

- Song 22 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“A Faith-Strengthening Vision”:** (10 min.)
Mr 9:1—Jesus promised that some apostles would see a visionary preview of the Kingdom (w05 1/15 12 ¶9-10)
Mr 9:2-6—Peter, James, and John saw the transfigured Jesus conversing with “Elijah” and “Moses” (w05 1/15 12 ¶11)
Mr 9:7—Jehovah affirmed with his own voice that Jesus is his Son (*nwtsty* study note)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Mr 10:6-9—What principle about marriage did Jesus highlight? (w08 2/15 30 ¶8)

Mr 10:17, 18—Why did Jesus correct a certain man for calling him “Good Teacher”? (*nwtsty* study notes)

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) Mr 9:1-13

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) w04 5/15 30-31—Theme: What Is the Meaning of Jesus’ Words Recorded at Mark 10:25?

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 131
- **“What God Has Yoked Together . . .”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Love and Respect Unites Families* (video category THE BIBLE).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 20
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 66 and Prayer


MARK 9-10 | A Faith-Strengthening Vision



9:1-7

Imagine how Jesus must have felt when he heard his heavenly Father announce during the transfiguration vision that He approved of him. This no doubt fortified Jesus for the suffering he was going to undergo. This vision also made a powerful impression on Peter, James, and John. Jesus was indeed the Messiah, and they were right to listen to him. Some 32 years later, Peter still recalled the experience and how it made “the prophetic word” more sure for him.—2Pe 1:16-19.

Although we did not personally see this impressive vision, we are witnessing its fulfillment. Jesus is ruling as a powerful King. Soon, he will “complete his conquest,” opening the way for a righteous new world.—Re 6:2.

 How has your faith been strengthened by seeing the fulfillment of Bible prophecy?

The Kingdom Is in Place —Let It Come!

(Revelation 11:15; 12:10)

1. Jehovah, you always have been,
And always you will be.
You've given the throne to your Son;
He rules by your decree.
The Kingdom has been brought to birth;
His rulership will fill the earth.

(CHORUS)

*For now have come to pass
Salvation and kingdom and might.
The Kingdom is in place.
We pray: "Let it come, Let it come!"*

2. The time for the Devil is short;
We know what this will mean.
Though living in times of distress,
We see the things unseen.
The Kingdom has been brought to birth;
His rulership will fill the earth.

(Chorus)

3. The angels in heaven rejoice
And sing with joyful cries.
The heavens above are relieved
From Satan and his lies.
The Kingdom has been brought to birth;
His rulership will fill the earth.

(Chorus)

MARK 8:29-9:14

but others say E-li'jah,^a and still others, one of the prophets.”

29 And he put the question to them: “You, though, who do you say I am?” Peter answered him: “You are the Christ.”^b **30** At that he strictly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.^c **31** Also, he began teaching them that the Son of man must undergo many sufferings and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed,^d and rise three days later.^e **32** Indeed, he was making that statement openly. But Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.^f **33** At this he turned, looked at his disciples, and rebuked Peter, saying: “Get behind me, Satan! because you think, not God’s thoughts, but those of men.”^g

34 He now called the crowd to him with his disciples and said to them: “If anyone wants to come after me, let him disown himself and pick up his torture stake* and keep following me.^h **35** For whoever wants to save his life* will lose it, but whoever loses his life* for my sake and for the sake of the good news will save it.ⁱ **36** Really, what good will it do a man to gain the whole world and to lose his life?^{*j} **37** What, really, would a man give in exchange for his life?^{*k} **38** For whoever becomes ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous* and sinful generation, the Son of man will also be ashamed of him^l when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”^m

9 Furthermore, he said to them: “Truly I say to you that there are some of those standing here who will not taste death at all until first they see the Kingdom of God already having come in power.”ⁿ **2** Six days later Je-

8:34 *See Glossary. 8:35-37 *Or “soul.” 8:38 *Or “unfaithful.”

Jesus took Peter and James and John along and led them up into a lofty mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them;^a **3** his outer garments began to glisten, becoming far whiter than any clothes cleaner on earth could whiten them. **4** Also, E·li'jah with Moses appeared to them, and they were conversing with Jesus. **5** Then Peter said to Jesus: "Rabbi, it is fine for us to be here. So let us erect three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for E·li'jah." **6** In fact, he did not know how to react, for they were quite fearful. **7** And a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice^b came out of the cloud: "This is my Son, the beloved.^c Listen to him."^d **8** Then suddenly they looked around and saw that no one was with them any longer except Jesus.

9 As they were coming down from the mountain, he strictly ordered them not to relate to anybody what they had seen^e until after the Son of man had risen from the dead.^f **10** They took the word to heart,* but discussed among themselves what this rising from the dead meant. **11** And they began to question him, saying: "Why do the scribes say that E·li'jah^g must come first?"^h **12** He said to them: "E·li'jah does come first and restore all things;ⁱ but how is it that it is written about the Son of man that he must undergo many sufferings^j and be treated with contempt?^k **13** But I say to you that E·li'jah,^l in fact, has come, and they did to him whatever they wanted, just as it is written about him."^m

14 When they came to the other disciples, they noticed a large crowd around them,

9:10 *Or "kept the matter to themselves."

and there were scribes arguing with them.^a **15** But as soon as all the crowd caught sight of him, they were astonished, and they ran up to him to greet him.

16 So he asked them: **“What are you arguing about with them?”**

17 And one of the crowd answered him: “Teacher, I brought my son to you because he has a speechless spirit.^b **18** Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground, and he foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth and loses his strength. I asked your disciples to expel it, but they were not able to do so.”

19 In response he said to them: **“O faithless generation,^c how long must I continue with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring him to me.”^d** **20** So they brought the boy to him, but at the sight of him, the spirit at once threw the child into convulsions. After falling on the ground, he kept rolling about, foaming at the mouth.

21 Then Jesus asked the father: **“How long has this been happening to him?”** He said: “From childhood on, **22** and often it would throw him into the fire and also into the water to destroy him. But if you can do anything, have pity on us and help us.” **23** Jesus said to him: **“That expression, ‘If you can’! Why, all things are possible for the one who has faith.”^e** **24** Immediately the child’s father cried out and said: “I have faith! Help me out where I need faith!”^f

25 Jesus, now noticing that a crowd was rushing toward them, rebuked the unclean spirit, saying to it: **“You speechless and deaf spirit, I order you, get out of him and do not enter into him again!”^g** **26** After crying out and going through many convulsions, it came out, and the child seemed to be dead, so that most of the people were say-

MARK 9:15-39

ing: "He is dead!" **27** But Jesus took him by the hand and raised him up, and he stood up. **28** So after he entered into a house, his disciples asked him privately: "Why could we not expel it?"^a **29** He said to them: "This kind can come out only by prayer."

30 They departed from there and went through Gal'i-lee, but he did not want anyone to get to know about it. **31** For he was teaching his disciples and telling them: "The Son of man is going to be betrayed into men's hands, and they will kill him,^b but despite being killed, he will rise three days later."^c **32** However, they did not understand his statement, and they were afraid to question him.

33 And they came into Ca-per'na-um. Now when he was inside the house, he put the question to them: "What were you arguing about on the road?"^d **34** They kept silent, for on the road they had been arguing among themselves about who is greater. **35** So he sat down and called the Twelve and said to them: "If anyone wants to be first, he must be last of all and minister of all."^e **36** Then he took a young child and stood him in their midst; and putting his arms around him, he said to them: **37** "Whoever receives one of such young children^f on the basis of my name receives me also; and whoever receives me receives not me only but also Him who sent me."^g

38 John said to him: "Teacher, we saw someone expelling demons by using your name, and we tried to prevent him, because he was not following us."^h **39** But Jesus said: "Do not try to prevent him, for there is no one who will do a powerful work on the basis of my name who will quickly be able to say anything

MARK 9:40–10:19

bad about me. **40** For whoever is not against us is for us.^a

41 And whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you belong to Christ,^b I tell you truly, he will by no means lose his reward.^c **42** But whoever stumbles one of these little ones who have faith, it would be better for him if a millstone that is turned by a donkey were put around his neck and he were pitched into the sea.^d

43 “If ever your hand makes you stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life maimed than to go off with two hands into Ge·hen’na,* into the fire that cannot be put out.^e

