

- Song 109 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Our Relief Ministry”:** (10 min.)
2Co 8:1-3—Macedonians contributed “beyond their means” to help their Judean brothers (w98 11/1 25 ¶1; kr 209 ¶1)
2Co 8:4—Helping needy Christians is part of our “relief ministry” (kr 209-210 ¶4-6)
2Co 9:7—“God loves a cheerful giver” (kr 196 ¶10)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
2Co 9:15—What is God’s “incredible free gift”? (w16.01 12 ¶2)

2Co 10:17—What does it mean to “boast in Jehovah”? (g99 7/8 20-21)

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) 2Co 7:1-12 (12)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Initial Call Video:** (4 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **Initial Call:** (2 min. or less) Use the sample conversation. (1)
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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 17
- **“How Our Relief Ministry Has Benefited Christians in the Caribbean”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Love in Action—Relief Work in the Islands* (video category OUR ACTIVITIES).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 66
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 94 and Prayer

2 CORINTHIANS 7-10 | Our Relief Ministry

8:1-4; 9:7

Christians have a twofold ministry—“the ministry of the reconciliation,” or our preaching and teaching work, and “the relief ministry” in behalf of fellow believers. (2Co 5:18-20; 8:4) Therefore, helping needy Christians is part of our sacred service. By having a share, we

- provide well for the needs of our brothers and sisters. —2Co 9:12a
- help afflicted ones get back into their spiritual routine, which includes zealously sharing in the preaching work as an expression of their thanks to Jehovah.—2Co 9:12b
- bring glory to Jehovah. (2Co 9:13) Relief work gives a witness to all, including those who have a negative view of Jehovah’s Witnesses



109 *Love Intensely From the Heart*

(1 Peter 1:22)

1. When our love is pure and intense,

 We make Jehovah's heart rejoice.

Love is his greatest quality,

 Something that we hold dear.

Warm affection glows in our hearts,

 Making a loyal friendship grow.

Love always acts unselfishly,

 Proving our love sincere.

When we see a friend in need,

 We'll be there to lend a helping hand.

Truly we can be a friend,

 Someone who can understand.

Jesus showed what love really means,

 Helping us see Jehovah's love,

Touching our hearts and moving us.

 Tender feelings are a start.

Love intensely from the heart.

2 Corinthians 7-10

7 Therefore, since we have these promises, beloved ones, let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

2 Make room for us in your hearts. We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one. **3** I do not say this to condemn you. For I have said before that you are in our hearts to die together and to live together. **4** I have great freeness of speech toward you. I have great boasting in regard to you. I am filled with comfort; I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction.

5 In fact, when we arrived in Mac-e-do'ni-a, our bodies got no relief, but we continued to be afflicted in every way—there were fights on the outside, fears within. **6** But God, who comforts those who are downhearted, comforted us by the presence of Titus; **7** and not only by his presence but also by the comfort he received because of you, as he reported back to us about your longing for me, your deep sorrow, and your earnest concern for me; so I rejoiced even more.

8 For even if I saddened you by my letter, I do not regret it. Even if I did at first regret it (seeing that the letter saddened you, though only for a little while), **9** now I rejoice, not because you were just saddened, but because you were saddened into repenting. For you were saddened in a godly way, so that you suffered no harm because of us. **10** For sadness in a godly way produces repentance leading to salvation, leaving no regret; but the sadness of the world produces death. **11** For see what a great earnestness your being saddened in a godly way produced in you, yes, clearing of yourselves, yes, indignation, yes, fear, yes, earnest desire, yes, zeal, yes, righting of the wrong! In every respect you demonstrated yourselves to be pure in this matter. **12** Although I wrote to you, I did

not do it for the one who did the wrong, nor for the one who was wronged, but so that your earnestness for us might be made evident among you in the sight of God. ¹³ That is why we have been comforted.

But in addition to our comfort, we rejoiced even more over the joy of Titus, because all of you refreshed his spirit. ¹⁴ For if I have boasted to him about you, I have not been put to shame; but just as all the things we told you were true, so also our boasting to Titus has proved true. ¹⁵ Also, his tender affections toward you are greater as he remembers the obedience of all of you, how you received him with fear and trembling. ¹⁶ I rejoice that in every way I may have confidence in you.

8 Now we want you to know, brothers, about the undeserved kindness of God that has been granted to the congregations of Mac·e·do'ni·a. ² During a great test under affliction, their abundance of joy and their deep poverty made the riches of their generosity abound. ³ For it was according to their means, yes, I testify, it was even beyond their means, ⁴ while they on their own initiative kept earnestly begging us for the privilege of kindly giving, to have a share in the relief ministry for the holy ones. ⁵ And not merely as we had hoped, but first they gave themselves to the Lord and to us through God's will. ⁶ So we encouraged Titus that, just as he had initiated this work among you, he should also complete this same kind giving on your part. ⁷ Nevertheless, just as you abound in everything, in faith and word and knowledge and all earnestness and in our love for you, may you also abound in this kind giving.

⁸ I am saying this, not to command you, but to make you aware of the earnestness of others and to test the genuineness of your love. ⁹ For you know the undeserved kindness of our Lord Jesus Christ, that although he was rich, he became poor for your sake, so that you might become rich through his poverty.

