

Song 123 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Jehovah Organizes His People”: (10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

Nu 1:2, 3—What was the purpose of national registrations in Israel? (*it-2* 764)

What spiritual gems from this week’s Bible reading would you like to share regarding Jehovah, the field ministry, or something else?

Bible Reading: (4 min.) Nu 1:1-19 (5)

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

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Return Visit: (4 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Adapt to the needs of the householder, and share an appropriate scripture. (12)

Talk: (5 min.) *w08* 7/1 21—Theme: Why Does the Bible Refer to the 12 Tribes of Israel When There Were Actually 13? (7)

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 57

“Organized to Preach to Everyone”: (10 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Become Jehovah’s Friend—Preach in a Foreign Language* (video category CHILDREN). Review with the audience some of the features of the *JW Language*® app.

Local Needs: (5 min.)

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.) *rr* chap. 4 ¶10-17



Jehovah Organizes His People

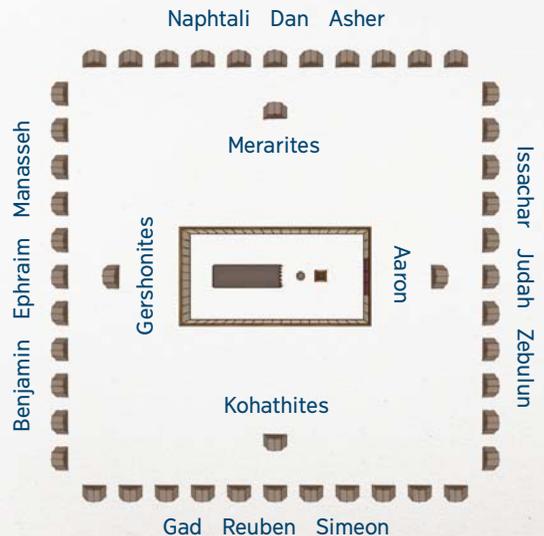
[Play the video *Introduction to Numbers*.]

The Israelites camped according to three-tribe divisions (Nu 1:52, 53; *w94* 12/1 9 ¶14)

The Israelite camp may have totaled 3,000,000 or more (Nu 2:32, 33; *it-1* 397 ¶14)

Jehovah wants his people to worship him in an organized way. That was true for the nation of Israel, and it is true for us today.—1Co 14:33, 40.

ASK YOURSELF, ‘How can I show my complete support for Jehovah’s organization?’



*Loyally Submitting
to Theocratic Order*
(1 Corinthians 14:33)

1. As Jehovah's people sound throughout the earth
Truths about the Kingdom and its priceless worth,
Theocratic order they must all obey
And remain united, loyalty display.

(CHORUS)

*Loyal submission in recognition,
This to our God we owe.
He gives protection, tender affection,
Loyalty to him we show.*

2. God provides his steward and his active force.
These will ever guide us in our Christian course.
So may we be steadfast, seeking God to please,
Loyally proclaiming all his wise decrees!

(Chorus)

Numbers

1 And Jehovah spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Si'nai, in the tent of meeting, on the first day of the second month, in the second year of their coming out of the land of Egypt. He said: **2** “Take a census of the whole assembly of the Israelites individually according to their families, according to their paternal houses, according to the count of the names of all the males. **3** You and Aaron are to register by their companies all those from 20 years old and up who can serve in the army in Israel.

4 “Take with you one man from each tribe; each one is to be a head of his paternal house. **5** These are the names of the men who will stand with you: of Reu'ben, E-li'zur the son of Shed'e-ur; **6** of Sim'e-on, She-lu'mi-el the son of Zu-ri-shad'dai; **7** of Judah, Nah'shon the son of Am-min'a-dab; **8** of Is'sa-char, Ne-than'el the son of Zu'ar; **9** of Zeb'u-lun, E-li'ab the son of He'lon; **10** of the sons of Joseph: from E'phra-im, E-lish'a-ma the son of Am-mi'hud; from Ma-nas'seh, Ga-ma'li-el the son of Pe-dah'zur; **11** of Benjamin, Ab'i-dan the son of Gid-e-o'ni; **12** of Dan, A-hi-e'zer the son of Am-mi-shad'dai; **13** of Ash'er, Pa'gi-el the son of Och'ran; **14** of Gad, E-li'a-saph the son of Deu'el; **15** of Naph'ta-li, A-hi'ra the son of E'nan. **16** These are the ones summoned from the assembly. They are the chieftains of the tribes of their fathers, the heads of the thousands of Israel.”

17 So Moses and Aaron took these men who had been designated by name. **18** They gathered all the assembly on

the first day of the second month, so that they might be registered individually by name, by family, and by their paternal houses, from 20 years old and up, ¹⁹ just as Jehovah had commanded Moses. So he registered them in the wilderness of Si'nai.

²⁰ The sons of Reu'ben, the descendants of Israel's firstborn, were listed by name, by family, and by their paternal houses. All the males from 20 years old and up who could serve in the army were counted individually, ²¹ and the number registered of the tribe of Reu'ben was 46,500.

²² The descendants of Sim'e-on were listed by name, by family, and by their paternal houses. All the males from 20 years old and up who could serve in the army were counted individually, ²³ and the number registered of the tribe of Sim'e-on was 59,300.

²⁴ The descendants of Gad were listed by name, by family, and by their paternal houses. All the males from 20 years old and up who could serve in the army were counted, ²⁵ and the number registered of the tribe of Gad was 45,650.

²⁶ The descendants of Judah were listed by name, by family, and by their paternal houses. All the males from 20 years old and up who could serve in the army were counted, ²⁷ and the number registered of the tribe of Judah was 74,600.

²⁸ The descendants of Is'sa-char were listed by name, by family, and by their paternal houses. All the males from 20 years old and up who could serve in the army were counted,

²⁹ and the number registered of the tribe of Is'sa·char was 54,400.

³⁰ The descendants of Zeb'u·lun were listed by name, by family, and by their paternal houses. All the males from 20 years old and up who could serve in the army were counted, ³¹ and the number registered of the tribe of Zeb'u·lun was 57,400.