44 *— **45** And if your foot makes you stumble, cut it off. It is better for you to enter into life lame than to be thrown with two feet into Ge·hen’na.*^f **46** *—

47 And if your eye makes you stumble, throw it away.^g It is better for you to enter one-eyed into the Kingdom of God than to be thrown with two eyes into Ge·hen’na,^{*h} **48** where the maggot does not die and the fire is not put out.ⁱ

49 “For everyone must be salted with fire.^j **50** Salt is fine, but if the salt ever loses its saltiness, with what will you season it?^k Have salt in yourselves,^l and keep peace with one another.”^m

10 From there he got up and came to the borders* of Ju·de’a across the Jordan, and again crowds gathered to him. As he was accustomed to do, he again began teaching them.ⁿ

2 And Pharisees approached, intent on testing him, and they asked whether it was lawful for a man to divorce a wife.^o

3 He answered them: “**What did Moses command you?**” **4** They said: “Moses allowed the writ-

9:43, 45, 47 *See Glossary. 9:44, 46 *See App. A3. 10:1 *Or “frontiers.”

ing of a certificate of dismissal and divorcing her.”^a **5** But Jesus said to them: “Out of regard for your hard-heartedness,^b he wrote this commandment for you.”^c **6** However, from the beginning of creation, ‘He made them male and female.’^d **7** For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother,^e **8** and the two will be one flesh,^f so that they are no longer two, but one flesh. **9** Therefore, what God has yoked together, let no man put apart.”^g **10** When they were again in the house, the disciples began to question him about this. **11** He said to them: “Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery^h against her, **12** and if ever a woman after divorcing her husband marries another, she commits adultery.”ⁱ

13 People now began bringing him young children for him to touch them, but the disciples reprimanded them.^j **14** At seeing this, Jesus was indignant and said to them: “Let the young children come to me; do not try to stop them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such ones.”^k **15** Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a young child will by no means enter into it.”^l **16** And he took the children into his arms and began blessing them, laying his hands on them.^m

17 As he was going on his way, a man ran up and fell on his knees before him and put the question to him: “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit everlasting life?”ⁿ **18** Jesus said to him: “Why do you call me good? Nobody is good except one, God.”^o **19** You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder,^p do not commit adultery,^q do not steal,^r do not bear false witness,^s do not defraud,^t honor

your father and your mother.”^a **20** The man said to him: “Teacher, all these things I have kept from my youth on.” **21** Jesus looked at him and felt love for him and said, “One thing is missing about you: Go, sell what things you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come be my follower.”^b **22** But he grew sad at the answer and went away grieved, for he had many possessions.^c

23 After looking around, Jesus said to his disciples: “How difficult it will be for those with money to enter into the Kingdom of God!”^d **24** But the disciples were surprised at his words. Jesus then responded: “Children, how difficult it is to enter into the Kingdom of God! **25** It is easier for a camel to go through a needle’s eye than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God.”^e **26** They became still more astounded and said to him:* “Who possibly can be saved?”^f **27** Looking straight at them, Jesus said: “With men it is impossible but not so with God, for all things are possible with God.”^g **28** Peter began to say to him: “Look! We have left all things and followed you.”^h **29** Jesus said: “Truly I say to you, no one has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for my sake and for the sake of the good newsⁱ **30** who will not get 100 times more now in this period of time—houses, brothers, sisters, mothers, children, and fields, with persecutions^j—and in the coming system of things,* everlasting life. **31** But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”^k

10:26 *Or possibly, “to one another.”

10:30 *Or “the coming age.” See Glossary.

MARK 10:20-42

32 Now they were going on the road up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going ahead of them, and they were astonished, but those who followed began to fear. Once again he took the Twelve aside and started to tell them these things that were about to happen to him:^a

33 “Look! We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes. They will condemn him to death and hand him over to men of the nations, **34** and these will mock him and spit on him and scourge him and kill him, but three days later he will rise.”^b

35 James and John, the sons of Zeb'e-dee,^c approached him and said to him: “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of you.”^d **36** He said to them: “What do you want me to do for you?” **37** They replied: “Grant us to sit down, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your glory.”^e **38** But Jesus said to them: “You do not know what you are asking for. Can you drink the cup that I am drinking or be baptized with the baptism with which I am being baptized?”^f **39** They said to him: “We can.” At that Jesus said to them: “The cup I am drinking, you will drink, and with the baptism with which I am being baptized, you will be baptized.”^g **40** However, to sit down at my right hand or at my left is not mine to give, but it belongs to those for whom it has been prepared.”

41 When the ten others heard about it, they became indignant at James and John.^h **42** But Jesus called them to him and said to them: “You know that those who appear to be* ruling the

10:42 *Or “those who are recognized as.”

MARK 10:43-11:15

nations lord it over them and their great ones wield authority over them.^a **43** This must not be the way among you; but whoever wants to become great among you must be your minister,^b **44** and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of all. **45** For even the Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister^c and to give his life* as a ransom in exchange for many.”^d

46 They then came into Jer'i-cho. But as he and his disciples and a considerable crowd were going out of Jer'i-cho, Bar-ti-mae'us (the son of Ti-mae'us), a blind beggar, was sitting beside the road.^e **47** When he heard that it was Jesus the Naz-a-rene', he started shouting and saying: "Son of David,^f Jesus, have mercy on me!"^g **48** At this many began rebuking him, telling him to be silent, but all the more he kept shouting: "Son of David, have mercy on me!" **49** So Jesus stopped and said: "Call him to me." So they called the blind man, saying to him: "Take courage! Get up; he is calling you." **50** Throwing off his outer garment, he leaped to his feet and went to Jesus. **51** Then Jesus said to him: "What do you want me to do for you?" The blind man said to him: "*Rab-bo'ni*,* let me recover my sight." **52** And Jesus said to him: "Go. Your faith has made you well."^h And immediately he recovered his sight,ⁱ and he began to follow him on the road.

11 Now when they were getting near to Jerusalem, to Beth'pha-ge and Beth'a-ny^j at the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples^k **2** and told them: "Go into the village that is within sight, and as soon as you en-

10:45 *Or "soul." 10:51 *Meaning "Teacher."

- Song 22 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“A Faith-Strengthening Vision”:** (10 min.)
Mr 9:1—Jesus promised that some apostles would see a visionary preview of the Kingdom (w05 1/15 12 ¶9-10)
Mr 9:2-6—Peter, James, and John saw the transfigured Jesus conversing with “Elijah” and “Moses” (w05 1/15 12 ¶11)
Mr 9:7—Jehovah affirmed with his own voice that Jesus is his Son (*nwtsty* study note)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Mr 10:6-9—What principle about marriage did Jesus highlight? (w08 2/15 30 ¶8)

Mr 10:17, 18—Why did Jesus correct a certain man for calling him “Good Teacher”? (*nwtsty* study notes)

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

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

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APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
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- **Talk:** (6 min. or less) w04 5/15 30-31—Theme: What Is the Meaning of Jesus’ Words Recorded at Mark 10:25?

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

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- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 20
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
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MARK 9-10 | A Faith-Strengthening Vision



9:1-7

Imagine how Jesus must have felt when he heard his heavenly Father announce during the transfiguration vision that He approved of him. This no doubt fortified Jesus for the suffering he was going to undergo. This vision also made a powerful impression on Peter, James, and John. Jesus was indeed the Messiah, and they were right to listen to him. Some 32 years later, Peter still recalled the experience and how it made “the prophetic word” more sure for him.—2Pe 1:16-19.

Although we did not personally see this impressive vision, we are witnessing its fulfillment. Jesus is ruling as a powerful King. Soon, he will “complete his conquest,” opening the way for a righteous new world.—Re 6:2.

 How has your faith been strengthened by seeing the fulfillment of Bible prophecy?

May 14-20

Treasures From God's Word

Mark 9:1—Jesus promised that some apostles would see a visionary preview of the Kingdom

(Mark 9:1) Furthermore, he said to them: “Truly I say to you that there are some of those standing here who will not taste death at all until first they see the Kingdom of God already having come in power.”

[w05 1/15 12 paragraphs 9-10]⁹ Over a year has gone by since Jesus gave the aforementioned proof of his Messiahship. The Passover of the year 32 C.E. has come and gone. Many who believed have ceased following him, perhaps because of persecution, materialism, or the anxieties of life. Others may be confused or disappointed because Jesus rejected the people's efforts to make him king. When challenged by the Jewish religious leaders, he refused to provide a self-glorifying sign from heaven. (Matthew 12:38, 39) This refusal may have puzzled some. Furthermore, Jesus has begun to reveal to his disciples something they find very difficult to grasp—“he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the older men and chief priests and scribes, and be killed.”—Matthew 16:21-23.

