

- Song 25 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“The Illustration of the Olive Tree”:** (10 min.)  
 Ro 11:16—The cultivated olive tree represents the fulfillment of God’s purpose regarding the Abrahamic covenant (*w11 5/15 23 ¶13*)  
 Ro 11:17, 20, 21—Anointed ones grafted onto the symbolic olive tree must continue to exercise faith (*w11 5/15 24 ¶15*)  
 Ro 11:25, 26—The complete number of spiritual Israelites “will be saved” (*w11 5/15 25 ¶19*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)  
 Ro 9:21-23—Why should we yield to the molding of the Great Potter, Jehovah? (*w13 6/15 25 ¶5*)  
  
 Ro 10:2—Why must we be certain that our worship is based on accurate knowledge? (*it-1 1260 ¶2*)

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) Ro 10:1-15 (10)

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Second Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation. (6)
- **Bible Study:** (5 min. or less) Begin with the second return visit sample conversation, and then start a Bible study using the *Teach Us* book. (9)

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 60
- **“Improving Our Skills in the Ministry—Discontinuing Unproductive Bible Studies”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 56
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 36 and Prayer


ROMANS 9-11 | The Illustration of the Olive Tree

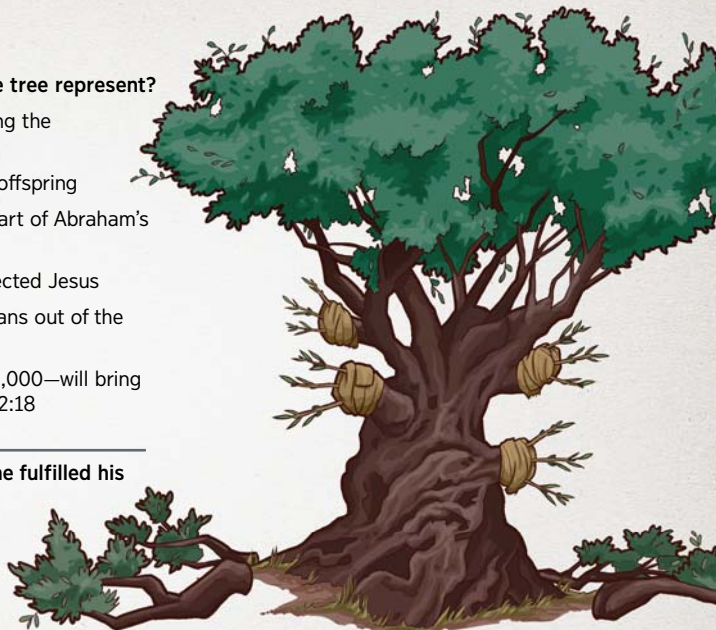
**11:16-26**

What do the various features of the symbolic olive tree represent?

- **The tree:** the fulfillment of God’s purpose regarding the Abrahamic covenant
- **The trunk:** Jesus, the principal part of Abraham’s offspring
- **The branches:** the full number of the secondary part of Abraham’s offspring
- **The “broken off” branches:** natural Jews who rejected Jesus
- **The “grafted in” branches:** spirit-anointed Christians out of the nations

As foretold, Abraham’s offspring—Jesus and the 144,000—will bring blessings “to people of the nations.”—Ro 11:12; Ge 22:18

 What do I learn about Jehovah from the way he fulfilled his purpose regarding Abraham’s offspring?



# *A Special Possession*

(1 Peter 2:9)

1. God has a new creation,  
His spirit-anointed sons.  
He has bought them from mankind;  
His approval they've won.

*(CHORUS)*

*A special possession,  
They're a people for your name.  
They love you. They praise you.  
As one they declare abroad your fame.*

2. They are a holy nation,  
Who handle the truth aright.  
God has called them from darkness  
To his wonderful light.

*(Chorus)*

3. Faithful to their commission,  
They gather the other sheep.  
To the Lamb they are loyal.  
His commandments they keep.

*(Chorus)*

## Romans 9-11

**9** I am telling the truth in Christ; I am not lying, as my conscience bears witness with me in holy spirit, <sup>2</sup> that I have great grief and unceasing pain in my heart. <sup>3</sup> For I could wish that I myself were separated from the Christ as the cursed one for the sake of my brothers, my relatives according to the flesh, <sup>4</sup> who are Israelites. To them belong the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the sacred service and the promises. <sup>5</sup> To them the forefathers belong, and from them the Christ descended according to the flesh. God, who is over all, be praised forever. Amen.

<sup>6</sup> However, it is not as though the word of God has failed. For not all who descend from Israel are really "Israel." <sup>7</sup> Neither are they all children because they are Abraham's offspring; rather, "What will be called your offspring will be through Isaac." <sup>8</sup> That is, the children in the flesh are not really the children of God, but the children by the promise are counted as the offspring. <sup>9</sup> For the word of promise was as follows: "At this time I will come and Sarah will have a son." <sup>10</sup> Not only then but also when Re-bek'ah conceived twins from the one man, Isaac our forefather; <sup>11</sup> for when they had not yet been born and had not practiced anything good or bad, so that God's purpose respecting the choosing might continue dependent, not on works, but on the One who calls, <sup>12</sup> it was said to her: "The older will be the slave of the younger." <sup>13</sup> Just as it is written: "I loved Jacob, but E'sau I hated."

<sup>14</sup> What are we to say, then? Is there injustice with God? Certainly not! <sup>15</sup> For he says to Moses: "I will show mercy to whomever I will show mercy, and I will show compassion to whomever I will show compassion." <sup>16</sup> So, then, it depends, not on a person's desire or on his effort, but on God, who has mercy. <sup>17</sup> For the scripture says to Phar'aoh: "For this very reason I have let you remain: to show my power in connection with you and to

have my name declared in all the earth.”<sup>18</sup> So, then, he has mercy on whomever he wishes, but he lets whomever he wishes become obstinate.

<sup>19</sup> You will therefore say to me: “Why does he still find fault? For who has withstood his will?”<sup>20</sup> But who are you, O man, to be answering back to God? Does the thing molded say to its molder: “Why did you make me this way?”<sup>21</sup> What? Does not the potter have authority over the clay to make from the same lump one vessel for an honorable use, another for a dishonorable use?

<sup>22</sup> What, then, if God had the will to demonstrate his wrath and to make his power known, and he tolerated with much patience vessels of wrath made fit for destruction?<sup>23</sup> And if this was done to make known the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand for glory,<sup>24</sup> namely, us, whom he called not only from among Jews but also from among nations, what of it?<sup>25</sup> It is as he says also in Ho-se'a: “Those not my people I will call ‘my people,’ and her who was not loved, ‘beloved’;”<sup>26</sup> and in the place where it was said to them, ‘You are not my people,’ there they will be called ‘sons of the living God.’”

<sup>27</sup> Moreover, Isaiah cries out concerning Israel: “Although the number of the sons of Israel may be as the sand of the sea, only the remnant will be saved.”<sup>28</sup> For Jehovah will make an accounting on the earth, concluding it and cutting it short.”<sup>29</sup> Also, just as Isaiah foretold: “Unless Jehovah of armies had left an offspring to us, we should have become just like Sod'om, and we should have resembled Go-mor'rah.”

<sup>30</sup> What are we to say, then? That people of the nations, although not pursuing righteousness, attained righteousness, the righteousness that results from faith;<sup>31</sup> but Israel, although pursuing a law of righteousness, did not attain to that law.<sup>32</sup> For what reason? Because they pursued it, not by faith, but as by works. They stumbled over the “stone of stumbling”;<sup>33</sup> as it is

written: “Look! I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense, but the one who rests his faith on it will not be disappointed.”

**10** Brothers, the goodwill of my heart and my supplication to God for them are indeed for their salvation. <sup>2</sup> For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to accurate knowledge. <sup>3</sup> For because of not knowing the righteousness of God but seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God. <sup>4</sup> For Christ is the end of the Law, so that everyone exercising faith may have righteousness.

<sup>5</sup> For Moses writes about the righteousness that is by the Law: “The man who does these things will live by means of them.” <sup>6</sup> But the righteousness resulting from faith says: “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ that is, to bring Christ down, <sup>7</sup> or, ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ that is, to bring Christ up from the dead.” <sup>8</sup> But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your own mouth and in your own heart”; that is, “the word” of faith, which we are preaching. <sup>9</sup> For if you publicly declare with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and exercise faith in your heart that God raised him up from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup> For with the heart one exercises faith for righteousness, but with the mouth one makes public declaration for salvation.

<sup>11</sup> For the scripture says: “No one who rests his faith on him will be disappointed.” <sup>12</sup> For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. There is the same Lord over all, who is rich toward all those calling on him. <sup>13</sup> For “everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved.” <sup>14</sup> However, how will they call on him if they have not put faith in him? How, in turn, will they put faith in him about whom they have not heard? How, in turn, will they hear without someone to preach? <sup>15</sup> How, in turn, will they preach unless they have been sent out? Just as it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who declare good news of good things!”

<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, they did not all obey the good news. For Isaiah says: “Jehovah, who has put faith in the thing heard from us?” <sup>17</sup> So faith follows the thing heard. In turn, what is heard is through the word about Christ. <sup>18</sup> But I ask, They did not fail to hear, did they? Why, in fact, “into all the earth their sound went out, and to the ends of the inhabited earth their message.” <sup>19</sup> But I ask, Israel did not fail to know, did they? First Moses says: “I will incite you to jealousy through that which is not a nation; I will incite you to violent anger through a foolish nation.” <sup>20</sup> But Isaiah becomes very bold and says: “I was found by those who were not seeking me; I became known to those who were not asking for me.” <sup>21</sup> But he says regarding Israel: “All day long I have spread out my hands toward a disobedient and obstinate people.”

**11** I ask, then, God did not reject his people, did he? By no means! For I too am an Israelite, of the offspring of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. <sup>2</sup> God did not reject his people, whom he first recognized. Do you not know what the scripture says in connection with E-li'jah, as he pleads with God against Israel? <sup>3</sup> “Jehovah, they have killed your prophets, they have dug up your altars, and I alone am left, and now they are trying to take my life.” <sup>4</sup> Yet, what does the divine pronouncement say to him? “I have left for myself 7,000 men who have not bent the knee to Ba'al.” <sup>5</sup> So in the same way, at the present time also, there is a remnant according to a choosing through undeserved kindness. <sup>6</sup> Now if it is by undeserved kindness, it is no longer through works; otherwise, the undeserved kindness would no longer be undeserved kindness.

<sup>7</sup> What, then? The very thing Israel is earnestly seeking he did not obtain, but the ones chosen obtained it. The rest had their senses dulled, <sup>8</sup> just as it is written: “God has given them a spirit of deep sleep, eyes that do not see and ears that do not hear, down to this very day.” <sup>9</sup> Also, David says: “Let their table become a snare and a trap and a stumbling block and a retribution for them.” <sup>10</sup> Let

their eyes become darkened so that they cannot see, and always make them bend their backs.”

<sup>11</sup> So I ask, They did not stumble and fall completely, did they? Certainly not! But by their false step, there is salvation to people of the nations, to incite them to jealousy. <sup>12</sup> Now if their false step means riches to the world and their decrease means riches to people of the nations, how much more will their full number mean!

<sup>13</sup> Now I speak to you who are people of the nations. Seeing that I am an apostle to the nations, I glorify my ministry <sup>14</sup> to see if I may in some way incite my own people to jealousy and save some from among them. <sup>15</sup> For if their being cast away means reconciliation for the world, what will the acceptance of them mean but life from the dead? <sup>16</sup> Further, if the part of the dough taken as firstfruits is holy, the entire batch is also holy; and if the root is holy, the branches are also.