¹⁰ And in this I give my opinion: This is for your benefit, seeing that already a year ago you not only initiated the action but also showed your desire to do it. ¹¹ So now, also complete what you started to do, so that your readiness to act may be completed according to the means you have available. ¹² For if the readiness is there first, it is especially acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what a person does not have. ¹³ For I do not want to make it easy for others, but difficult for you; ¹⁴ but that by means of an equalizing, your surplus at the present time might offset their need, so that their surplus might also offset your deficiency, that there may be an equalizing. ¹⁵ Just as it is written: "The person with much did not have too much, and the person with little did not have too little."

¹⁶ Now thanks be to God for putting the same earnest concern for you in the heart of Titus, ¹⁷ because he has indeed responded to the encouragement, but being very eager, he is coming to you on his own initiative. ¹⁸ But we are sending along with him the brother whose praise in connection with the good news has spread through all the congregations. ¹⁹ Not only that, but he was also appointed by the congregations to be our traveling companion as we administer this kind gift for the glory of the Lord and in proof of our readiness to assist. ²⁰ Thus we are avoiding having any man find fault with us in connection with this liberal contribution that we are administering. ²¹ For we 'care for everything honestly, not only in the sight of Jehovah but also in the sight of men.'

²² Moreover, we are sending with them our brother whom we have often tested and found to be diligent in many matters, but now much more diligent on account of his great confidence in you. ²³ If, though, there is any question about Titus, he is my companion and a fellow worker for your interests; or if there are questions about our brothers, they are apostles of congregations and a glory of Christ.

²⁴ So demonstrate the proof of your love to them, and show the congregations why we boasted about you.

9 Now concerning the ministry that is for the holy ones, it is not really necessary for me to write you, ² for I know your willingness about which I am boasting to the Mac-e-do'ni-ans, that A-cha'ia has been ready now for a year, and your zeal has stirred up the majority of them. ³ But I am sending the brothers, so that our boasting about you might not prove empty in this respect and that you may really be ready, just as I said you would be. ⁴ Otherwise, if the Mac-e-do'ni-ans should come with me and find you not ready, we—not to mention you—should be put to shame by our confidence in you. ⁵ So I thought it necessary to encourage the brothers to come to you ahead of time and to get your promised bountiful gift ready in advance, so that this might be ready as a generous gift, and not as something extorted.

⁶ But as to this, whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. ⁷ Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

⁸ Moreover, God is able to cause all his undeserved kindness to abound toward you so that you are always completely self-sufficient in everything, as well as having plenty for every good work. ⁹ (Just as it is written: “He has distributed widely; he has given to the poor. His righteousness continues forever.” ¹⁰ Now the One who abundantly supplies seed to the sower and bread for eating will supply and multiply the seed for you to sow and will increase the harvest of your righteousness.) ¹¹ In everything you are being enriched for every sort of generosity, which produces through us an expression of thanks to God; ¹² because the ministry of this public service is not only to provide well for the needs of the holy ones but also to be rich in many expressions of thanks to God. ¹³ Through

the proof that this relief ministry gives, they glorify God because you are submissive to the good news about the Christ, as you publicly declared, and because you are generous in your contribution to them and to all. ¹⁴ And with supplication for you, they express affection for you because of the surpassing undeserved kindness of God upon you.

¹⁵ Thanks be to God for his indescribable free gift.

10 Now I myself, Paul, appeal to you by the mildness and kindness of the Christ, lowly though I am when among you face-to-face, but bold toward you when absent. ² I beg that when present, I may not have to be bold and take the strong measures that I expect against some who view us as if we walked in a fleshly manner. ³ For though we walk in the flesh, we do not wage warfare according to what we are in the flesh. ⁴ For the weapons of our warfare are not fleshly, but powerful by God for overturning strongly entrenched things. ⁵ For we are overturning reasonings and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are bringing every thought into captivity to make it obedient to the Christ; ⁶ and we are prepared to inflict punishment for every disobedience, as soon as your own obedience is complete.

⁷ You look at things according to their face value. If anyone is confident in himself that he belongs to Christ, let him reflect again on this fact: Just as he belongs to Christ, so do we also. ⁸ For even if I should boast a bit too much about the authority that the Lord gave us to build you up and not to tear you down, I would not be put to shame. ⁹ For I do not want to seem as though I were trying to terrify you by my letters. ¹⁰ For they say: "His letters are weighty and forceful, but his presence in person is weak and his speech contemptible." ¹¹ Let such a man consider that what we say by letters when absent, this we will also do when present. ¹² For we do not dare to class ourselves or compare ourselves with some who

recommend themselves. But when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.

¹³ However, we will not boast outside our assigned boundaries, but within the boundary of the territory that God measured out to us, making it reach even as far as you. ¹⁴ Really, we are not overextending ourselves as if we did not reach you, for we were the first to reach as far as you with the good news about the Christ.

¹⁵ No, we are not boasting outside our assigned boundaries about the labors of someone else, but we hope that as your faith continues to increase, what we have done may be made to increase, within our territory. Then we will abound still more, ¹⁶ so that we may declare the good news to the countries beyond you, so as not to boast in what has already been done in someone else's territory. ¹⁷ "But the one who boasts, let him boast in Jehovah."

¹⁸ For it is not the one who recommends himself who is approved, but the one whom Jehovah recommends.