¹⁰ In another nine to ten months, it would be time “for [Jesus] to move out of this world to the Father.” (John 13:1) Deeply concerned about his loyal disciples, Jesus promises some of them the very thing he denied the faithless Jews—a sign from heaven. “Truly I say to you,” Jesus says, “there are some of those standing here that will not taste death at all until first they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom.” (Matthew 16:28) Obviously, Jesus is not saying that certain ones of his disciples will live until the

establishment of the Messianic Kingdom in 1914. Jesus has in mind giving three of his intimate disciples a spectacular foregleam of his glory in Kingdom power. This visionary preview is called the transfiguration.

Mark 9:2-6—Peter, James, and John saw the transfigured Jesus conversing with “Elijah” and “Moses”

(Mark 9:2-6) Six days later Jesus took Peter and James and John along and led them up into a lofty mountain by themselves. And he was transfigured before them; his outer garments began to glisten, becoming far whiter than any clothes cleaner on earth could whiten them. Also, Elijah with Moses appeared to them, and they were conversing with Jesus. Then Peter said to Jesus: “Rabbi, it is fine for us to be here. So let us erect three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.” In fact, he did not know how to react, for they were quite fearful.

[w05 1/15 12 paragraph 11] Six days later, Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up into a lofty mountain—likely a ridge of Mount Hermon. There, Jesus is “transfigured before them, and his face shone as the sun, and his outer garments became brilliant as the light.” The prophets Moses and Elijah also appear, conversing with Jesus. This awesome event possibly takes place at night, making it especially vivid. In fact, it is so real that Peter offers to erect three tents—one each for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. While Peter is still speaking, a bright cloud overshadows them and a voice out of the cloud says: “This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved; listen to him.”—Matthew 17:1-6.

Mark 9:7—Jehovah affirmed with his own voice that Jesus is his Son (nwtsty study note “a voice”)

(Mark 9:7) And a cloud formed, overshadowing them, and a voice came out of the cloud: “This is my Son, the beloved. Listen to him.”

a voice: The second of three instances in the Gospel accounts where Jehovah is reported as speaking directly to humans. The first instance occurred at Jesus’ baptism in 29-C E and is recorded at Mt 3, 16-and-17, Mr 1 11, and Lu 3 22. The second instance was in connection with Jesus’ transfiguration in 32-C E and is recorded at Mt 17 5, Mr 9 7, and Lu 9 35. The third instance, mentioned only in the Gospel of John, happened in 33-C E, shortly before Jesus’ last Passover. Jehovah responded to Jesus’ request that his Father glorify His own name.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Mark 10:6-9—What principle about marriage did Jesus highlight?

(Mark 10:6-9) “However, from the beginning of creation, ‘He made them male and female. For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother, and the two will be one flesh,’ so that they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has yoked together, let no man put apart.”

[w08 2/15 30 paragraph 8] God’s purpose is that marriage mates stick together. Therefore, rather than hastily seeking a divorce, husbands and wives should strive to apply Bible principles to overcome any difficulties that may arise in marriage.—Matthew 19:4-6.

Mark 10:17, 18—Why did Jesus correct a certain man for calling him “Good Teacher”? (nwtsty study notes “Good Teacher,” “Nobody is good except one, God”)

(Mark 10:17, 18) As he was going on his way, a man ran up and fell on his knees before him and put the question to him: “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit everlasting life?” Jesus said to him: “Why do you call me good? Nobody is good except one, God.

Good Teacher: The man was evidently using the words “Good Teacher” as a flattering and formalistic title, since such honor was usually demanded by the religious leaders. While Jesus had no objection to being properly identified as “Teacher” and “Lord” (John 13:13), he directed all honor to his Father.

Nobody is good except one, God: Jesus here recognizes Jehovah as the ultimate standard of what is good, the One who has the sovereign right to determine what is good and what is bad. By rebelliously eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and bad, Adam and Eve sought to assume that right. Unlike them, Jesus humbly leaves the setting of standards to his Father. God has expressed and defined what is good by means of what he has commanded in his Word.—Mark 10:19.

MARK

Study Notes—Chapter 9

9:2

a lofty mountain: Possibly Mount Hermon, which is near Caesarea Philippi. (Mr 8:27; see study note on Mt 16:13.) It reaches a height of 2,814 m (9,232 ft) above sea level. The transfiguration may have taken place on one of the spurs of Mount Hermon.—See App. B10.

9:5

Rabbi: Literally meaning “my great one,” from the Hebrew word *rav*, meaning “great.” In common usage, “Rabbi” meant “Teacher.”—Joh 1:38.

9:7

a voice: The second of three instances in the Gospel accounts where Jehovah is reported as speaking directly to humans. The first instance occurred at Jesus’ baptism in 29 C.E. and is recorded at Mt 3:16, 17; Mr 1:11; and Lu 3:22. The second instance was in connection with Jesus’ transfiguration in 32 C.E. and is recorded at Mt 17:5; Mr 9:7; and Lu 9:35. The third instance, mentioned only in the Gospel of John, happened in 33 C.E., shortly before Jesus’ last Passover. Jehovah responded to Jesus’ request that his Father glorify His own name.

9:17

a speechless spirit: That is, an evil spirit that makes a person unable to speak.

9:20

convulsions: In this particular case, demon activity was associated with epileptic symptoms. However, the Scriptures do

not imply that epilepsy is generally caused by demon possession any more than deafness and speechlessness are. (Compare Mr 9:17, 25.) Rather, Mt 4:24 reports that people brought to Jesus ailing ones who included those who were “demon-possessed *and* epileptic,” drawing a distinction between these two types of individuals.—See study note on Mt 4:24.

9:25

speechless and deaf spirit: That is, an evil spirit that makes a person unable to speak and to hear.

9:29

by prayer: Some manuscripts add “and fasting.” But the earliest and most reliable manuscripts do not include “and fasting.” These words were evidently added by copyists who advocated fasting and practiced it. They repeatedly included references to fasting where these were not found in earlier copies.—See study note on Mt 17:21.

9:42

a millstone that is turned by a donkey: Or “a huge millstone.” Lit., “a millstone of a donkey.” Such a millstone, likely 1.2-1.5 m (4-5 ft) in diameter, was so heavy that it had to be turned by a donkey.

9:43

cut it off: Jesus was using hyperbole. He was saying that a person should be willing to give up something as precious as a hand, a foot, or an eye rather than allow it to cause him to stumble into unfaithfulness. He was obviously not encouraging self-mutilation or implying that a person was somehow subservient to the will of his limbs or eyes. (Mr 9:45, 47) He meant that a person should deaden a body member, or treat it as if it were severed from the body, rather than use it to commit a

sin. (Compare Col 3:5.) He should allow nothing to hinder him from gaining life.

Gehenna: This term comes from the Hebrew words *geh hin-nom'*, meaning “valley of Hinnom,” which lay to the W and S of ancient Jerusalem. (See App. B12, map “Jerusalem and Surrounding Area.”) By Jesus’ day, the valley had become a place for burning refuse, so the word “Gehenna” was a fitting symbol of complete destruction.—See Glossary.

9:44

Some manuscripts read here “where their maggot does not die and the fire is not put out,” but these words do not appear in important early manuscripts. Similar words do appear in verse 48, where there is no uncertainty regarding the text. Evidence suggests that a scribe or scribes repeated the words from verse 48 in verses 44 and 46.—See App. A3.

9:45

Gehenna: See study note on Mr 9:44 and Glossary.

9:46

See study note on Mr 9:44.

9:47

Gehenna: See study note on Mr 9:44 and Glossary.

9:48

where: Referring to “Gehenna,” mentioned in the preceding verse. As shown in the study note on Mt 5:22, by Jesus’ day, the Valley of Hinnom (from which the term “Gehenna” is derived) had become a place for burning garbage. By mentioning that **the maggot does not die and the fire is not put out**, Jesus is evidently alluding to the prophetic words of Isa 66:24. That

prophecy is not describing living people being tortured; rather, it tells what happens to “the carcasses of the men” who rebel against Jehovah. Where the fire did not reach, worms, or maggots, would breed, consuming anything not destroyed by the fire. On this basis, Jesus’ words mean that God’s adverse judgment would result, not in torture, but in complete destruction.

