

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

**TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD**

- **“Paul’s ‘Thorn in the Flesh’”:** (10 min.)  
2Co 12:7—Paul dealt with a nagging problem that was like an irritating thorn (w08 6/15 3-4)  
2Co 12:8, 9—Jehovah chose not to grant Paul’s supplications to remove the thorn (w06 12/15 24 ¶17-18)

2Co 12:10—Paul was able to fulfill his assignment by relying on God’s holy spirit (w18.01 9 ¶8-9)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)  
2Co 12:2-4—To what do “the third heaven” and “paradise” likely refer? (w18.12 8 ¶10-12)

2Co 13:12—What evidently was “a holy kiss”? (it-2 177)

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 11:1-15 (5)

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

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

- Song 38
- **“You Can Succeed Despite Your ‘Thorn in the Flesh!’”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video “*The Eyes of the Blind Will Be Opened*” (video category INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES). Inform the audience that literature for the blind or visually impaired is available in 47 languages in braille as well as other formats. Publishers should speak with the literature servant to request such literature. Encourage all to be attentive to the needs of any in the congregation or territory who are visually impaired.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 67
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 78 and Prayer

2 CORINTHIANS 11-13 | Paul’s “Thorn in the Flesh”

**12:7-10** ✍

In the Bible, thorns are often used in a figurative sense. They may describe people who are troublesome and cause injury or things that pose problems. (Nu 33:55; Pr 22:5; Eze 28:24) When Paul wrote about his “thorn in the flesh,” he may have been referring to false apostles and others who challenged his apostleship and work. How do the scriptures below indicate another possibility for Paul’s “thorn in the flesh”?

- Ac 23:1-5
- Ga 4:14, 15
- Ga 6:11

What is your “thorn in the flesh”?

How can you rely on Jehovah to help you endure?



# 3 Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

(Proverbs 14:26)

C F G C G/B

O Je - ho - vah, you have giv - en us a  
So Je - ho - vah, please in - still in us a

Am F Gsus4 G

hope that we hold dear. It's a  
heart that won't for - get, For you've

C F G Am Am/G

hope we find so thrill - ing we  
al - ways been our com - fort when

F Dm7 Gsus4 G

want the world to hear. But at  
trou - bled times we've met. And these

# Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

C F G C C/B

times thoughts this that life's lift anx and i - e - ties strength - en us are the can re -

Am F Gsus4 G G7/F

cause of fears with - in, And the  
vive that dy - ing flame, For they

C/E F G Am

hope fill that our hearts burned so with bright - ly cour - age has to

F Dm7 E7sus4 E7 Chorus

sud speak - den - ly a - bout grown your dim. name. You're our

# Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

Am Am/G G/F F C/E

strength, you're our hope, you're our con - fi - dence. What -

Detailed description: This system contains the first line of music. The treble clef staff has a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. It features a melody of eighth and quarter notes with lyrics underneath. The bass clef staff provides a simple accompaniment of quarter notes. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff: Am, Am/G, G/F, F, and C/E.

Dm7 Am/C Bb Fadd9 G7sus4 G7

ev - er we lack, you sup - ply. When we

Detailed description: This system contains the second line of music. The treble clef staff continues the melody with lyrics. The bass clef staff has a more active accompaniment, including a half note and quarter notes. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff: Dm7, Am/C, Bb, Fadd9, G7sus4, and G7.

Am Am/G G/F F Dm7

preach, when we teach, we have con - fi - dence be -

Detailed description: This system contains the third line of music. The treble clef staff continues the melody with lyrics. The bass clef staff continues the accompaniment. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff: Am, Am/G, G/F, F, and Dm7.

C/E F6 F/G G13 C

cause it's on you we re - ly.

Detailed description: This system contains the final line of music. The treble clef staff continues the melody with lyrics. The bass clef staff continues the accompaniment. Chord symbols are placed above the treble staff: C/E, F6, F/G, G13, and C. The final chord, C, is held for a longer duration, indicated by a large oval.

(See also Ps. 72:13, 14; Prov. 3:5, 6, 26; Jer. 17:7.)

ent.<sup>a</sup> **12** For we do not dare to class ourselves or compare ourselves with some who recommend themselves.<sup>b</sup> But when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.<sup>c</sup>

**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.<sup>d</sup> **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.<sup>e</sup> **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."<sup>f</sup> **18** For it is not the one who recommends himself who is approved,<sup>g</sup> but the one whom Jehovah\* recommends.<sup>h</sup>

**11** I wish you would put up with me in a little unreasonableness. But, in fact, you are putting up with me! **2** For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy,\* for I personally promised you in marriage to one husband that I might present you as a chaste<sup>o</sup> virgin to the Christ.<sup>i</sup> **3** But I am afraid that somehow, as the serpent seduced Eve by its cunning,<sup>j</sup> your minds might be corrupted away

10:13 \*Or "apportioned by measure to us." 10:17, 18 \*See App. A5. 11:2 \*Lit., "God's zeal." <sup>o</sup>Or "pure."

## CHAP. 10

a 2Co 13:2

b 2Co 5:12

c Pr 26:12  
Ga 6:3d Ac 9:15  
Ga 2:8e 1Co 3:10  
1Co 4:15f Jer 9:24  
1Co 1:31

g Lu 18:10-14

h 1Co 4:5  
2Ti 2:15

## CHAP. 11

i Mr 2:19  
Eph 5:23  
Re 21:2, 9j Ge 3:4, 5  
Joh 8:44

## Second Col.

a 1Ti 6:3-5  
Heb 13:9  
2Pe 3:17

b Ga 1:7, 8

c 2Co 11:23

d 2Co 10:10

e Ac 18:3  
1Co 9:18

f Php 4:10

g Php 4:15, 16

h 1Th 2:9

i 1Co 9:14, 15

j 1Co 9:11, 12

k Ro 16:17, 18  
2Pe 2:1l Ga 1:8  
2Th 2:9

from the sincerity and the chastity\* that are due the Christ.<sup>a</sup>

**4** For as it is, if someone comes and preaches a Jesus other than the one we preached, or you receive a spirit other than what you received, or good news other than what you accepted,<sup>b</sup> you easily put up with him. **5** For I consider that I have not proved inferior to your superfine apostles in a single thing.<sup>c</sup> **6** But even if I am unskilled in speech,<sup>d</sup> I certainly am not in knowledge; indeed we made it clear to you in every way and in everything.

**7** Or did I commit a sin by humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I gladly declared the good news of God to you without cost?<sup>e</sup> **8** Other congregations I deprived\* by accepting provisions<sup>f</sup> in order to minister to you.<sup>f</sup> **9** Yet, when I was present with you and I fell into need, I did not become a burden on anyone, for the brothers who came from Mac-e-do'ni-a abundantly supplied my needs.<sup>g</sup> Yes, in every way I kept myself from becoming a burden to you and will continue to do so.<sup>h</sup> **10** As surely as the truth of Christ is in me, I will not stop this boasting<sup>i</sup> in the regions of A-cha'ia. **11** For what reason? Because I do not love you? God knows I do.