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TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

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2 CORINTHIANS 7-10 | Our Relief Ministry

8:1-4; 9:7

Christians have a twofold ministry—“the ministry of the reconciliation,” or our preaching and teaching work, and “the relief ministry” in behalf of fellow believers. (2Co 5:18-20; 8:4) Therefore, helping needy Christians is part of our sacred service. By having a share, we

- provide well for the needs of our brothers and sisters. —2Co 9:12a
- help afflicted ones get back into their spiritual routine, which includes zealously sharing in the preaching work as an expression of their thanks to Jehovah.—2Co 9:12b
- bring glory to Jehovah. (2Co 9:13) Relief work gives a witness to all, including those who have a negative view of Jehovah’s Witnesses



May 13-19 / 2 Corinthians 7-10

- Song 109 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 minutes or less)

Treasures From God's Word

- **"Our Relief Ministry"**: (10 minutes)

Our Relief Ministry

2 Corinthians 8:1-4; 9:7

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2 Corinthians 8:1-3—Macedonians contributed “beyond their means” to help their Judean brothers

2 Corinthians 8:1-3: Now we want you to know, brothers, about the undeserved kindness of God that has been granted to the congregations of Macedonia. During a great test under affliction, their abundance of joy and their deep poverty made the riches of their generosity abound. For it was according to their means, yes, I testify, it was even beyond their means,

w98 11/1 25 paragraph 1

First, Paul told the Corinthians about the Macedonians, whose response to the relief effort was exemplary. “During a great test under affliction,” Paul wrote, “their abundance of joy and their deep poverty made the riches of their generosity abound.” The Macedonians did not need prodding. On the contrary, Paul said that “they of their own accord kept begging us with much entreaty for the privilege of kindly giving.” The cheerful generosity of the Macedonians is all the more remarkable when we consider that they themselves were in “deep poverty.”—2 Corinthians 8:2-4

kr 209 paragraph 1

It is about 46 C.E., and Judea is in the grip of famine. The Jewish disciples of Christ living there lack the means to pay the sky-high prices demanded for the meager supply of grain available. They are hungry, staring starvation in the face. However, they are about to experience the protection of Jehovah’s hand in a way that no other disciples of Christ have ever felt it before. What is about to happen?

2 Corinthians 8:4—Helping needy Christians is part of our “relief ministry”

2 Corinthians 8:4: while they on their own initiative kept earnestly begging us for the privilege of kindly giving, to have a share in the relief ministry for the holy ones.

***kr* 209-210 paragraphs 4-6**

4 In his second letter to the Corinthians, Paul explained that Christians have a twofold ministry. Although Paul’s letter was directed to anointed Christians, today his words apply to Christ’s “other sheep” as well. (John 10:16) One part of our ministry is “the ministry of the reconciliation,” that is, our preaching and teaching work. (2 Corinthians 5:18-20; 1 Timothy 2:3-6) The other part involves a ministry that we perform in behalf of fellow believers. Specifically, Paul referred to a “relief ministry.” (2 Corinthians 8:4) As to the expressions “*ministry* of the reconciliation” and “relief *ministry*,” in both instances the word “ministry” is a translation of a form of the Greek word *diakoni'a*. Why is that significant?

5 By using the same Greek word for both activities, Paul grouped relief work with other forms of ministry that were carried out in the Christian congregation. He had stated earlier: “There are different ministries, and yet there is the *same* Lord; and there are different activities, . . . But [they] are performed by the very *same* spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:4-6, 11) In fact, Paul linked the various congregational ministries with “sacred service.” (Romans 12:1, 6-8) No wonder he felt that it was appropriate to give part of his time “to minister to the holy ones”!—Romans 15:25, 26.

6 Paul helped the Corinthians to see why relief work was part of their ministry and worship to Jehovah. Note his reasoning: Christians who provide relief do so because they are “submissive to the good news about the Christ.” (2 Corinthians 9:13) Hence, moved by their desire to put Christ’s teachings into practice, Christians help fellow believers. The kind acts that they perform in behalf of their brothers, stated Paul, are nothing less than expressions of “the surpassing undeserved kindness of God.” (2 Corinthians 9:14; 1 Peter 4:10) Thus, in commenting on serving our brothers in need, which includes relief work, *The Watchtower* of December 1, 1975, rightly stated: “We should never doubt that Jehovah God and his Son Jesus Christ give real importance to this kind of service.” Yes, relief work is a valuable form of sacred service.—Romans 12:1, 7; 2 Corinthians 8:7; Hebrews 13:16.

2 Corinthians 9:7—“God loves a cheerful giver”

2 Corinthians 9:7: Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

***kr* 196 paragraph 10**

First, we make voluntary contributions because we love Jehovah and want to do “what is pleasing in his eyes.” (1 John 3:22) Jehovah is indeed pleased with a worshipper who gives freely from his heart. Let us examine the apostle Paul’s words about Christian giving. (Read 2 Corinthians 9:7.) A true Christian is not a reluctant or forced giver. Rather, he gives because he has “resolved in his heart” to do

so. That is, he gives after he has considered a need and how he can fill it. Such a giver is dear to Jehovah, for “God loves a cheerful giver.” Another translation reads: “God loves people who love to give.”

