

Monday, June 14

What will happen to the one who falls with no one to help him up?—Ecclesiastes 4:10.

Those who have moved to a new assignment need, not pity, but understanding. They may be struggling to deal with their own health problems or those of their relative. They may be grieving over the death of a loved one. And they also may grieve, even if in private, over the loss of association with their spiritual family in their former assignment. It takes time to process such deep and often very mixed emotions. In the meantime, your support and example can help them to adjust. “In my previous assignment, I conducted Bible studies every day,” says a sister who served for many years in a foreign land. “In my new one, it was difficult even to get the opportunity to open the Bible or to show a video in the ministry. But local publishers invited me on their calls and studies. This gave me a more positive outlook. I learned to start conversations in the new territory. All of this helped me to regain joy.” *w19.08 22 paragraph 10; 24 paragraphs 13-14*

Tuesday, June 15

I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.—Philippians 4:2.

Like Euodia and Syntyche, we may face a major obstacle to cultivating a close bond of love with others—the tendency to focus on imperfections. All of us make mistakes every day. If we stay focused on the imperfections of others, our love for them will cool. For example, if a brother forgets to help us clean the Kingdom Hall, we may become irritated. If we then begin to list all the other mistakes we know our brother has made, our irritation will grow and our love for him will diminish. If you find yourself in a similar situation, it would be good to reflect on this fact: Jehovah sees our imperfections as well as those of our brother. Yet, in spite of these imperfections, he still loves our brother and he still loves us. For that reason, we need to imitate Jehovah's love and keep a positive view of our brothers. When we work hard to love our brothers, we strengthen our bond of unity with them.—Philippians 2:1, 2. *w19.08* 9-10 paragraphs 7-8

Wednesday, June 16

Jehovah . . . takes note of the humble.—Psalm 138:6.

Jehovah loves humble people. Only those who are truly humble can have a warm, personal relationship with him. On the other hand, “the haughty he knows only from a distance.” All of us want to please Jehovah and experience his warm love, so we have good reasons to learn to cultivate humility. Humility is lowliness of mind and freedom from pride or arrogance. The Bible indicates that a humble person has a proper view of his relationship with Jehovah God and with his fellow man. The humble person acknowledges that everyone is superior to him in some way. (Philippians 2:3, 4) Some people only appear to be humble. They may have an unassuming personality. Or they may show deference or politeness because of their culture and upbringing. But deep down, they may actually be very prideful. Sooner or later, they will reveal what they truly are at heart.—Luke 6:45.

w19.09 2 paragraph 1, 3-4

Thursday, June 17

He brings vengeance on those . . . who do not obey the good news about our Lord Jesus.—2 Thessalonians 1:8.

“The good news about our Lord Jesus” includes all the truths that Jesus taught. We obey the good news when we apply it in our lives. That obedience includes keeping Kingdom interests in first place, living by God’s righteous standards, and announcing God’s Kingdom. (Matthew 6:33; 24:14) It also includes supporting Christ’s anointed brothers as they care for their weighty responsibilities. (Matthew 25:31-40) Soon they will be able to return the kindness shown them by those of the “other sheep.” (John 10:16) How so? Before the war of Armageddon begins, all of the 144,000 will have been raised to heaven as immortal spirits. They will then be part of the heavenly armies that will crush Gog and safeguard “a great crowd” of sheeplike ones. (Revelation 2:26, 27; 7:9, 10) Yes, what a privilege the great crowd will have had to support Jehovah’s anointed servants while these were still on earth! *w19.09* 12-13 paragraphs 16-18

Friday, June 18

You will find refreshment.—Matthew 11:29.

Why is it refreshing for us to do the work Jesus has given us? Because we have the best overseers. Jehovah, our Supreme Overseer, is not a thankless or harsh master. He appreciates the work we do. (Hebrews 6:10) And he gives us the power that we need to carry our load of responsibility. (2 Corinthians 4:7; Galatians 6:5, footnote.) Jesus, our King, leads by example. (John 13:15) And the elders who shepherd us try to imitate Jesus, “the great shepherd.” (Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 5:2) They strive to be kind, encouraging, and courageous as they feed and protect us. Also, we have the best companions. No other people have a sense of purpose or a bond of love like ours. Just think: We have the privilege of working with people who have the highest moral standards but who are not self-righteous. They consider others superior to them. They view us not only as fellow workers but also as friends. And that bond is so close that they are willing to give their lives for us! *w19.09 20* paragraph 1; 23 paragraphs 12-14

Saturday, June 19

You are not in darkness, so that the day should overtake you as it would thieves.—1 Thessalonians 5:4.