**12** But what I am doing I will continue to do,<sup>j</sup> in order to eliminate the pretext of those who are wanting a basis\* for being found equal to us in the things<sup>k</sup> about which they boast. **13** For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ.<sup>k</sup> **14** And no wonder, for Satan himself keeps disguising himself as an angel of light.<sup>l</sup> **15** It is therefore nothing extraordinary if his

11:3 \*Or "purity." 11:8 \*Lit., "robbed." <sup>f</sup>Or "support." 11:12 \*Or "pretext." <sup>o</sup>Or "the office."

ministers also keep disguising themselves as ministers of righteousness. But their end will be according to their works.<sup>a</sup>

**16** I say again: Let no one think I am unreasonable. But even if you do, then accept me as an unreasonable person, so that I too may boast a little. **17** What I now say is, not as following the Lord's example, but as an unreasonable person would, with boastful self-confidence. **18** Since many are boasting according to the flesh,<sup>\*</sup> I too will boast. **19** Since you are so "reasonable," you gladly put up with the unreasonable ones. **20** In fact, you put up with whoever enslaves you, whoever devours your possessions, whoever grabs what you have, whoever exalts himself over you, and whoever strikes you in the face.

**21** I say this to our dishonor, since it may seem that we have acted in weakness.

But if others act boldly—I am talking unreasonably—I too act boldly. **22** Are they Hebrews? I am one also.<sup>b</sup> Are they Israelites? I am one also. Are they Abraham's offspring?<sup>\*</sup> I am also.<sup>c</sup> **23** Are they ministers of Christ? I reply like a madman, I am more outstandingly one: I have done more work,<sup>d</sup> been imprisoned more often,<sup>e</sup> suffered countless beatings, and experienced many near-deaths.<sup>f</sup> **24** Five times I received 40 strokes less one from the Jews,<sup>g</sup> **25** three times I was beaten with rods,<sup>h</sup> once I was stoned,<sup>i</sup> three times I experienced shipwreck,<sup>j</sup> a night and a day I have spent in the open sea; **26** in journeys often, in dangers from rivers, in dangers from robbers, in dangers from my own people,<sup>k</sup> in dangers from the na-

**11:18** \*That is, on human grounds.  
**11:22** \*Lit., "seed."

## CHAP. 11

a Mt 16:27  
Php 3:18, 19  
2Ti 4:14

b Ac 22:3

c Ro 11:1  
Php 3:4, 5

d Ro 11:13  
1Co 15:10

e Ac 16:23, 24

f Ac 9:15, 16  
2Co 6:4, 5  
1Pe 2:20, 21

g De 25:3

h Ac 16:22

i Ac 14:19

j Ac 27:41

k Ac 20:3  
Ac 23:10

## Second Col.

a Ac 14:5, 6

b Ac 13:50

c Ac 20:31

d 1Co 4:11

e 2Co 6:4, 5

f 2Co 2:4  
Col 2:1

g Ac 9:24, 25

## CHAP. 12

h Ac 2:17

i Ac 22:17, 18

tions,<sup>a</sup> in dangers in the city,<sup>b</sup> in dangers in the wilderness, in dangers at sea, in dangers among false brothers, **27** in labor and toil, in sleepless nights often,<sup>c</sup> in hunger and thirst,<sup>d</sup> frequently without food,<sup>e</sup> in cold and lacking clothing.<sup>\*</sup>

**28** Besides those things of an external kind, there is what rushes in on me from day to day:<sup>\*</sup> the anxiety for all the congregations.<sup>f</sup> **29** Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is stumbled, and I am not incensed?

**30** If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. **31** The God and Father of the Lord Jesus, the One who is to be praised forever, knows I am not lying. **32** In Damascus the governor under A-re'tas the king was guarding the city of the Dam-a-scenes' to seize me, **33** but I was lowered in a basket<sup>\*</sup> through a window in the city wall,<sup>g</sup> and I escaped his hands.

**12** I have to boast. It is not beneficial, but I will move on to supernatural visions<sup>h</sup> and revelations of the Lord.<sup>i</sup> **2** I know a man in union with Christ who, 14 years ago—whether in the body or out of the body, I do not know; God knows—was caught away to the third heaven. **3** Yes, I know such a man—whether in the body or apart from the body, I do not know; God knows— **4** who was caught away into paradise and heard words that cannot be spoken and that are not lawful for a man to say. **5** I will boast about such a man, but I will not boast about myself except of my weaknesses. **6** For even if I want to boast, I will not be unreasonable, for I would say the truth.

**11:27** \*Lit., "and in nakedness." **11:28** \*Or "the daily pressure on me." **11:33** \*Or "wicker basket."

But I refrain from doing so, in order that no one should give me more credit than what he sees in me or hears from me, **7** just because of receiving such extraordinary revelations.

To keep me from becoming overly exalted, I was given a thorn in the flesh,<sup>a</sup> an angel of Satan, to keep slapping\* me, so that I might not be overly exalted. **8** Three times I begged the Lord about this, that it would depart from me. **9** But he said to me: "My undeserved kindness is sufficient for you, for my power is being made perfect in weakness."<sup>b</sup> Most gladly, then, I will boast about my weaknesses, in order that the power of the Christ may remain over me like a tent. **10** So I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in times of need, in persecutions and difficulties, for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am powerful.<sup>c</sup>

**11** I have become unreasonable. You compelled me to, for I ought to have been recommended by you. For I did not prove to be inferior to your superfine apostles in a single thing, even if I am nothing.<sup>d</sup> **12** Indeed, the signs of an apostle were produced among you with great endurance,<sup>e</sup> and by signs and wonders\* and powerful works.<sup>f</sup> **13** For how were you less favored than the rest of the congregations, except that I myself did not become a burden to you?<sup>g</sup> Kindly forgive me for this wrong.

**14** Look! This is the third time I am ready to come to you, and I will not become a burden. For I am seeking, not your possessions,<sup>h</sup> but you; for the children<sup>i</sup> are not expected to save up for their parents, but the parents for their children. **15** For my part, I will

12:7 \*Or "beating." 12:12 \*Or "parents."

## CHAP. 12

a Ga 4:13

b Isa 40:29

c Php 4:13

d 2Co 11:23

e 2Co 6:4

f Ac 14:3  
Ac 15:12  
Ro 15:18, 19g 1Co 9:11, 12  
2Co 11:9

h Ac 20:33

i 1Co 4:14

## Second Col.

a 2Co 1:6  
Col 1:24  
1Th 2:8  
Heb 13:17

b 2Co 11:9

c 2Co 8:6

## CHAP. 13

d De 19:15  
Mt 18:16

most gladly spend and be completely spent for you.<sup>\*a</sup> If I love you so much more, am I to be loved the less? **16** But be that as it may, I did not burden you.<sup>b</sup> Nevertheless, you say I was "crafty" and I caught you "by trickery." **17** I did not take advantage of you through any of those whom I sent to you, did I? **18** I urged Titus and I sent the brother with him. Titus did not take advantage of you at all, did he?<sup>c</sup> We walked in the same spirit, did we not? In the same footsteps, did we not?