Digging for Spiritual Gems

2 Corinthians 9:15—What is God’s “indescribable free gift”?

2 Corinthians 9:15: Thanks be to God for his indescribable free gift.

w16.01 12 paragraph 2

Paul knew that all the magnificent promises of God were guaranteed through the perfect sacrifice of Christ. (Read 2 Corinthians 1:20.) Thus, that “indescribable free gift” would include all the goodness and loyal love that Jehovah would extend to us through Jesus. Indeed, that gift is so awe-inspiring that it cannot be fully described in human terms. How should receiving such an extraordinary gift affect us? And in what practical ways should this gift motivate us as we prepare to observe the Memorial of Christ’s death on Wednesday, March 23, 2016?

2 Corinthians 10:17—What does it mean to “boast in Jehovah”?

2 Corinthians 10:17: “But the one who boasts, let him boast in Jehovah.”

g99 7/8 20-21

In the Christian Greek Scriptures, the verb *kaukha'omai*, translated “take pride, exult, boast,” is used in both a negative and a positive

sense. Paul says, for example, that we may “exult, based on hope of the glory of God.” He also recommends: “He that boasts, let him boast in Jehovah.” (Romans 5:2; 2 Corinthians 10:17) This means taking pride in Jehovah as our God, a sentiment that may lead us to exult over his good name and reputation.

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study 12)

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Initial Call

Question: What happens when we die?

Scripture: Ec 9:5a

Link: Is death the end of it all?

Lisa (Publisher 1): Good evening. We're here because we find that many people wonder: What happens when we die? There are many different ideas out there. May I ask your viewpoint?

Householder: Well. I'm not sure but, we must live on in some way.

Lisa (Publisher 1): You know a lot of people have said something similar, and it's understandable, we all want to continue living. However, note what the Bible says here at Ecclesiastes 9 verse 5. Joanne would please read the beginning of that verse?

Joanne (Publisher 2): Sure. "For the living know that they will die, but the dead know nothing at all..."

Lisa (Publisher1): Thank you. The dead know nothing at all. Have you ever considered that as a possibility?

Householder: Hm. I've never heard that before.

Lisa (Publisher 1): You're not alone. Many people are surprised to hear that the Bible says that. If the dead know nothing at all, then could they be living somewhere else?

Householder: Well. It doesn't seem like it.

Lisa (Publisher 1): This can actually be a comforting thought. It means our loved ones who have died are not suffering, since the dead are unconscious. Of course, we may wonder: Does this mean death is the end of it all? Would you like to know the Bible's answer?

Householder: Yeah, I would.

Lisa (Publisher1): I'd like to come back with my husband and show it to you. When would be a good time?



Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Conversations



INITIAL CALL

Question: What happens when we die?

Scripture: Ec 9:5a

Link: Is death the end of it all?



FIRST RETURN VISIT

Question: Is death the end of it all?

Scripture: Job 14:14, 15

Link: What will life be like when God resurrects our dead loved ones?



SECOND RETURN VISIT

Question: What will life be like when God resurrects our dead loved ones?

Scripture: Isa 32:18

Link: How will God bring peace to the earth?



1. Kind and patient, perfect in love,
Was Christ, who came down from above.
He took care of our needs
With words and by deeds;
He gave of his time and his love.
He would keep the lowly in mind
By healing the sick, deaf, and blind.
To his royal commission he proved true
And willingly said: “I want to.”

2. We now try to follow his way
In all of our dealings each day.
We are loving and kind
To all whom we find;
We help them to learn and obey.
We respond to friends when in need;
We love them in word and in deed.
So if widows and orphans should ask you,
Then readily say: “I want to.”

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Love in Action – Relief Work in the Islands

Bro. John Ekrann (Helper to the Coordinators' Committee): Welcome to this special news update.

In September 2017 hurricanes Irma and Maria devastated much of the Caribbean, and our brothers were affected as well.

How is the relief work progressing? Well, recently, brother Mark Sanderson went with brother Gary Breaux, a helper to the Service Committee, to visit some of the affected territories under the United States, France and Barbados Branches. We're sure you will enjoy this video report.

[In late 2017, the Caribbean Islands were hit by Hurricanes Irma and Maria]

[Experiences & Comments of brothers and sisters affected by the hurricanes and Disaster Relief volunteers]

For me, Irma was a monster.

At times the whole place was shaking somewhat. I thought the whole house was going to burst apart.

It's hard to find the words to describe. But I think it's been a shock.

And I felt like the whole house was gonna fall on us.

Then I keep praying with Jehovah. I keep praying. I will keep praying and praying.

[Music]

Even though there was a lot of plundering on the island, the supermarkets, the big businesses were ruined. But we immediately saw Jehovah send us the help we needed. The congregation, the Branch, Barbados, friends, they immediately sent brothers here.

Love in Action – Relief Work in the Islands

In a bedroom someone's roof came from another house, landed in the back of our home, and the 2x4 came straight through our bedroom roof. And we went into that closet, five of us, and we prayed, and we sang. I have never supplicated Jehovah so much in my life.

[Music]

The brother(sic) also took the initiative to come to our house, under the rain and wind. To secure a tarp we put in place, so that it will not fly away.

And then eventually the big 40-foot container came in, and it was so wonderful. We received little letters in it for the brothers, telling them their prayers are with us, and they sent nice little notes to encourage us with the food supplies. We started giving that out to the brothers, and they were very happy Jehovah has provided.

A rescue team was put into place. Very quickly we had to analyze the situation, to come to grips with the task ahead of us.

One of the Disaster Relief Committee's first objective is to urgently provide the spiritual help to our brothers.

The goal is to encourage and strengthen the brothers and sisters by visiting them at their home and, most importantly, listening to them.