<sup>17</sup> However, if some of the branches were broken off and you, although being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became a sharer of the richness of the olive’s root, <sup>18</sup> do not be arrogant toward the branches. If, though, you are arrogant toward them, remember that it is not you who bears the root, but the root bears you. <sup>19</sup> You will say, then: “Branches were broken off so that I might be grafted in.” <sup>20</sup> That is true! For their lack of faith, they were broken off, but you are standing by faith. Do not be haughty, but be in fear. <sup>21</sup> For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. <sup>22</sup> Consider, therefore, God’s kindness and severity. There is severity toward those who fell, but toward you there is God’s kindness, provided you remain in his kindness; otherwise, you too will be lopped off. <sup>23</sup> And they also, if they do not remain in their lack of faith, will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them back in. <sup>24</sup> For if you were cut out of the olive tree that is wild by nature and were grafted contrary to nature into the garden olive

tree, how much more will these who are natural branches be grafted back into their own olive tree!

<sup>25</sup> For I do not want you to be unaware of this sacred secret, brothers, so that you do not become wise in your own eyes: A partial dulling of senses has come upon Israel until the full number of people of the nations has come in, <sup>26</sup> and in this manner all Israel will be saved. Just as it is written: “The deliverer will come out of Zion and turn away ungodly practices from Jacob. <sup>27</sup> And this is my covenant with them, when I take their sins away.” <sup>28</sup> True, with respect to the good news, they are enemies for your sakes; but with respect to God’s choosing, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers. <sup>29</sup> For the gifts and the calling of God are not things he will regret. <sup>30</sup> For just as you were once disobedient to God but have now been shown mercy because of their disobedience, <sup>31</sup> so also these now have been disobedient with mercy resulting to you, so that they themselves may also now be shown mercy. <sup>32</sup> For God has confined all of them together in disobedience so that he might show all of them mercy.

<sup>33</sup> O the depth of God’s riches and wisdom and knowledge! How unsearchable his judgments are and beyond tracing out his ways are! <sup>34</sup> For “who has come to know Jehovah’s mind, or who has become his adviser?” <sup>35</sup> Or, “who has first given to him, so that it must be repaid to him?” <sup>36</sup> Because from him and by him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever. Amen.



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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) Ro 10:1-15 (10)

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- **Second Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
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**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

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- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 56
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
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ROMANS 9-11 | The Illustration of the Olive Tree

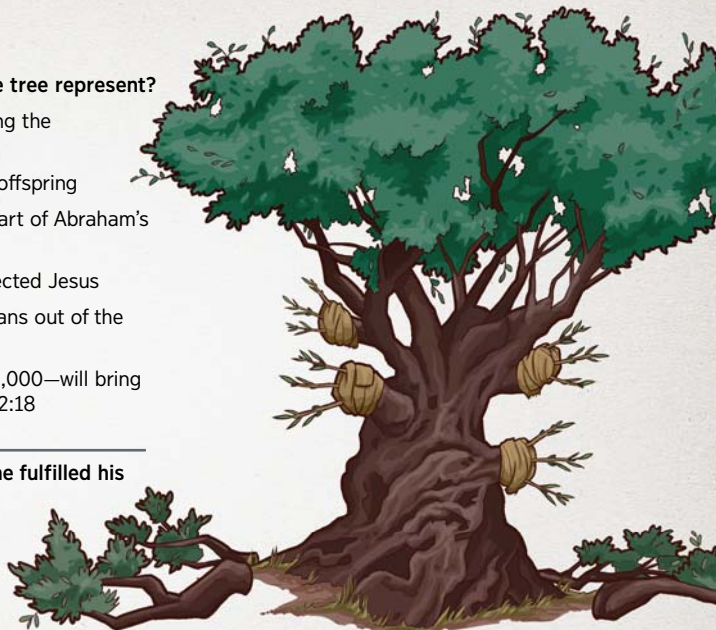
**11:16-26**

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As foretold, Abraham’s offspring—Jesus and the 144,000—will bring blessings “to people of the nations.”—Ro 11:12; Ge 22:18

 What do I learn about Jehovah from the way he fulfilled his purpose regarding Abraham’s offspring?



## February 25–March 3 / Romans 9-11

- Song 25 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 minutes or less)

### Treasures From God's Word

- **“The Illustration of the Olive Tree”**: (10 minutes)

### The Illustration of the Olive Tree

Romans 11:16-26

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As foretold, Abraham's offspring—Jesus and the 144,000—will bring blessings “to people of the nations.”—Romans 11:12; Genesis 22:18

What do I learn about Jehovah from the way he fulfilled his purpose regarding Abraham's offspring?

## **Romans 11:16—The cultivated olive tree represents the fulfillment of God’s purpose regarding the Abrahamic covenant**

**Romans 11:16:** Further, if the part of the dough taken as firstfruits is holy, the entire batch is also holy; and if the root is holy, the branches are also.

### **w11 5/15 23 paragraph 13**

The apostle Paul goes on to compare those who become part of Abraham’s seed to branches on a symbolic olive tree. (Romans 11:21) This cultivated olive tree represents the fulfillment of God’s purpose with regard to the Abrahamic covenant. The root of the tree is holy and represents Jehovah as the one who gives life to spiritual Israel. (Isaiah 10:20; Romans 11:16) The trunk represents Jesus as the primary part of Abraham’s seed. The branches collectively represent “the full number” of those included in the secondary part of Abraham’s seed.

## **Romans 11:17, 20, 21—Anointed ones grafted onto the symbolic olive tree must continue to exercise faith**

**Romans 11:17:** However, if some of the branches were broken off and you, although being a wild olive, were grafted in among them and became a sharer of the richness of the olive’s root,

**Romans 11:20, 21:** That is true! For their lack of faith, they were broken off, but you are standing by faith. Do not be haughty, but be in fear. For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you.

## **w11 5/15 24 paragraph 15**

What, then, did Jehovah do to fulfill his purpose? Paul explains that branches from a wild olive tree were grafted onto the cultivated olive tree to replace those broken off. (Read Romans 11:17, 18.) Thus, spirit-anointed Christians of the nations, such as some in the congregation in Rome, were figuratively grafted onto this symbolic olive tree. In this way they became part of Abraham's seed. Originally, they were like wild olive branches, not having any opportunity to be a part of this special covenant. But Jehovah opened the way for them to become spiritual Jews.—Romans 2:28, 29.

## **Romans 11:25, 26—The complete number of spiritual Israelites “will be saved”**

**Romans 11:25, 26:** For I do not want you to be unaware of this sacred secret, brothers, so that you do not become wise in your own eyes: A partial dulling of senses has come upon Israel until the full number of people of the nations has come in, and in this manner all Israel will be saved. Just as it is written: “The deliverer will come out of Zion and turn away ungodly practices from Jacob.

## **w11 5/15 25 paragraph 19**

Yes, Jehovah's purpose with regard to “the Israel of God” is being fulfilled in a marvelous way. (Galatians 6:16) As Paul said, “all Israel will be saved.” (Romans 11:26) In Jehovah's due time, “all Israel”—that is, the complete number of spiritual Israelites—will serve as kings and priests in heaven. Nothing can cause Jehovah's purpose to fail!

## Digging for Spiritual Gems

### **Romans 9:21-23—Why should we yield to the molding of the Great Potter, Jehovah?**

**Romans 9:21-23:** What? Does not the potter have authority over the clay to make from the same lump one vessel for an honorable use, another for a dishonorable use? What, then, if God had the will to demonstrate his wrath and to make his power known, and he tolerated with much patience vessels of wrath made fit for destruction? And if this was done to make known the riches of his glory on vessels of mercy, which he prepared beforehand for glory,

### **w13 6/15 25 paragraph 5**

What if humans stubbornly refuse to be molded by the Great Potter? How, then, does he exercise his divine authority? Think about what happens to the clay if it becomes unsuited for the intended purpose. Why, the potter can make another type of vessel out of it or simply discard it! When the clay is useless, though, generally the potter is at fault. This is never the case with our Potter. (Deuteronomy 32:4) When a person does not yield to Jehovah's molding, the fault always lies with that person. Jehovah exercises his potterlike authority over humans by adjusting his dealings with them depending on their response to his molding. Those who respond properly are fashioned in a beneficial way. For example, anointed Christians are "vessels of mercy" who have been molded into 'vessels for an honorable use.' On the other hand, those who stubbornly oppose God end up as "vessels of wrath made fit for destruction."—Romans 9:19-23.

## **Romans 10:2—Why must we be certain that our worship is based on accurate knowledge?**

**Romans 10:2:** For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to accurate knowledge.

### ***it-1* 1260 paragraph 2**

Misdirected Zeal. One may be sincerely zealous, or jealous, for a certain cause and yet be wrong and displeasing to God. That was true of many of the Jews of the first century. They looked for righteousness to come to them through their own works under the Mosaic Law. But Paul showed that their zeal was misdirected because of lack of accurate knowledge. Therefore they did not receive the real righteousness that comes from God. They would have to see their error and turn to God through Christ to receive righteousness and freedom from the condemnation of the Law. (Romans 10:1-10) Saul of Tarsus was one of such, being extremely zealous for Judaism to the point of excess, “persecuting the congregation of God and devastating it.” He was scrupulously keeping the Law as “one who proved himself blameless.” (Galatians 1:13, 14; Philippians 3:6) Yet his jealousy for Judaism was a misdirected one. He was sincere of heart, for which reason Jehovah exercised undeserved kindness through Christ in turning him to the way of true worship.—1 Timothy 1:12, 13.

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

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

**Bible Reading:** (4 minutes or less) Romans 10:1-15 (*th* study 10)

## Study Notes

### Romans 9:3

**separated . . . as the cursed one:** That is, the one being under a curse from God. Paul is here using a form of hyperbole, or exaggeration. He expresses his willingness to take on himself the curse from God that awaited his **brothers**, unbelieving Jews, for rejecting the promised Messiah. (Compare Ga 3:13.) Paul's point is that he was willing to do everything within his power to help them to avail themselves of God's means of salvation.

### Romans 9:4

**the adoption as sons:** This expression is here used figuratively in connection with the fleshly Israelites. Therefore, in this instance, it apparently refers to their unique position while they were God's covenant people. Accordingly, the Hebrew Scriptures occasionally refer to natural Israel as God's son or sons. (Ex 4:22, 23; De 14:1, 2; Isa 43:6; Jer 31:9; Ho 1:10; 11:1) Actual sonship, however, would not be possible until the ransom provision was made through Christ Jesus, and it would depend on a person's accepting and putting faith in that divine arrangement.—Joh 1:12, 13; 2Co 6:16-18; Ga 4:4, 5.

**the sacred service:** Or "the worship." Here referring to the sacred service set out in the Law covenant. At Heb 9:1, 6, Paul used this expression when describing the worship at the tabernacle, which included the sacrifices offered in behalf of Israel when the Law covenant was in effect. At Ro 12:1, Paul again uses this expression, but with regard to a Christian's worship of God.—See study note on Ro 12:1.

## Romans 9:5

**God, who is over all, be praised forever:** This phrase refers to Jehovah God; it is an exhortation to praise him for what he has done for his people, including what is mentioned earlier in this passage. However, some translations render this verse in a way that would identify Christ as Almighty God. For example, “the Christ, who is God over all.” Grammatically, such a rendering is possible, but the context has to be taken into consideration. The preceding passage describes God’s loving provisions for his people. Consider also what follows at Ro 9:6-13. These verses show that the outworking of God’s purpose depends, not on inheritance according to the flesh, but on the will of *God*. Verses 14-18 refer to God’s message to Pharaoh, as recorded at Ex 9:16, to highlight that *God* is over all. In verses 19-24, *God’s* superiority is further illustrated by the analogy of a potter and the clay vessels that he makes. Considering the context, it would therefore be natural for Paul to refer to “God, who is over all.” It is also noteworthy that Paul in his writings most often ascribes such expressions of praise, not to Christ Jesus, but to God. (Ro 11:34-36; 16:27; Ga 1:4, 5; Php 4:20; 1Ti 1:17) Paul clearly distinguishes between Jesus and Jehovah God, as at Ro 15:5, 6, where he urges fellow Christians to “glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2Co 1:3; Eph 1:3) The main text rendering of Ro 9:5 is also strongly supported by Paul’s words at 1Co 15:27, 28.—For a further discussion of Ro 9:5, see *Kingdom Interlinear*, App. 2D, “God, Who Is Over All.”