In his exhortation, the apostle Paul mentions “Jehovah’s day.” (1 Thessalonians 5:1-6) As used in this context, this refers to the time period that begins with the attack on “Babylon the Great,” the world empire of false religion, and ends with Armageddon. (Revelation 16:14, 16; 17:5) Paul also tells us how we can make sure that we are ready for “Jehovah’s day.” We should “not sleep on as the rest do.” We must “stay awake” and remain alert to the danger of compromising our neutrality by getting drawn into the world’s political issues. If we were to get involved, we could become “part of the world.” (John 15:19) We know that God’s Kingdom is the only hope for world peace. We also want to help others wake up to what the Bible foretold would happen in the world. Once the great tribulation begins, it will be too late for people to turn to Jehovah. That is why our preaching work is so urgent! *w19.10* 8 paragraph 3; 9 paragraphs 5-6

Sunday, June 20

Take a scroll and write in it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel and Judah.—Jeremiah 36:2.

When the time came for the contents of the scroll to be revealed, Jeremiah had to rely on his friend Baruch to deliver the message. (Jeremiah 36:5, 6) Baruch courageously fulfilled his dangerous assignment. Can you imagine how proud Jeremiah must have felt when Baruch went to the temple courtyard and did what he had been asked to do? (Jeremiah 36:8-10) The princes of Judah heard what Baruch had done, and they commanded him to read the scroll aloud to them! (Jeremiah 36:14, 15) The princes decided to tell King Jehoiakim what Jeremiah had said. King Jehoiakim got so angry when he heard the words written by Jeremiah that he burned the scroll and ordered the arrest of Jeremiah and Baruch. However, Jeremiah took another scroll, gave it to Baruch, and as Jeremiah dictated Jehovah's message, Baruch wrote "all the words of the scroll that King Jehoiakim of Judah had burned in the fire."—Jeremiah 36:26-28, 32.

w19.11 3-4 paragraphs 4-6

Song 134 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

 TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

“Train Your Children to Love Jehovah”:
(10 min.)

Spiritual Gems: (10 min.)

De 5:21—What does the law against covetousness teach us? (w19.02 22 ¶11)

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.) De 5:1-21 (5)

 APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

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Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 01 point 3 (8)

 LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 105

“Show Love in the Family”: (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Display Unfailing Love in Your Family* (video category PROGRAMS AND EVENTS).

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)
rr chap. 9 ¶27-32, boxes 9C and 9D

 Train Your Children to Love Jehovah

Parents must cultivate their own love for Jehovah
(De 6:5; w05 6/15 20 ¶11)

They must set a good example for their children
(De 6:6; w07 5/15 15-16)

They must teach their children often about Jehovah
(De 6:7; w05 6/15 21 ¶14)

In addition to family worship, what are some occasions when you might help your children to develop love for Jehovah and his principles?



134 *Children Are a Trust From God*

(Psalm 127:3-5)

1. When a man becomes a father

And a woman has a child of her own,
They share a trust, they must remember,
That is not theirs, not theirs alone.
The gift they share is from Jehovah;
Of life and love he is the one true Source.
To parents he gives sure direction
That they may follow the wisest course.

(CHORUS)

*A sacred trust you have been given;
A precious life is in your hands.
You can bestow the greatest favor;
Instruct your child in God's commands.*

2. All the words God has commanded—

They must always prove to be on your heart.
These words you'll speak to sons and daughters;
This is your trust, this is your part.
To them you'll speak along your roadway,
When you rise up and when you are at rest.
In years to come, may they remember,
May they be faithful, may they be blessed.

(Chorus)

Deuteronomy 5-6

5 Moses then summoned all Israel and said to them: “Hear, O Israel, the regulations and the judicial decisions that I am announcing to you today, and you must learn them and carefully observe them. ² Jehovah our God made a covenant with us in Hor'eb. ³ It was not with our forefathers that Jehovah made this covenant, but with us, all of us alive here today. ⁴ Jehovah spoke face-to-face with you in the mountain, out of the fire. ⁵ I was standing between Jehovah and you at that time to convey to you the word of Jehovah, for you were afraid because of the fire and did not go up the mountain. He said:

⁶ “I am Jehovah your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ⁷ You must never have any other gods besides me.

⁸ “You must not make for yourself a carved image or a form like anything that is in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. ⁹ You must not bow down to them nor be led to serve them, for I, Jehovah your God, am a God who requires exclusive devotion, bringing punishment for the error of fathers upon sons, upon the third generation and upon the fourth generation of those who hate me, ¹⁰ but showing loyal love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments.