**19** Have you been thinking all along that we have been making our defense to you? It is before God that we are speaking in union with Christ. But, beloved ones, all that we do is to build you up. **20** For I am afraid that somehow when I arrive, I may not find you as I wish and I may not be as you wish, but instead, there may be strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, dissension, backbiting, whispering,\* being puffed up with pride, and disorder. **21** Perhaps when I come again, my God might humiliate me before you, and I may have to mourn over many of those who previously sinned but have not repented of their uncleanness and sexual immorality\* and brazen conduct<sup>#</sup> that they have practiced.

**13** This is the third time I am coming to you. "On the testimony\* of two or three witnesses every matter must be established."<sup>d</sup> **2** Although I am absent now, it is as if I were present for the second time, and I give my warning in advance to those who sinned previously and

12:15 \*Or "your souls." 12:20 \*Or "gossip." 12:21 \*Greek, *por-nei'a*. See Glossary. <sup>#</sup>Or "shameless conduct." Greek, *a-sel'gei-a*. See Glossary. 13:1 \*Lit., "mouth."

to all the rest, that if ever I come again I will not spare them, **3** since you are seeking proof that Christ, who is not weak toward you but strong among you, is really speaking through me. **4** For, indeed, he was executed on the stake because of weakness, but he is alive because of God's power.<sup>a</sup> True, we also are weak with him, but we will live together with him<sup>b</sup> because of God's power toward you.<sup>c</sup>

**5** Keep testing whether you are in the faith; keep proving what you yourselves are.<sup>d</sup> Or do you not recognize that Jesus Christ is in union with you? Unless you are disapproved. **6** I truly hope you will recognize that we are not disapproved.

**7** Now we pray to God that you may do nothing wrong, not that we may appear approved, but that you may do what is fine, even if we may appear

## CHAP. 13

- a Ro 6:4  
1Pe 3:18
- b 2Ti 2:11, 12
- c 1Co 6:14
- d 1Co 11:28  
Ga 6:4

## Second Col.

- a 1Co 4:21
- b 2Co 1:3, 4
- c Php 2:2
- d 1Th 5:13  
Jas 3:17  
1Pe 3:11  
2Pe 3:14
- e 1Co 14:33

disapproved. **8** For we can do nothing against the truth, but only for the truth. **9** We certainly rejoice whenever we are weak but you are powerful. And this is what we are praying for, your being readjusted. **10** That is why I write these things while absent, so that when I am present, I may not have to be severe in using the authority that the Lord gave me,<sup>a</sup> to build up and not to tear down.

**11** Finally, brothers, continue to rejoice, to be readjusted, to be comforted,<sup>b</sup> to think in agreement,<sup>c</sup> to live peaceably,<sup>d</sup> and the God of love and of peace<sup>e</sup> will be with you. **12** Greet one another with a holy kiss. **13** All the holy ones send you their greetings.

**14** The undeserved kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the sharing in the holy spirit be with all of you.

## TO THE

## GALATIANS

## OUTLINE OF CONTENTS

- 1 Greetings (1-5)  
No other good news (6-9)  
Good news preached by Paul comes from God (10-12)  
Paul's conversion and early activity (13-24)
- 2 Paul meets with the apostles in Jerusalem (1-10)  
Paul corrects Peter (Cephas) (11-14)  
Declared righteous only through faith (15-21)
- 3 Works of Law versus faith (1-14)  
Righteous will live by faith (11)  
Abrahamic promise not by Law (15-18)  
Abraham's offspring, Christ (16)  
Origin and purpose of the Law (19-25)

- Sons of God through faith (26-29)  
Abraham's offspring, those belonging to Christ (29)
- 4 No longer slaves, but sons (1-7)  
Paul's concern for the Galatians (8-20)  
Hagar and Sarah: two covenants (21-31)  
Jerusalem above, our mother, is free (26)
- 5 Christian freedom (1-15)  
Walking by spirit (16-26)  
Works of the flesh (19-21)  
Fruitage of the spirit (22, 23)
- 6 Carry one another's burdens (1-10)  
What is sown is reaped (7, 8)  
Circumcision of no value (11-16)  
A new creation (15)  
Conclusion (17, 18)



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**12:7-10** ✍

In the Bible, thorns are often used in a figurative sense. They may describe people who are troublesome and cause injury or things that pose problems. (Nu 33:55; Pr 22:5; Eze 28:24) When Paul wrote about his “thorn in the flesh,” he may have been referring to false apostles and others who challenged his apostleship and work. How do the scriptures below indicate another possibility for Paul’s “thorn in the flesh”?

- Ac 23:1-5 **Paul was too nearsighted to see that Ananias was wearing the apparel of High Priest.**
- Ga 4:14, 15 **Since Paul was nearly blind they wished they could give him their good eyes.**
- Ga 6:11 **Paul was so nearsighted he had to write with large letters to be able to see what he was writing.**

What is your “thorn in the flesh”?

How can you rely on Jehovah to help you endure?



## May 20-26 / 2 Corinthians 11-13

### Treasures From God's Word

**"Paul's 'Thorn in the Flesh'":** (10 minutes)

#### **2 Corinthians 12:7—Paul dealt with a nagging problem that was like an irritating thorn**

**2 Corinthians 12:7:** just because of receiving such extraordinary revelations. To keep me from becoming overly exalted, I was given a thorn in the flesh, an angel of Satan, to keep slapping me, so that I might not be overly exalted.

#### **w08 6/15 3-4**

Another faithful servant asked Jehovah to remove "a thorn in the flesh," a nagging problem. The apostle Paul entreated God three times to be set free from this trial. Whatever it was, like an irritating thorn, it could have robbed Paul of his joy in Jehovah's service. Paul likened it to being constantly slapped. Jehovah's answer was: "My undeserved kindness is sufficient for you; for my power is being made perfect in weakness." Jehovah did not take away that thorn in the flesh. Paul had to contend with it, but he added: "When I am weak, then I am powerful." (2 Corinthians 12:7-10) What did he mean?

#### **2 Corinthians 12:8, 9—Jehovah chose not to grant Paul's supplications to remove the thorn**

**2 Corinthians 12:8, 9:** Three times I begged the Lord about this, that it would depart from me. But he said to me: "My undeserved kindness is sufficient for you, for my power is being made perfect in weakness." Most gladly, then, I will boast about my weaknesses, in order that the power of the Christ may remain over me like a tent.