**Amen:** A term that is often used in the inspired letters of the Christian Greek Scriptures when the writer has expressed some form of praise to God.—Ro 16:27; Eph 3:21; 1Pe 4:11; see study note on Ro 1:25.



## **Romans 9:7**

**offspring:** Or “descendants.” Lit., “seed.”—See App. A2.

## **Romans 9:16**

**not on a person’s desire or on his effort:** Lit., “not on the one who desires nor on the one who runs.” The literal expression “the one who runs” is here used figuratively to refer to one who exerts himself in striving toward a goal. In his letters, Paul often used the metaphor of a runner in a race. (1Co 9:24-26; Ga 5:7; Php 2:16) When Paul discussed God’s choosing of spiritual Israel, he explained that those of natural Israel counted on their fleshly relationship with Abraham and their pursuit of “righteousness” through the Law of Moses. They had been running, or “pursuing” the goal of “righteousness,” in the wrong way. (Ro 9:30-32) The members of the true “Israel” were to depend, not on their own efforts or achievements, but on God’s mercy. (Ro 9:6, 7) They would need to exert themselves in service to God, but without God’s mercy their efforts would be in vain.

## **Romans 9:17**

**the scripture says to Pharaoh:** In the words that follow, Paul quotes from Ex 9:16. The words are part of a message that Jehovah commanded Moses to tell Pharaoh of Egypt. (Ex 9:13-19) However, Paul personifies “the scripture,” writing as if the scripture itself spoke these words directly to Pharaoh. Paul uses a similar personification at Ro 3:19, where he says: “All the things the Law says, it addresses to those under the Law.” The use of this figure of speech in these contexts is appropriate because the Hebrew Scriptures, including the Law, were recognized as God’s word—in effect, God was speaking. In a similar way, Jesus sometimes

personified God's holy spirit, saying that it "will teach" and "will bear witness."—Joh 14:26; 15:26.

**I have let you remain:** Many translations render this expression "I have raised you up," which may convey the idea that God put Pharaoh into office. However, Paul here quotes from Ex 9:16, where the context clarifies what is meant. When announcing the seventh plague, God said to Pharaoh: "By now I could have thrust my hand out to strike you . . . , and you would have been wiped out from the earth." (Ex 9:15) But instead of striking Pharaoh, God chose to spare him, telling him: "I have kept you in existence [or "I have let you remain"; lit., "I have kept you standing"]." (Ex 9:16) It is also worth noting that the Greek *Septuagint* translates Jehovah's words to Pharaoh as "you have been preserved." So both the Hebrew Scripture context and the *Septuagint* rendering support the idea that the Greek term at Ro 9:17 means that God had let Pharaoh remain until God showed him His power.

**to have my name declared in all the earth:** Paul here quotes from Ex 9:16. The words are part of what Jehovah instructed Moses to tell **Pharaoh** after the sixth plague. (Ex 9:8-15) In the Bible, the word "name" at times stands for the person himself, his reputation, and all that he declares himself to be. (Ex 34:5, 6; see study notes on Mt 6:9; Joh 17:6, 26.) The Bible consistently emphasizes the sanctification and vindication of God's name. For example, the psalmist prayed: "May people know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth." (Ps 83:18) Over 50 times the book of Ezekiel states Jehovah's words: People "will have to know that I am Jehovah." (Eze 6:7; 38:23) Jesus taught his disciples to pray that God's name be sanctified. (Mt 6:9) The apostle Paul encouraged Christians to declare God's name publicly (Heb 13:15), and Re 15:4 raises the

question: “Who will not really fear you, Jehovah, and glorify your name?”

## **Romans 9:21**

**the potter:** A maker of earthenware pots, dishes, and other vessels. The Greek term *ke-ra-meus'* comes from a root meaning “to mix,” perhaps referring to the need to mix water with the soil or clay to prepare it for use. The Hebrew word for potter (*yoh-tser'*) literally means “former” or “one forming.” In the Hebrew Scriptures, the potter’s **authority**, or right, over the clay is used a number of times to illustrate God’s sovereignty over individuals and nations.—Isa 29:16; 45:9; 64:8; Jer 18:1-12.

## **Romans 9:22**

**vessels:** Here Paul continues to use the illustration of a potter. (See study note on Ro 9:21.) The Greek word *skeu'os* literally refers to a container of any kind. However, it is often used figuratively in the Scriptures to refer to people. (Ac 9:15; ftn.; 2Ti 2:20, 21, ftns.) For example, Christians are compared to earthen vessels entrusted with a glorious treasure, the ministry. (2Co 4:1, 7) In the context of Ro 9:21-23, God’s refraining from bringing immediate destruction on wicked people, **vessels of wrath**, serves to spare rightly disposed ones because it gives them time to be molded as “vessels of mercy.”—Ro 9:23.

## **Romans 9:27**

**Isaiah cries out concerning Israel:** Here and in the following verse, Paul quotes from Isa 10:22, 23. Those verses foretold what happened in 607 B.C.E. when Jehovah used the Babylonian Empire to execute judgment on Israel. The whole land, including Jerusalem, fell to the invader. The Jews were taken captive to

Babylon for 70 years. After that, “only a remnant” returned to reestablish true worship in Jerusalem. Here in his letter to the Romans, Paul shows that this prophecy had a further fulfillment in the first century C.E. At that time, a relatively small number of Jews, “a remnant,” became followers of Jesus and returned to Jehovah in a spiritual sense. (Ro 11:4, 5) These were later joined by believing Gentiles, making up a spiritual nation, “the Israel of God.”—Ga 6:16.

### **Romans 9:28**

**Jehovah:** In this quote from Isa 10:23, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See App. C.

**concluding it and cutting it short:** Or “executing it completely and speedily.” Paul here quotes from the *Septuagint* version of Isa 10:22, 23. This prophecy was fulfilled on Jerusalem both in 607 B.C.E. and in 70 C.E. when Jehovah executed judgment completely and speedily.

### **Romans 9:29**

**Jehovah:** In this quote from Isa 1:9, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text.—See App. C.

**Jehovah of armies:** This expression has its background in the Hebrew Scriptures, where it occurs 285 times (with some variations), starting at 1Sa 1:3. It is a combination of the Tetragrammaton and the Hebrew word for “armies,” *tseva·'ohth'*. The Greek equivalent of this expression occurs twice in the Christian Greek Scriptures, here and at Jas 5:4. Both Paul and James quote or allude to prophecies in the Hebrew Scriptures. In

these two cases, the Hebrew word *tseva·'ohth'*, “armies,” is transliterated *Sa·ba·oth'* in Greek. Although Greek manuscripts literally read “Lord Sabaoth” (Greek, *Ky'ri·os Sa·ba·oth'*), one lexicon defines *Sa·ba·oth'* as “a name applied to God . . . = יהוה יצבאות [*YHWH tseva·'ohth'*] *Yahweh Lord of the Armies, Lord of Hosts.*” (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Third Edition) Further reasons why the *New World Translation* uses the name Jehovah in the main text are explained in App. C1.

**armies:** Or “heavenly armies.” The Greek term *Sa·ba·oth'* is a transliteration of the Hebrew word *tseva·'ohth'*, the plural form of *tse·va'*, which basically means a literal army of soldiers, or combat forces. (Ge 21:22; De 20:9; see study note on **Jehovah of armies** in this verse.) It appears that the “armies” signified are primarily, if not exclusively, the angelic forces. The expression “Jehovah of armies” thus conveys the sense of power held by the Sovereign Ruler of the universe, who has at his command vast forces of spirit creatures. (Ps 103:20, 21; 148:1, 2; Isa 1:24; Jer 32:17, 18) However, some suggest that the “armies” in the expression “Jehovah of armies” include not only the angelic forces but also the Israelite army and the inanimate heavenly bodies.

**offspring:** See study note on Ro 9:7.

## **Romans 9:33**

**on it:** That is, on the symbolic **stone** mentioned at Isa 28:16, from which Paul is quoting. The stone refers to Jesus Christ, which is evident from the way Isaiah’s prophecy is applied at Ro 10:11 and 1Pe 2:6. So the Greek pronoun used here could also be rendered “him.” That is how it is rendered at Ro 10:11, where Paul quotes part of the same prophecy from Isaiah but does not mention the

“stone.” Thus the inspired words of Isaiah, Paul, and Peter provide a guarantee that putting faith in Jesus will not lead to disappointment.

**will not be disappointed:** Paul here quotes from the *Septuagint* version of Isa 28:16. The Greek phrase basically means “will not be ashamed (put to shame).” This emphasizes that those who exercise faith in Jesus Christ, the symbolic stone mentioned in Isaiah’s prophecy, will not experience the shame and disappointment of those whose faith is shown to be in vain. The same expression is used at Ro 10:11 and 1Pe 2:6.

### **Romans 10:2**

**accurate knowledge:** In the Christian Greek Scriptures, there are two words commonly translated “knowledge,” *gno'sis* and *e·pi'gno·sis*. Both are related to the verb *gi·no'sko*, which means “to know; to understand; to perceive.” *E·pi'gno·sis*, the word used here, is a strengthened form of *gno'sis* (*e·pi'*, literally meaning “upon” but here conveying the idea of “additional”). It can often be seen from the context to mean “exact, real, or full knowledge.” Here Paul uses this word to show that the zeal of his fellow countrymen, the Jews, was misdirected. It was not based on a correct understanding of God’s will as revealed through Jesus, the promised Messiah.

### **Romans 10:4**

**the end:** The Greek word *te'los*, generally rendered “end,” has different shades of meaning. It can refer to the termination of something in contrast with the beginning. (Mt 24:14; Mr 3:26; Re 21:6) This meaning fits well here, for the Mosaic Law came to its complete finish after Jesus’ death, resurrection, and ascension to heaven. (Joh 1:17; Ro 6:14; Ga 5:18; Col 2:14, 16, 17) However, *te'los* may also refer to “the end” in the sense of goal or objective.

(Compare 1Ti 1:5, where this Greek word is rendered “objective.”) Since Paul described the Mosaic Law as a “guardian leading to Christ,” it can be said that Christ is the objective or goal aimed at by the Law. (Ga 3:24) So in this context, *telos* apparently conveys both ideas.

## **Romans 10:7**

**the abyss:** Or “the deep.” The Greek word *abys·sos* has the basic meaning “exceedingly deep” or “unfathomable; boundless.” The term occurs nine times in the Christian Greek Scriptures, where it generally refers to a place or condition of confinement. (See study note on Lu 8:31.) Here at Ro 10:7, it refers to the symbolic place in which Christ Jesus spent parts of three days and from where his Father resurrected him. (Compare Ps 71:19, 20; Mt 12:40.) Jesus was confined, or restrained, when he was dead—unconscious and completely inactive. Only his Father could free him from that place of confinement. (Compare 2Sa 22:5, 6; Job 38:16, 17; Ps 9:13; 107:18; 116:3; Ac 2:24.) However, the term “abyss” cannot properly be *limited* in meaning to the common grave of mankind. (See Glossary, “Grave.”) It is noteworthy that the Greek *Septuagint* does not use *abys·sos* to translate the Hebrew word *she’ohl’* (“the Grave”). Also, the symbolic place of confinement in which Satan and his demons will be held is called an “abyss” and is also described as a “prison.” This usage of the term further supports the thought that “the abyss” is not limited in meaning to the common grave of mankind.—Lu 8:31; Re 20:1, 3, 7.