¹¹ “You must not take up the name of Jehovah your God in a worthless way, for Jehovah will not leave anyone unpunished who takes up his name in a worthless way.

¹² “Observe the Sabbath day to keep it sacred, just as Jehovah your God commanded you. ¹³ You are to labor and do all your work in six days, ¹⁴ but the seventh day is a sabbath to Jehovah your God. You must not do any work, neither you nor your son nor your daughter nor your slave man nor your slave girl nor your bull nor your donkey nor any of your domestic animals nor your foreign resident who is inside your cities, in order that your slave man and your slave girl may rest the same as you. ¹⁵ Remember that you became a slave in the land of Egypt and that Jehovah your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. That is why Jehovah your God commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

¹⁶ “Honor your father and your mother, just as Jehovah your God has commanded you, so that you may live a long time and you may prosper in the land that Jehovah your God is giving you.

¹⁷ “You must not murder.

¹⁸ “Neither must you commit adultery.

¹⁹ “Neither must you steal.

²⁰ “Neither must you testify to a falsehood against your fellow man.

²¹ “Neither must you desire your fellow man’s wife. Neither must you selfishly desire your fellow man’s house nor his field nor his slave man nor his slave girl nor his bull nor his donkey nor anything that belongs to your fellow man.’

²² “These commandments Jehovah spoke to all your congregation on the mountain, out of the fire, the cloud, and the thick gloom, with a loud voice, and he added nothing further; then he wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.

²³ “But as soon as you had heard the voice out of the darkness, while the mountain was burning with fire, all the heads of your tribes and the elders approached me. ²⁴ Then you said, ‘Here Jehovah our God has shown us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice out of the fire. Today we have seen that God can speak with man and he can keep living. ²⁵ Now, why should we die? For this great fire may consume us. If we continue hearing the voice of Jehovah our God, we are sure to die. ²⁶ For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the fire as we did and yet goes on living? ²⁷ You yourself must go near to hear all that Jehovah our God will say, and you will be the one to tell us all that Jehovah our God says to you, and we will listen and do it.’

²⁸ “So Jehovah heard the words you spoke to me, and Jehovah said to me, ‘I have heard the words that this people have spoken to you. All they have said is good. ²⁹ If only they would always have a heart inclined to fear me and to keep

all my commandments; then it would go well with them and their sons forever! ³⁰ Go say to them: “Return to your tents.” ³¹ But you should stay here with me, and let me tell you all the commandments, the regulations, and the judicial decisions that you should teach to them and that they are to observe in the land that I am giving them to take possession of.’ ³² Now you people should be careful to do just as Jehovah your God has commanded you. You must not turn to the right or to the left. ³³ You should walk in all the way that Jehovah your God has commanded you, in order that you may live and prosper and prolong your days in the land that you will take possession of.

6 “Now these are the commandments, the regulations, and the judicial decisions that Jehovah your God has given to teach you, so that you may observe them when you cross over into the land that you are to take possession of, ² in order that you may fear Jehovah your God and keep all his statutes and his commandments that I am commanding you—you and your son and your grandson—all the days of your life, so that you may live a long time. ³ And you must listen, O Israel, and carefully observe them, so that you may prosper and become very many in the land flowing with milk and honey, just as Jehovah, the God of your forefathers, has promised you.

⁴ “Listen, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah. ⁵ You must love Jehovah your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your strength. ⁶ These words that I am

commanding you today must be on your heart, ⁷ and you must inculcate them in your sons and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up. ⁸ Tie them as a reminder on your hand, and they must be like a headband on your forehead. ⁹ Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

¹⁰ “When Jehovah your God brings you into the land that he swore to your forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to give you—great and fine cities that you did not build, ¹¹ houses full of all sorts of good things that you did not work for, hewn cisterns that you did not dig, and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant—and you have eaten and become satisfied, ¹² be careful not to forget Jehovah, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ¹³ Jehovah your God you should fear, and him you should serve, and by his name you should swear. ¹⁴ You must not follow after other gods, any gods of the peoples who are all around you, ¹⁵ for Jehovah your God who is in your midst is a God who requires exclusive devotion. Otherwise, the anger of Jehovah your God will blaze against you and he will annihilate you from the face of the earth.