#### **w06 12/15 24 paragraphs 17-18**

17 In response to Paul's prayers, God told him: "My undeserved kindness is sufficient for you; for my power is being made perfect in weakness." Paul said: "Most gladly, therefore, will I rather boast as respects my weaknesses, that the power of the Christ may like a tent remain over me." (2 Corinthians 12:9; Psalm 147:5) Hence, Paul experienced that through Christ, God's powerful protection was spread over him like a tent. Today, Jehovah answers our prayers in a similar manner. He spreads his protection like a shelter over his servants.

18 Of course, a tent does not stop the rains from falling or the winds from blowing, but it does provide some protection from those elements. Likewise, the shelter provided by "the power of the Christ" does not stop trials from befalling us or hardships from being brought against us. Yet, it does give spiritual protection against the harmful elements of this world and the attacks of its ruler, Satan.

(Revelation 7:9, 15, 16) Therefore, even if you are dealing with a trial that does not 'depart from you,' you can be certain that Jehovah is aware of your struggle and that he has responded to "the sound of your outcry." (Isaiah 30:19; 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4) Paul wrote: "God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but along with the temptation he will also make the way out in order for you to be able to endure it."—1 Corinthians 10:13; Philippians 4:6, 7.

## **2 Corinthians 12:10—Paul was able to fulfill his assignment by relying on God's holy spirit**

**2 Corinthians 12:10:** So I take pleasure in weaknesses, in insults, in times of need, in persecutions and difficulties, for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am powerful.

### **w18.01 9 paragraphs 8-9**

8 Read Isaiah 40:30. No matter how qualified we may be, we are limited in what we can accomplish in our own strength. That is a lesson we all must learn. Although he was a capable man, the apostle Paul had limitations that prevented him from doing everything he wanted to do. When he expressed his concerns to God, he was told: "My power is being made perfect in weakness." Paul got the point. He concluded: "When I am weak, then I am powerful." (2 Corinthians 12:7-10) What did he mean by that?

9 Paul realized that there was only so much he could do without help from a higher source. God's holy spirit could supply the power that Paul lacked. Not only that, but God's spirit could empower Paul to perform tasks that he would never have been able to complete in his own power. The same is true of us. If the strength we have comes from Jehovah, we will be strong indeed!

## **Digging for Spiritual Gems**

### **2 Corinthians 12:2-4—To what do "the third heaven" and "paradise" likely refer?**

**2 Corinthians 12:2-4:** I know a man in union with Christ who, 14 years ago—whether in the body or out of the body, I do not know; God knows—was caught away to the third heaven. Yes, I know such a man—whether in the body or apart from the body, I do not know; God knows—who was caught away into paradise and heard words that cannot be spoken and that are not lawful for a man to say.

### **w18.12 8 paragraphs 10-12**

"The third heaven" mentioned at 2 Corinthians 12:2 is likely the Messianic Kingdom in the hands of Jesus Christ and the 144,000, the "new heavens."—2 Peter 3:13.

It is "the third heaven" because the Kingdom is a superlative, an elevated, form of rulership.

The "paradise" into which Paul was "caught away" in vision likely refers to (1) the physical Paradise to come on earth, (2) the spiritual paradise that will exist then, which will be more extensive than the spiritual paradise that exists now, and (3) "the paradise of God" in heaven that will coexist in the new world.

## **2 Corinthians 13:12—What evidently was “a holy kiss”?**

**2 Corinthians 13:12:** Greet one another with a holy kiss.

### ***it-2 177***

The “Holy Kiss.” Among early Christians there was the “holy kiss” (Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:26) or “kiss of love” (1 Peter 5:14), possibly bestowed on individuals of the same sex. This early Christian form of greeting may correspond to the ancient Hebrew practice of greeting one with a kiss. Though the Scriptures provide no details, the “holy kiss” or “kiss of love” evidently reflected the wholesome love and unity prevailing in the Christian congregation.—John 13:34, 35.

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) 2 Corinthians 11:1-15 (*th* study 5)

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

**TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD**

- **“Paul’s ‘Thorn in the Flesh’”:** (10 min.)  
 2Co 12:7—Paul dealt with a nagging problem that was like an irritating thorn (w08 6/15 3-4)  
 2Co 12:8, 9—Jehovah chose not to grant Paul’s supplications to remove the thorn (w06 12/15 24 ¶17-18)  
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- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) 2Co 11:1-15 (5)

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **First Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **First Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation. (2)
- **First Return Visit:** (4 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation, and introduce the *Teach Us* book. (4)

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 38
- **“You Can Succeed Despite Your ‘Thorn in the Flesh!’”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video “*The Eyes of the Blind Will Be Opened*” (video category INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES). Inform the audience that literature for the blind or visually impaired is available in 47 languages in braille as well as other formats. Publishers should speak with the literature servant to request such literature. Encourage all to be attentive to the needs of any in the congregation or territory who are visually impaired.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 67
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 78 and Prayer

2 CORINTHIANS 11-13 | Paul’s “Thorn in the Flesh”

**12:7-10** ✍

In the Bible, thorns are often used in a figurative sense. They may describe people who are troublesome and cause injury or things that pose problems. (Nu 33:55; Pr 22:5; Eze 28:24) When Paul wrote about his “thorn in the flesh,” he may have been referring to false apostles and others who challenged his apostleship and work. How do the scriptures below indicate another possibility for Paul’s “thorn in the flesh”?

- Ac 23:1-5
- Ga 4:14, 15
- Ga 6:11

What is your “thorn in the flesh”?

How can you rely on Jehovah to help you endure?



## 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?

Lisa (Publisher 1): It's great to see you again. I brought my husband, Ron.

Householder: Nice to meet you.

Ron (Publisher 3): You too.

Lisa (Publisher 1): When I was here yesterday, we left off with the question: Is death the end of it all? Have you had a chance to give that any thought?

Householder: I've been thinking about it all day. I really hope the answer is no.

Ron (Publisher 3): You're right, the answer is no. The Bible clearly teaches that there is hope for those who've died. For example, consider what the faithful man Job said to God. Lisa would you like to read Job 14:14 & 15 for us?

Lisa (Publisher 1): Sure. It says: "If a man dies, can he live again? I will wait all the days of my compulsory service until my relief comes. You will call, and I will answer you. You will long for the work of your hands".

Ron (Publisher 3): Thank you. Did you notice the confidence that Job had? What did he believe would happen after he died?

Householder: Hmm. He would live again?

Ron (Publisher 3): Yes. He said that God would call him from the grave and he, job, would answer.

[Ron Soliloquises: When preparing for this return visit Lisa and I discussed how we might emphasize the latter part of verse 15, to show that Jehovah yearns to resurrect those who have died. This seems like a good opportunity to further the conversation in that direction.]

Ron (Publisher 3): There's also something interesting in verse 15. It says that God will "long" or "yearn" for the work of his hands. So how do you think God feels about resurrecting his servant Job?

Householder: It seems like he really wants to do it.

## Sample Conversations – May 2019

Lisa (Publisher1): Isn't that a comforting thought

Householder: Definitely.

Ron (Publisher 3): Of course, you may wonder: What will life be like when God does this? Let's discuss the Bible's answer on our next visit.