³² The descendants of Joseph through E'phra·im were listed by name, by family, and by their paternal houses. All the males from 20 years old and up who could serve in the army were counted, ³³ and the number registered of the tribe of E'phra·im was 40,500.

³⁴ The descendants of Ma·nas'seh were listed by name, by family, and by their paternal houses. All the males from 20 years old and up who could serve in the army were counted, ³⁵ and the number registered of the tribe of Ma·nas'seh was 32,200.

³⁶ The descendants of Benjamin were listed by name, by family, and by their paternal houses. All the males from 20 years old and up who could serve in the army were counted, ³⁷ and the number registered of the tribe of Benjamin was 35,400.

³⁸ The descendants of Dan were listed by name, by family, and by their paternal houses. All the males from 20 years old and up who could serve in the army were counted, ³⁹ and the number registered of the tribe of Dan was 62,700.

⁴⁰ The descendants of Ash'er were listed by name, by family, and by their paternal houses. All the males from 20 years old and up who could serve in the army were counted,⁴¹ and the number registered of the tribe of Ash'er was 41,500.

⁴² The descendants of Naph'ta-li were listed by name, by family, and by their paternal houses. All the males from 20 years old and up who could serve in the army were counted,⁴³ and the number registered of the tribe of Naph'ta-li was 53,400.

⁴⁴ These were registered by Moses together with Aaron and the 12 chieftains of Israel, each representing his paternal house.⁴⁵ All the Israelites from 20 years old and up who could serve in the army in Israel were registered by their paternal house,⁴⁶ and the total number registered was 603,550.

⁴⁷ But the Levites were not registered in among them by the tribe of their fathers.⁴⁸ So Jehovah told Moses:⁴⁹ “Only the tribe of Le'vi you are not to register, and you should not include the number of them along with the other Israelites.⁵⁰ You should appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the Testimony and over all its utensils and over everything that belongs to it. They will carry the tabernacle and all its utensils, and they will minister at it, and they are to camp around the tabernacle.⁵¹ Whenever the tabernacle is to be moved, the Levites should take it down; and when the tabernacle is to be reassembled, the Levites should set it up;

and any unauthorized person who comes near should be put to death.

⁵² “Each Israelite should set up his tent in his assigned camp, each man according to his three-tribe division by their companies. ⁵³ And the Levites should encamp around the tabernacle of the Testimony, so that no indignation may arise against the assembly of the Israelites; and the Levites must be responsible for the care of the tabernacle of the Testimony.”

⁵⁴ The people of Israel did all that Jehovah had commanded Moses. They did just so.

2 Jehovah now spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying: ² “The Israelites should encamp where their three-tribe division is assigned, each man near the banner of his paternal house. They should camp facing the tent of meeting, all around it.

³ “Those camping on the east side, toward the sunrise, will be the three-tribe division of the encampment of Judah by their companies; the chieftain for the sons of Judah is Nah'shon the son of Am-min'a-dab. ⁴ Those registered in his army are 74,600. ⁵ Camping alongside him will be the tribe of Is'sa-char; the chieftain for the sons of Is'sa-char is Ne-than'el the son of Zu'ar. ⁶ Those registered in his army are 54,400. ⁷ Next is the tribe of Zeb'u-lun; the chieftain for the sons of Zeb'u-lun is E-li'ab the son of He'lon. ⁸ Those registered in his army are 57,400.

⁹ “All those registered in the armies of the camp of Judah are 186,400. They should break camp first.

¹⁰ “The three-tribe division of the encampment of Reu'ben by their companies will be toward the south; the chieftain for the sons of Reu'ben is E-li'zur the son of Shed'e-ur. ¹¹ Those registered in his army are 46,500. ¹² Camping alongside him will be the tribe of Sim'e-on; the chieftain for the sons of Sim'e-on is She-lu'mi-el the son of Zu-ri-shad'dai. ¹³ Those registered in his army are 59,300. ¹⁴ Next is the tribe of Gad; the chieftain for the sons of Gad is E-li'a-saph the son of Reu'el. ¹⁵ Those registered in his army are 45,650.

¹⁶ “All those registered in the armies of the camp of Reu'ben are 151,450, and they should break camp second.

¹⁷ “When the tent of meeting is moved, the camp of the Levites should be in the middle of the other camps.

“They should travel in the same order as they encamp, with each in his place, according to their three-tribe divisions.

¹⁸ “The three-tribe division of the encampment of E'phra-im by their companies will be toward the west; the chieftain for the sons of E'phra-im is E-lish'a-ma the son of Am-mi'hud. ¹⁹ Those registered in his army are 40,500. ²⁰ Next to him will be the tribe of Ma-nas'seh; the chieftain for the sons of Ma-nas'seh is Ga-ma'li-el the son of Pe-dah'zur. ²¹ Those registered in his army are 32,200. ²² Next is the tribe of Benjamin; the chieftain for the sons of Benjamin is Ab'i-dan the son of Gid-e-o'ni. ²³ Those registered in his army are 35,400.

²⁴ “All those registered in the armies of the camp of E'phra-im are 108,100, and they should break camp third.

²⁵ “The three-tribe division of the encampment of Dan by their companies will be toward the north; the chieftain for the sons of Dan is A·hi·e·zer the son of Am·mi·shad·dai.

²⁶ Those registered in his army are 62,700. ²⁷ Camping alongside him will be the tribe of Ash'er; the chieftain for the sons of Ash'er is Pa'gi-el the son of Och'ran. ²⁸ Those registered in his army are 41,500. ²⁹ Next is the tribe of Naph'ta·li; the chieftain for the sons of Naph'ta·li is A·hi'ra the son of E'nan. ³⁰ Those registered in his army are 53,400.

³¹ “All those registered in the camp of Dan are 157,600. They should break camp last, according to their three-tribe divisions.”