9:49

salted with fire: This figure of speech could be understood in two different ways. (1) If the expression is connected with the statements Jesus just made, as recorded at Mr 9:43-48, it would refer to destruction by the fire of Gehenna. Jesus might be alluding to what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah, in the vicinity of the Dead (Salt) Sea, when God “made it rain sulfur and fire” on those cities. (Ge 19:24) In this context, Jesus’ statement “**everyone** must be salted with fire” would mean that all who allow their hands, feet, or eyes to stumble them or others into unfaithfulness would be salted with the fire of Gehenna, or eternal destruction. (2) If the expression “salted with fire” is connected with what is said next, as recorded at Mr 9:50, then Jesus may have been speaking of a fire that would come upon his followers and work for their good, promoting peaceful relations among them. In this context, everyone—that is, all his disciples—would be purified and cleansed by Jehovah’s Word, which burns up all falsehood and error, and also by the fire of persecution or trials, which test and purify one’s loyalty and devotion to Jehovah. (Jer 20:8, 9; 23:29; 1Pe 1:6, 7; 4:12, 13) Jesus may well have had in mind both of the ideas just discussed.

9:50

Salt: A mineral used for preserving and flavoring food. In this context, Jesus likely focused on the preserving quality of salt; his disciples could help others to avoid spiritual and moral decay.

loses its saltiness: Or “loses its strength.” In Jesus’ day, salt was often obtained from the Dead Sea area and was contaminated by other minerals. If the salty portion was removed from this mixture, only a tasteless, useless residue remained.

Have salt in yourselves: Jesus evidently here uses “salt” to refer to the quality in Christians that causes them to do and say things that are in good taste, considerate, and wholesome and that tend toward preserving the lives of others. The apostle Paul uses “salt” in a similar way at Col 4:6. Perhaps Jesus was thinking of his apostles’ arguments about who would be the greatest. Figurative salt makes what a person says easier for others to accept and can thus help to preserve **peace**.

MARK

Study Notes—Chapter 10

10:1

the borders of Judea across the Jordan: This apparently refers to Perea, a region on the E side of the Jordan River, especially the parts of Perea bordering on Judea.—See study note on Mt 19:1 and App. A7, Map 5.

10:4

certificate of dismissal: Or “certificate of divorce.” By requiring a man who was considering divorce to prepare a legal document and likely to consult the elders, the Law gave him time to reconsider such a serious decision. The intent of the Law was

evidently to prevent rash divorces and to provide women with a measure of legal protection. (De 24:1) But in Jesus' day, religious leaders had made divorce easy to obtain. The first-century historian Josephus, himself a divorced Pharisee, suggested that divorce was allowable "for any cause whatsoever (and many such causes happen among men)." The Mosaic Law did not encourage divorce. A certificate was provided as a deterrent to a hasty breakup of marriages and as a protection for women. (De 24:1) A husband who wanted to obtain a certificate likely had to consult duly authorized men who might encourage the couple to reconcile.

10:6

the beginning of creation: Evidently referring to the creation of mankind. Jesus here describes how the Creator instituted marriage between a man and a woman, thus forming the nucleus of human society.

He: Some ancient manuscripts make the subject specific and read "God."

10:8

one flesh: This expression is a literal rendering into Greek of the Hebrew term at Ge 2:24 and could also be rendered "one body" or "one person." It describes the closest bond possible between two humans. It not only refers to sexual relations but extends to the whole relationship, making the two individuals faithful and inseparable companions. Such a union cannot be broken up without damage to the partners bound by it.

10:11

divorces his wife: Or "sends his wife away." Jesus' words as recorded by Mark must be understood in the light of the more complete statement at Mt 19:9, which includes the phrase

“except on the grounds of sexual immorality.” (See study note on Mt 5:32.) What Mark wrote in quoting Jesus regarding divorce applies if the grounds for obtaining the divorce is anything other than “sexual immorality” (Greek, *por-nei’a*) committed by the unfaithful marriage partner.

commits adultery against her: Jesus here rejects the prevailing Rabbinic teaching that allowed men to divorce their wives “on every sort of grounds.” (Mt 19:3, 9) The concept of committing adultery *against his wife* was alien to most Jews. Their rabbis taught that a husband could never commit adultery against his wife—only a woman could be unfaithful. By putting the husband under the same moral obligation as the wife, Jesus dignifies women and elevates their status.

10:12

if ever a woman after divorcing her husband: With this phrase, Jesus recognizes the right of a woman to divorce an unfaithful husband—something that was evidently not acceptable to the Jews of his day. According to Jesus, however, under the Christian system, the same standard would apply to men and women.

10:13

young children: The children may have been of varying ages, since the Greek word here rendered “young children” is used not only of newborns and infants (Mt 2:8; Lu 1:59) but also of Jairus’ 12-year-old daughter (Mr 5:39-42). However, in the parallel account at Lu 18:15, which describes Jesus’ interaction with this group of young ones, Luke uses a different Greek word, one that refers only to very small children, or infants.—Lu 1:41; 2:12.

10:15

like a young child: Refers to having the desirable qualities of young children. Such qualities include being humble, teachable, trustful, and receptive.—Mt 18:5.

10:16

took the children into his arms: Only Mark's account includes this detail. The Greek word for "take into one's arms" occurs only here and at Mr 9:36 and could also be rendered "embrace." Jesus exceeded the expectations of the adults who brought these children to Jesus so that he might merely "touch" them. (Mr 10:13) As the oldest of a family of at least seven children, he understood the needs of young children. (Mt 13:55, 56) Jesus even **began blessing them**. The Greek word used here is an intensified form of the word for "to bless," which could be understood to mean that he tenderly and warmly blessed them.

10:17

Good Teacher: The man was evidently using the words "Good Teacher" as a flattering and formalistic title, since such honor was usually demanded by the religious leaders. While Jesus had no objection to being properly identified as "Teacher" and "Lord" (Joh 13:13), he directed all honor to his Father.

10:18

Nobody is good except one, God: Jesus here recognizes Jehovah as the ultimate standard of what is good, the One who has the sovereign right to determine what is good and what is bad. By rebelliously eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and bad, Adam and Eve sought to assume that right. Unlike them, Jesus humbly leaves the setting of standards to his Father. God has expressed and defined what is good by means of what he has commanded in his Word.—Mr 10:19.

10:21

felt love for him: Only Mark records Jesus' sentiments toward the rich young ruler. (Mt 19:16-26; Lu 18:18-30) Peter, himself a man of deep emotion, may have been the source of this description of Jesus' feelings.—See "Introduction to Mark."

10:25

easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye: Jesus is using hyperbole to illustrate a point. Just as a literal camel cannot go through the eye of an actual sewing needle, it is impossible for a rich man to enter **the Kingdom of God** if he continues to put his riches ahead of his relationship with Jehovah. Jesus did not mean that no wealthy person would inherit the Kingdom, for he went on to say: "All things are possible with God."—Mr 10:27.

10:26

to him: Some manuscripts read: "to one another."

10:30

the coming system of things: Or "the coming age." The Greek word *ai-on'*, having the basic meaning "age," can refer to a state of affairs or to features that distinguish a certain period of time, epoch, or age. Jesus is here referring to the coming era under God's Kingdom rule, in which **everlasting life** is promised.—Lu 18:29, 30; see Glossary, "System(s) of things."

10:32

going on the road up to Jerusalem: The city was about 750 m (2,500 ft) above sea level, so the Scriptures often speak of worshippers going "up to Jerusalem." (Lu 2:22; Joh 2:13; Ac 11:2) Jesus and his disciples were about to ascend from the Jordan Valley (see study note on Mr 10:1), which at its lowest

point is about 400 m (1,300 ft) below sea level. They would have to climb some 1,000 m (3,330 ft) to reach Jerusalem.

10:34

spit on him: Spitting on a person or in his face was an act of extreme contempt, enmity, or indignation, bringing humiliation on the victim. (Nu 12:14; De 25:9) Jesus here states that he would experience such treatment, which fulfilled a prophecy regarding the Messiah: “I did not hide my face from humiliating things and from spit.” (Isa 50:6) He was spat on during his appearance before the Sanhedrin (Mr 14:65) and by the Roman soldiers after his trial by Pilate (Mr 15:19).