¹⁶ “You must not put Jehovah your God to the test the way you put him to the test at Mas'sah. ¹⁷ You should diligently observe the commandments of Jehovah your God and his reminders and his regulations that he has commanded you to observe. ¹⁸ You must do what is right and good in

Jehovah's eyes, in order that you may prosper and that you may enter and take possession of the good land about which Jehovah has sworn to your forefathers, ¹⁹ by driving out all your enemies from before you, just as Jehovah has promised.

²⁰ "In the future, when your son asks you, 'What is the meaning of the reminders, the regulations, and the judicial decisions that Jehovah our God has commanded you?' ²¹ then you will say to your son, 'We became slaves to Phar'aoh in Egypt, but Jehovah brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand. ²² So before our eyes Jehovah kept sending signs and miracles, great and devastating, upon Egypt, upon Phar'aoh, and upon all his household. ²³ And he brought us out from there in order to bring us here to give us the land about which he had sworn to our forefathers. ²⁴ Then Jehovah commanded us to carry out all these regulations and to fear Jehovah our God for our lasting good, so that we could keep alive, as we are today. ²⁵ And it will mean righteousness for us if we are careful to observe all these commandments in obedience to Jehovah our God, just as he has commanded us.'

Song 134 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

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(10 min.)

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In addition to family worship, what are some occasions when you might help your children to develop love for Jehovah and his principles?



June 14-20 / Deuteronomy 5-6

Song 134 and Prayer

Opening Comments (1 minute)

Treasures From God's Word

"Train Your Children to Love Jehovah": (10 minutes)

Parents must cultivate their own love for Jehovah

Deuteronomy 6:5: You must love Jehovah your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your strength.

w05 6/15 20 paragraph 11

On this subject, perhaps no passage of Scripture is quoted more often than Deuteronomy 6:5-7. Please open your Bible and read those verses. Note that parents are first told to cultivate their own spirituality, building love for Jehovah and taking his words to heart. Yes, you need to be a serious student of God's Word, reading the Bible regularly and meditating on it so that you develop a real understanding of and love for Jehovah's ways, principles, and laws. As a result, your heart will be full of fascinating Bible truths that will

move you to feel joy, awe, and love for Jehovah. You will have an abundance of good things to impart to your children.—Luke 6:45.

They must set a good example for their children

Deuteronomy 6:6: These words that I am commanding you today must be on your heart,

w07 5/15 15-16

Your dreams, ideals, values, and interests manifest themselves not only in what you say but also in what you do. (Romans 2:21, 22) From infancy, children learn by carefully observing their parents. Children perceive what is important to their parents, and these are the things that often become important to young ones. If you truly love Jehovah, your children will discern that. For instance, they will see that Bible reading and study are important to you. They will come to realize that you put Kingdom interests first in life. (Matthew 6:33) Your regular presence at Christian meetings and participation in the Kingdom-preaching work will show them

that rendering sacred service to Jehovah is of utmost importance to you.—Matthew 28:19, 20; Hebrews 10:24, 25.

They must teach their children often about Jehovah

Deuteronomy 6:7: and you must inculcate them in your sons and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up.

w05 6/15 21 paragraph 14

As Deuteronomy 6:7 shows, there are many occasions when you parents can discuss spiritual things with your children. Whether traveling together, doing chores together, or relaxing together, you may find opportunities to provide for your children's spiritual needs. Of course, you need not incessantly "lecture" your children about Bible truths. Rather, try to keep family conversation on an upbuilding, spiritual level. For example, the *Awake!* magazine contains many articles on a wide variety of subjects. Such articles may pave the way for conversations about Jehovah's animal creation,

places of natural beauty around the world, and the wonderful variety among human cultures and ways of life. Such conversations may move young ones to read more of the literature provided by the faithful and discreet slave class.—Matthew 24:45-47.

In addition to family worship, what are some occasions when you might help your children to develop love for Jehovah and his principles?

[Image:] A father and son building a kite. In the background are articles about birds from the series “Was It Designed?”

[Image:] The father talking to his daughter while she colors a picture of an apple tree. He is pointing to apples on a plate in front of them.

Spiritual Gems

Deuteronomy 5:21—What does the law against covetousness teach us?

Deuteronomy 5:21: “Neither must you desire your fellow man’s wife. Neither must you selfishly desire your fellow

man's house nor his field nor his slave man nor his slave girl nor his bull nor his donkey nor anything that belongs to your fellow man.'

w19.02 22 paragraph 11

Lessons: Jehovah sees beyond a person's outward appearance. He sees what we really are inside, in our heart. (1 Samuel 16:7) No thought, no feeling, no action can be kept secret from him. He looks for and encourages the good in us. But he wants us to identify and control wrong thoughts before they become wrong actions.—2 Chronicles 16:9; Matthew 5:27-30.