# 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?





# What Can the Bible Teach Us?

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# He Will Make You Strong

(1 Peter 5:10)

D Bm G A D

There was a rea - son why God brought the truth to you And  
God gave his own be - lov - ed Son in your be - half; On

G A Bm Em7 Asus4 A

called you from the dark - ness to the light. With - in your  
this ac - count, He wants you to suc - ceed. If He did

D Bm G Em/G F#sus4 F#

heart, he saw the long - ing that you had To  
not with - hold the gift of His dear Son, Then

Bm9 Bm Bm9/A Bm/A G

search for him and prac - tice what is right. You  
nev - er doubt He'll give the strength you need. He

# He Will Make You Strong

G D/F# Em Em/D

prom - ised him in prayer to do his will; He  
won't for - get the faith and love you've shown; He

Detailed description: This system contains the first two lines of music. The treble staff has a key signature of two sharps (F# and C#) and a common time signature. The melody starts on G4, moving to A4, B4, C5, then down to B4, A4, G4. The bass staff provides accompaniment with chords G, D/F#, Em, and Em/D. The lyrics are: "prom - ised him in prayer to do his will; He won't for - get the faith and love you've shown; He".

Em/C# F#7+5 Bm D/A G Dma7/F# Em11 A7sus4 Chorus

helped you then, and he will help you still. With  
will not fail to care for all His own.

Detailed description: This system contains the third and fourth lines of music. The treble staff continues the melody with chords Em/C#, F#7+5, Bm, D/A, G, Dma7/F#, Em11, and A7sus4. The lyrics are: "helped you then, and he will help you still. With will not fail to care for all His own." The word "Chorus" is written above the final chord. The bass staff has a "R.H." marking above the final chord.

D Em11 D/F# G D/F#

Je - sus' blood He bought you, to God you now be - long. So

Detailed description: This system contains the fifth and sixth lines of music. The treble staff has chords D, Em11, D/F#, G, and D/F#. The lyrics are: "Je - sus' blood He bought you, to God you now be - long. So". The bass staff provides accompaniment.

Em/C# F#7 Bm D/E E7 G/A A7

he will make you firm, and he will make you strong. He'll

Detailed description: This system contains the seventh and eighth lines of music. The treble staff has chords Em/C#, F#7, Bm, D/E, E7, G/A, and A7. The lyrics are: "he will make you firm, and he will make you strong. He'll". The bass staff provides accompaniment.

# He Will Make You Strong

D A/C# Bm7 D/A A/G G Dadd9/F#

guide you and pro - tect you, as he has all a - long. Yes,

This system of musical notation is in the key of D major (two sharps). The melody is written in the treble clef and the bass line in the bass clef. The lyrics are: "guide you and protect you, as he has all a - long. Yes,"

Gadd9/B Gm/Bb D/A A7sus4 A7

he will make you firm, and he will make you

This system continues the melody and bass line. The lyrics are: "he will make you firm, and he will make you".

D

strong.

This system concludes the piece with a final D chord in the treble clef. The lyrics are: "strong."

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

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## **Talita Alnashi: “The Eyes of the Blind Will Be Opened”**

Bro. Geoffrey Jackson (Governing Body): Let’s begin by visiting a family in Stockholm, Sweden.

The parents, Usama and Kristina, have two daughters, Talita and Isabella.

When Talita was born, the doctor found cataracts in both of her eyes.

A cataract is a clouding of the eye’s natural lens.

So the doctor had to operate so that Talita wouldn’t lose her sight completely—a terrifying situation for any parent.

Today, Talita is seven years old and almost blind in one eye but completely blind in the other.

Teaching a child about Jehovah in this system of things is already a challenge even without physical ailments involved.

But let’s find out how Talita’s parents rose to the challenge, making sure that she received a proper spiritual education despite her poor vision.

Talita Alnashi: I look forward to not having poor sight anymore and that I can play with a bear and a lion and to sit on the back of a tiger.

Usama Alnashi: Jehovah gives us a fantastic promise at Isaiah 35:5: “The eyes of the blind will be opened.”

Kristina Alnashi: It’s been a challenge to get to where we are today. We thank Jehovah for all the help he has given us.

Usama Alnashi: As soon as Talita was able to leave the house after the operation, we made sure to go to the meetings.

Kristina Alnashi: It helped us a lot to be able to throw our burden on Jehovah. We prayed together; we cried a lot together because it was so hard.

E&OE

## **Talita Alnashi: “The Eyes of the Blind Will Be Opened”**

Usama Alnashi: One of the challenges is that we have to give Talita audio description constantly. We have to tell her who is coming in and what is happening.

Kristina Alnashi: We get so many amazing materials on jw.org and also through the congregation. She really loves to read Learn from the Great Teacher. It has questions which make her a part of the story.

Usama Alnashi: She has a very good memory, and therefore she remembers a lot of what she reads. So when we are with friends, she often quizzes them.

[At a family gathering with brothers and sisters]

Talita: OK, what are the names of Jesus' apostles?

Brother: There are so many.

Talita: But Joseph's brothers, they are more difficult!

[Laughing]

Brother: Exactly. This is nothing....Judas Iscariot...the other one.

Talita: Judas Thaddeus.

Brother: Judas Thaddeus.

[Family singing together]

Talita: I really like to sing the songs in my songbook.

Kristina Alnashi: Talita's spiritual goal is to learn more of our Kingdom songs. We get so much help from the beautiful music on the website and also from the Caleb and Sophia videos.



## **Talita Alnashi: “The Eyes of the Blind Will Be Opened”**

Usama Alnashi: She knows many of the stories from My Book of Bible Stories, so she can answer in her own words. We will ask a question like, Do you know this about David? And if she knows the answer, then we encourage her to answer at the meeting.

Talita (answering at a meeting): “And your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried.”

Talita: When I give an answer at the meetings, Jehovah becomes happy because he loves children.

Kristina Alnashi: She often asks the friends, “Do you love Jehovah?” So she feels very united with them.

Kristina Alnashi: One of the best moments where we saw that Talita’s spirituality had grown was when she came home from a sleepover at her grandparents’ house. My parents are not Jehovah’s Witnesses, and her grandmother had said that God doesn’t exist. So when Talita came home, she said, “And then when I was going to sleep, I prayed to Jehovah, ““Would you please help Grandmother to realize that you do exist —that you are real?””

Usama Alnashi: We try to keep our wonderful hope alive, so we often talk about what we will do in Paradise. We really look forward to when Talita will be able to see again and live in a paradise with all our friends. It’s going to be wonderful!

Talita: I think that Jehovah looks forward to looking at me when I play with a tiger.

## You Can Succeed Despite Your “Thorn in the Flesh”!

During these critical last days, thorny problems afflict all of God’s servants. (2Ti 3:1) How can we rely on Jehovah and successfully cope with these problems? Watch the video “*The Eyes of the Blind Will Be Opened*” to find out what Talita Alnashi and her parents have done, and then answer the following questions:



- What is Talita’s “thorn in the flesh”?