## **Romans 10:8**

**preaching:** That is, publicly proclaiming.—See study note on Mt 3:1.

## Romans 10:9

**publicly declare:** The Greek word *ho·mo·lo·ge'o* is rendered “confess” in some Bibles. Many lexicons define this word “to declare (acknowledge) publicly.” In verse 10, the same verb is translated “makes public declaration.” Paul explains that it is not enough for Christians to have faith in their heart; they must make a public declaration of that faith in order to gain salvation. (Ps 40:9, 10; 96:2, 3, 10; 150:6; Ro 15:9) They do not make such a public declaration just once, as at the time of their baptism, but they continue to do so when meeting together with fellow believers and when proclaiming the good news about salvation to unbelievers.—Heb 10:23-25; 13:15.

**Lord:** The Greek word used here, *Ky'ri·os* (Lord), is generally used as a noun in the Scriptures. Strictly speaking, it is an adjective signifying the possessing of power (*ky'ros*) or authority. It appears in every book of the Christian Greek Scriptures except in Paul's letter to Titus and the letters of John. As God's created Son and Servant, Jesus Christ properly addresses his Father and God (Joh 20:17) as “Lord” (*Ky'ri·os*), the One having superior power and authority, his Head. (Mt 11:25; 1Co 11:3) However, the title “Lord,” as used in the Bible, is not limited to Jehovah God. It is also used with reference to Jesus Christ (Mt 7:21; Ro 1:4, 7), one of the heavenly elders seen by John in vision (Re 7:13, 14), angels (Da 12:8), humans (Ac 16:16, 19, 30; here rendered “masters” or “sirs”), and false deities (1Co 8:5). Some claim that the phrase “Jesus is Lord” means that he and his Father, Jehovah, are the same person. However, the context makes it clear that this cannot be the case, since “God raised [Jesus] up from the dead.” Jesus' authority as Lord was given to him by the Father.—Mt 28:18; Joh 3:35; 5:19, 30. —See study note on **that Jesus is Lord** in this verse.



**that Jesus is Lord:** While Jesus was on earth, some who were not his followers called him “Lord,” using the term as a title of respect or courtesy. When the Samaritan woman called him “Sir,” it was also out of respect. The Greek word used by Bible writers (*Ky'ri-os*) has a wide range of meaning and can, depending on the context, be rendered “Sir,” “Master,” or “Lord.” (Mt 8:2; Joh 4:11) However, Jesus indicated that by calling him Lord, his disciples (or learners) showed that they recognized him as their Master, or Lord. (Joh 13:13, 16) Especially after Jesus’ death and resurrection to an exalted position in heaven did his title Lord take on greater significance. By means of his sacrificial death, Jesus purchased his followers and thus became both their Owner (1Co 7:23; 2Pe 2:1; Jude 4; Re 5:9, 10) and their King (Col 1:13; 1Ti 6:14-16; Re 19:16). Acknowledging Jesus as Lord involves more than simply calling him by that title. True Christians must recognize his position and obey him.—Mt 7:21; Php 2:9-11.

## **Romans 10:11**

**No one who rests his faith on him will be disappointed:** Paul is here quoting from Isa 28:16 according to the *Septuagint*. The Greek expression rendered “will be disappointed” basically means “will be ashamed (put to shame).” Paul here shows that a person who exercises faith in Jesus Christ will not experience the shame and disappointment of those whose faith is shown to be in vain. The same expression is used at Ro 9:33 and 1Pe 2:6.

## **Romans 10:12**

**Lord:** The identity of the one referred to as “Lord” (*Ky'ri-os*) in this verse cannot be established with certainty from the context; nor have Bible scholars come to an agreement as to whether Paul meant the Lord Jesus Christ or the Lord Jehovah. Ro 10:9 clearly

refers to Jesus Christ as Lord, and the quotation from Isa 28:16 found at Ro 10:11 applies to him as well. So if the “Lord” at Ro 10:12 is to be directly linked with “him” at Ro 10:11, the “Lord” referred to is Jesus Christ. On the other hand, at Ro 10:9, Paul speaks of exercising faith ‘in your heart’ that “God raised him up from the dead.” Furthermore, Ro 10:13, a quotation from Joe 2:32, states: “Everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved.” Hence, if the “Lord” referred to at Ro 10:12 is the same as at Ro 10:13, Jehovah God is the “Lord” being referred to. The thought would then be the same as that expressed at Ro 3:29—there is one God over both Jews and Gentiles. This is an example of how the New World Bible Translation Committee examined the context of each occurrence of the word *Ky’ri-os* (Lord) to determine where to restore the divine name. If the Hebrew Scripture background and the context provide no clear support for restoring the divine name, the committee retained the rendering “Lord” so as not to overstep the bounds of a translator, venturing into the field of interpretation. —See App. C1.

## **Romans 10:13**

**everyone:** Here Paul quotes from Joe 2:32. In the preceding verse, Paul says that “there is *no distinction* between Jew and Greek” and that “there is the same Lord over *all*, who is rich toward *all* those calling on him.” So the word “everyone” in this context further emphasizes God’s impartiality toward Jews and non-Jews.

**calls on the name of Jehovah:** Calling on Jehovah’s name is broad in meaning and involves more than just knowing and using God’s personal name. The expression “to call on [someone’s] name” has its background in the Hebrew Scriptures. Paul is here quoting from Joe 2:32, where the context stresses true repentance and trust in Jehovah’s forgiveness. (Joe 2:12, 13) At

Pentecost 33 C.E., Peter quoted the same prophecy of Joel and exhorted his listeners to repent and take action to secure Jehovah's approval. (Ac 2:21, 38) Other contexts show that calling on God's name involves knowing God, trusting in him, and looking to him for help and guidance. (Ps 20:7; 99:6; 116:4; 145:18) In some contexts, calling on the name of Jehovah can mean declaring his name and qualities. (Ge 12:8; compare Ex 34:5, where the same Hebrew expression is rendered "declared the name of Jehovah.") In the verse that follows Ro 10:13, Paul connects calling on God with putting faith in him.—Ro 10:14.

**the name of Jehovah:** Paul here quotes from Joe 2:32, where the expression "the name of Jehovah" occurs. This combination of the Hebrew word for "name" and the Tetragrammaton is found more than 90 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. Some examples are Ge 12:8; Ex 33:19; 34:5; De 28:10; 32:3; Job 1:21; Ps 118:26; Pr 18:10; Mic 4:5. Concerning this Hebrew expression, one reference work says that it "means not only the name but [Jehovah's] full being and power." The use of the genitive "the name *of* Jehovah" instead of "the name Jehovah" indicates that his name is not used as a kind of charm. Rather, God's name is linked to his personality, ways, and purposes. Thus, one **who calls on the name of Jehovah** must do more than know and use the name. He must come to know the Person behind the name, worship him, and live in harmony with his ways. Calling on the name of Jehovah also involves exercising faith in him, as Ro 10:14 shows.

**Jehovah:** In this quote from Joe 2:32, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text. This quote also appears at Ac 2:21 in Peter's speech at Pentecost.—See App. C.

## Romans 10:15

**How beautiful are the feet:** Paul is here quoting from Isa 52:7. The Scriptures commonly refer to parts of the human body as representing the whole person. Isaiah figuratively speaks as if the messenger were approaching Jerusalem from the nearby mountains of Judah. It would have been impossible to see the messenger's feet from that distance, so the focus here is on the arrival of the messenger. "The feet" stand for the messenger and for the efforts he makes to proclaim good news. God viewed "the feet" of Jesus and his disciples as beautiful, or precious, because they fulfilled this prophecy and brought "good news of good things." —See study note on **those who declare good news of good things** in this verse.

**those who declare good news of good things:** Paul is quoting Isa 52:7, which mentions "the one bringing good news" in singular. During Babylonian captivity, a messenger bearing news of deliverance must have been a welcome sight. However, Isaiah's prophecy finds a greater fulfillment in Jesus Christ, the greatest proclaimer of good news. Paul expands the application of Isaiah's statement still further by referring to "those [plural] who declare good news." In imitation of Jesus, all Christians are messengers of the good news of peace.

## Romans 10:16

**Jehovah, who has put faith in the thing heard from us?:** Paul here quotes the first part of Isa 53:1 regarding Jehovah's servant and shows that Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled in Jesus. While the coming and glorification of Jesus—the Messiah—was good news, Paul says about the unbelieving Jews: **They did not all obey the good news.** Relatively few in Paul's day put faith in the good news

about God's Servant.—For the use of the divine name here, see App. C3 introduction; Ro 10:16.

## **Romans 10:17**

**the word about Christ:** The Greek expression could be understood as “the word of Christ,” that is, the word spoken *by* Christ. However, the context favors the rendering used in the main text, conveying the idea of ‘the word spoken about Christ.’ Some manuscripts read “the word of God” here, but the reading “the word about [of] Christ” has strong manuscript support.

## **Romans 10:18**

**into all the earth their sound went out:** Paul here quotes from Ps 19:4, which describes how the silent witness given by God's physical creation reaches the whole earth. Paul extends the application to the preaching work. He indicates that just as creation's testimony reaches all the earth, to the point that rejection of God is inexcusable (Ro 1:20), so the extensive preaching of the “good news” (Ro 10:15) concerning Christ had given the Jews plenty of opportunities to accept it. Their lack of response was due to lack of faith. Paul may also have had in mind that the silent witness of creation gave an inaudible witness to all humans, making denial of God's Creatorship inexcusable.—See study note on Ro 1:20.

**the inhabited earth:** Here the Greek word for “inhabited earth” (*oi·kou·me'ne*) is used in a broad sense and refers to the earth as the dwelling place of mankind. (Lu 4:5; Ac 17:31; Re 12:9; 16:14) In the first century, this term was also used in reference to the vast Roman Empire, where the Jews had been dispersed. (Lu 2:1; Ac 24:5) Paul here quotes from Ps 19:4, where the *Septuagint* (Ps

18:5, *LXX*) uses the same Greek word to translate a Hebrew term that can refer to the inhabited areas of the earth.

## **Romans 10:21**

**I have spread out my hands:** Paul here quotes from Isa 65:2. To spread out one's hands denotes an invitation or an entreaty. Like a father who reaches out to a rebellious son, Jehovah had figuratively spread out his hands in an appeal to his wayward nation.

## **Romans 11:1**

**offspring:** Or “descendants.” Lit., “seed.”—See App. A2.

## **Romans 11:3**

**Jehovah:** Paul is here quoting from 1Ki 19:10, 14, where the prophet Elijah addresses Jehovah God. In the original Hebrew text, the divine name is represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*). Paul abbreviates the quote and changes the order of some sentences. He also adds a direct personal address at the beginning of the quote, showing that these words were directed to God. Available Greek manuscripts use a form of the word *Ky'ri-os* (Lord), but “Jehovah” is here used in the main text because in the context of the words that Paul is quoting, as well as in other contexts, Elijah consistently addresses Jehovah, using His personal name. (1Ki 17:20, 21; 18:36, 37; 19:4) So the Hebrew Scripture background of this quote supports the view that *Ky'ri-os* was substituted for the divine name. Also, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew use the divine name here.—See App. C3 introduction; Ro 11:3.

**my life:** Here the Greek word *psy·khe'*, rendered “soul” in some Bible translations, refers to a person's life. The expression **trying to**

**take my life** (lit., “seeking my soul”) can also be rendered “trying [wanting] to kill me.” This expression reflects wording used in the Hebrew Scriptures, such as at 1Ki 19:10, 14, from which Paul quotes.—Ex 4:19, ftn.; 1Sa 20:1, ftn.; see Glossary, “Soul.”

## **Romans 11:4**

**the divine pronouncement:** The Greek noun *khre·ma·ti·smos*’ denotes a statement of divine origin. Here it describes what God said to his prophet Elijah at 1Ki 19:18. Most lexicons and Bible translations use such renderings as “divine pronouncement; divine response; God’s reply; the answer of God.” This term is related to the verb *khre·ma·ti’zo*, used several times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. For example, Ac 11:26 states that Jesus’ followers “*were by divine providence called Christians.*”—See study notes on Ac 10:22; 11:26.