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 minutes) Deuteronomy 5:1-21 (*th* study 5)

Song 134 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

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Make Wise Decisions Regarding Alcoholic Beverages



All Christians need to exercise self-control regarding alcoholic beverages. (Pr 23:20, 29-35; 1Co 6:9, 10) If a Christian chooses to drink, he should do so in moderation. He must also avoid dependence on alcohol and avoid stumbling others. (1Co 10:23, 24; 1Ti 5:23) Certainly, no one, especially young ones, should be pressured to consume alcoholic beverages.

WATCH THE WHITEBOARD ANIMATION *THINK PAST THE DRINK*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- Why must all Christians obey laws regarding drinking alcohol?—Ro 13:1-4

- Why should we avoid letting others pressure us to drink alcohol?—Ro 6:16

- How can we avoid pitfalls related to alcoholic beverages?



SAMPLE CONVERSATIONS

Initial Call

Question: What is God’s purpose for humans?

Scripture: **Ge 1:28**

Link: How do we know that God will accomplish his purpose for humans?

► FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



• *bhs 29 ¶1*

Return Visit

Question: How do we know that God will accomplish his purpose for humans?

Scripture: **Isa 55:11**

Link: What will life be like when God fulfills his purpose?

► FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



• *bhs 29 ¶2*



Bible Study: (5 min.) *Iffi* lesson 01 point 3 (8)

DIG DEEPER

Consider how the Bible has helped people, how you can enjoy reading it, and why it is good to get help to understand it.

3. The Bible can guide us

The Bible is like a powerful light. We can use the Bible to show us how to make good decisions and to help us see what lies ahead.

Read Psalm 119:105, and then discuss these questions:

- How did the writer of this psalm view the Bible?
- How do you view the Bible?

(Psalm 119:105) Your word is a lamp to my foot, And a light for my path.

1. God is love, and he invites us:
 ‘Walk with me and love my way.’
When we love both God and neighbor,
 Gracious deeds will fill each day.
Therein lies the key to living;
 Therein lies the life we seek.
Christlike love will never fail us;
 Christlike love through us will speak.
2. Love of truth moves us to action;
 Love of God moves us to love.
When we fail he seeks to help us;
 By his strength we rise above.
Love is pure and never jealous;
 Love is kind and bears all things.
May we grow to love our brother;
 May we taste what true love brings.
3. Never let resentment lead you;
 May it never take your hand.
Look to God, and he will guide you;
 He will teach you these commands:
Love of God and love of neighbor,
 Ev’rything that love should be.
May we always show to others
 Godlike love, yes, tenderly.

Song 134 and Prayer | Opening Comments (1 min.)

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Show Love in the Family



Love is the glue that binds a family together. Without love, a family will struggle to maintain unity and a spirit of cooperation. How can husbands, wives, and parents show love in the family?

A loving **husband** will consider his wife’s needs, point of view, and feelings. (Eph 5:28, 29) He will provide physically and spiritually for his family, including having a regular Family Worship evening. (1Ti 5:8) A loving **wife** will be in subjection to her husband and show him “deep respect.” (Eph 5:22, 33; 1Pe 3:1-6) Both mates must be willing to forgive each other freely. (Eph 4:32) Loving **parents** show personal interest in each of their children and teach them to love Jehovah. (De 6:6, 7; Eph 6:4) What challenges do their children face in school? How are they coping with peer pressure? When love abounds within the family, all of its members will feel safe and secure.

WATCH THE VIDEO *DISPLAY UNFAILING LOVE IN YOUR FAMILY*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- How does a loving husband feed and cherish his wife?



- How does a loving wife show deep respect for her husband?



- How do loving parents inculcate God’s Word in their children?



CAUTIONS REGARDING TECHNOLOGY

Electronic devices can easily consume time that should be spent strengthening the bonds of love within the family. Parents may consider setting time limits for themselves and their children on

the use of these devices. Furthermore, parents need to determine if their young children may communicate online and with whom.