We had made up a group to provide medical, technical, and emotional help.

[Music]

Once the food supplies had arrived, an on-site team prepared the shipment so that the merchandise could be sent by shipping crate that same weekend.

But for the moment the objective is to repair. To shelter our brothers and sisters from the rain.

The congregations really cooperated well because they were quick to react.

E&OE

Love in Action – Relief Work in the Islands

The friends are very generous. So, a lot of food kits are arriving. First aid supplies as well.

What's moved us the most is the courage that the brothers and sisters showed. They really appreciated that we came. They felt the Branch was supporting them.

[Music]

[In February 2018 Brother Sanderson of the Governing Body and Brother Breaux, a helper to the Service Committee, visited the brothers in the Caribbean.]

[Mark Sanderson – Tortola Kingdom Hall Dedication]: Now, when the tremendous hurricane affected this part of the world, Brother Breaux, of course, came to the studio and he said that when he arrived here the brothers and sisters were out in the parking lot of the Kingdom Hall, and that they had been waiting, and not because they knew anyone was coming, but because they knew that, if there was going to be some help, it was gonna come from the Kingdom Hall. And it made me feel like I want to go to Tortola. [Laughter]

Now that all the work has been finished, it's all completed, is it your desire brothers and sisters that we should dedicate this beautiful Kingdom Hall to the worship into the praise of our wonderful, our magnificent God Jehovah?
[Applause]

[Music]

[Continued...Experiences & Comments of brothers and sisters affected by the hurricanes and Disaster Relief volunteers]

And it's a big talking of Tortola. Everyone is surprised and happy to see it and they want their churches to be prepared just like ours, like our Kingdom Hall.

Jehovah does good things to us under a hurricane, a bad hurricane. That's how I look at Jehovah. Type of God he is, he does good to people.

E&OE

Love in Action – Relief Work in the Islands

The friends here tell us, very often, that they really feel the help and comfort from the brothers that are far. They have often said they feel Jehovah's organization is showing a special interest in them.

Once is a hurricane, we can't depend on ourselves, we got to depend on Jehovah at all time, because Jehovah is a protector and he's the one that going to protect us, and we have to put forth faith and trust in him.

I felt a calm, a peaceful calm feeling, that Jehovah is going to take care. What you worrying about? Jehovah going to take care of us, and don't put your trust, and might on nothing, grabbing everything. Don't do that. Jehovah is there for us, so don't you worry.

[Mark Sanderson – Tortola Kingdom Hall Dedication]: To see people from all different races, from all different ethnicities, the nationalities, to speak different languages, all come together to work on a project, just because of love. It's just something that is so deeply moving. There's nothing that compares to it in the world. There's nothing that you could, you could liken it to. When we see things like this it's a miracle. It's actually a miracle that Jehovah is performing all around us.

When Jesus said in John 13 verse 34 he said: "I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples—if you have love among yourselves."

People can talk all day about love, and they can talk about service to, and charity, and all these different things, but when you come here and you see the love in action, you see it in your unselfishness to come here, and work so hard every day. This is what Jesus is talking about. All the world will know that you are my disciples.

Bro. John Ekrann (Helper to the Coordinators' Committee): What an encouraging report. It is clear that Jehovah is blessing the relief efforts. Now this report highlighted the work taking place in just some of the areas affected by recent hurricanes. In a previous broadcast we mentioned that we could spend up to twenty-five million dollars for disasters this year. However, now that the damage has been fully evaluated, and also factoring in other disasters that have occurred since that broadcast, we're currently estimating that our disaster relief, globally, will cost about sixty million dollars.

E&OE

Love in Action – Relief Work in the Islands

So far, over 4,100 of our brothers and sisters from dozens of countries have assisted with disaster relief in just the Caribbean. We want to thank all those involved with the relief work. We appreciate your sacrifices, and willing spirit. May Jehovah continue to richly bless all of you, and your families, who are working so hard to help our brothers and sisters recover.

A report like this makes us proud of Jehovah's people, who truly love one another, just as Jesus said his true disciples would. The Governing Body is grateful for your constant support as shown by your generous contributions, your willing volunteer spirit, and your prayers.

This is JW Broadcasting from the World Headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses.

How Our Relief Ministry Has Benefited Christians in the Caribbean



Today, just as in the first century, we have the privilege of demonstrating love to fellow Christians who have experienced disasters. (Joh 13: 34, 35) Watch the video *Love in Action—Relief Work in the Islands* to see how Christians have responded to the needs of their brothers and sisters living in the Caribbean, and then answer the following questions:

- How were our brothers in the Caribbean affected by Hurricane Irma and Hurricane Maria?

- How has Jehovah helped our brothers in the Caribbean by means of fellow Christians?

- How were the victims of the hurricanes affected by the outpouring of love shown by their brothers?

- How many brothers and sisters have participated in disaster relief in the Caribbean?

- How may all of us have a share in relief work?

- How did this video make you feel about being part of this loving organization?



SECTION

4

**JESUS’
LATER MINISTRY
IN JUDEA**

**“BEG THE MASTER OF
THE HARVEST TO
SEND OUT WORKERS.”**

—LUKE 10:2



66**IN JERUSALEM FOR THE
FESTIVAL OF TABERNACLES**JOHN 7:11-32

• JESUS TEACHES AT THE TEMPLE

Jesus has become well-known during the years since his baptism. Thousands of Jews have seen his miracles, and reports about his works have spread throughout the land. Now, at the Festival of Tabernacles (or, Booths) in Jerusalem, many are looking for him.