**Baal:** A Canaanite god regarded by some of its worshippers as the owner of the sky and the giver of rain and fertility. This is the only reference to Baal in the Christian Greek Scriptures. Paul is here quoting from 1Ki 19:18. In the Hebrew Scriptures, this god is designated by the Hebrew term *hab·Ba’al*, literally, “the Baal.” (Jg 2:13; 1Ki 16:31; 18:25) The Hebrew term is also found in the plural form (the Baals), apparently referring to the various local deities thought of as owning or having influence over particular places. (Jg 2:11; 8:33; 10:6) The Hebrew word *ba’al* (without the definite article) means “owner; master.”—Ex 21:28; 22:8.

## **Romans 11:8**

**God:** In this verse, Paul quotes wording from De 29:4 and Isa 29:10. The Hebrew text of these verses does not use “God,” but Paul may have quoted from the *Septuagint*, which according to most manuscripts reads at De 29:4 (29:3, *LXX*): “The Lord *God* has

not given . . . ” For reasons stated in App. C1, copies of the *Septuagint* existing in Paul’s day likely read: “Jehovah God has not given . . . ” In fact, there is evidence that a fragment containing De 29:4 in the papyrus collection Fouad Inv. 266 uses the Tetragrammaton in the Greek text, followed by the Greek term for “God.” So Paul may have made a slightly abbreviated quote from the *Septuagint*, using only “God,” which is the reading found in available Greek manuscripts of Ro 11:8. (Compare a similarly abbreviated quote at Ac 7:37; see study note.) The Hebrew texts of both De 29:4 and Isa 29:10 use the divine name, and this is reflected in some translations of Ro 11:8 into Hebrew (referred to as J<sup>7, 8, 10, 14, 15, 20</sup> in App. C4) that use the Tetragrammaton here.

### **Romans 11:9**

**table:** Possibly an allusion to a table for sacrifices or to a feast. Paul is here quoting from Ps 69:22, where “table” is parallel to “prosperity” and apparently denotes blessings. Paul applies this psalm to the Jews, the majority of whom would reject Jesus and be stumbled. This stumbling was due, in part, to their insistence that their fleshly relationship with Abraham was sufficient for them to receive ongoing blessings from God. (Mt 3:9; Joh 8:39) This erroneous view would ultimately lead to “retribution” for them.

### **Romans 11:12**

**the world:** In this context, Paul uses the Greek word *ko'smos* as an equivalent to **people of the nations**, that is, non-Jews, or Gentiles. Here “the world” is distinguished from the people of Israel with whom God had concluded a covenant. Also, Christian Bible writers frequently used *ko'smos* to denote the world of mankind separate from the true followers of Christ. This use of the Greek term



rendered “world” is unique to the Scriptures.—See study note on Joh 15:19.

## **Romans 11:13**

**an apostle to the nations:** That is, to the non-Jews, or Gentiles. When Paul was converted to Christianity, probably about 34 C.E., the resurrected Jesus declared: “This man is a chosen vessel to me to bear my name *to the nations* as well as to kings and the sons of Israel.” (Ac 9:15) Thus Paul was chosen by the Lord Jesus Christ to be “an apostle [meaning “someone sent out”] to the nations.” (Ac 26:14-18; Ro 1:5; Ga 1:15, 16; 1Ti 2:7) While Paul had strong conviction and proofs of his apostleship, nowhere does the Bible suggest that he replaced one of “the Twelve”; nor did he ever refer to himself as one of “the Twelve.”—1Co 15:5-8; compare study note on Ac 1:23.

**glorify:** Or “magnify.” The Greek verb *do·xa'zo* (to glorify; to give glory to), related to the word *do'xa* (glory; honor), is often used in connection with glorifying God. (Mt 5:16; 9:8; Mr 2:12; Lu 2:20; 5:25, 26; Ac 4:21; 11:18; Ro 15:6, 9) In this context, the verb may convey such shades of meaning as “take pride in; take seriously; make the most of.” Paul shows that he highly esteems his “ministry,” regarding it as an honor of the highest order.

**my ministry:** When Jesus was on earth, he commissioned his followers to make disciples of people of all the nations. (Mt 28:19, 20) Paul called this work “the ministry of the reconciliation.” In Paul’s words, “we beg” a world alienated from God to “become reconciled to God.” (2Co 5:18-20) Paul made the most of his Christian ministry to the nations, but at the same time, his earnest desire was that some Jews would also be moved to take the necessary steps to gain salvation. (Ro 11:14) The basic meaning of

the Greek word *di·a·ko·ni'a* is “service” and the related verb is sometimes used in the Bible with regard to personal services, such as waiting on tables. (Lu 4:39; 17:8; Joh 2:5) Here it refers to the Christian ministry. This is an elevated form of service, that of ministering to the spiritual needs of others.

### **Romans 11:14**

**my own people:** Lit., “my flesh.” Paul here refers to his fellow countrymen, the Israelites.—Compare Ge 37:27.

### **Romans 11:16**

**the root . . . the branches:** Here Paul compares the fulfillment of God’s purpose regarding the Abrahamic covenant to an olive tree. Jehovah, the root of the tree, gives life to spiritual Israel. (Isa 10:20) Jesus, the trunk of the tree, is the primary part of Abraham’s offspring. (Ga 3:16) Paul says that the branches collectively are “the full number” of those included in the secondary part of Abraham’s offspring.—Ro 11:25; Ga 3:29.

### **Romans 11:17**

**some of the branches were broken off:** That is, the natural Jews who rejected Jesus were themselves rejected.

**you, although being a wild olive, were grafted in:** Paul is still addressing Christians of non-Jewish background. (Ro 11:13) He continues with the illustration of a cultivated olive tree to show how God’s purpose with regard to the Abrahamic covenant was being fulfilled. (See study note on Ro 11:16.) Initially, only Jews had the opportunity to be part of that covenant. Non-Jews, or Gentiles, were likened to branches from a different tree, that is, a wild olive tree. Jehovah opened the way for Gentiles to become part of Abraham’s

offspring as spiritual Jews, figuratively grafting them into the cultivated olive tree. The Rome congregation consisted of faithful Christians from both Jewish and Gentile backgrounds, and all were expected to produce spiritual fruitage.—Ro 2:28, 29.

**grafted in:** Grafting is the process of joining a branch or a twig from a tree producing good fruit with a tree bearing inferior fruit. After the union becomes permanent, the grafted-in branches produce quality fruit, similar to that of the tree from which they were taken. Paul discusses the grafting of branches from an inferior tree into a cultivated tree “contrary to nature,” apparently practiced by some cultivators in the first century. (See study note on Ro 11:24.) The Greek word for “to graft” is used only in Romans chapter 11.

## **Romans 11:24**

**grafted contrary to nature into the garden olive tree:** Normally, farmers grafted branches from a cultivated, or garden, olive tree into a wild olive tree. As a result, the wild olive tree would produce better fruit, comparable to fruit from the tree from which the branch had been cut. The reverse—grafting wild branches into a cultivated tree—would be quite contrary to the regular procedure and would usually not be expected to yield good results. However, grafting a branch from a wild olive tree into a cultivated one was what some farmers occasionally did in the first century. (See Media Gallery, “Grafting an Olive Branch.”) By alluding to just such a procedure that would seem unusual—even unnatural, or **contrary to nature**—Paul heightens the force of his illustration. Paul uses the cultivated olive tree to illustrate how God’s purpose with regard to the Abrahamic covenant was fulfilled. He likens those who become part of Abraham’s offspring to branches on this symbolic olive tree. (Ro 11:21) The Gentile Christians are likened to branches from a wild olive tree because they had previously been alienated from God’s

people, Israel, who were Abraham's natural offspring and heirs of the covenant made with Abraham. (Eph 2:12) But when some Jews, likened to the natural branches, showed a lack of faith, they were rejected by God and "broken off." (Ro 11:20) Jehovah arranged for these Gentiles to be grafted in to replace the unproductive branches. (Ga 3:28, 29) Just as branches from a wild olive tree would thrive when grafted into a cultivated olive tree, the Gentile Christians benefit greatly as they receive "the richness [lit., "fatness"]" of the garden olive tree's root. This arrangement highlighted God's undeserved kindness toward the Gentile Christians and removed any basis for boasting on their part.—Ro 11:17; compare Mt 3:10; Joh 15:1-10.

**the garden olive tree:** In the Greek term *ka-li-e'lai-os* used here, the word for "olive tree" has a prefix that comes from the word *ka-los'*. It means "good; fine; excellent," implying well-suited for its purpose—like an olive tree that is cultivated in order to be fruitful and productive. Here the garden, or cultivated, olive tree is contrasted with **the olive tree that is wild** (*a-gri-e'lai-os*; lit., "field olive tree") and uncultivated.

## **Romans 11:26**

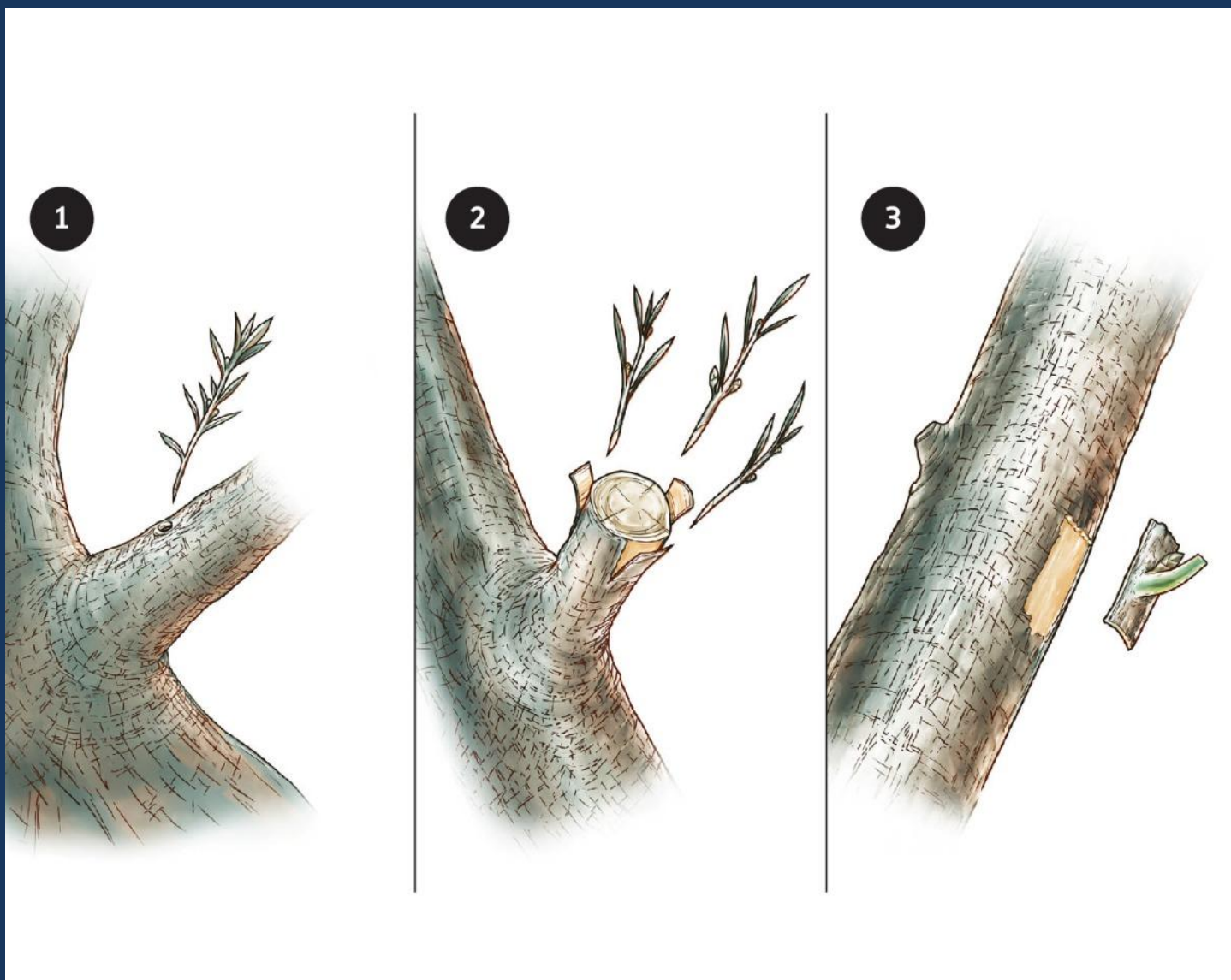
**and in this manner all Israel will be saved:** That is, all spiritual Israel, "the Israel of God." (Ga 6:16; Ro 2:29) God's purpose is to have 144,000 spiritual Israelites in a saved condition and ruling with His Son in heaven. That purpose will be fulfilled "in this manner," namely, by figuratively grafting in branches from the "wild olive" to fulfill God's purpose to have his "garden olive tree" full of productive branches. (Ro 11:17-25; Re 7:4; 14:1, 3) This involved admitting Gentile Christians to be part of spiritual Israel. Some favor rendering the Greek expression at the beginning of the verse "and

then” or “and in the end,” but the rendering “and in this manner” is supported by many lexicons and other Bible translations.