³² These were the Israelites who were registered according to their paternal houses; the total of those in the camps registered for the army was 603,550. ³³ But the Levites did not get registered along with the other Israelites, just as Jehovah had commanded Moses. ³⁴ The Israelites did everything that Jehovah had commanded Moses. This is how they encamped by their three-tribe divisions and how they broke camp, each by family and according to their paternal houses.

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Nu 1:2, 3—What was the purpose of national registrations in Israel? (*it-2* 764)

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 Jehovah Organizes His People

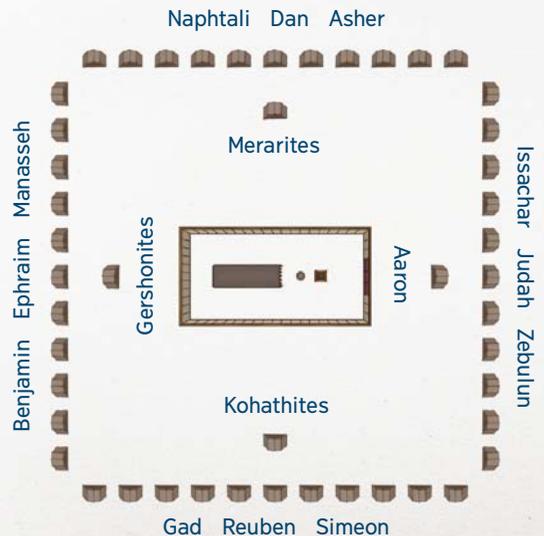
[Play the video *Introduction to Numbers*.]

The Israelites camped according to three-tribe divisions (Nu 1:52, 53; *w94* 12/1 9 ¶14)

The Israelite camp may have totaled 3,000,000 or more (Nu 2:32, 33; *it-1* 397 ¶14)

Jehovah wants his people to worship him in an organized way. That was true for the nation of Israel, and it is true for us today.—1Co 14:33, 40.

ASK YOURSELF, ‘How can I show my complete support for Jehovah’s organization?’



February 8-14 / Numbers 1-2

Song 123 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 minute)

Treasures From God's Word

Jehovah Organizes His People": (10 minutes)

[Play the video *Introduction to Numbers*.]

The Israelites camped according to three-tribe divisions

Numbers 1:52, 53: "Each Israelite should set up his tent in his assigned camp, each man according to his three-tribe division by their companies. And the Levites should encamp around the tabernacle of the Testimony, so that no indignation may arise against the assembly of the Israelites; and the Levites must be responsible for the care of the tabernacle of the Testimony."

w94 12/1 9 paragraph 4

If you had had a bird's-eye view of Israel encamped in the wilderness, what would you have seen? A vast, but orderly,

array of tents housing possibly three million or more people, grouped according to three-tribe divisions to the north, south, east, and west. Peering closer, you would also have noticed another grouping nearer the middle of the camp. These four smaller clusters of tents housed the families of the tribe of Levi. At the very center of the camp, in an area cordoned off by a cloth wall, was a unique structure. This was the "tent of meeting," or tabernacle, which "wise-hearted" Israelites had built according to Jehovah's plan.—Numbers 1:52, 53; 2:3, 10, 17, 18,25; Exodus 35:10.

The Israelite camp may have totaled 3,000,000 or more

Numbers 2:32, 33: These were the Israelites who were registered according to their paternal houses; the total of those in the camps registered for the army was 603,550. But the Levites did not get registered along with the other Israelites, just as Jehovah had commanded Moses.

***it-1* 397 paragraph 4**

The size of this camp of Israel was very great. The above

register figures total 603,550 fighting men, in addition to women and children, old folks and handicapped, 22,000 Levites, and “a vast mixed company” of aliens—perhaps all together 3,000,000 or more. (Exodus 12:38, 44; Numbers 3:21-34, 39) How much area such an encampment would cover is not certain; estimates vary greatly. When the camp was pitched opposite Jericho on the Plains of Moab, it is described as extending “from Beth-jeshimoth to Abel-shittim.”—Numbers 33:49.

Jehovah wants his people to worship him in an organized way. That was true for the nation of Israel, and it is true for us today.—1 Corinthians 14:33, 40.

Diagram: An overhead view of the layout of the camp of Israel. The tabernacle is at the center. Closest to the tabernacle are the families of the tribe of Levi: Aaron to the east, the Kohathites to the south, the Gershonites to the west, and the Merarites to the north. The 12 tribes of Israel are farther away. To the east are Issachar, Judah, and Zebulun. To the south are Gad, Reuben, and Simeon. To the

west are Benjamin, Ephraim, and Manasseh. To the north are Naphtali, Dan, and Asher.

Ask yourself, 'How can I show my complete support for Jehovah's organization?'

Spiritual Gems

Numbers 1:2, 3—What was the purpose of national registrations in Israel?

Numbers 1:2, 3: "Take a census of the whole assembly of the Israelites individually according to their families, according to their paternal houses, according to the count of the names of all the males. You and Aaron are to register by their companies all those from 20 years old and up who can serve in the army in Israel.

it-2 764

An enrollment, usually by name and lineage according to tribe and household. It involved more than a simple census or count of heads. The national registrations referred to in the Bible served various purposes, such as taxation,

assignments of military service, or (for those Levites included) appointments to duties at the sanctuary.

What spiritual gems from this week's Bible reading would you like to share regarding Jehovah, the field ministry, or something else?

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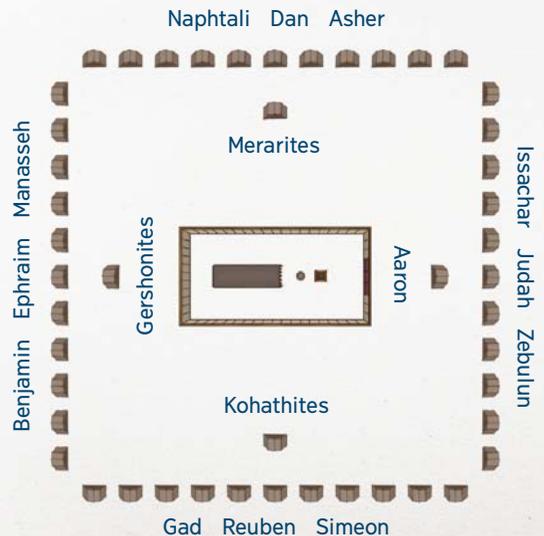
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Will You Serve as an Auxiliary Pioneer in March or April?