10:35

sons: A few manuscripts read “two sons,” but the shorter reading has strong manuscript support.

James and John, the sons of Zebedee, approached him: According to Matthew’s account, the mother of James and John approaches Jesus with this request, but her two sons are evidently the source of the request. This conclusion is supported by Matthew’s report that on hearing about this request, the ten other disciples “became indignant,” not at the mother, but “at the two brothers.”—Mt 20:20-24; see study notes on Mt 4:21; 20:20.

10:37

one at your right hand and one at your left: Here both positions indicate honor and authority, but the place of greatest honor is always on the right.—Ps 110:1; Ac 7:55, 56; Ro 8:34; see study note on Mt 25:33.

10:38

drink the cup: In the Bible, “cup” is often used figuratively of God’s will, or the “assigned portion,” for a person. To “drink the

cup” here means to submit to God’s will. In this case, the “cup” involved not only Jesus’ suffering and death under the false charge of blasphemy but also his being resurrected to immortal life in heaven.

be baptized with the baptism with which I am being baptized:

Or “be immersed with the immersion that I am undergoing.”

Jesus here uses the term “baptism” in parallel with “cup.” (See study note on **drink the cup** in this verse.) He is already undergoing this baptism during his ministry. In his case, he will be *fully* baptized, or immersed, into death when he is executed on the torture stake on Nisan 14, 33 C.E. His resurrection, which includes a raising up, will complete this baptism. (Ro 6:3, 4) Jesus’ baptism into death is clearly distinct and separate from his water baptism, for he had completely undergone water baptism at the beginning of his ministry, at which time his baptism into death had only begun.

10:42

lord it over them: Or “dominate them; are masters over them.” This Greek term is used only four times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. (Mt 20:25; Mr 10:42; 1Pe 5:3; and at Ac 19:16, where it is rendered “overpowered”) Jesus’ counsel brought to mind the hated Roman yoke and the oppressive domination by the Herods. (Mt 2:16; Joh 11:48) Peter evidently got the point, later urging Christian elders to lead by example, not by domination. (1Pe 5:3) A related verb used in Luke’s parallel account (Lu 22:25) is also used at 2Co 1:24, where Paul says that Christians are not to be “masters over” the faith of fellow believers.

10:45

life: The Greek word *psy·khe'*, traditionally rendered “soul,” is here used in the sense of “life.”—See Glossary, “Soul.”

10:46

Jericho: The first Canaanite city W of the Jordan River to be conquered by the Israelites. (Nu 22:1; Jos 6:1, 24, 25) By Jesus' time, a new city had been built about 2 km (a little over a mile) S of the old city. This may explain why Lu 18:35 says of the same incident that "Jesus was getting near to Jericho." Perhaps Jesus performs the miracle while leaving, or **going out of**, the Jewish city and approaching the Roman city, or vice versa.—See App. B4 and B10.

a blind beggar: Matthew's account (20:30) of this event states that two blind men were present. Mark and Luke (18:35) each mention one, evidently focusing on **Bartimaeus**, whose name appears only in Mark's account.

10:47

the Nazarene: A descriptive epithet applied to Jesus and later to his followers. (Ac 24:5) Since many Jews had the name Jesus, it was common to add a further identification; the practice of associating people with the places from which they came was customary in Bible times. (2Sa 3:2, 3; 17:27; 23:25-39; Na 1:1; Ac 13:1; 21:29) Jesus lived most of his early life in the town of Nazareth in Galilee, so it was natural to use this term regarding him. Jesus was often referred to as "the Nazarene," in different situations and by various individuals. (Mr 1:23, 24; 10:46, 47; 14:66-69; 16:5, 6; Lu 24:13-19; Joh 18:1-7) Jesus himself accepted the name and used it. (Joh 18:5-8; Ac 22:6-8) On the sign that Pilate placed on the torture stake, he wrote in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek: "Jesus the Nazarene the King of the Jews." (Joh 19:19, 20) From Pentecost 33 C.E. onward, the apostles as well as others often spoke of Jesus as the Nazarene or as being from Nazareth.—Ac 2:22; 3:6; 4:10; 6:14; 10:38; 26:9; see also study note on Mt 2:23.

Son of David: Addressing Jesus as “Son of David,” blind Bartimaeus openly acknowledges him as the Messiah.—**Son of David:** Indicates that Jesus is the heir of the Kingdom covenant that is to be fulfilled by someone in David’s line. —See study notes on Mt 1:6; 15:25.

10:51

***Rabboni*:** A Semitic word meaning “My Teacher.” It may be that “*Rabboni*” was originally more respectful or conveyed more warmth than the form “Rabbi,” a title of address meaning “Teacher.” (Joh 1:38) However, when John did his writing, perhaps the first person suffix (“-i” meaning “my”) on this word had lost its special significance in the title, for John translates it “Teacher.”—Joh 20:16.

- Song 22 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“A Faith-Strengthening Vision”:** (10 min.)
Mr 9:1—Jesus promised that some apostles would see a visionary preview of the Kingdom (w05 1/15 12 ¶9-10)
Mr 9:2-6—Peter, James, and John saw the transfigured Jesus conversing with “Elijah” and “Moses” (w05 1/15 12 ¶11)
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- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
Mr 10:6-9—What principle about marriage did Jesus highlight? (w08 2/15 30 ¶8)

Mr 10:17, 18—Why did Jesus correct a certain man for calling him “Good Teacher”? (*nwtsty* study notes)

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) Mr 9:1-13

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) w04 5/15 30-31—Theme: What Is the Meaning of Jesus’ Words Recorded at Mark 10:25?

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 131
- **“What God Has Yoked Together . . .”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Love and Respect Unites Families* (video category THE BIBLE).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 20
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 66 and Prayer


MARK 9-10 | A Faith-Strengthening Vision



9:1-7

Imagine how Jesus must have felt when he heard his heavenly Father announce during the transfiguration vision that He approved of him. This no doubt fortified Jesus for the suffering he was going to undergo. This vision also made a powerful impression on Peter, James, and John. Jesus was indeed the Messiah, and they were right to listen to him. Some 32 years later, Peter still recalled the experience and how it made “the prophetic word” more sure for him.—2Pe 1:16-19.

Although we did not personally see this impressive vision, we are witnessing its fulfillment. Jesus is ruling as a powerful King. Soon, he will “complete his conquest,” opening the way for a righteous new world.—Re 6:2.

 How has your faith been strengthened by seeing the fulfillment of Bible prophecy?



Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Conversations

●○○ INITIAL CALL

Question: How can we know what the future holds?

Scripture: Isa 46:10

Link: What future does God promise for humans and the earth?



●●○ FIRST RETURN VISIT

Question: What future does God promise for humans and the earth?

Scripture: Ps 37:29

Link: How can we make the hope offered in the Bible our own?



○○● SECOND RETURN VISIT

Question: How can we make the hope offered in the Bible our own?

Scripture: Ps 37:34

Link: What way of life does God invite us to follow?

laziness, and unsuitable speech. If we have put on "the new personality" and yet allow ourselves to drift back toward such things, what would we be doing? We would be going against the spirit-inspired counsel of God's Word, the Bible. By doing this, we would be grieving the holy spirit.

In Ephesians chapter 5, we read Paul's counsel about avoiding prurient interest in fornication. The apostle also urges fellow believers to avoid shameful conduct and obscene jesting. If we do not want to grieve God's holy spirit, we ought to bear this in mind when choosing entertainment. Why would we show interest in such things by talking about them, reading about them, and viewing their portrayal on television or elsewhere?

Of course, we could grieve the spirit in other ways. Jehovah's spirit promotes unity in the congregation, but suppose we were to spread harmful gossip or encourage cliques in the congregation. Would we not be working against the spirit's leadings toward unity? In a general way, we would be grieving the holy spirit, like those who caused divisions in the congregation in Corinth. (1 Corinthians 1:10; 3:1-4, 16, 17) We would also be grieving the spirit if we deliberately undermined respect for spirit-appointed men in the congregation.—Acts 20:28; Jude 8.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Creation Declares the Glory of God!

Do Your Circumstances
Control Your Life?

From Dark Dungeons
to the Swiss Alps

Clearly, then, it is wise to consider our attitude and actions in the light of what we know to be the leadings of the holy spirit as reflected in the Bible and in the Christian congregation. Let us also be "praying with holy spirit," yielding to its influence and always acting in harmony with what is said in God's inspired Word. (Jude 20) May it be our determination never to grieve the spirit but always to be led by it to the honor of Jehovah's holy name.