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- What Bible promises have helped Talita and her parents maintain a positive attitude?

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- How did Talita’s parents demonstrate their reliance on Jehovah soon after her operation?

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- How have Talita’s parents made good use of theocratic resources to instill love for God in Talita’s heart?

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- How has Talita shown that she is growing spiritually despite her “thorn in the flesh”?

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- How has Talita’s example encouraged you?

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## “NEVER HAS ANY MAN SPOKEN LIKE THIS”

JOHN 7:32-52

Jesus is still in Jerusalem for the Festival of Tabernacles (or, Booths). He is pleased that “many of the crowd put faith in him.” That does not please the religious leaders, however. They send officers, who function as religious police, to arrest him. (John 7:31, 32) Yet, Jesus does not try to hide.

Rather, Jesus keeps on teaching publicly in Jerusalem, saying: “I will be with you a little while longer before I go to the One who sent me. You will look for me, but you will not find me, and where I am you cannot come.” (John 7:33, 34) The Jews do not understand, so they say among themselves: “Where does this man intend to go, so that we will not find him? He does not intend to go to the Jews dispersed among the Greeks and teach the Greeks, does he? What does he mean when he says, ‘You will look for me, but you will not find me, and where I am you cannot come?’” (John 7:35, 36) Jesus, however, is speaking of his death and resurrection to heaven, and his enemies cannot follow him there.

The seventh day of the festival arrives. Each morning of the festival, a priest has poured out water taken from the Pool of Siloam, so that it flowed to the base of the temple’s altar. Likely reminding the people of this practice, Jesus cries out: “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever puts faith in me, just as the scripture has said: ‘From deep within him streams of living water will flow.’”—John 7:37, 38.

Jesus is referring to what will happen when his disciples are anointed with holy spirit and called to be in line for heavenly life. This anointing occurs after Jesus’ death. Beginning on the day of Pentecost the following year, streams of



life-giving water begin to flow as spirit-anointed disciples share the truth with people.

In response to Jesus' teaching, some say: "This really is the Prophet," evidently referring to the foretold prophet greater than Moses. Others say: "This is the Christ." But some argue: "The Christ is not coming out of Galilee, is he? Does the scripture not say that the Christ is coming from the offspring of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?"—John 7:40-42.

So the crowd is divided. Though some want Jesus arrested, no one lays a hand on him. When the officers return to the religious leaders without Jesus, the chief priests and Pharisees ask: "Why did you not bring him in?" The officers reply: "Never has any man spoken like this." The religious leaders angrily resort to ridicule and name-calling: "You have not been misled also, have you? Not one of the rulers or of the Pharisees has put faith in him, has he? But this crowd who do not know the Law are accursed people."—John 7:45-49.

At this, Nicodemus, a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin, dares to speak in Jesus' behalf. Some two and a half years earlier, Nicodemus came to Jesus at night and expressed faith in him. Now Nicodemus says: "Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and learns what he is doing, does it?" What is their defensive reply? "You are not also out of

Galilee, are you? Search and see that no prophet is to be raised up out of Galilee."—John 7: 51, 52.

The Scriptures do not directly say that a prophet would come out of Galilee. Yet God's Word did point to the Christ as coming from there; it prophesied that "a great light" would be seen in "Galilee of the nations." (Isaiah 9: 1, 2; Matthew 4:13-17) Furthermore, as foretold, Jesus was born in Bethlehem, and he is an offspring of David. Although the Pharisees may be aware of this, they are likely responsible for spreading many of the misconceptions that people have about Jesus.



- 
- ◇ How may Jesus be calling attention to something that occurs each morning during the festival?
  - ◇ Why do the officers not arrest Jesus, and how do the religious leaders react?
  - ◇ What indicates that the Christ would come out of Galilee?

# “Teaching the Word of God”

(Acts 18:11)

C G6/B G7/B Gm/Bb A7

For those who teach the Word of God, There  
 As teach - ers of Je - ho - vah's Word, We  
 Je - ho - vah gives us all we need To

Dm A7+5 Dm7 F/G G13

is a joy - ful share. The  
 strive to do what's right, So  
 teach his pre - cious Word. So

Cma7 C B7/D# C/E F° F A7/E

ben - e - fits that we re - ceive Are  
 all may see sin - cer - i - ty As  
 if we pray to ask for help, We

C+5/D C6/D D7 Fm/Ab G7sus4 G7

far be - yond com - pare. We  
 we re - flect God's light. With  
 know that we'll be heard. We

*“Teaching the Word of God”*

C G6/B G7/B Gm/Bb A7

im - i - tate the Son of God And  
 dil - i - gence we search God's Word, For  
 love what's in the Word of God; What's

Dm A7+5 Dm7 F/G G13

how he taught with love. And  
 it has news to tell. So  
 more, we know it's true. And

Cma7 C B7/D# C/E G/F F C#° Dm

as we teach, the ones we're help - ing Draw  
 we can share our heart's good trea - sure And  
 as we love the ones we're teach - ing, They'll

Ab7+5 F/G G7 C

close to God a - bove.  
 teach our - selves teach as well.  
 soon be teach - ers too!



MARCH 2019

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
MAY 6–JUNE 2, 2019

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

*The Watchtower* (ISSN 0043-1087) March 2019 is published by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; L. Weaver, Jr., President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299, and by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada, PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. © 2018 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. Printed in Canada.

## FEATURED CONTENT ON JW.ORG

### WAS IT DESIGNED?

#### **The Fruit Fly's Aerobatic Ability**

Fruit flies are able to make turns similar to those made by fighter jets but in a fraction of a second. Where did this tiny insect's aerobatic ability come from?

(Go to [BIBLE TEACHINGS > SCIENCE & THE BIBLE](#).)

### THE BIBLE CHANGES LIVES

#### **I Seemed to Have Everything I Could Hope For**

Stéphane was young, successful, and famous; yet, he felt empty and unfulfilled. How did he find true happiness and purpose in life?

(Go to [BIBLE TEACHINGS > PEACE & HAPPINESS](#).)

### COVER PICTURE:

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

Visit the [jw.org](http://jw.org)® website, or scan code





# Encourage One Another

(Hebrews 10:24, 25)

D Bm G D6/F#

As we en - cour - age one an - oth - er To  
 A word when spo - ken at the right time Is,  
 As we with eyes of faith are see - ing The

Em11 A7sus4 A7 D D/C# Gma7/B A13

serve Je - ho - vah faith - ful - ly, We  
 oh, how com - fort - ing to hear! We  
 near - ness of Je - ho - vah's day, We

D Bm G G#°

find the bonds of love are strength - ened; Fine  
 hear these words of con - so - la - tion From  
 need our gath - er - ing to - geth - er To

D/A D#° Em7 G/A A7 Dsus4 D

works bring peace and u - ni - ty. The  
 friends so faith - ful and so dear. How  
 keep us walk - ing in the way. U -

R.H.