Opinions about Jesus are greatly divided. “He is a good man,” some say. Others respond: “He is not. He misleads the crowd.” (John 7:12) Much of this subdued talk occurs during the opening days of the festival. Yet no one has the courage to speak out publicly in Jesus’ behalf because there is widespread fear of how the Jewish leaders will react.

Partway through the festival, Jesus shows up at the temple. Many of the people are amazed at his marvelous ability to teach. He never attended the rabbin-



ic schools, so the Jews wonder: “How does this man have such a knowledge of the Scriptures when he has not studied at the schools?”—John 7:15.

“What I teach is not mine,” Jesus explains, “but belongs to him who sent me. If anyone desires to do His will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or I speak of my own originality.” (John 7:16, 17) Jesus’ teaching is in harmony with God’s Law, so it should be obvious that he is seeking God’s glory, not his own.

Then Jesus says: “Moses gave you the Law, did he not? But not one of you obeys the Law. Why are you seeking to kill me?” Some in the crowd, probably visitors from outside the city, are unaware of such efforts. It seems inconceivable to them that anyone would want to kill a teacher like him. Hence, they conclude that something must be wrong with Jesus for him to make that claim. “You have a demon,” they say. “Who is seeking to kill you?”—John 7:19, 20.

Actually, a year and a half earlier, the Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus after he had healed a man on the Sabbath. Jesus now uses a thought-provoking

line of reasoning and exposes their unreasonable-ness. He calls attention to the fact that under the Law, a baby boy is to be circumcised on the eighth day, even if it is the Sabbath. Then he asks: “If a man receives circumcision on a sabbath so that the Law of Moses may not be broken, are you violently angry at me because I made a man completely well on a sabbath? Stop judging by the outward appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”—John 7:23, 24.

Residents of Jerusalem who are aware of the situation comment: “This is the man they [the rulers] are seeking to kill, is it not? And yet see! he is speaking in public, and they say nothing to him. Have the rulers come to know for certain that this is the Christ?” Why, then, do the people not believe that Jesus is the Christ? “We know where this man is from; yet when the Christ comes, no one is to know where he is from,” they say.—John 7:25-27.

Right there at the temple, Jesus answers: “You know me and you know where I am from. And I have not come of my own initiative, but the One who sent me is real, and you do not know him. I know him,

because I am a representative from him, and that One sent me.” (John 7:28, 29) In response to that clear statement, there is an attempt to lay hold of Jesus, either to imprison him or to kill him. However, the attempt fails because it is not yet time for Jesus to die.

Many, though, put faith in Jesus, as they should. He has walked on water, calmed the winds, miraculously fed thousands with a few loaves and fish, cured the sick, made the lame walk, opened the eyes of the blind, cured lepers, and even raised the dead. Yes, they have good reason to ask: “When the Christ comes, he will not perform more signs than this man has done, will he?”—John 7:31.

When the Pharisees hear the crowd saying these things, they and the chief priests send out officers to arrest Jesus.

- ◇ When Jesus arrives at the festival, what are people saying about him?
- ◇ Jesus uses what reasoning to show that he is not violating the Law of God?
- ◇ Why do many put faith in Jesus?

Grateful for God's Word

(Philippians 2:16)

1. Jehovah, our Father, we want to express
How grateful we are that your Word we possess!
All Scripture is inspired;
its truth has set us free.
Its light gives us knowledge; the truth we can see.
2. Your Word has the power to reach deep inside.
Our thoughts and intentions, it helps to divide.
Your laws are clear and perfect,
your judgments ever true.
Your principles guide us in all that we do.
3. Your Word, O Jehovah, has human appeal.
Your prophets were like us; they felt what we feel.
Please help us build a strong faith
that follows what is heard.
We thank you, Jehovah, for your precious Word!

MARCH 2019

THE  **WATCHTOWER**
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



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COVER PICTURE:

Away from the crowd, Jesus compassionately heals a deaf man
(See study article 12, paragraph 11)

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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)

Listen to Jehovah's Voice

“This is my Son . . . Listen to him.”—MATT. 17:5.

SONG 89

Listen, Obey, and Be Blessed

PREVIEW

When Jesus was on earth, Jehovah spoke from heaven on three occasions. On one of those occasions, Jehovah urged Christ's disciples to listen to his Son. Today, Jehovah speaks to us by means of his written Word, which includes the teachings of Jesus, as well as by means of his organization. This article will consider how we benefit from listening to Jehovah and to Jesus.

JEHOVAH loves to communicate with us. In the past, he used prophets, angels, and his Son, Christ Jesus, to convey his thoughts to us. (Amos 3:7; Gal. 3:19; Rev. 1:1) Today, he communicates with us through his Word, the Bible. He gave it to us so that we can learn his thinking and understand his ways.

² When Jesus was on earth, Jehovah spoke from heaven on three occasions. Let us consider what Jehovah said, what we can learn from his words, and how we benefit from what he said.

“YOU ARE MY SON, THE BELOVED”

³ Mark 1:9-11 records the first occasion when Jehovah spoke from heaven. (Read.) He said: “You are my Son, the beloved; I have approved you.” How it must have touched Jesus’ heart to hear his Father’s voice expressing love and reassurance to him! Jehovah’s words confirmed three important facts about Jesus. First, Jesus is his Son. Second, Jehovah loves his Son. And third,

1-2. (a) How has Jehovah communicated with humans? (b) What will we consider in this article?