**deliverer:** Or “savior.” Paul here quotes from the *Septuagint* reading of Isa 59:20, and he applies the prophecy to Christians who are members of “the Israel of God.” (Ga 6:16) He indicates that the prophecy will be completely fulfilled when the full number of spiritual Israel is made up.

### **Romans 11:34**

**Jehovah’s:** In this quote from Isa 40:13, the divine name, represented by four Hebrew consonants (transliterated *YHWH*), occurs in the original Hebrew text. The Greek expressions rendered “come to know . . . mind” and “become his adviser” follow the wording of Isa 40:13 in the *Septuagint*.



## Grafting an Olive Branch

The practice of grafting was common in Bible times. It normally involved joining a shoot or a twig of a tree known to produce good fruit with the stock of a tree bearing inferior fruit in order to improve the quality of the fruit produced by that tree. The apostle Paul alluded to the practice of grafting in the illustration he gave regarding an olive tree. (Ro 11:17-24) He compared spirit-anointed Gentile Christians to wild olive branches grafted into a “garden olive tree.” (Ro 11:24) A first-century C.E. Roman soldier and farmer named Lucius Junius Moderatus Columella, who wrote about a variety of agricultural subjects, specifically mentioned such a technique. For healthy olive trees that failed to produce fruit, he recommended: “It is a good plan to bore them with a Gallic auger and to put tightly into the hole a green slip taken from a wild olive-tree; the result is that the tree, being as it were impregnated with fruitful offspring, becomes more productive.” Paul’s illustration was a vivid reminder that all spirit-anointed Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, should be united. (Ro 2:28, 29; 11:17, 18) Shown here are different grafting methods that may have been used in the first century C.E.

1. A hole is bored in the side of a branch, and a slip from another tree is inserted
2. Slits are cut into the end of a branch, and multiple slips are inserted and bound in place
3. A patch is cut out of a branch, and a slip attached to a piece of bark is bound into the opening

**Related Scripture(s) Ro 11:17**

- Song 25 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“The Illustration of the Olive Tree”:** (10 min.)  
 Ro 11:16—The cultivated olive tree represents the fulfillment of God’s purpose regarding the Abrahamic covenant (*w11 5/15 23 ¶13*)  
 Ro 11:17, 20, 21—Anointed ones grafted onto the symbolic olive tree must continue to exercise faith (*w11 5/15 24 ¶15*)  
 Ro 11:25, 26—The complete number of spiritual Israelites “will be saved” (*w11 5/15 25 ¶19*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)  
 Ro 9:21-23—Why should we yield to the molding of the Great Potter, Jehovah? (*w13 6/15 25 ¶5*)  
  
 Ro 10:2—Why must we be certain that our worship is based on accurate knowledge? (*it-1 1260 ¶2*)

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) Ro 10:1-15 (10)

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Second Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation. (6)
- **Bible Study:** (5 min. or less) Begin with the second return visit sample conversation, and then start a Bible study using the *Teach Us* book. (9)

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 60
- **“Improving Our Skills in the Ministry—Discontinuing Unproductive Bible Studies”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 56
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 36 and Prayer


ROMANS 9-11 | The Illustration of the Olive Tree

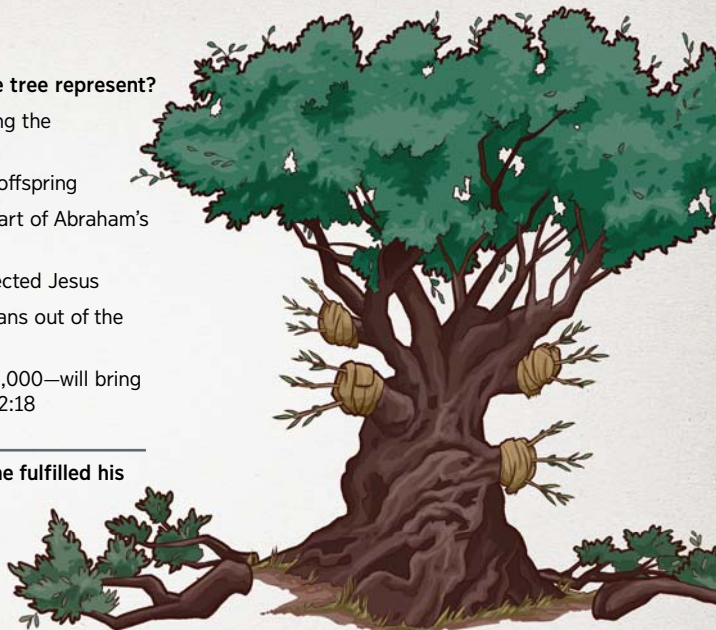
**11:16-26**

What do the various features of the symbolic olive tree represent?

- **The tree:** the fulfillment of God’s purpose regarding the Abrahamic covenant
- **The trunk:** Jesus, the principal part of Abraham’s offspring
- **The branches:** the full number of the secondary part of Abraham’s offspring
- **The “broken off” branches:** natural Jews who rejected Jesus
- **The “grafted in” branches:** spirit-anointed Christians out of the nations

As foretold, Abraham’s offspring—Jesus and the 144,000—will bring blessings “to people of the nations.”—Ro 11:12; Ge 22:18

 What do I learn about Jehovah from the way he fulfilled his purpose regarding Abraham’s offspring?



## Second Return Visit

**Question:** Is the Bible's advice practical?

**Scripture:** Pr. 14:30

**Link:** Has the Bible accurately foretold the future?

Brandi (Publisher 1): So, now the question is: Is that advice practical? Julie, would you please share an example of the Bible's advice?

Julie (Publisher 2): Sure. Notice what it says here at Proverbs 14 and verse 30: "A calm heart gives life to the body, but jealousy is rottenness to the bones."

Brandi (Publisher 1): So, according to this, how do we benefit when we control our emotions, and try to focus on positive thoughts?

Anne (Householder): Umm, it seems like it would be good for our health.

Brandi (Publisher 1): Exactly. What do you think? Does that advice seem practical?

Anne (Householder): Yeah, I'd say so.

Brandi (Publisher 1): And the Bible's advice always works, no matter who we are, or where we live. Not many books have that kind of success.

Anne (Householder): That's true.

Brandi (Publisher 1): But there's still another way that the Bible claims to benefit us. It foretells the future. But are its prophecies accurate? Let's discuss that next time.





# Our Christian Life and Ministry

## MEETING WORKBOOK


### Sample Conversations

●○○  
INITIAL CALL →

**Question:** Is the Bible still relevant today?

**Scripture:** 2Ti 3:16

**Link:** Is the Bible compatible with science?




○○○  
FIRST RETURN VISIT →

**Question:** Is the Bible compatible with science?

**Scripture:** Job 26:7

**Link:** Is the Bible's advice practical?




○○●  
SECOND RETURN VISIT

**Question:** Is the Bible's advice practical?

**Scripture:** Pr 14:30

**Link:** Has the Bible accurately foretold the future?



1. In this year of goodwill  
by our God, all need to hear  
That the day of his anger  
will come, and it is near.

*(CHORUS)*

*It means their life, but not just theirs;  
It means our own life as well.  
It means their life if they obey,  
So all the nations we must tell;  
We must tell.*

2. There's a message to preach,  
so we spread it all abroad.  
We invite all to come and  
be reconciled to God.

*(Chorus)**(BRIDGE)*

It's urgent, it's important,  
That people listen, learn, and live.  
We tell them, and we teach them;  
Life-giving truth we freely give.

*(Chorus)*

- Song 25 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

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- Song 60
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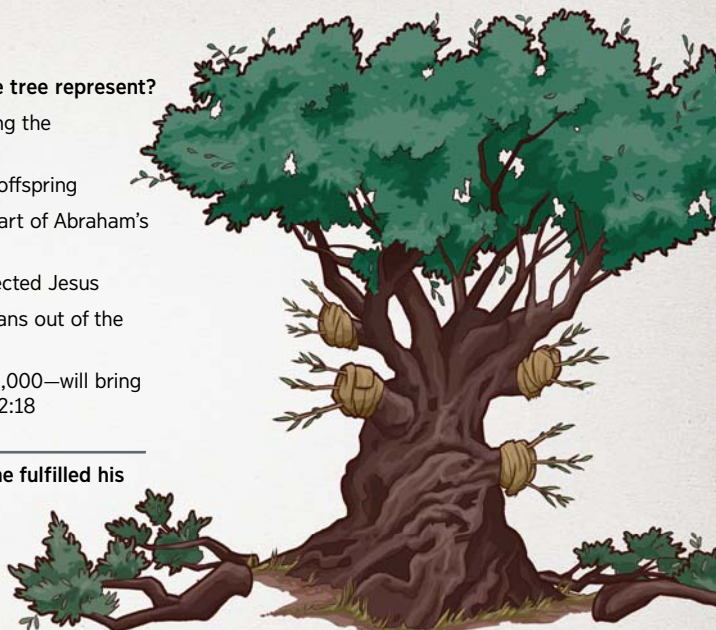
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As foretold, Abraham’s offspring—Jesus and the 144,000—will bring blessings “to people of the nations.”—Ro 11:12; Ge 22:18

 What do I learn about Jehovah from the way he fulfilled his purpose regarding Abraham’s offspring?



## **Improving Our Skills in the Ministry: Discontinuing Unproductive Bible Studies**

Conductor: I've really enjoyed our Bible studies, Tony. Even though it's been a challenge for you to study every week, we always have good discussions.

Student (Tony): Yeah. I like what you show me from the Bible, it's so different from my church.

Conductor: As we considered before, Jehovah wants people to come to an accurate knowledge of truth. Like it says at 1 Timothy 2:4. But there's more to it than that.

Student (Tony): What do you mean?

Conductor: Well, imagine for a moment that you lived along the coast where there's a danger of tsunamis. If you heard a tsunami warning, would you be saved if you just recognized the warning, and knew how to evacuate?

Student (Tony): No. I'd have to get out of the danger zone.

Conductor: Exactly. So, do we truly benefit if we *only learn* what Jehovah requires of us?

Student (Tony): No. I guess not.

Conductor: Jesus gave an excellent illustration about the need to *apply* what we learn. It's found at Matthew chapter 13, verses 18 through 23. Would you please read that for us Tony?

Student (Tony): Sure. It says: "Now listen to the illustration of the man who sowed .....As for the one sown upon the fine soil, this is the one hearing the word and getting the sense of it, who really does bear fruit and produces, this one 100 times more, that one 60, the other 30."

Conductor: Thank you. So, of all the situations Jesus describes, which one do you think resembles yours the most?

Student (Tony): Umm. I don't really know

E&OE

## Improving Our Skills in the Ministry: Discontinuing Unproductive Bible Studies

Conductor: Well, let's look again at the example of the one sown upon the fine soil. According to verse 23, how did he respond after hearing the word?