# Encourage One Another

G Gma7 G6 F#m Bm D7/A

love we find a - mong God's peo - ple Gives  
 good it is to work to - geth - er With  
 nit - ed with Je - ho - vah's peo - ple, We

Gma7 A9/G F#m7 Bm7 E13sus4 E7 G/A A13

each the cour - age to en - dure. Our  
 those whose hopes and goals we share! We  
 hope to serve e - ter - nal - ly. So

D Bm G G#o

con - gre - ga - tion is a ref - uge, A  
 seek to strength - en one an - oth - er And  
 we en - cour - age one an - oth - er To

D/A D#o Em7 G/A A7 D

place where we can feel se - cure.  
 help each one his bur - den bear.  
 hold to our in - teg - ri - ty.

(See also Luke 22:32; Acts 14:21, 22; Gal. 6:2; 1 Thess. 5:14.)

**SONG 90**

Encourage One Another

**PREVIEW**

Jehovah and Jesus are concerned about the feelings of others. This article will consider what we can learn from their examples. We will also discuss why we need to show fellow feeling and how we can do so.

## Show Concern for the Feelings of Others

*“All of you have . . . fellow feeling.”*—1 PETER 3:8.

WE ENJOY being around people who care about our feelings and welfare. They try to put themselves in our place, to discern what we are thinking and feeling. They anticipate our needs and offer help—sometimes even before we ask for it. We appreciate people who show that they have “fellow feeling”<sup>\*</sup> for us.—**Read 1 Peter 3:8.**

<sup>2</sup> As Christians, we all want to show empathy, or fellow feeling. Realistically, though, we may need to work at it. Why? For one thing, we are imperfect. (Rom. 3:23) So we must fight the inborn tendency to think mainly of ourselves. Also, some of us may struggle to show empathy because of our upbringing or past circumstances. Finally, we could be influenced by the attitude of people around us. In these last days, many do not consider the feelings of others. Rather, they are “lovers of themselves.” (2 Tim. 3:1, 2) What can help us overcome these challenges to our showing concern for the feelings of others?

<sup>3</sup> We can improve in showing fellow feeling by imitating Jehovah God and his Son, Jesus Christ. Jehovah is a God of love, and he sets the best example in showing concern for others. (1 John 4:8) Jesus perfectly imitated his Fa-

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**\* EXPRESSIONS EXPLAINED:** To show “fellow feeling” means to try to understand what others are feeling and to feel the same way ourselves. (Rom. 12:15) In this article, “fellow feeling” and “concern” mean the same thing.

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1. In line with 1 Peter 3:8, why do we enjoy being around people who care about our feelings and welfare?
2. Why may we need to work at showing empathy?
3. (a) How can we improve in showing fellow feeling? (b) What will we consider in this article?

ther's personality. (John 14:9) While on earth, he demonstrated how a human can show compassion. In this article, we will first consider how Jehovah and Jesus have shown concern for the feelings of others. Then we will consider how we can imitate their examples.

#### JEHOVAH'S EXAMPLE OF CONCERN FOR OTHERS

<sup>4</sup> The Bible teaches that Jehovah cares about the feelings of his servants. For example, consider how Jehovah felt when the ancient Israelites went through trials. "During all their distress it was distressing to him," says God's Word. **(Read Isaiah 63:7-9.)** Later, through the prophet Zechariah, Jehovah declared that when his people are mistreated, he takes it personally. Jehovah told his servants: "Whoever touches you touches the pupil of my eye." (Zech. 2:8) What a powerful image of the concern Jehovah has for his people!

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4. How does Isaiah 63:7-9 show that Jehovah cares about the feelings of his servants?

<sup>5</sup> Jehovah does more than just *feel compassion* for his servants who suffer. He *takes action* to help them. For example, when the Israelites were suffering as slaves in Egypt, Jehovah understood their pain and felt moved to relieve it. Jehovah said to Moses: "I have certainly seen the affliction of my people . . . , and I have heard their outcry . . . I well know the pains they suffer. I will go down to rescue them out of the hand of the Egyptians." (Ex. 3:7, 8) Because Jehovah felt compassion for his people, he freed them from slavery. Centuries later, in the Promised Land, the Israelites faced enemy attacks. How did Jehovah respond? He "was moved to pity over their groaning caused by those who oppressed them and those who were treating them abusively." Again, empathy moved Jehovah to help his people. He sent judges to save the Israelites from their enemies. —Judg. 2:16, 18.

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5. Give an example of how Jehovah has taken action to help his servants who suffer.

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Jehovah compassionately freed the Israelites from slavery in Egypt  
(See paragraph 5)



<sup>6</sup> Jehovah shows consideration for the feelings of his people—even when their thinking is not always sound. Consider the case of Jonah. God sent this prophet to proclaim a message of judgment against the Ninevites. When they repented, God chose to spare them. However, Jonah was not happy about this outcome. He “became hot with anger” because his prophecy of doom did not come true. But Jehovah was patient with Jonah and helped him to adjust his thinking. (Jonah 3:10–4:11) In time, Jonah got the point, and he was even used by Jehovah to record this account for our benefit.—Rom. 15:4.\*

<sup>7</sup> Jehovah’s dealings with his people assure us that he has empathy for his servants. He is aware of the pain and suffering of each one of us. Jehovah “truly know[s] the human heart.” (2 Chron. 6:30) He understands our intimate thoughts, our deepest emotions, and our limitations. And “he will not let [us] be tempted beyond what [we] can bear.” (1 Cor. 10:13) How comforting that assurance is!

### JESUS’ EXAMPLE OF CONCERN FOR OTHERS

<sup>8</sup> As a human on earth, Jesus had deep concern for others. At least three factors

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\* Jehovah also responded with compassion to other faithful individuals’ strong emotions. Think of the accounts about Hannah (1 Sam. 1:10-20), Elijah (1 Ki. 19:1-18), and Ebed-melech (Jer. 38:7-13; 39:15-18).

6. Give an example of how Jehovah showed regard for the feelings of someone whose thinking was not sound.

7. Jehovah’s dealings with his servants assure us of what?

8-10. What factors must have contributed to Jesus’ concern for others?

must have contributed to his concern. First, as noted earlier, *Jesus perfectly reflected his heavenly Father’s personality*. Like his Father, Jesus loved people. Although he rejoiced over everything he had helped Jehovah make, Jesus “was especially fond of the sons of men.” (Prov. 8:31) Love moved Jesus to care about the feelings of others.

<sup>9</sup> Second, like Jehovah, *Jesus could read hearts*. He could know people’s motives and feelings. (Matt. 9:4; John 13:10, 11) So when Jesus discerned that people were brokenhearted, concern moved him to provide comfort.—Isa. 61:1, 2; Luke 4:17-21.