Would you like to do more in Jehovah’s service during the Memorial season? (2Co 5:14, 15) During March and April, auxiliary pioneers may choose a 30- or 50-hour requirement. If you are able to participate in this special activity, submit an application to the Congregation Service Committee. Each month, the names of those approved to serve as auxiliary pioneers will be announced to the congregation. In this way, the congregation can support the pioneers in the ministry. May all of us take full advantage of opportunities during the Memorial season to sharpen our preaching skills and to encourage one another.—1Th 5:11.



**“The love the Christ has compels us.”
—2Co 5:14**



SAMPLE CONVERSATIONS

Initial Call

Question: Does God listen to prayers?

Scripture: Ps 65:2

Link: What can we pray about?

▶ FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



• wp21.1 5

Return Visit

Question: What can we pray about?

Scripture: 1Jo 5:14

Link: How does God answer our prayers?

▶ FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



• wp21.1 10

Memorial Invitation Campaign (February 27–March 27)

“We’re here [or calling or writing] to invite you to a special event that will be attended by millions of people. It’s the anniversary of Jesus’ death.” Hand [or text or mail] the person an invitation. “This invitation shows the time and location of the event in our area [or how you can attend online]. We also invite you to a special talk the weekend before.”

Link When Interest Is Shown: Why did Jesus die?



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[w08 7/1 21]

Why is reference generally made to the 12 tribes of Israel when there were actually 13 tribes?

The tribes, or families, of Israel descended from the sons of Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel. This patriarch had 12 sons—Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Dan, Naphtali, Gad, Asher, Issachar, Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin. (Genesis 29:32–30:24; 35:16-18) Eleven of these brothers had tribes named after them, but no tribe was named after Joseph. Instead, two tribes were named after his sons, Ephraim and Manasseh, who received full status as tribal heads. So the number of tribes in Israel amounted to 13. Why, then, does the Bible usually speak of 12 tribes?

Among the Israelites, the men of the tribe of Levi were set apart for service at Jehovah’s tabernacle and later at the temple. Hence, they were exempted from military service. Jehovah told Moses: “Only the tribe of Levi you must not register, and the sum of them you must not take in among the sons of Israel. And you yourself appoint the Levites over the tabernacle of the Testimony and over all its utensils and over everything that belongs to it.”—Numbers 1:49, 50.

The Levites did not receive a territorial allotment in the Promised Land either. Rather, they were assigned 48 cities scattered throughout the territory of Israel.—Numbers 18:20-24; Joshua 21:41.

For these two reasons, the tribe of Levi was not generally included when the tribes were listed. The tribes of Israel were thus usually numbered as 12.—Numbers 1:1-15.

57 *Preaching to All Sorts of People*

(1 Timothy 2:4)

1. We really want to imitate our God,
To be impartial, as we know he is.
To save all sorts of people is his will;
He welcomes all to come and to be his.

(CHORUS)

*It's the person, not the place;
It's the heart and not the face.
God's message to all people we extend.
So because we really care,
We keep preaching ev'rywhere:
"All sorts of people can become God's friend."*

2. It doesn't matter where they may be found
Or what at first they might appear to be.
What really counts is what they are at heart—
The inner self, the one Jehovah sees.

(Chorus)

3. Jehovah welcomes all who make the choice
To leave the world and all its ways behind.
This we have learned, and this we want to share,
And so we preach to people of all kinds.

(Chorus)

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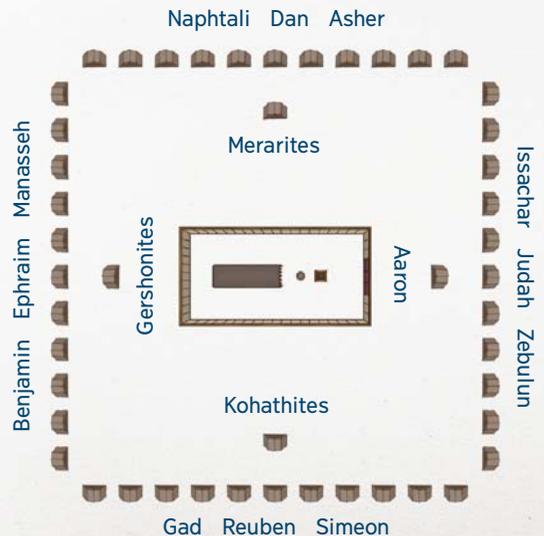
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Organized to Preach to Everyone

Just as Jehovah organized the Israelites, he organizes his people today to do his will. Around the world, branch offices, circuits, congregations, and field service groups all function to further the preaching of the good news. We preach to everyone, including those who speak another language.—Re 14:6, 7.

Have you considered learning another language in order to help someone learn the truth? Even if you cannot devote the time needed to learn a language, you can use the *JW Language* app to learn a simple presentation. Then, after using it in the ministry, you may experience the same joy that our first-century brothers had when people from other lands were amazed to hear “the magnificent things of God” in their own language.—Ac 2:7-11.



WATCH THE VIDEO *BECOME JEHOVAH’S FRIEND—PREACH IN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:



- When might you use the *JW Language* app?



- What are some of its features?



- What languages do people speak in your territory?