Jehovah Keeps His Promises **MODERN TIMES**

SEE PARAGRAPHS 27-31

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1 Pure worship free from idolatry</p> <p>2 An end to spiritual famine</p> <p>3 Sacrifices of praise offered</p> | <p>4 Faithful men to take the lead</p> <p>5 Global unity of worship</p> |
|---|---|

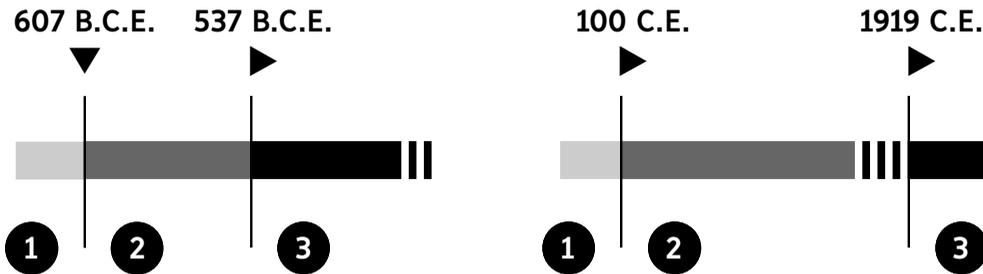
How do we know that? Well, what happened in heaven in 1914? Jesus Christ was enthroned as the Messianic King! How was that event a restoration? Remember, Jehovah had promised King David that kingship in his family line would endure forever. (1 Chron. 17: 11-14) That kingship was interrupted in 607 B.C.E. when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and ended the rule of the Davidic kings.

²⁴ As “the Son of man,” Jesus was a descendant of David and thus became the legal heir to the Davidic kingship. (Matt. 1:1; 16:13-16; Luke 1:32, 33) In 1914 when Jehovah granted Jesus the heavenly throne, “the times of restoration of all things” began! Now

PROPHECIES OF CAPTIVITY AND RESTORATION

SEE PARAGRAPHS 6-11, 25-32

Many prophecies about the captivity of the Jewish people in ancient Babylon saw a second, greater fulfillment in the much later captivity of the Christian congregation in Babylon the Great. Note some examples.



FIRST FULFILLMENT

1. WARNINGS

Before 607 B.C.E.—Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel warn Jehovah’s people; yet, apostasy still flourishes

2. CAPTIVITY

607 B.C.E.—Jerusalem destroyed; God’s people taken captive to Babylon

3. RESTORATION

537 B.C.E. and on—A faithful remnant returns to Jerusalem, rebuilds the temple, and resumes pure worship

GREATER FULFILLMENT

First Century C.E.—Jesus, Paul, and John warn the congregation, but apostasy still flourishes

Starting in Second Century C.E.—True Christians are taken captive within Babylon the Great

1919 C.E. and on—Under Jesus’ kingship, the faithful anointed saw the end of their spiritual exile and the restoration of pure worship

see a fulfillment far greater than any that God's people had seen back in ancient times. Let us now consider how the five promises we have already examined have seen a greater fulfillment.

²⁷ **PROMISE 1.** *An end of idolatry and other disgusting religious practices.* At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, faithful Christians were gathering together and were beginning to discard false religious practices. Veneration of a triune God, belief in the immortality of the human soul, and the hellfire doctrine were all cast aside as unscriptural teachings with roots in false religion. The use of images in worship was exposed as outright idolatry. Gradually, God's people also came to see the use of the cross in worship as a form of idolatry.—Ezek. 14:6.

²⁸ **PROMISE 2.** *A restoration to the spiritual land of God's people.* As they left Babylonish religion behind, faithful Christians found themselves in their proper spiritual land, a blessed condition, or environment, where they would never again suffer spiritual famine. **(Read Ezekiel 34:13, 14.)** As we will see further in

27. How did God cleanse his people of idolatry?

28. In what sense were Jehovah's people restored to their land?

Chapter 19 of this publication, Jehovah has blessed that land with an unprecedented flow of spiritual nourishment.—Ezek. 11:17.

²⁹ **PROMISE 3.** *The resuming of gift offerings at Jehovah's altar.* Back in the first century C.E., Christians were taught that they were to offer to God, not literal animal sacrifices, but far more valuable gifts—the words that they spoke in praising Jehovah and preaching to others about him. (Heb. 13:15) During the centuries of exile, there was no organized arrangement to make such offerings. At the close of the exile, however, God's people were already making such sacrifices of praise. They were busy in the preaching work and happily praising God at their meetings. From 1919 on, “the faithful and discreet slave” put greater emphasis on the preaching work and organized it more thoroughly. (Matt. 24:45-47) Jehovah's altar was thus overflowing with the sacrifices of an ever-growing army of praisers of his holy name!