<sup>10</sup> Third, *Jesus himself experienced some of the challenges people faced*. For example, Jesus apparently grew up in a poor family. From working with his adoptive father, Joseph, Jesus learned how to do hard physical work. (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3) It seems that Joseph died sometime before the end of Jesus’ ministry. So Jesus likely felt the pain of losing a loved one in death. And Jesus knew what it was like to be in a family with differing religious views. (John 7:5) Those circumstances and others would have helped Jesus to understand the challenges and feelings of ordinary people.

<sup>11</sup> Jesus’ concern was especially evident when he performed miracles. Jesus did not perform miracles out of a mere sense of duty. He was “moved with pity” for those who were suffering. (Matt. 20:29-34; Mark 1:40-42) For example, imagine Jesus’ feelings as he

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11. When was Jesus’ concern especially evident? Explain. (See cover picture.)

took a man away from the crowd and healed his deafness or as he resurrected the only son of a widow. (Mark 7:32-35; Luke 7:12-15) Jesus sympathized with those people and wanted to help them.

<sup>12</sup> Jesus showed fellow feeling for Martha and Mary. When he saw their grief over the death of their brother, Lazarus, “Jesus gave way to tears.” **(Read John 11:32-35.)** He did not weep just because he had lost the company of a close friend. After all, he knew that he was going to resurrect Lazarus. Rather, Jesus wept because he understood and was touched by the heartache of his dear friends.

<sup>13</sup> We benefit greatly from learning about Jesus’ fellow feeling. Of course, we are not perfect as he was. Yet, we love him for the way he treated others. (1 Pet. 1:8) We are encouraged to know that he is now ruling as King of God’s Kingdom. He will soon eliminate all suffering. He is in the best position to help humanity recover from the wounds inflicted by Satan’s rulership, for Jesus too was once human. Indeed, we are blessed to have a Ruler who can “sympathize with our weaknesses.”—Heb. 2:17, 18; 4:15, 16.

#### IMITATE THE EXAMPLE SET BY JEHOVAH AND JESUS

<sup>14</sup> When we consider the example set by Jehovah and Jesus, we ourselves feel

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12. How does John 11:32-35 show Jesus’ fellow feeling for Martha and Mary?

13. How are we encouraged by knowing about Jesus’ fellow feeling?

14. In view of Ephesians 5:1, 2, what do we feel moved to do?

moved to try to show greater fellow feeling. **(Read Ephesians 5:1, 2.)** We cannot read hearts as they do. Even so, we can try to understand the emotions and needs of others. (2 Cor. 11:29) Unlike the selfish world around us, we strive to “look out not only for [our] own interests, but also for the interests of others.”—Phil. 2:4.

<sup>15</sup> Congregation elders in particular need to show fellow feeling. They know that they are accountable for the sheep entrusted to their care. (Heb. 13:17) To help their fellow believers, elders need to be understanding. How can elders demonstrate fellow feeling?

<sup>16</sup> A sympathetic elder spends time with his Christian brothers and sisters. He asks questions and then listens attentively and patiently. That is especially important if one of these dear sheep wants to pour out his heart but struggles to find the right words. (Prov. 20:5) By willingly giving of his time, an elder forms strong bonds of trust, friendship, and love with his brothers.—Acts 20:37.

<sup>17</sup> Many brothers and sisters say that the quality they most value in congregation elders is their concern for the feelings of others. Why? “It is easier to talk to them because you know that they will understand you,” says Adelaide. She adds: “You can discern that they have fellow feeling for you by the way they respond when you talk with them.” A brother recalls appreciatively: “I saw

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15. Who in particular need to show fellow feeling?

16. What does a sympathetic elder do, and why is this important?

17. What do many brothers and sisters say that they most value in elders? Give an example.



# Our congregations thrive when we show fellow feeling

(See paragraphs 15-19)

In congregations around the world, you will find examples of Jehovah's people caring for one another. What examples of fellow feeling can you see here?



How can you add to the loving spirit in your congregation?

tears well up in the eyes of one elder as he contemplated my situation. That image will always remain in my mind.” —Rom. 12:15.

<sup>18</sup> Of course, elders are not the only ones who need to show fellow feeling. All of us can develop this quality. How? Try to understand what family members and fellow believers are going through. Take an interest in the teenagers in the congregation as well as in the sick, the elderly, and those who have lost loved ones in death. Ask how they are doing. Really listen as they express themselves. Help them sense that you truly understand what they are dealing with. Offer to help in whatever way you can. When we do this, we show genuine love in action.—1 John 3:18.

<sup>19</sup> We need to be flexible when trying to help others. Why? Because people react to hardship in different ways. Some are eager to talk, while others are more re-

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18. How can we develop fellow feeling for others?

19. Why do we need to be flexible when trying to help others?

served. So we want to offer help, but we should avoid asking questions that are too personal. (1 Thess. 4:11) Even when others do open up, we may find that we do not always share their point of view. Yet, we need to recognize that this is how *they* feel. We want to be quick to listen and slow to speak.—Matt. 7:1; Jas. 1:19.

<sup>20</sup> Besides showing fellow feeling in the congregation, we want to show this beautiful quality in our ministry. How can we display fellow feeling when making disciples? We will consider that in the following article.

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20. What will we consider in the following article?

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**PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Page 18:** Meetings at the Kingdom Hall offer many opportunities for warm fellowship. We see (1) an elder kindly talking to a young publisher and his mother, (2) a father and his daughter helping an older sister to the car, and (3) two elders listening attentively to a sister seeking guidance.

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## HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- How has Jehovah shown concern for the feelings of others?
- How did Jesus show concern for the feelings of others?
- How can we show fellow feeling?



# Be Forgiving

(Psalm 86:5)

B $\flat$  F/A Gm Dm/F E $\flat$

Lov - ing - ly Je - ho - vah Made pro - vi - sion through his Son  
 We re - ceive such mer - cy When we act like God a - bove  
 Mer - cy is a vir - tue That we all should cul - ti - vate.

B $\flat$ /D Cm11 B $\flat$ /D E $\flat$  F7sus4

For our sins to be for - giv - en And for death to be un - done.  
 And for - give each oth - er free - ly, Show - ing em - pa - thy and love.  
 It will keep us from re - sent - ment, From the bit - ter - ness of hate.

F7 B $\flat$  Cm7 B $\flat$ /D F/E $\flat$  E $\flat$  Cm Dm7 Cm/E $\flat$  Cm7 F

If we tru - ly are re - pen - tant, His for - give - ness we can claim  
 Put - ting up with one an - oth - er, Put - ting hurt - ful - ness a - way;  
 When we im - i - tate Je - ho - vah, Who is un - sur - passed in love,

D7sus4 D7 Gm9 Gm E $\flat$ m/G $\flat$  B $\flat$ /F F7sus4 F7 B $\flat$

On the ba - sis of Christ's ran - som, Ask - ing par - don in his name.  
 Show - ing hon - or to our broth - er, Show - ing love's sur - pass - ing way.  
 We will tru - ly be for - giv - ing; We will be like God a - bove.





10,000 Galaxies