- What should you do if someone who shows interest in the Kingdom message speaks another language?—od 100-101 ¶39-41

**People of all languages
need to hear the
good news**

Become Jehovah's Friend

Preach in a Foreign Language

Raw transcript

Sometimes in service, we meet people who don't speak the language that we do. What is it? Wouldn't it be cool if we had a translator robot that could help us? Get out of here, get out of here! Well, we can't use machines to preach. But we have something better! JW Language! You can learn to speak to anyone with this! First, pick the language you already speak. Second, choose a language you want to learn. Third, find "Preaching Skills." What do you need? "Greetings and Introductions"! Good. Because we need to know how to say hi to them, right? So let's look at this one. This is so cool! Wow! I can talk to Chinese people! Let's go in service! What is it? Hello. I am pleased to meet you. Wow! Come in, come in! Come in, come in!

commands: “You must love Jehovah your God with all your heart” and “you must love your fellow man as yourself.” (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18) When we obey these commands by showing unselfish love, we reflect Jehovah’s own love. As the apostle John wrote, “we love, because he first loved us.” (1 John 4:8, 19) Hence, “the face of a man” represents love.

⁹ To whom do these attributes belong? Since the faces belong to the cherubs, the attributes belong to all whom the visionary cherubs represent—Jehovah’s heavenly family of loyal spirit creatures. (Rev. 5:11) Moreover, as Jehovah is the Source of the cherubs’ life, he is also the Source of their attributes. (Ps. 36:9) Thus, the cherubs’ faces picture attributes belonging to Jehovah himself. (Job 37:23; Ps. 99:4; Prov. 2:6; Mic. 7:18) What are a few ways in which Jehovah shows these outstanding attributes?

¹⁰ **Justice.** As the God who “loves justice,” Jehovah “treats none with partiality.” (Ps. 37:28; Deut. 10:17) Thus, the opportunity to become and remain his ser-

9. To whom do the attributes associated with the cherubs’ faces belong?
10, 11. What are some ways that we are benefiting from expressions of Jehovah’s four cardinal attributes?

vants and to receive eternal blessings is open to all of us regardless of our social standing or background. **Wisdom.** As the God who “is wise in heart,” Jehovah has provided a book full of “practical wisdom.” (Job 9:4; Prov. 2:7) Applying the Bible’s wise counsel helps us to deal with life’s day-to-day challenges and to live meaningful lives. **Power.** As the God who is “great in power,” Jehovah uses his holy spirit to give us “power beyond what is normal.” This strengthens us to cope with whatever severe and painful trials we may face.—Nah. 1:3; 2 Cor. 4:7; Ps. 46:1.

¹¹ **Love.** As the God “abundant in loyal love,” Jehovah never abandons his faithful worshippers. (Ps. 103:8; 2 Sam. 22:26) Thus, even if we are saddened because ill health or advanced age prevents us from doing as much in Jehovah’s service as before, we draw comfort from knowing that Jehovah remembers the labors of love we have rendered to him in the past. (Heb. 6:10) Clearly, we already greatly benefit from Jehovah’s expressions of justice, wisdom, power, and love, and we will continue to benefit from these four cardinal attributes in times to come.

¹² Of course, we should keep in mind that what we as humans are able to understand about Jehovah's qualities amounts to "just the fringes of his ways." (Job 26:14) "Understanding the Almighty is beyond our reach," for "his greatness is unsearchable." (Job 37:23; Ps. 145:3) Hence, we realize that Jehovah's qualities cannot be numbered or put into categories. **(Read Romans 11:33, 34.)** In fact, Ezekiel's vision itself reveals that God's attributes are not limited in number or in scope. (Ps. 139:17, 18) What aspect of the vision highlights that important truth?

"Four Faces . . . Four Wings . . . Four Sides"

¹³ Ezekiel saw in vision that each of the cherubs had, not one, but *four* faces. What does that indicate? Recall that in God's Word, the number four is often used to represent that which is fully rounded out, all embracing, or complete. (Isa. 11:12; Matt. 24:31; Rev. 7:1) Significantly, in this particular vision, Ezekiel mentions the number four no less than 11 times! (Ezek. 1:5-18) What, then, can we conclude? Just as

12. What should we keep in mind about our ability to understand Jehovah's qualities?

13, 14. What do the four faces of the cherubs represent, and why can we draw that conclusion?

the *four* cherubs represent *all* other loyal spirit creatures, so the *four* faces of the cherubs *when viewed together* stand for, or embrace, *all* the attributes that Jehovah possesses.*[2]

¹⁴ To illustrate how the meaning of the cherubs' four faces may include more than just four qualities, consider as a comparison what takes place with the four wheels in this vision. Each wheel is impressive, but when the four wheels are viewed together, they form more than four impressive individual wheels—they are the foundation on which the chariot rests. In a similar way, when the four faces are viewed together, they form more than four impressive individual attributes—they are the foundation of Jehovah's awe-inspiring personality.

Jehovah Is Close to All His Loyal Servants

¹⁵ Through this first vision, Ezekiel learned a vital and heartening truth about his relationship with Jehovah. What was it? That truth is indicated in the

*[2] Through the years, our publications have considered some 50 different attributes of Jehovah.—See the *Watch Tower Publications Index* under “Jehovah,” subheading “Qualities by Name.”

15. What heartening truth did Ezekiel learn through the first vision he received?

“I WAS WATCHING THE *LIVING* CREATURES”

SEE PARAGRAPH 4

Ezekiel had no doubt seen colossal sculptures of winged bulls and lions with human heads standing as guardians in front of palaces and temples. Such statues were found throughout ancient Assyria and Babylonia. Like all onlookers, he must have stared in wonder at these formidable creatures, some standing nearly 20 feet tall. Still, no matter how powerful these creatures looked, they were lifeless, carved from stone.

In contrast, the four creatures that Ezekiel saw in vision were “*living* creatures.” What a striking difference! This sight had such an impact on Ezekiel that he mentioned the words “*living* creatures” 11 times in the introduction of his prophecy. (Ezek. 1:5-22) The vision of the four living creatures moving in unison below God’s throne must have deeply impressed on Ezekiel that Jehovah is in full control of all creation. Today, the same vision vividly impresses us with the greatness and mightiness of Jehovah and the magnificence of his sovereignty. —1 Chron. 29:11.

opening words of the prophet’s book. After stating that he was “in the land of the Chaldeans,” Ezekiel, speaking about his own experience, added: “*There* the hand of Jehovah came upon him.” (Ezek. 1:3) Note

that Ezekiel stated that he received the vision, not in Jerusalem, but *there*—in Babylon.*^[3] So, what did that fact reveal to Ezekiel? This: Although he was a lowly exile who had been separated from Jerusalem and its temple, he had not been separated from Jehovah and His worship. Jehovah’s appearing to Ezekiel in Babylon demonstrated that rendering pure worship to God did not depend on location or position. Instead, it depended on Ezekiel’s heart condition and his desire to serve Jehovah.