3. As we read at Mark 1:9-11, what did Jehovah say when Jesus got baptized, and what important facts did those words confirm?

Jehovah has approved his Son. Let us look at each one closely.

⁴ **“You are my Son.”** With these words, Jehovah indicated that his beloved Son, Jesus, had entered into a new relationship with Him. While Jesus was in heaven, he was a spirit son of God. However, at his baptism, he was anointed by holy spirit. At that time, God indicated that Jesus as His anointed Son now had the hope of returning to heaven to become God’s appointed King and High Priest. (Luke 1:31-33; Heb. 1:8, 9; 2:17) So at Jesus’ baptism, his Father had good reason to say: “You are my Son.”—Luke 3:22.

⁵ **“You are . . . the beloved.”** Jehovah’s example in expressing love and approval reminds us to look for opportunities to encourage others. (John 5: 20) We blossom when someone we care about shows love to us and commends us for the good we do. Likewise, our brothers and sisters in the congregation and our family members need our love and encouragement. When we commend others, we strengthen their faith and help them to

4. What new relationship with God did Jesus enter into at his baptism?

5. How can we imitate Jehovah’s example in expressing love and approval?

serve Jehovah loyally. Parents especially need to encourage their children. When parents commend their children sincerely and show them affection, they help their children to flourish.

6 “I have approved you.” These words show that Jehovah was confident that Jesus would faithfully carry out his Father’s will. Jehovah has such confidence in his Son, so we can likewise be completely confident that Jesus will faithfully carry out all

6. Why can we have confidence in Jesus Christ?

We thrive on commendation and encouragement
(See paragraph 5)



of Jehovah's promises. (2 Cor. 1:20) When we consider Jesus' example, we are even more determined to learn from him and to follow in his footsteps. Jehovah is equally confident that, as a group, his servants will continue to learn from his Son.—1 Pet. 2:21.

“LISTEN TO HIM”

⁷ **Read Matthew 17:1-5.** The second time Jehovah spoke from heaven was when Jesus “was transfigured.” Jesus had invited Peter, James, and John to accompany him up into a high mountain. While there, they saw a remarkable vision. Jesus' face shone brightly and his clothes glistened. Two figures, representing Moses and Elijah, began talking to Jesus about his coming death and resurrection. Although the three apostles were “weighed down with sleep,” they saw this amazing vision when they were fully awake. (Luke 9:29-32) Next, a bright cloud covered them, and they heard a voice from the cloud—God's voice! As at Jesus' baptism, Jehovah expressed his approval of his Son and his love for him, saying: “This is my Son,

7. According to Matthew 17:1-5, on which occasion did Jehovah speak from heaven, and what did he say?

the beloved, whom I have approved.” But this time Jehovah added: “Listen to him.”

⁸ The vision gave a preview of Jesus’ future glory and power as King of God’s Kingdom. No doubt, Christ was encouraged and fortified for the sufferings and painful death he would endure. The vision also built up the disciples’ faith and strengthened them for the tests of integrity and years of hard work that lay ahead. Some 30 years later, the apostle Peter referred to the vision of the transfiguration, showing that the vision was still vivid in his mind.—2 Pet. 1:16-18.

⁹ “Listen to him.” Jehovah made it clear that he wants us to listen to his Son’s words and obey them. What did Jesus say when he was on earth? He said many things worth listening to! For example, he lovingly taught his followers how to preach the good news, and he repeatedly reminded them to keep on the watch. (Matt. 24:42; 28:19, 20) He also urged them to exert themselves vigorously, and he encouraged them not to give up. (Luke 13:24) Jesus stressed the need for his followers to love one another, to remain united, and to observe

8. What effect did the vision have on Jesus and the disciples?

9. What practical counsel did Jesus give his disciples?

his commandments. (John 15:10, 12, 13) What practical counsel Jesus gave his disciples! That counsel is just as valid today as it was when Jesus gave it.

¹⁰ Jesus said: “Everyone who is on the side of the truth listens to my voice.” (John 18:37) We show that we are listening to his voice when we “continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely.” (Col. 3:13; Luke 17:3, 4) We further show that we are listening to his voice by zealously preaching the good news “in favorable times and difficult times.”—2 Tim. 4:2.

¹¹ Jesus said: “My sheep listen to my voice.” (John 10:27) Christ’s followers show that they listen to Jesus by not only paying attention to his words but also acting on them. They are not distracted by the “anxieties of life.” (Luke 21:34) Rather, they make obeying Jesus’ commands a priority in life, even in the face of challenging circumstances. Many of our brothers are enduring severe trials, including attacks by opposers, extreme poverty, and natural disasters. Through it all, they remain faithful to Jehovah, cost what it may. To them, Jesus gives the following assur-

10-11. How can we show that we are listening to Jesus?



Our ministry helps us stay focused
(See paragraph 12)

ance: “Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one who loves me. In turn, whoever loves me will be loved by my Father.”—John 14:21.