• **Jesus Christ compared a rich man's difficulty in getting into the Kingdom with a camel that is trying to get through a needle's eye. Did Jesus have in mind a literal camel and a real sewing needle?**

Two of the three Scriptural quotations of this statement are quite similar. According to Matthew's account, Jesus said: "It is easier for a camel to get through a needle's eye than for a rich man to get into the kingdom of God." (Matthew 19:24) Similarly, Mark 10:25 reads: "It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."

Some reference works suggest that the "needle's eye" was a small gate in one of Jerusalem's large gates. If the big gate was closed at night, the small one could be opened. It is held that a camel could fit through it. Is this what Jesus had in mind?

Evidently it is not. Jesus apparently was referring to a sewing needle. Since both bone and metal needles of ancient origin have been found in that region, they must have been common household items. Luke 18:25 removes any uncertainty about Jesus' words, for it quotes him as saying: "It is easier, in fact, for a camel to get through the eye of a sewing needle than for a rich man to get into the kingdom of God."

Various lexicographers agree with the rendering "sewing needle" as found in

the *New World Translation*. The Greek word for 'needle' at Matthew 19:24 and Mark 10:25 (*rha·phis'*) is drawn from a verb meaning "sew." And the Greek term found at Luke 18:25 (*be·lo'ne*) is used to refer to a literal surgical needle. Says *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*: "The idea of applying 'the needle's eye' to small gates seems to be a modern one; there is no ancient trace of it. The Lord's object in the statement is to express human impossibility and there is no need to endeavour to soften the difficulty by taking the needle to mean anything more than the ordinary instrument."—1981, Volume 3, page 106.

Some suggest that in these verses "camel" should be rendered "rope." The Greek words for rope (*ka'mi·los*) and camel (*ka'me·los*) are similar. However, the Greek word for "camel" rather than the one for "rope" appears at Matthew 19:24 in the oldest extant Greek manuscripts of Matthew's Gospel (the Sinaitic, the Vatican No. 1209, and the Alexandrine). Reportedly, Matthew originally wrote his Gospel in Hebrew and may personally have translated it into Greek. He knew exactly what Jesus said and therefore used the proper word.

So, then, Jesus meant a literal sewing needle and a real camel. He was using these to emphasize the impossibility of something. But did Jesus mean that no rich man could ever get into the Kingdom? No, for Jesus' statement was not meant to be taken literally. He was using hyperbole to illustrate that just as a literal camel cannot go through the eye of an actual sewing needle, it is impossible for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom if he continues to cling to his riches and



does not put Jehovah first in his life.
—Luke 13:24; 1 Timothy 6:17-19.

Jesus made this statement just after a rich young ruler turned down the grand privilege of becoming Jesus' follower. (Luke 18:18-24) A wealthy individual having greater love for his possessions than for spiritual things cannot expect to gain everlasting life in the Kingdom arrangement. Yet, certain rich people did become Jesus' disciples. (Matthew 27:57; Luke 19:2, 9) So a rich person who is conscious of his spiritual need and who seeks divine help can receive God-given salvation.—Matthew 5:3; 19:16-26.

131 “What God Has Yoked Together”

(Matthew 19:5, 6)

1. With dignity and joy,
A threefold cord is bound.
With God and men to witness,
These sacred vows resound.

(CHORUS 1)

*He vowed before Jehovah
To love her from the heart.
“What God has yoked together,
Let no man put apart.”*

2. They both have searched God’s Word
To learn to do his will,
And now they seek his blessing,
Their promise to fulfill.

(CHORUS 2)

*She vowed before Jehovah
To love him from the heart.
“What God has yoked together,
Let no man put apart.”*

- Song 22 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

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9:1-7

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Although we did not personally see this impressive vision, we are witnessing its fulfillment. Jesus is ruling as a powerful King. Soon, he will “complete his conquest,” opening the way for a righteous new world.—Re 6:2.

 How has your faith been strengthened by seeing the fulfillment of Bible prophecy?

Love and Respect Unites Families

[Couple arguing]

Anger.

[Child watching on]

Hurtful words.

[Upset child]

Devastating effects.

The Bible says: "A mild answer turns away rage; But a harsh word stirs up anger."

[Couple sits down together at the kitchen table- things are tense]

The way out of a crisis is only found by learning to speak openly with one another.

In a mild gentle way.

It takes time and patience.

[Husband sends text message to his wife – "I'm sorry. (emoji) I didn't want to hurt you."]

Honestly apologising also helps to build bridges

[Couple talking in the lounge room]

"The insight of a man certainly slows down his anger", says the Bible.

Insight means understanding. To have empathy for my partner.

How can I understand the feelings behind their reaction?

How were my words understood?

Speaking so as to not hurt one another's feelings will help.

Love and Respect Unites Families

[Torn photo]

When was everything OK between us?

[Family walking along a street together – husband and wife arms around each other]

What were the things that made us happy?

[Couple embrace]

Can we revive this love again?

[Family in park together – one son on swing -other son sits between them -couple hold hands- mother kisses son o head and looks at husband and smiles]

Go in a new direction?

“All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must do to them.” - Matthew 7:12

“What God Has Yoked Together . . .”



The Mosaic Law required a man who was considering divorce to prepare a legal certificate. This served to deter the hasty breakup of marriages. However, in Jesus' day, religious leaders made divorce easy to obtain. Men could divorce their wives on every sort of grounds. (*nwtsty* study notes on Mr 10:4, 11) Jesus called attention to the fact that marriage was authorized and established by Jehovah. (Mr 10:2-12) A husband and wife were to become “one flesh” in a permanent union. The only Scriptural basis for divorce, according to Matthew’s parallel account, is “sexual immorality.”—Mt 19:9.

Today, many people view marriage, not as Jesus did, but as the Pharisees did. When problems arise, those in the world are quick to divorce. Christian couples, on the other hand, take their marriage vows seriously and strive to overcome difficulties by applying Bible principles. After watching the video *Love and Respect Unites Families*, answer the following questions:



- How can you apply Proverbs 15:1 in your marriage, and why is this important?

- How can you avoid problems by applying Proverbs 19:11?



- If your marriage is at the breaking point, instead of thinking, ‘Should I get a divorce?’ what questions should you consider?



- How can you be a better husband or wife by applying Matthew 7:12?



SECTION

3

**JESUS’
GREAT MINISTRY
IN GALILEE**

**‘JESUS BEGAN
PREACHING:
“THE KINGDOM HAS
DRAWN NEAR.”’**

—MATTHEW 4:17



20

SECOND MIRACLE WHILE IN CANA

MARK 1:14, 15 LUKE 4:14, 15 JOHN 4:43-54

- JESUS PREACHES THAT “THE KINGDOM OF GOD HAS DRAWN NEAR”
 - HE HEALS A BOY FROM A DISTANCE
-

After some two days in Samaria, Jesus moves on to his home territory. He has had an extended preaching campaign in Judea, but he is not returning to Galilee to rest. Rather, he begins an even greater ministry in the land where he grew up. He might not expect to be well-received there, because as Jesus stated, “a prophet has no honor in his own homeland.” (John 4:44) Instead of staying with him, his disciples return home to their families and their former occupations.

What message does Jesus begin preaching? It is this: “The Kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent, and have faith in the good news.” (Mark 1:15) And what is the response? Actually, many Galileans receive Jesus well, giving him honor. This is not

just because of his message. Some from Galilee were at the Passover in Jerusalem months before and saw the remarkable signs Jesus performed.—John 2:23.

Where does Jesus begin his great Galilean ministry? Apparently in Cana, where he had once turned water into wine at a wedding feast. While there on this second occasion, Jesus learns of a lad who is very sick, at the point of death. He is the son of a government official of Herod Antipas, the king who later has John the Baptist beheaded. This official hears that Jesus has come out of Judea to Cana. So the man travels from his home in Capernaum to Cana to find Jesus. The grief-stricken official urges him: “Lord, come down before my young child dies.”—John 4:49.

Jesus responds with a statement that must astonish the man: “Go your way; your son lives.” (John 4:50) Herod’s official believes Jesus and starts his return trip home. On the way he is met by his slaves, who have hurried to tell him good news. Yes, his son is alive and well! ‘When did he get better?’ he asks, trying to put the pieces together.