¹⁶ Why is the truth that Ezekiel learned of great comfort to us today? It assures us that when we serve Jehovah wholeheartedly, he remains close to us no matter where we may live, how distressed we may feel, or under what circumstances in life we may find ourselves. (Ps. 25:14; Acts 17:27) Jehovah, moved by his abundant loyal love for each of his servants, does not quickly give up on us. (Ex. 34:6) Therefore, we are never beyond the reach of Jehovah’s

*[3] The single word “there,” notes one Bible commentator, “captures the amazement of the moment more than any other. . . . God is *there* in Babylon! What comfort!”

16. (a) What comforting assurance can we draw from Ezekiel’s vision?
(b) What moves you to serve Jehovah with all your heart?

loyal love. (Ps. 100:5; Rom. 8:35-39) Furthermore, this impressive vision of Jehovah's holiness and his surpassing might reminds us that Jehovah is worthy of receiving our worship. (Rev. 4:9-11) Indeed, how thankful we are that Jehovah used such visions as aids to help us understand some important truths about himself and his attributes! Gaining deeper insight into Jehovah's appealing attributes draws us closer to him and moves us to praise and serve him with all our heart and all our strength.—Luke 10:27.

¹⁷ Sadly, though, in Ezekiel's day, pure worship was defiled. How did that come about? How did Jehovah react? And what significance do those ancient events have for us today? These questions will be considered in the following chapters.

17. What questions will we consider in the following chapters?

YOUR PLACE IN PURE WORSHIP

- 1** Why do the faces of a man, a lion, a bull, and an eagle especially reflect Jehovah's strength and mightiness?
- 2** In what ways are you already benefiting from expressions of Jehovah's outstanding attributes?
- 3** Why can we conclude that the four faces of the cherubs when viewed together represent *all* of Jehovah's attributes?
- 4** How does this vision of Ezekiel assure you that you are never beyond the reach of Jehovah's love?

1

Jehovah's Attributes

(Revelation 4:11)

1. Jehovah our God, exalted in might,
Creator of life and Provider of light.
Creation speaks of your power so grand;
The heavens and earth forever stand.
2. Your heavenly throne, on justice it stands.
To us you make known all your righteous commands.
And as we turn to your Word, we can see
Your wisdom revealed so brilliantly.
3. The greatest of all is your perfect love.
Beyond all compare are your gifts from above.
Your attributes and your glorious name,
With joy and with zeal, we will proclaim.

DECEMBER 2020

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



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COVER PICTURE:

A family who live where our Christian work is restricted persevere in their worship with full faith that God has good things in store for them (See study article 50, paragraph 4)

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1. Ev'ry newborn child, Ev'ry drop of rain,
Ev'ry golden ray of sun, Each head of grain—
All are gifts from God; They reveal his way.
Miracles performed by him sustain us each day.

(CHORUS)

*So, what are we to do with a gift so rare
But to love the One who gave it and show him we care.
No matter what we do, We never can earn it.
This gift is still a gift—The miracle of life.*

2. Others may give up, Lose their will to try,
Echoing the wife of Job: “Curse God and die.”
We are not that way; Praise to God we give,
Thanking him for ev'ry precious moment we live.

(CHORUS)

*So, what are we to do with a gift so rare
But to love the ones around us and show them we care.
No matter what we do, We never can earn it.
This gift is still a gift—The miracle of life.*

“How Are the Dead to Be Raised Up?”

“Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?”

—1 COR. 15:55.

SONG 141

The Miracle of Life

PREVIEW

The second half of 1 Corinthians chapter 15 contains details about the resurrection, especially that of anointed Christians. However, what Paul wrote is also of interest to those of the other sheep. This article will show how the hope of the resurrection should affect our life now and give us reason to look forward to the future.

MOST people now serving Jehovah hope to live forever on earth. A remnant of spirit-anointed Christians, however, hope to be raised to life in heaven. These anointed ones are keenly interested in what their future life will be like, but what about those with the earthly hope? As we will see, the heavenly resurrection will lead to blessings also for those who have the hope of living forever on earth. So regardless of whether our hope is heavenly or earthly, we should be interested in the heavenly resurrection.

² God inspired some of Jesus' disciples in the first century to write about the heavenly hope. The apostle John explained: "We are now children of God, but it has not yet been made manifest what we will be. We do know that when he is made manifest we will be like him." (1 John 3:2) So anointed Christians do not know what they will be like when they are raised to heaven with spirit bodies. However, they will in a literal sense see Jehovah when they receive their reward. The Bible does not reveal every detail about the heavenly resurrection, but the apostle Paul did provide some information about it. The anointed will be with Christ when he brings "to nothing all government and all authority and pow-

1-2. Why should all Christians be interested in the heavenly resurrection?

er.” That includes “the last enemy, death.” Finally, Jesus—along with his corulers—will subject himself and all things to Jehovah. (1 Cor. 15:24-28) What a climax that will be!*

³ Paul’s belief in the resurrection helped him to endure various trials. (Read 1 Corinthians 15:30-32.) He told the Corinthians: “Daily I face death.” Paul also wrote: “I have fought with wild beasts at Ephesus.” Perhaps he was alluding to his fighting real animals at an arena in Ephesus. (2 Cor. 1:8; 4:10; 11:23) Or he may have been referring to hostile Jews and others who were like “wild beasts.” (Acts 19:26-34; 1 Cor. 16:9) Whichever it was, Paul faced serious perils. Yet, he still had a positive outlook on the future.—2 Cor. 4:16-18.