¹² Here is another way we can show that we are listening to Jesus: by cooperating with those whom he has appointed to take the lead among us. (Heb. 13:7, 17) God’s organization has made many adjustments in recent years, including the use of new tools and methods in our ministry, the format

12. What is another way we can show that we are listening to Jesus?

of our midweek meeting, and the way we build, renovate, and maintain our Kingdom Halls. How we appreciate the loving and carefully thought-out guidance! We can be sure that Jehovah will bless our efforts to follow the organization's timely direction.

¹³ We benefit from listening to all the things Jesus taught. Jesus assured his disciples that his teachings would refresh them. "You will find refreshment for yourselves," he said. "For my yoke is kindly, and my load is light." (Matt. 11:28-30) God's Word, which includes the four Gospel accounts of Jesus' life and ministry, refreshes us, restores our spiritual strength, and makes us wise. (Ps. 19:7; 23:3) Jesus stated: "Happy are those hearing the word of God and keeping it!"—Luke 11:28.

'I WILL GLORIFY MY NAME'

¹⁴ **Read John 12:27, 28.** The Gospel of John records a third occasion on which Jehovah spoke from heaven. A few days before his death, Jesus

13. What are the benefits of listening to Jesus?

14-15. (a) What was the third occasion, related at John 12:27, 28, on which Jehovah spoke from heaven? (b) Why would Jehovah's words have comforted and strengthened Jesus?

was in Jerusalem to celebrate his last Passover. “I am troubled,” he said. Then he prayed: “Father, glorify your name.” In response, his Father spoke from heaven: “I have glorified it and will glorify it again.”

¹⁵ Jesus was troubled because of the great responsibility he had to remain faithful to Jehovah. Jesus was aware that he was going to suffer a brutal scourging and a cruel death. (Matt. 26:38) More than all else, Jesus wanted to glorify his Father’s name. Jesus was charged with blasphemy, and he was concerned that his death would bring reproach on God. How reassuring Jehovah’s words must have been to Jesus! He could be sure that Jehovah’s name would be glorified. His Father’s words must have done much to comfort Jesus and strengthen him for what was to come. Although Jesus may have been the only one present who understood what his Father said at that time, Jehovah made sure that His words were recorded for all of us.—John 12:29, 30.

¹⁶ Like Jesus, we too may be concerned about reproach brought on Jehovah’s name. Perhaps like

16. Why may we at times be concerned about the reproach on God’s name?

Jesus, we are victims of unjust treatment. Or we may be disturbed by false stories that opposers spread about us. We may think about the reproach these reports bring on Jehovah's name and his organization. At such times, Jehovah's words are of great comfort to us. We need not be unduly anxious. We can be sure that "the peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard [our] hearts and [our] mental powers by means of Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:6, 7) Jehovah will never fail to glorify his name. By means of the Kingdom, he will reverse all the damage that Satan and this world bring on His faithful servants.—Ps. 94:22, 23; Isa. 65:17.

BENEFIT FROM JEHOVAH'S VOICE TODAY

¹⁷ Jehovah is still speaking to us today. (Read Isaiah 30:21.) True, we do not hear God speak to us from heaven. He has, however, provided his written Word, the Bible, in which he gives us instruction. Additionally, Jehovah's spirit moves "the faithful steward" to keep giving His servants their food supply. (Luke 12:42) What an abundance of spiritual food we receive in the form

17. In line with Isaiah 30:21, how does Jehovah speak to us today?



Jehovah will glorify his name and deliver his people
(See paragraph 16)

of printed and online material, videos, and audio publications!

¹⁸ Let us keep in mind the words that Jehovah spoke when his Son was on earth! May God's own words, as recorded in the Bible, give us confidence that Jehovah has everything under control and

18. How do Jehovah's words build your faith and give you courage?

that he will reverse any damage brought on us by Satan and his wicked world. And may we be determined to listen intently to Jehovah’s voice. If we do, we will successfully endure whatever problems we now face and any challenges that are yet to come. The Bible reminds us: “You need endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the fulfillment of the promise.”—Heb. 10:36.

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Page 19: An elder notices a ministerial servant helping to maintain the Kingdom Hall and working at the literature counter. The elder offers warm commendation. **Page 23:** A couple in Sierra Leone give a meeting invitation to a local fisherman. **Page 27:** Witnesses in a country where our work is restricted meet in a private home. They are dressed casually to avoid drawing attention to themselves.

EXPLAIN WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED FROM JEHOVAH’S WORDS FOUND AT . . .

■ Mark 1:11

■ Matthew 17:5

■ John 12:28

SONG 4

“Jehovah Is My Shepherd”

4 “Jehovah Is My Shepherd”

(Psalm 23)

1. Jehovah God is my Shepherd;
I'll follow where he will lead.
He knows my hopes and my heart's desire;
He knows what I truly need.
To watered pastures he leads me,
To places secure and blessed.
And he guides me always with loyal love
To where I find peace and rest.
He guides me always with loyal love
To where I find peace and rest.
2. Refreshing are all your pathways,
The ways of your righteousness.
For your name's sake never let me stray
From walking in faithfulness.
In valleys deep in the shadows,
Assured by your staff and rod,
I will fear no danger of lasting harm,
For you are my Friend and God.
I fear no danger of lasting harm,
For you are my Friend and God.
3. Jehovah, you are my Shepherd;
I follow where you will lead.
You strengthen me, and you give me rest;
You give all I truly need.
As you most surely are living,
So sure is my hope in you.
May your loyal love and your care for me
Pursue me my whole life through.
Your loyal love and your care for me
Pursue me my whole life through.