“The fever left him yesterday at the seventh hour,” they answer.—John 4:52.

The official realizes that this is exactly when Jesus said, “Your son lives.” After that, both this man, who is wealthy enough to have slaves, and his entire household become disciples of Christ.

Cana is thus a place where Jesus twice performs miracles, turning water into wine and later curing the young boy from a distance of some 16 miles. These, of course, are not his only miracles. But this cure is significant because it marks his return to Galilee. He is clearly a prophet approved by God, yet to what extent will this ‘prophet be honored in his own homeland’?

That will become evident as Jesus heads home to Nazareth. What awaits him there?

- ◇ When Jesus returns to Galilee, what message does he begin to preach and what response does he encounter?
- ◇ Jesus performs what miracle while again in Cana, and how does it affect those involved?
- ◇ What is noteworthy about the way Jesus cured a lad in Capernaum?

Declare the Good News

(Revelation 14:6, 7)

1. The fullness of the Kingdom truth was long concealed.
The truth about the promised King is now revealed.
Jehovah in his mercy and his love of right
Considered man's condition in his sinful plight.
He formed his purpose that his Son should rule the earth;
In God's due time the Kingdom rule
would be brought to birth.
And that he might arrange to bring his Son a bride,
A little flock of chosen ones is glorified.
2. The good news that we now declare was long foreknown.
Jehovah wills that in this time it would be shown.
Along with us, his angels take delight to share,
To aid us as the Kingdom truth we now declare.
We have the duty and the honor in these days
To sanctify his name
and give him his rightful praise.
We're honored as his Witnesses that name to bear
With everlasting good news that we now declare.

MARCH 2018

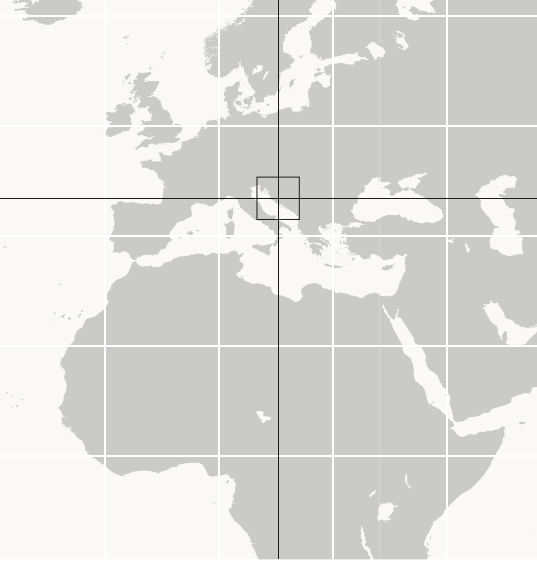
THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
APRIL 30–JUNE 3, 2018

LARGE
PRINT
EDITION



COVER IMAGE:

CROATIA

Two brothers offer a tract to a painter on the bridge in front of Kaštilac, a fortress built in the 16th century, near the city of Split

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Baptism—A Requirement for Christians

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Parents, Are You Helping Your Child Progress to Baptism?

What should be our goal when we conduct a Bible study? Why would it be a mistake to delay baptism? What has caused some Christian parents to encourage their children to postpone getting baptized? These questions and others will be addressed in these two articles.

PUBLISHERS

5,335

BIBLE STUDIES

2,123

MEMORIAL

ATTENDANCE (2016)

8,434

The Watchtower (ISSN 0043-1087) Issue 4 March 2018 is published by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; L. Weaver, Jr., President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299, and by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada, PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. © 2017 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. Printed in Canada.

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations.

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

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The Delightful Course of Hospitality —So Needed!

The apostle Peter urged Christians in the first century: “Be hospitable to one another.” (1 Pet. 4:9) Why is this counsel so needed in our day? What are some practical ways that we can follow it? And how can we be good guests? This article will consider these questions.

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“Listen to Discipline and Become Wise”

These two articles will help us to appreciate more fully the depth of God’s love for us as reflected in his fatherly discipline. How, though, does God discipline us? How should we respond to his discipline? And how can we cultivate self-discipline? Find the answers in these articles.

100 *Receive Them With Hospitality*

(Acts 17:7)

1. Jehovah shows sincere hospitality.

He cares for all without partiality.

He gives both rain and sun,

withholding these from none;

He fills our hearts with food and good cheer.

Whenever we show favor to lowly ones,

We imitate our God as beloved sons.

Our Father will repay

the goodness we display,

Our kindness that is truly sincere.

2. We never know the good that may come about

When we see those in need and we help them out.

Though strangers they may be,

in hospitality,

We lend a hand to care for their needs.

Like Lydia of old, we say: 'Be my guest.'

When they come to our home, they find peace and rest.

Our Father is aware

of all those ev'rywhere,

Who imitate his merciful deeds.



SONGS:
100, 87

**HOW DO YOU
FEEL ABOUT . . .**

the need for
hospitality within
the congregation?

opportunities
we have to extend
hospitality?

overcoming barriers
to extending
hospitality?

The Delightful Course of Hospitality —So Needed!

*“Be hospitable to one another
without grumbling.”—1 PET. 4:9.*

SOMETIME between the years 62 and 64 C.E., the apostle Peter wrote to “the temporary residents scattered about in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.” (1 Pet. 1:1) These culturally diverse congregations in

1. What conditions did first-century Christians face?

Asia Minor needed encouragement and guidance. They were suffering opposition and were subjected to abusive speech. They faced “fiery trials.” And they lived at a critical time. “The end of all things has drawn close,” wrote Peter. Yes, the violent end of the Jewish system of things would come in less than a decade. What could help Christians everywhere to get through those stressful times?—1 Pet. 4:4, 7, 12.

² Among other things, Peter urged his brothers: “Be hospitable to one another.” (1 Pet. 4:9) The word “hospitality” in Greek literally means “fondness for, or kindness to, strangers.” Note, however, that Peter urged his Christian brothers and sisters to be hospitable “to one another,” to those whom they already knew and associated with. How would being hospitable help them?

³ It would draw them together. Consider your own experience. Have you had the pleasure of being invited to someone’s home? Did that occasion not leave you with warm memories? When you entertained some from your congregation, was your friendship not deepened? By extending hospitality, we get to know our brothers and sisters in a more

2, 3. Why did Peter urge his brothers to show hospitality? (See opening picture.)

personal way than we can in other settings. Christians in Peter’s day needed to draw ever closer as conditions grew worse. The same is true for Christians in these “last days.”—2 Tim. 3:1.

4 What opportunities do we have for extending hospitality “to one another”? How can we overcome barriers that may hinder us from being hospitable? What can help us be good guests?

OPPORTUNITIES TO SHOW HOSPITALITY

5 **At meetings:** We welcome all who attend our Christian meetings as fellow guests at a spiritual meal. Jehovah and his organization are our hosts. (Rom. 15:7) When new ones attend, we become cohosts, as it were. Why not take the initiative to welcome these new ones, no matter how they may be dressed or groomed? (Jas. 2:1-4) If a visitor is not already being cared for, could you invite him to sit with you? He might appreciate help to follow the program and perhaps to find scriptures being read. This would be a fine way to “follow the course of hospitality.”—Rom. 12:13.

6 **For refreshments or a meal:** In Bible times,

-
4. What questions will we consider in this article?
 5. How can we be hospitable at our Christian meetings?
 6. Who should be among the primary guests in our homes?

hospitality normally included inviting someone to one's home for a meal. (Gen. 18:1-8; Judg. 13:15; Luke 24:28-30) An invitation to share food was an invitation to friendship and peace. Who should be among our primary guests? Those who are a regular part of our lives, the brothers and sisters in our congregation. When hard times come, will we not depend on one another? We need loyal friendships and peace with all of them. Interestingly, in 2011 the Governing Body changed the time of the *Watchtower* Study for the United States Bethel family from 6:45 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. Why? The announcement stated that more will likely be inclined to show and accept hospitality with fellow Bethelites when the meeting ends earlier. Other branch offices followed suit. This arrangement has drawn Bethel families closer than ever.

⁷ Visits of public speakers from other congregations, as well as visits of circuit overseers and, at times, representatives from the local branch office, provide opportunities for us to extend hospitality. (Read **3 John 5-8.**) Providing refreshments or a meal is one fine way of doing this. Could you assist?

7, 8. How can we provide hospitality to visiting representatives of Jehovah's organization?