Student (Tony): He got the sense of it and produced fruit.

Conductor: Right. So, he **responded** to what he learned, and **made the needed changes**. What about the other three in Jesus illustration?

Student (Tony): Something prevented them from responding.

Conductor: Exactly.

Student (Tony): You know, I want to do what Jehovah wants. But it's hard these days. Pressures from every side. I mean, you know, how it is. The job, the bills, the kids, the boss.

Conductor: It's challenging to seek God's kingdom first, and to balance all of our other responsibilities. But it is possible.

Assistant: I remember when I first started studying. Everybody opposed me, even my wife. Not only that, I drank a lot. I had to make a lot of changes. *But I prayed to Jehovah, specifically, about what I needed to work on. So, I started coming to meetings right away. Being with the congregation helped me to apply what I was learning.* I really could see how Jehovah was blessing my efforts. He became my father, and my friend. I really tried to apply James 4:8 it says: "Draw close to God....."

Student (Tony): ".....and he will draw close to you". Yeah, I remember that verse. So how long did it take for you to become a witness?

Assistant: Well, each person is different. For me, from the time I started studying until I dedicated my life to Jehovah, and got baptized, it was a couple of years. I'm so happy I started attending meetings, and never looked back.

## **Improving Our Skills in the Ministry: Discontinuing Unproductive Bible Studies**

Student (Tony): I'm not sure I'm ready for that kind of commitment. Maybe someday.

Conductor: We appreciate your honesty. For now, though, it's best that we discontinue the Bible study. *I'll stop by from time to time to see how you're doing, and to share a scriptural thought.* But keep thinking about Jehovah's warm invitation and his promise at James 4:8. *Talk to him, specifically, about your challenges and the changes you want to make to please him. And you know the schedule for our meetings at the Kingdom Hall. We'd love to see you there.* If you'd like to resume the study at some point, let me know. You have my contact information.

Student (Tony): Thanks. I appreciate that.

Conductor: Let's say a prayer.

## IMPROVING OUR SKILLS IN THE MINISTRY

## Discontinuing Unproductive Bible Studies



**WHY IMPORTANT:** People must call on the name of Jehovah in order to be saved. (Ro 10:13, 14) Yet, not everyone who agrees to study the Bible wants to live by Jehovah’s standards. We make the best use of our precious time in the ministry by helping those who truly want to make changes to please Jehovah. If a Bible student does not make meaningful progress after a reasonable period of time, we wisely re-direct our efforts to those whom Jehovah is drawing to him and his organization. (Joh 6:44) Of course, if at a future time the person gives evidence of being “rightly disposed for everlasting life,” we gladly resume his Bible study.—Ac 13:48.

**HOW TO DO IT:**

- Commend the student for wanting to gain accurate knowledge.—1Ti 2:4
- Emphasize the importance of applying what he has learned.—Lu 6:46-49
- Kindly discuss Jesus’ illustration of the sower, and ask him to consider what may be holding him back.—Mt 13:18-23
- Tactfully explain why you are discontinuing the study
- Let him know that you will call periodically to encourage him and that the study can resume in the future if he makes progress

**WATCH THE VIDEO, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

- What did you learn from the conversation that indicated that the student was not making spiritual progress?

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- How did the publisher help the student appreciate that he needed to make changes?

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- How did the publisher leave the door open for the study to resume in the future?

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Before discontinuing a Bible study, seek Jehovah’s direction in prayer. While taking into account the student’s age or other limitations, look for indications of meaningful progress.

- Does the person keep his appointments to study?
- Does he prepare for the study?
- Does he attend congregation meetings?
- Is he making changes in harmony with Bible principles?
- Does he share with others what he is learning?
- Is he withdrawing from false religion?

## WHAT REALLY DEFILES A PERSON?

MATTHEW 15:1-20    MARK 7:1-23    JOHN 7:1

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- JESUS EXPOSES HUMAN TRADITIONS

---

As the Passover of 32 C.E. approaches, Jesus is busy teaching in Galilee. Then he likely heads to Jerusalem for the Passover, as God’s Law requires. However, Jesus does so cautiously because the Jews are seeking to kill him. (John 7:1) After that he returns to Galilee.

Jesus is probably in Capernaum when Pharisees and scribes come to him from Jerusalem. Why do they make this trip? They are looking for grounds on which to accuse Jesus of a religious offense. They ask: “Why do your disciples overstep the tradition of the men of former times? For example, they do not wash their hands when about to eat a meal.” (Matthew 15:2) God never told his people to observe this ritual of ‘washing their hands up to the elbow.’ (Mark 7:3) Yet the Pharisees consider not doing so to be a serious offense.





Rather than answer their accusation directly, Jesus points to how they willfully break God's Law. "Why do you overstep the commandment of God because of your tradition?" he asks them. "For example, God said, 'Honor your father and your mother,' and, 'Let the one who speaks abusively of his father or mother be put to death.' But you say, 'Whoever says to his father or mother: "Whatever I have that could benefit you is a gift dedicated to God," he need not honor his father at all.'"—Matthew 15:3-6; Exodus 20:12; 21:17.

The Pharisees claim that money, property, or anything dedicated as a gift to God belongs to the temple, so it cannot be used for a different purpose. In reality, though, the person is still in possession of the dedicated gift. For example, a son might say that his money or property is "corban," a gift dedicated to God or to the temple, as if the temple now has prior claim to the gift. The money or property is still the son's to use, yet he claims that it cannot be used to help his aged and needy parents. He thereby evades his responsibility toward them.—Mark 7:11.

Jesus is rightly indignant at this twisting of God's Law and says: "You have made the word of God invalid because of your tradition. You hypocrites, Isaiah aptly prophesied about you when he said: 'This people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far removed from me. It is in vain that they keep worshipping me, for they teach commands of men as doctrines.'" The Pharisees have no response to Jesus' strong criticism. So he calls the crowd to come near. "Listen and get the sense of it," he says. "It is not what enters into a man's mouth that defiles him, but it is what comes out of his mouth that defiles him."—Matthew 15:6-11; Isaiah 29:13.

Later when in a house, the disciples ask Jesus: "Do you know that the Pharisees were stumbled at hearing what you said?" He replies: "Every plant that my heavenly Father did not plant will be uprooted. Let them be. Blind guides is what they are. If, then, a blind man guides a blind man, both will fall into a pit."—Matthew 15:12-14.

Jesus seems surprised when, on behalf of the disciples, Peter asks for clarification about what defiles

a man. Jesus responds: “Are you not aware that whatever enters into the mouth passes through the stomach and is discharged into the sewer? However, whatever comes out of the mouth comes from the heart, and those things defile a man. For example, out of the heart come wicked reasonings, murders, adulteries, sexual immorality, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies. These are the things that defile a man; but to take a meal with unwashed hands does not defile a man.”—Matthew 15:17-20.

Jesus is not discouraging normal hygiene, nor is he arguing that a person need not wash his hands before preparing food or eating a meal. Rather, he is condemning the hypocrisy of religious leaders who try to bypass God’s righteous laws by resorting to human traditions. The fact is, wicked deeds originating in the heart are what defile a man.

- ◇ The Pharisees and scribes make what accusation?
- ◇ As Jesus points out, how do the Pharisees willfully overstep God’s Law?
- ◇ What are the things that actually defile a man?

1. We guard our hearts, it means our life;  
We shun the path of sin.  
God reads the heart, and there he finds  
The person deep within.  
Sometimes the heart deceives the mind,  
And we begin to stray.  
So may our mind direct our heart  
And keep Jehovah's way.
2. Prepared in heart, we search for God  
By means of earnest prayer.  
Each day we give him praise and thanks,  
Revealing ev'ry care.  
The things Jehovah teaches us,  
We gladly will obey.  
We cultivate a loyal heart,  
To please him ev'ry day.
3. Our hearts we shield from harmful thoughts,  
We dwell on what is true.  
We love God's Word to touch our hearts,  
To strengthen and renew.  
Jehovah loves his loyal ones;  
On this we can depend.  
We'll worship him wholeheartedly  
Forever as his friend.

DECEMBER 2018

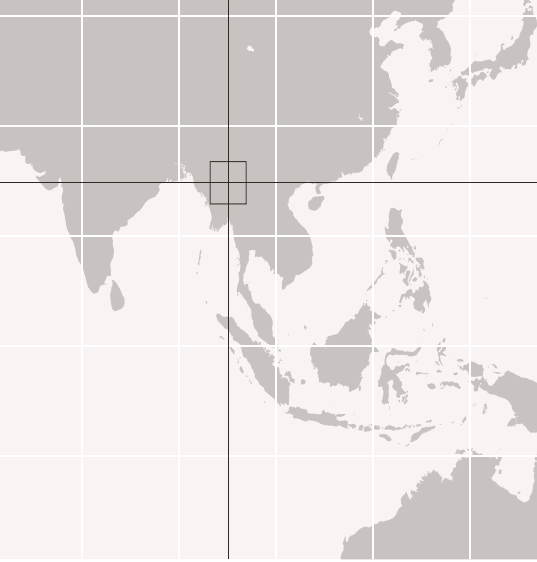
# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
FEBRUARY 4–MARCH 3, 2019

LARGE  
PRINT  
EDITION



COVER IMAGE:

# MYANMAR

Two sisters find many with whom they can share the good news at a market in Taunggyi

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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### **4 WEEK OF FEBRUARY 4-10**

#### **“See You in Paradise!”**

True Christians fervently look forward to living in Paradise. This article discusses why we have a solid Scriptural basis for that hope and how the promise that Jesus made about Paradise is to be understood.

---

### **16 WEEK OF FEBRUARY 11-17**

#### **Honor “What God Has Yoked Together”**

This article will present what the Bible says about honorable marriage. How can we show that we honor marriage? And how can we uphold what the Bible says about divorce and separation?



PUBLISHERS

4,296

BIBLE STUDIES

4,329

MEMORIAL  
ATTENDANCE (2017)

8,659

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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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## 28 WEEK OF FEBRUARY 18-24

Young Ones, Your Creator Wants You to Be Happy

## 39 WEEK OF FEBRUARY 25–MARCH 3

Young Ones, You Can Have a Satisfying Life

Young people are often faced with big decisions, such as which goals they should pursue in life. Secular authorities often recommend higher education and a lucrative career. Jehovah, however, advises young ones to put him first. These two articles will show that listening to God is the course of wisdom.

---

## 51 LIFE STORY

“Jehovah Has Dealt Kindly” With Us

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## 62 QUESTIONS FROM READERS



# **133**    *Worship Jehovah During Youth* (Ecclesiastes 12:1)

1. Precious to God, we are daughters and sons,  
    Giving our strength as his faithful young ones.  
Loving attention to us he will give,  
    Blessing our days for as long as we live.
2. Honoring parents who care for our lives  
    Helps us express what we're feeling inside.  
Then we find favor with God and with men,  
    Drawing us close to Jehovah, our Friend.
3. May we remember our God in our youth,  
    Growing each day in our love of the truth.  
Giving our best to our God, we will bring  
    Joy to the heart of Jehovah, our King.



## Young Ones, You Can Have a Satisfying Life

*“You make known to me  
the path of life.”—PS. 16:11.*

A STUDENT named Tony was on his way to becoming a high school dropout. A fatherless boy, he had little interest in school and would spend his weekends at the movies or with friends. He was not

---

1, 2. What kind of change is possible, as illustrated by the experience of a high school student?

**SONGS:**  
133, 89

**HOW CAN PSALM 16  
HELP YOU TO . . .**

---

make Jehovah your  
“portion”?

---

choose good  
friends and set  
worthwhile goals?

