faith and hope!

⁸ *How accurate knowledge of God benefited Noah.* Accurate knowledge gave Noah faith and godly wisdom,

6, 7. How did hope reinforce Noah’s faith?

8. In what ways did accurate knowledge of God protect Noah?

which protected him from harm, especially spiritual harm. For instance, because Noah “walked with the true God,” he did not walk, or associate, with the ungodly. He was not fooled by the materialized demons, who surely impressed faithless, gullible humans with their superhuman abilities—perhaps even to the point of becoming objects of idolatry. (Gen. 6:1-4, 9) Also, Noah knew that *humans* were told to reproduce and fill the earth. (Gen. 1:27, 28) Hence, he must have known that sexual unions between women and materialized spirits were both unnatural and wrong. That conclusion was no doubt confirmed when those unions produced abnormal offspring. In time, God warned Noah that He was going to bring a flood upon the earth. Noah’s faith in that warning moved him to build the ark, thus saving his household.—Heb. 11:7.

⁹ *How we cultivate faith like Noah’s.* The key is to be good students of God’s Word, to take to heart what we learn, and to let that knowledge mold us and guide us. (1 Pet. 1:13-15) Then faith and godly wisdom will protect us from Satan’s clever designs and from the world’s evil spirit. (2 Cor. 2:11) That spirit fosters a love for violence and immorality. And it impels people to focus on fleshly desires. (1 John 2:15,

9, 10. How can we imitate Noah’s faith?

16) It may even move the spiritually weak to ignore the evidence of the closeness of God's great day. Note that when Jesus compared our time with Noah's, he focused, not on violence or immorality, but on the dangers of spiritual apathy.—Read Matthew 24:36-39.

¹⁰ Ask yourself: 'Does my way of life indicate that I truly know Jehovah? Does my faith impel me not only to live in harmony with God's righteous standards but also to proclaim them?' May your answers show that you too 'walk with the true God.'

DANIEL SHOWED GODLY WISDOM IN PAGAN BABYLON

¹¹ *How Daniel came to know Jehovah.* Daniel was evidently well-instructed by his parents, who taught him to love Jehovah and his written Word. Moreover, that love stayed with Daniel all his life. Even in his old age, we find him poring over the Scriptures. (Dan. 9:1, 2) Daniel's intimate knowledge of God, including God's dealings with Israel, is beautifully reflected in the prophet's heartfelt and contrite prayer recorded at Daniel 9:3-19. Why not take a few moments to read that prayer and meditate on it, taking

11. (a) Daniel's godly devotion as a youth reveals what about his upbringing? (b) What qualities of Daniel would you like to imitate?

special note of what it tells you about Daniel as a person?

¹² *How accurate knowledge of God benefited Daniel.* For a faithful Jew, life in pagan Babylon presented big challenges. For instance, Jehovah told the Jews: “Seek the peace of the city to which I have exiled you.” (Jer. 29:7) Yet, at the same time, he required their exclusive devotion. (Ex. 34:14) What enabled Daniel to balance the two requirements? Godly wisdom helped him to grasp the principle of relative subjection to secular authorities. Centuries later, Jesus taught the very same principle.—Luke 20:25.

¹³ Consider what Daniel did when an official decree forbade prayer to any god or man other than the king for 30 days. (Read Daniel 6:7-10.) Daniel could have made excuses, saying, ‘Thirty days is not forever!’ But he refused to let a royal edict override his Scriptural obligations. Of course, he could have prayed discreetly so as not to be observed. He knew that his daily custom was well-known. So while it meant risking his life, Daniel decided not to give even the impression that he was compromising in his worship.

12-14. (a) In what ways did Daniel show godly wisdom? (b) How was Daniel blessed for his courageous loyalty to God?

¹⁴ Jehovah blessed Daniel's conscientious and courageous decision by miraculously sparing him a cruel death. In fact, the outcome resulted in a marvelous witness for Jehovah that reached the farthest parts of the Medo-Persian Empire!—Dan. 6:25-27.

¹⁵ *How to cultivate faith like Daniel's.* The key to strong faith is not simply to read God's Word but to 'get the sense' of it. (Matt. 13:23) We want Jehovah's mind on matters, which includes grasping Bible principles. Hence, we need to meditate on what we read. Also important is regular heartfelt prayer, especially when we face trials or other challenging situations. When we pray in faith for wisdom and strength, Jehovah will generously give them to us.—Jas. 1:5.

JOB APPLIED GODLY PRINCIPLES IN GOOD TIMES AND BAD

¹⁶ *How Job came to know Jehovah.* Job was not an Israelite. He was, however, a distant relative of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and Jehovah had revealed details to them about himself and his purpose for mankind. In some undisclosed way, Job learned many of those precious truths. (Job 23:12) "My ears have heard about you," he said. (Job 42:5) Moreover,

15. How can we cultivate faith like that of Daniel?

16, 17. How did Job gain an accurate knowledge of God?