⁸ A sister in the United States remembers: “Over the years, my husband and I have had the opportunity to provide hospitality in our home for many speakers and their wives. *Every* experience has been a delight—fun and, most of all, spiritually edifying. We have never regretted it.”

⁹ **Long-term guests:** In ancient times, hospitality often included providing lodging for trustworthy visitors. (Job 31:32; Philem. 22) In our day, too, such a need arises. Circuit overseers often need lodging when they visit the congregations. Students at theocratic schools may need places to stay, as may construction volunteers. Natural disasters may leave some families homeless and in need of lodging until relief efforts can restore their dwellings. We should not assume that only those who have very comfortable homes are in a position to help; they may already have done so many times. Could you share in offering accommodations even if your circumstances are modest?

¹⁰ A brother in South Korea fondly remembers that he provided accommodations for students attending theocratic schools. He writes: “I hesitated initially because we were newly married and living

9, 10. (a) Who may need long-term hospitality? (b) Can even those who have modest dwellings assist? Illustrate.

in a small house. But having students stay with us was truly a joyous experience. As newlyweds, we were able to see how happy a couple can be when they serve Jehovah and pursue spiritual goals together.”

¹¹ New to the congregation: Individuals and families may move to your area. Some may come to serve where the need is greater. Pioneers may be sent to assist in your congregation. All of them are initially out of their element to some extent—in a new community, new congregation, perhaps even a new language or culture. Inviting them for refreshments, a meal, or an outing will help them to make new friends and adjust to their changed circumstances.

¹² Hospitality need not be elaborate. (Read Luke 10:41, 42.) In recounting the early days of his service as a missionary, a brother says: “We were young, inexperienced, and homesick. One evening my wife was particularly homesick, and my efforts to help were not working. Then, about 7:30 p.m., we heard a knock on the door. There stood a Bible student who brought us three oranges. She had come

11. Why may those who are new to your congregation need hospitality?

12. What experience shows that hospitality need not be elaborate?

to welcome the new missionaries. We invited her in and gave her a glass of water. Then we made tea and hot chocolate. We didn't know Swahili yet, and she didn't know English. But that incident began our greatest delight in forging friendships with the local brothers.”

OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO HOSPITALITY

¹³ Have you held back from offering hospitality? If so, you may have missed out on opportunities for delightful company and for forming lasting friendships. Hospitality is one of the finest antidotes to loneliness. But you may wonder, ‘Why would anyone hold back?’ There could be a number of reasons.

¹⁴ **Time and energy:** Jehovah’s servants are very busy and often have multiple commitments. Some may feel that they simply do not have the time or energy to show hospitality. If that is your situation, it may be that you need to examine your current schedule of activities. Could you make some adjustments so that you will have time and energy to accept or offer hospitality? The Scriptures urge

13. What benefits come from being hospitable?

14. What might we do if having little time and energy limits our accepting or extending hospitality?

Christians to extend hospitality. (Heb. 13:2) It is not wrong to make time for this; actually, it is the right thing to do. You may, of course, need to be willing to limit some optional activities.

15 Your feelings about yourself: Have you ever wanted to be hospitable but felt inadequate? Some are shy and fear that conversation would lag or that guests might not feel entertained. Others have limited income and believe that they could never offer what other members of the congregation could. Remember, of prime importance about a home is, not that it is fancy, but that it is orderly, clean, and inviting.

16 If you feel anxious about having guests, you are not alone. An elder in Britain admits: “There can be a measure of nervousness in preparing for guests. But as with anything in relation to serving Jehovah, the benefits and satisfaction that result far outweigh any anxiety. I have enjoyed simply sitting down with guests over coffee and talking.” Remember that showing personal interest in guests is always helpful. (Phil. 2:4) Nearly everyone enjoys sharing his experiences in life. Social occasions may be the only times others ask to hear about our

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15. What anxieties about extending hospitality might some have?
16, 17. What may alleviate worries about having guests?

experiences. Another elder writes: “Having friends from the congregation to my home helps me to understand them better and gives me time to get to know them, especially how they came into the truth.” Loving interest can make any occasion a delight.

¹⁷ A pioneer sister who hosted students attending various theocratic schools admitted: “Initially I was concerned because my accommodations are very modest, and I have secondhand furniture. The wife of one of the instructors really put me at ease. She said that when she and her husband are serving in the traveling work, their best weeks are those spent staying with a spiritual person who may not have much materially but who has the same focus as they have—serving Jehovah and keeping life simple. This reminded me of what my mum used to say to us as children: ‘Better a dish of vegetables where there’s love.’” (Prov. 15:17) Let love motivate your hospitality, and you need not worry.

¹⁸ **Your feelings about others:** Is there someone in your congregation who rubs you the wrong way? Your initial feelings about that person may be negative and can become long-lasting if nothing is

18, 19. How can being hospitable help us overcome negative feelings about others?

done to improve them. Personality differences may neutralize your good intentions to extend hospitality. Or someone may have hurt you in the past, and you find it hard to forget.

¹⁹ To improve relationships, even with enemies, the Bible recommends hospitality. (Read Proverbs 25:21, 22.) Extending hospitality to someone can reduce friction and soften hard feelings. It can bring to the surface lovable aspects of our guest's personality, aspects that Jehovah saw when he drew that one to the truth. (John 6:44) If extended with love, an unexpected invitation can be the start of a completely changed relationship. How can you make sure that love is your honest motive? One way is by following the encouragement given at Philipians 2:3: "With humility consider others superior to you." Finding ways that our brothers or sisters *are* superior to us—be it their faith, endurance, fearlessness, or some other Christian quality—will deepen our love for them and open the way for genuine and healing hospitality.

BEING A GOOD GUEST

²⁰ The psalmist David asked: "O Jehovah, who may be a guest in your tent?" (Ps. 15:1) He followed

20. Why and how should we honor an invitation we have accepted?



Hosts usually
prepare well for
their guests
(See paragraph 20)

that question with a discussion of spiritual qualities that God looks for in his guests. One quality is being true to our word: “He does not go back on his promise, even when it is bad for him.” (Ps. 15:4) If we accept an invitation, we should not cancel frivolously. Our host may well have made preparations, and all his effort may be for nothing if we cancel. (Matt. 5:37) Some have at times canceled a previous invitation in order to accept a seemingly better one. Would that be loving and respectful? Rather, we should accept hospitality with genuine appreciation for whatever our hosts have to offer. (Luke 10:7) And if truly unavoidable circumstances force

us to cancel, it would be loving and considerate to let our hosts know as soon as possible.

²¹ It is also important to respect local customs. In some cultures, unexpected guests are welcome; in others, prior arrangements are preferred. In some places, hosts honor guests with the finest they have to offer, letting family take second place; in others, everyone shares alike. In some areas, guests normally bring something to contribute to the occasion; in others, hosts are happier when their guests feel no such obligation. And in some cultures, it is expected that guests politely decline the first invitation or two; in others, to decline comes across as unappreciative. Let us do our utmost to make our hosts happy that they invited us.

²² In a broader sense than ever, “the end of all things has drawn close.” (1 Pet. 4:7) We face the greatest tribulation the world has ever seen. As pressures mount, we will need the deepest of love between us and our brothers and sisters. As never before, Peter’s counsel to Christians applies: “Be hospitable to one another,” a delightful and needed course that will have no end.—1 Pet. 4:9.

21. How can respecting local customs contribute to our being good guests?

22. Why is it so important to “be hospitable to one another”?

Come! Be Refreshed

(Hebrews 10:24, 25)

1. We live in a world that is wayward and lost;
The way of our God is not known.
We need sure direction to safeguard our steps;
We cannot succeed on our own.

Our meetings refresh us and brighten our hope;
They help us build faith in our God.
They move us with words that incite to fine deeds,
They give us the strength to go on.

We'll never forsake what Jehovah commands;
His will is what we want to do.
Our meetings instruct us in ways that are right;
Our love for the truth they renew.
2. Jehovah is keenly aware of our needs;
His counsel by us should be heard.
To buy out the time for occasions to meet
Shows wisdom and trust in his Word.

By wholesome instruction from God-fearing men,
We learn how our faith can be shown.
With loving support from our fam'ly of faith,
We know that we're never alone.

So as we look forward to much better times,
We'll meet with the ones whom we love.
And here at these meetings we'll learn how to live
With wisdom that comes from above.