⁴ We are living in dangerous times. Some of our brothers have been victims of crime. Others live in war-torn areas where their safety is far from guaranteed. Still others serve Jehovah at the risk of their life or freedom in lands where the preaching

* “Questions From Readers” in this issue addresses Paul’s comments found at 1 Corinthians 15:29.

3. As indicated at 1 Corinthians 15:30-32, Paul’s belief in the resurrection helped him to do what?

4. How has the hope of the resurrection strengthened Christians today? (See cover picture.)

work is restricted or even banned. Yet, all these brothers and sisters persevere in their worship of Jehovah, becoming examples for us. They are secure in the knowledge that even if they lose their life at the present time, Jehovah has something far better in mind for them in the future.

⁵ Paul warned his brothers about a dangerous viewpoint that some had: “If the dead are not to be raised up, ‘let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we are to die.’” That viewpoint actually existed even before Paul’s day. He may have been quoting Isaiah 22:13, which refers to the attitude of the Israelites. Instead of drawing close to God, they pursued a life of pleasure. Basically, the attitude of those Israelites was “here today, gone tomorrow,” a view common even today. However, the bad outcome to the nation of Israel is a matter of record.—2 Chron. 36:15-20.

⁶ Clearly, the fact that Jehovah can resurrect the dead should affect our choice of associates. The brothers in Corinth needed to guard against associating with those who denied the resurrection. There is a lesson for us today: No good can come from

5. What dangerous viewpoint could weaken our faith in the resurrection?

6. How should the resurrection hope affect our choice of associates?

choosing as regular associates those who have a live-for-the-moment outlook. Being with such ones can ruin a true Christian's viewpoint and habits. In fact, it might lead him to have a lifestyle that includes what God hates—sin. Thus, Paul strongly urged: “Come to your senses in a righteous way and do not practice sin.”—1 Cor. 15:33, 34.

WHAT SORT OF BODY?

⁷ **Read 1 Corinthians 15:35-38.** An inquirer who wanted to cast doubt on the resurrection might have asked: “How are the dead to be raised up?” We do well to consider Paul's answer because many people today have personal views about life after death. But what does the Bible teach?

⁸ When someone dies, his body decomposes. But the One who created the universe from nothing can resurrect that person, giving him a suitable body. (Gen. 1:1; 2:7) Paul used an illustration to show that God would not need to bring back the same body. Think of “a bare grain,” or a plant “seed.” A seed of grain that is planted in the ground germinates

7. What question about the resurrection might some have asked, as shown at 1 Corinthians 15:35-38?

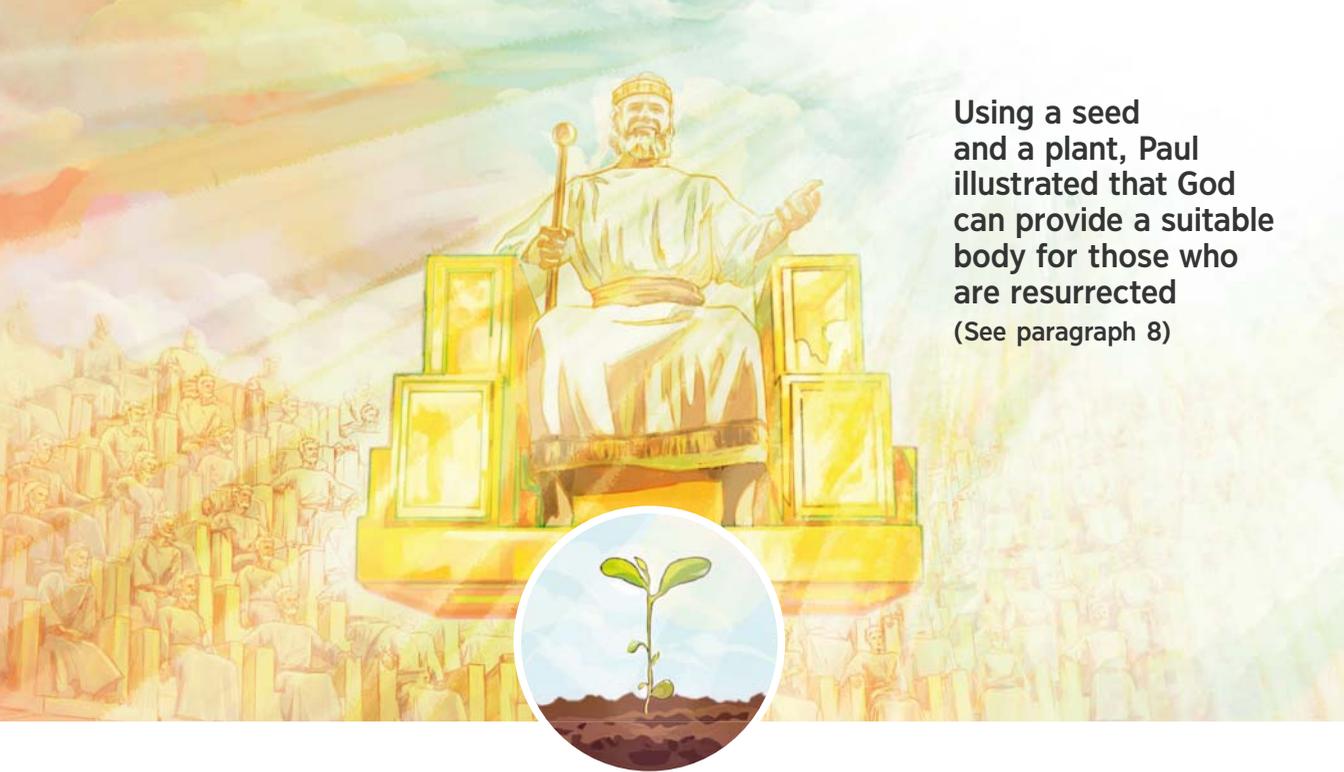
8. What illustration can help us to understand the resurrection to heavenly life?



and becomes a new plant. The resulting plant is quite different from the small seed. Paul used this comparison to show that our Creator can provide “a body just as it [pleases] him.”