³⁰ **PROMISE 4.** *The sifting out of bad shepherds.* Christ freed God's people from the unscrupulous,

29. How did the preaching work receive a boost in 1919?

30. What did Jesus do to meet his people's need for good shepherds?

self-serving false shepherds of Christendom. In Christ's flock, shepherds who acted like those false shepherds were removed from their position. (Ezek. 20:38) Jesus, as the Fine Shepherd, made sure that his sheep were cared for. In 1919 he appointed his faithful and discreet slave. That small group of loyal anointed Christians took the lead in providing spiritual food, so God's people were well-cared-for. In time, elders were trained to assist in caring for "the flock of God." (1 Pet. 5:1, 2) The inspired description recorded at Ezekiel 34:15, 16 has often been used to remind Christian shepherds of the standard set by Jehovah God and Jesus Christ.

³¹ **PROMISE 5.** *Unity among worshippers of Jehovah.* Over the centuries, Christendom has split into tens of thousands of denominations, including countless factions and sects that are hopelessly at odds. In contrast, Jehovah has done something truly miraculous with his restored people. His promise through Ezekiel, "I will give them a unified heart," has seen a glorious fulfillment. (Ezek. 11:19) Around the world, Christ has millions of followers from countless ethnic, religious,

31. How did Jehovah fulfill the prophecy of Ezekiel 11:19?

"I WILL GIVE THEM A UNIFIED HEART"

economic, and social backgrounds. Yet, all are taught the same truths and carry out the same work in marvelous harmony. On the final night of his life on earth, Jesus earnestly prayed that his followers would be united. **(Read John 17:11, 20-23.)** In our day, Jehovah has fulfilled that request in the greatest way.

³² Are you not delighted to live during this thrilling time of restoration? We see the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecies in every facet of our worship today. We can be confident that Jehovah now looks on his people with favor, just as he foretold through Ezekiel: "I will take pleasure in you." (Ezek. 20:41) Do you realize what a privilege you have to be part of the unified, well-fed people who are offering praise to Jehovah around the world—a people freed after centuries of spiritual exile? Still, some of Ezekiel's restoration prophecies will see a greater fulfillment yet.

“Like the Garden of Eden”

³³ As we have seen, “the times of restoration of all

32. How do you feel about the fulfillment of the restoration prophecies? (See also the box “Prophecies of Captivity and Restoration.”)

33-35. (a) What did the prophecy of Ezekiel 36:35 mean to the Jewish exiles? (b) What does that prophecy mean to Jehovah's people today? (See also the box “The Times of Restoration of All Things.”)

Our Reasons for Joy

(Matthew 5:12)

1. Our reasons for joy are abundant,
Like riches increasing in worth.
Those precious to God from all nations
Are joining us in all the earth.
The joy in our heart is well-founded,
With roots reaching deep in God's Word.
We daily partake of its teachings;
Faith follows the things we have heard.
Our causes for joy are deep-seated,
Like embers that burn in our hearts.
Though troubles and trials beset us,
Endurance Jehovah imparts.

(CHORUS)

*Jehovah our God is our joy,
The work of his hands our delight.
How deep are his thoughts, how great are his works,
Abounding in goodness and might!*

2. We gladly behold his productions,
The heavens, the sea, and the land.
We gaze at the book of creation,
Applauding the work of his hands.
Triumphantly we now bear witness,
Proclaiming the Kingdom of God.
The news of its birth and its blessings,
We joyously spread all abroad.
Eternal rejoicing approaches,
Like daylight that follows the night.
The promised new earth and new heavens
Will bring everlasting delight.

(CHORUS)

*Jehovah our God is our joy,
The work of his hands our delight.
How deep are his thoughts, how great are his works,
Abounding in goodness and might!*

APRIL 2021

THE  **WATCHTOWER**
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
JUNE 7–JULY 4, 2021

Study Article 14: June 7-13 “Follow His Steps Closely”	2
Study Article 15: June 14-20 Learning From Jesus’ Final Words	14
Study Article 16: June 21-27 Continue Appreciating the Ransom	27
Study Article 17: June 28–July 4 Jehovah Treasures You!	39
LIFE STORY “Now I Love the Ministry!”	52
QUESTIONS FROM READERS	60

COVER PICTURE:

By means of a simple meal, Jesus showed his disciples how to remember his sacrifice (See study article 16, paragraph 16)

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

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

Learning From Jesus’ Final Words

*“This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved.
Listen to him.”—MATT. 17:5.*

SONG 17

“I Want To”

PREVIEW

As Matthew 17:5 tells us, Jehovah wants us to listen to his Son. In this article, we will discuss a number of lessons we can learn from the words Jesus spoke when he was dying on the torture stake.