Jehovah himself stated that Job spoke truthfully about Him.—Job 42:7, 8.

¹⁷ Job also saw many of God’s invisible qualities in the visible creation. (Job 12:7-9, 13) Later, both Elihu and Jehovah used aspects of creation to remind Job of man’s insignificance compared with God’s greatness. (Job 37:14; 38:1-4) Jehovah’s words reached Job’s heart, for he humbly said to God: “Now I know that you are able to do all things and that nothing you have in mind to do is impossible for you. . . . I repent in dust and ashes.”—Job 42:2, 6.

¹⁸ *How accurate knowledge of God benefited Job.* Job had outstanding insight into godly principles. He truly knew Jehovah, and he acted on that knowledge. Consider: Job knew that he could not profess to love God and at the same time be unkind to his fellow man. (Job 6:14) He did not elevate himself above others but showed brotherly concern for all, rich and poor. “Did not the One who made me in the womb also make them?” he said. (Job 31:13-22) Clearly, Job had not allowed his earlier prestige and wealth to warp his view of himself or others. What a contrast to many of the powerful and wealthy in the world!

18, 19. In what ways did Job show that he truly knew Jehovah?

19 Job rejected all forms of idolatry—even in his heart. He knew that false worship, including devotion to material riches, would be a denial of “the true God above.” (Read Job 31:24-28.) He viewed marriage as a sacred bond between a man and a woman. He even made a covenant with his eyes not to look immorally at a virgin. (Job 31:1) Keep in mind that

Our faith is strengthened when we see
God’s invisible qualities in the visible creation
(See paragraph 17)



this was at a time when God tolerated polygamy. So Job could have taken a second wife had he wanted to.* Evidently, though, he took as a pattern the marital union that God established in Eden, making that example a law to himself. (Gen. 2:18, 24) Some 1,600 years later, Jesus Christ taught his listeners to adhere to the same righteous principles regarding marriage and sexual morality.—Matt. 5:28; 19:4, 5.

²⁰ *How we cultivate faith like Job's.* The key, once again, is to have accurate knowledge of Jehovah and to let that knowledge guide us in every aspect of life. For example, the psalmist David states that Jehovah “hates anyone who loves violence,” and David warns against associating “with deceitful men.” (Read Psalm 11:5; 26:4.) What insight do those scriptures give you into God’s thinking? How should that insight influence your priorities, use of the Internet, and choice of associates and entertainment? Your answers may help you to see how well you know Jehovah. To remain blameless in today’s complex

* The same could be said of Noah. He had just one wife, even though polygamy began to be practiced soon after the rebellion in Eden.—Gen. 4:19.

20. How does accurate knowledge of Jehovah and of his standards help us in choosing good associates and wholesome entertainment?

and wicked world, we must train our “powers of discernment” so that we can distinguish not just right from wrong but also wise from unwise.—Heb. 5:14; Eph. 5:15.

²¹ Because Noah, Daniel, and Job searched for Jehovah with all their heart, he let himself be found by them. He helped them to “understand everything” necessary to please him. They thus became examples of righteousness, and they led truly successful lives. (Ps. 1:1-3) So ask yourself, ‘Do I know Jehovah as well as Noah, Daniel, and Job did?’ In fact, thanks to increased spiritual light, you can know him even more fully! (Prov. 4:18) So dig deeply into God’s Word. Meditate on it. And pray for holy spirit. Then you will draw ever closer to your heavenly Father. And you will act with insight and wisdom in today’s ungodly world.—Prov. 2:4-7.

21. What will enable us to “understand everything” we need to know to please our heavenly Father?

150 *Seek God for Your Deliverance*

(Zephaniah 2:3)

1. Nations align as one,
 Opposing Jehovah's Son.
Their time of human rulership
 By God's decree now is done.
Rulers have had their day;
 God's Kingdom is here to stay.
Soon Christ will crush earthly enemies.
 No more will there be delay.

(CHORUS)

*Seek God for your deliverance,
 Yes, look to him with confidence.
Seek his righteousness,
 Show your faithfulness,
For his sov'reignty, take your stand.
 Then see our God deliver you
By his mighty hand.*

2. People on earth now choose,
 Responding to this good news.
We offer to all men the choice
 To hear or proudly refuse.
Trials, although severe,
 Need not fill our hearts with fear.
Jehovah cares for his loyal ones;
 Our cries for help he will hear.

(Chorus)

(See also 1 Sam. 2:9; Ps. 2:2, 3, 9; Prov. 2:8; Matt. 6:33.)