⁹ Read 1 Corinthians 15:39-41. Paul noted that there is great diversity in creation. For example, there are different fleshly bodies, such as cattle, birds, and fish. He stated that in the sky, we see differences between the sun and the moon. And he noted that “one star differs from another star in

9. As to bodies, 1 Corinthians 15:39-41 calls attention to what differences?



Using a seed and a plant, Paul illustrated that God can provide a suitable body for those who are resurrected (See paragraph 8)

glory.” Yes, even if we may not discern it with the naked eye, there are what scientists call red giant stars, white dwarfs, and yellow stars, such as our sun. Paul also stated that “there are heavenly bodies and earthly bodies.” How so? Well, on earth, we have bodies of flesh, but in heaven there are spirit bodies, like the ones the angels have.

¹⁰ Note what Paul said next: “So it is with the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised up in incorruption.” Of course, upon dying, the human body decays and returns to the dust.

10. How might differences in bodies relate to the resurrection?

(Gen. 3:19) So how can it be that a body is “raised up in incorruption”? Paul was not speaking of a human who is resurrected to life on earth, such as those raised by Elijah, Elisha, and Jesus. Paul was referring to a person who is resurrected with a heavenly body, that is, “a spiritual one.”—1 Cor. 15:42-44.

¹¹ When Jesus walked the earth, he had a fleshly body. But when he was resurrected, he “became a life-giving spirit” and returned to heaven. Likewise, anointed Christians would be resurrected to spirit life. Paul explained: “Just as we have borne the image of the one made of dust, we will bear also the image of the heavenly one.”—1 Cor. 15:45-49.

¹² Paul was reaching the climax of his discussion of the resurrection. It is important to note that Jesus was not resurrected with a human body. Paul pointedly said: “Flesh and blood cannot inherit God’s Kingdom” in heaven. (1 Cor. 15:50) The apostles and other anointed ones would not be resurrected to heaven with corruptible bodies of flesh and blood. When would they be resurrected? Paul stressed that this resurrection still lay ahead; it was not something they would experience right after

11-12. What change did Jesus experience when he was resurrected, and how do the anointed experience something similar?

they died. By the time Paul wrote 1 Corinthians, some disciples had already “fallen asleep in death,” for example, the apostle James. (Acts 12:1, 2) Other apostles and anointed ones would yet fall “asleep in death.”—1 Cor. 15:6.

VICTORY OVER DEATH

¹³ Both Jesus and Paul pointed forward to a special time in history—Christ’s presence. That presence would be marked by wars, earthquakes, pestilences, and other global developments. We have seen this Bible prophecy being fulfilled since 1914. There would be another outstanding part of that sign. Jesus said that the good news of God’s established Kingdom would be preached “in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations, and then the end [would] come.” (Matt. 24:3, 7-14) Paul pointed out that “the presence of the Lord” would also be a time of resurrection for anointed Christians who had “fallen asleep in death.”—1 Thess. 4: 14-16; 1 Cor. 15:23.

¹⁴ Anointed ones who today finish their earthly course are instantly raised to life in the heavens.

13. How would Jesus’ presence be marked?

14. What do anointed ones who pass away during Christ’s presence experience?



Those who are changed “in the blink of an eye”
will share with Jesus in smashing the nations
(See paragraph 15)

This is confirmed by Paul’s words recorded at 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52: “We will not all fall asleep in death, but we will all be changed, in a moment, in the blink of an eye, during the last trumpet.” These words of Paul are now undergoing fulfillment! Upon their resurrection, these brothers of Christ will have complete joy; they will “always be with the Lord.”—1 Thess. 4:17.

¹⁵ The Bible tells us what work those who are changed “in the blink of an eye” will do in heaven. Jesus says to them: “To the one who conquers and observes my deeds down to the end, I will give authority over the nations, and he will shepherd the people with an iron rod so that they will be broken to pieces like clay vessels, just as I have received from my Father.” (Rev. 2:26, 27) They will follow their Commander in the task at hand—shepherding the nations with a rod of iron.—Rev. 19:11-15.

¹⁶ Clearly, the anointed will be victorious over death. (1 Cor. 15:54-57) Their resurrection will put them in position to share in the victory over earth-wide wickedness during the coming war of Armageddon. Millions of other Christian men and women will “come out of the great tribulation,” surviving into the new world. (Rev. 7:14) Those survivors on earth will be eyewitnesses to another victory over death—the resurrection of billions of people who died in the past. Just imagine the joy when that victorious event occurs! (Acts 24:15) And all those who prove completely loyal to Jehovah will be

15. What work awaits those who will be changed “in the blink of an eye”?

16. How will many humans be victorious over death?

victorious even over inherited death. They will be able to live forever.

¹⁷ Every Christian now alive should be grateful for the reassuring words that Paul wrote to the Corinthians regarding the resurrection. We have every reason to show that we accept Paul's urging to be fully occupied now "in the work of the Lord." (Read **1 Corinthians 15:58.**) If we loyally and actively share in that work, we will put ourselves in line to experience a future filled with joy. That future will be more wonderful than anything we can imagine. It certainly will confirm that our labor has not been in vain in connection with the Lord.

17. With 1 Corinthians 15:58 in mind, what should we do now?

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- As we face perils, how should the resurrection hope affect us?
- What share will those who are changed "in the blink of an eye" have with Christ?
- Why is the counsel found at 1 Corinthians 15:58 appropriate for us today?

SONG 140

Life Without End—At Last!

140 *Life Without End—At Last!*

(John 3:16)

1. Can you see with your mind's eye,
Peoples dwelling together?
Sorrow has passed. Peace at last!
Life without tears or pain.

(CHORUS)

*Sing out with joy of heart!
You too can have a part.
Live for the day when you'll say,
"Life without end, at last!"*

2. In those days all will be young,
All at peace with Jehovah.
Troubles are gone, from now on,
No need to weep or fear.

(Chorus)

3. Paradise all will enjoy
As we sing of God's glory.
Long as we live, we will give
Honor and praise to God.

(Chorus)