---

cultivate a love  
for what is good  
and a hatred for  
what is bad?

violent, and he was not a drug addict. He simply had no purpose in life. And he had doubts about God's existence. Then he met a Witness couple and talked with them about his doubts and questions. They gave him two brochures—*The Origin of Life—Five Questions Worth Asking* and *Was Life Created?*

<sup>2</sup> When the couple returned, Tony had a changed attitude. He had studied the brochures, so much so that they were dog-eared and creased. “There has to be a God,” he said. He accepted a Bible study, and gradually his outlook on life changed. He also went from being a poor student to being one of the best in his school. Even the principal, who was aware of Tony's newfound faith, was amazed. “You have made major improvements in your attitude and your grades,” he said. “Is that because of your association with Jehovah's Witnesses?” Tony said yes and then gave a fine witness. He successfully completed high school and today serves as a regular pioneer and a ministerial servant. He is also happy that he now has a wonderful Father, Jehovah.—Ps. 68:5.

## **OBEDY JEHOVAH, AND YOU WILL SUCCEED**

<sup>3</sup> Tony's experience reminds us of Jehovah's deep interest in you young ones among us. He wants

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3. What course does Jehovah recommend for young ones?

you to enjoy a truly successful and satisfying life. Hence, he advises you: “Remember . . . your Grand Creator in the days of your youth.” (Eccl. 12:1) In today’s world, that is not always easy. However, it is by no means impossible. With God’s help, you can succeed, not just in your youth but throughout your life. To illustrate, consider a lesson we can learn from the Israelites’ conquest of the Promised Land and from David’s encounter with Goliath.

<sup>4</sup> When the Israelites neared the Promised Land, God did not command them to sharpen their fighting skills or train for war. (Deut. 28:1, 2) Rather, he told them that they needed to obey his commandments and trust in him. (Josh. 1:7-9) From a human viewpoint, that advice would make no sense! But it was the very best advice, for Jehovah gave his people victory after victory over the Canaanites. (Josh. 24:11-13) Yes, obedience to God calls for faith, but that faith *always* leads to success. This truth does not change with the passing of time. It is just as valid today.

<sup>5</sup> A mighty warrior, Goliath was some nine and a half feet (2.9 m) tall and well-armed. (1 Sam. 17:4-7)

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4, 5. What valuable lesson can we learn from the Israelites’ conquest of Canaan and from David’s encounter with Goliath? (See opening pictures.)

David, however, had two things: a sling and faith in his God, Jehovah. To those lacking faith, David surely seemed foolish. But how wrong they were! Goliath was the foolish one.—1 Sam. 17:48-51.

<sup>6</sup> The preceding article considered four things that contribute to our happiness and success in life. These were satisfying our spiritual need, appreciating our God-given friends, setting worthwhile goals, and cherishing our freedom as God’s people. Let us now explore these topics further, this time considering some principles found in Psalm 16.

## **SATISFY YOUR SPIRITUAL NEED**

<sup>7</sup> A spiritual person has faith in God and has God’s mind on matters. He looks to God for guidance and is determined to obey him. (1 Cor. 2:12, 13) David is a good example. He sang: “Jehovah is my portion, my allotted share, and my cup.” (Ps. 16:5) That “portion” included David’s approved relationship with God, in whom he took refuge. (Ps. 16:1) The result? “My whole being is joyful,” he wrote. Yes, nothing gave David more joy than intimacy with God.—Read Psalm 16:9, 11.

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6. What will we now consider in further detail?

7. (a) How would you describe a spiritual person? (b) What was David’s “portion,” and how did this affect him?

<sup>8</sup> The joy that David experienced does not come to those who center their lives on pleasures and riches. (1 Tim. 6:9, 10) “True satisfaction,” says a brother in Canada, “comes, not from what we can get out of life, but from what we give to the Giver of every good gift, Jehovah God.” (Jas. 1:17) Yes, developing faith in Jehovah and serving him will give your life meaning and provide you with satisfaction. How can you grow in faith? You must spend time with him, as it were, by reading his Word, observing his creation, and thinking about his qualities, including his love for you.—Rom. 1:20; 5:8.

<sup>9</sup> God’s love for us is sometimes expressed through fatherly correction. David welcomed such kindly counsel. He said: “I will praise Jehovah, who has given me advice. Even during the night, my innermost thoughts correct me.” (Ps. 16:7) Yes, he meditated on God’s thoughts, making them his own and allowing them to mold him. When you in faith do the same, you too will grow in love for God and in your desire to obey him. You will also gain spiritual maturity and depth. A sister named Christin said, “When I do research and meditate on what I

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8. What are some factors that contribute to a truly satisfying life?  
9. How can you allow God’s Word to mold you, as it did David?

read, I get the feeling that Jehovah had this penned just for me!”

<sup>10</sup> It is no exaggeration to say that a spiritual outlook on life also gives you exceptional knowledge and insight by enabling you to see the world and its future through God’s eyes. Why does God give you such knowledge and insight? He wants you to set sound priorities in your life, to make wise decisions, and to look forward to the future with confidence! (Read Isaiah 26:3.) A brother named Joshua, who lives in the United States, observes, “Staying close to Jehovah keeps everything in the proper perspective.” How true, and what satisfaction that brings!

## MAKE TRUE FRIENDS

<sup>11</sup> Read Psalm 16:3. David knew the secret to finding true friends. He found “great delight” in the company of those who loved Jehovah. Described as “holy ones,” they were morally clean, upright. Another psalmist felt the same way about his choice of friends. He wrote: “I am a friend of all who fear you and of those who keep your orders.” (Ps. 119:63) As

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10. As noted at Isaiah 26:3, a spiritual outlook on life has what advantages?

11. How did David reveal the key to making true friends?

we saw in the preceding article, you too can find many good friends among those who fear and obey Jehovah. That includes, of course, those of various ages.

<sup>12</sup> The psalmist David did not limit his circle of friends to just his peers. Can you recall the name of a “majestic” one who became his dear friend? His name was Jonathan. In fact, their friendship was one of the most beautiful recorded in the Scriptures. Did you know, however, that Jonathan was about 30 years older than David? What, then, was the basis for their friendship? Faith in God, mutual respect, and seeing each other’s courage as they fought God’s enemies.—1 Sam. 13:3; 14:13; 17:48-50; 18:1.

<sup>13</sup> Like David and Jonathan, we too find “great delight” in loving those who love Jehovah and who show their faith in him. Kiera, who has served God for years, says, “I’ve made friends with people from around the world, people of many different backgrounds and cultures.” When you broaden out in this way, you will see clear evidence of the uniting power of God’s Word and spirit.

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12. What was the basis for the friendship between David and Jonathan?

13. How can you broaden your circle of friends? Give an example.



## PURSUE WORTHWHILE GOALS

**14** Read Psalm 16:8. David’s life was focused on serving God. You too will enjoy a truly satisfying life if you keep service to Jehovah to the fore and set goals with him in mind. A brother named Steven said, “Working toward a goal, accomplishing it, and then looking back on the improvements I have made brings me satisfaction.” A young brother from Germany who now serves in another land stated, “When I’m old, I don’t want to look back on my life and see that everything I did was just about me.” We hope that you feel the same way. If you do, use your gifts to honor God and to do things for others. (Gal. 6: 10) Set spiritual goals for yourself, and ask Jehovah in prayer to help you to reach them. He delights to answer such prayers.—1 John 3:22; 5:14, 15.

**15** What goals might you set? They could include giving comments in your own words at Christian meetings, sharing in pioneer service, or going to Bethel. You might try to learn another language with a view to serving in a foreign-language field. Barak, a young full-time servant, says, “Waking up

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**14.** (a) What can help you to set worthwhile goals in life? (b) How have some young ones felt about setting spiritual goals?

**15.** What goals might you set for yourself? (See the box “Some Practical Goals.”)



## SOME PRACTICAL GOALS

- Getting more out of my Bible reading
- Becoming more conversational in the ministry
- Reaching dedication and baptism
- Becoming a ministerial servant
- Improving as a teacher
- Starting a Bible study
- Serving as an auxiliary or a regular pioneer
- Serving at Bethel
- Learning another language
- Serving where the need is greater
- Helping with Kingdom Hall construction or disaster relief

every day knowing that I'm giving all my strength to Jehovah is a feeling that no other activity can produce.”

## CHERISH YOUR GOD-GIVEN FREEDOM

<sup>16</sup> Read Psalm 16:2, 4. As we saw in the preceding article, God's righteous laws and principles liberate us by helping us to cultivate love for what is good and hatred for what is bad. (Amos 5:15) The psalmist David recognized Jehovah as his “Source of goodness.” Goodness is moral excellence, or virtue. David worked hard to imitate his God, to make God's goodness his own. David also cultivated a hatred for what is bad in God's eyes. That includes idolatry, a practice that debases humans and robs Jehovah of the glory owed to him.—Isa. 2:8, 9; Rev. 4:11.

<sup>17</sup> In Bible times, false worship often included gross sexual immorality. (Hos. 4:13, 14) To be sure, that form of worship appealed to the sinful flesh. But it did not bring lasting happiness. To the con-

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**16.** How did David feel about Jehovah's righteous standards, and why?

**17, 18.** (a) What did David observe about the consequences of false worship? (b) What causes people today to “multiply their sorrows”?

trary! ‘Those who pursued other gods multiplied their sorrows,’ said David. They also brought untold suffering to countless children. (Isa. 57:5) Jehovah detested such cruelty! (Jer. 7:31) Had you lived in those times, you would no doubt have been very thankful if your parents had faith in Jehovah and obeyed him.

<sup>18</sup> Today, too, false worship often condones sexual immorality, even homosexuality. But the end results of reveling in so-called moral freedom have not really changed since Bible times. (1 Cor. 6:18, 19) People “multiply their sorrows,” as you may have observed. So young ones, listen to your heavenly Father. Be fully convinced that obedience to him is in your best interests. Impress on your heart that the harm caused by wrongdoing far outweighs any temporary pleasure. (Gal. 6:8) Joshua, quoted earlier, said, “We can use our freedom any way we want, but misusing it isn’t satisfying.”

<sup>19</sup> Jesus said to his followers: “If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:31, 32) That freedom includes freedom from false religion, ignorance, and superstition. And it

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19, 20. What blessings await young ones who have faith in Jehovah and obey him?

involves more. As we have seen, it will ultimately include “the glorious freedom of the children of God.” (Rom. 8:21) Taste that freedom even now by ‘remaining in Christ’s word,’ or teachings. In this way, you will come to “*know the truth*” not just by learning about it but also by living it.

<sup>20</sup> Young ones, cherish the freedom God has given you. Use that freedom wisely, and thereby lay a fine foundation for the future. One young brother said: “Using freedom wisely as a young person really helps when later you are faced with bigger decisions, such as finding a suitable job or choosing whether to marry or to remain single for a time.”

<sup>21</sup> In this old system, even a so-called good life is at best uncertain and short. We do not know what tomorrow will bring. (Jas. 4:13, 14) The wise course, then, is to stay on the path that leads to “the real life”—everlasting life. (1 Tim. 6:19) Of course, God does not force us to walk that path. The choice is ours. Make Jehovah your “portion.” Cherish the many “good things” he has given you. (Ps. 103:5) And have faith that he can give you “abundant joy” and “happiness . . . forever.”—Ps. 16:11.

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21. How can you remain on the path to “the real life”?

# 89 *Listen, Obey, and Be Blessed*

(Luke 11:28)

1. If we have listened to Christ, will we show it?  
His teaching shines as it shows us the way.  
It makes us happy to hear and to know it,  
But we'll be blessed if we know and obey.

*(CHORUS)*

*Listen, obey, and be blessed  
When you hear God's will expressed.  
If you'd be happy and enter his rest,  
Listen, obey, and be blessed.*

2. Our way of life, like a house, gives protection  
When it is built on the rock, not on sand.  
If we apply Jesus' loving direction,  
We'll build a life which on bedrock will stand.

*(Chorus)*

3. Just as a tree rooted deep by the waters  
Gives of its fruit when each season arrives,  
If we obey as God's own sons and daughters,  
We'll all be blessed and enjoy endless lives.

*(Chorus)*