IT IS daytime, Nisan 14, 33 C.E. After being falsely accused and being judged guilty of a crime he did not commit, Jesus is mocked, cruelly tortured, and then nailed to a torture stake. Nails pierce his hands and feet. Every breath he takes, every word he speaks, is painful. But he must speak—he has important things to say.

² Let us discuss the words Jesus spoke as he was dying on the torture stake and the lessons we can learn from them. In other words, let us “listen to him.”—Matt. 17:5.

“FATHER, FORGIVE THEM”

³ *What did Jesus say?* Upon being nailed to the stake, Jesus prayed: “Father, forgive them.” Forgive whom? We find a clue in the words that follow: “They do not know what they are doing.” (Luke 23: 33, 34) Jesus was likely referring to the Roman soldiers who drove the nails through his hands and feet. They did not know who he really was. He may also have had in mind some in the crowd who had demanded his execution but would later exercise

1-2. Describe the setting in which Jesus spoke his final words as a human.

3. To whom was Jesus likely referring when he said: “Father, forgive them”?

faith in him. (Acts 2:36-38) Jesus refused to allow the injustices he had suffered to make him bitter and resentful. (1 Pet. 2:23) Instead, he asked Jehovah to forgive those putting him to death.

⁴ *What can we learn from Jesus' words?* Like Jesus, we need to be willing to forgive others. (Col. 3:13) Some, including relatives, may oppose us because they do not understand our beliefs and our way of life. They may lie about us, humiliate us in front of others, destroy our literature, or even threaten to cause us physical harm. Rather than harboring resentment, we can ask Jehovah to open the eyes of those who oppose us so that they may one day see the truth. (Matt. 5:44, 45) At times, we may find it hard to forgive, especially if we have experienced gross injustices. But if we allow bitterness and resentment to take root in our heart, we hurt ourselves. One sister explained: "I realize that being forgiving does not mean that I condone offenses or allow others to take advantage of me. It just means that I choose to let go of resentment." (Ps. 37:8) When we decide to forgive, we are choosing not to let negative experiences make us bitter.—Eph. 4:31, 32.

4. What can we learn from Jesus' willingness to forgive his opposers?

“YOU WILL BE WITH ME IN PARADISE”

⁵ *What did Jesus say?* Two criminals were being executed alongside Jesus. At first, the two joined in reproaching him. (Matt. 27:44) But later, one of them had a change of heart. He came to the conclusion that Jesus had done “nothing wrong.” (Luke 23:40, 41) What is more, he expressed his belief that Jesus would be resurrected from death and rule as a king someday. He said to the dying Savior: “Jesus, remember me when you get into your Kingdom.” (Luke 23:42) What faith that man showed! In answer, Jesus said to him: “Truly I tell you today, you will be with me [not in the Kingdom, but] in Paradise.” (Luke 23:43) Notice that Jesus made that promise very personal by referring to “I,” “you,” and “me.” Knowing that his Father is merciful, Jesus spoke words that gave hope to this dying criminal.—Ps. 103:8.

⁶ *What can we learn from Jesus’ words?* Jesus is a perfect reflection of his Father. (Heb. 1:3) Jehovah is eager to forgive us and to show us mercy if we are truly sorry for the bad things we have done in the past and we exercise faith that we can obtain

5. What did Jesus promise one of the criminals being executed alongside him, and why did he make that promise?

6. What do we learn from Jesus’ words to the criminal?

forgiveness of our sins through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. (1 John 1:7) Some may find it difficult to believe that Jehovah could ever forgive them for their past mistakes. If you feel that way at times, consider this: Shortly before he died, Jesus made an expression of mercy to the condemned criminal who was just beginning to show faith. So how much more would Jehovah show mercy to his faithful worshippers, who are doing their best to obey his commandments!—Ps. 51:1; 1 John 2:1, 2.

“SEE! YOUR SON! . . . SEE! YOUR MOTHER!”

7 **What did Jesus say? (Read John 19:26, 27.)** Jesus was concerned about his mother, who was likely a widow. His siblings could perhaps care for her physical and material needs. But who could care for her spiritual needs? There is no indication that his brothers were as yet disciples. However, John was a faithful apostle and one of Jesus’ closest friends. Jesus viewed those who joined him in worshipping Jehovah as his spiritual family. (Matt. 12:46-50) Therefore, moved by love and concern for Mary, Jesus entrusted her care to John, knowing that he would care for her spiritual welfare. To his mother,

7. What did Jesus say to Mary and John, as recorded at John 19:26, 27, and why did he say this?

he said: “See! Your son!” And to John, he said: “See! Your mother!” From that day on, John became like a son to Mary and cared for her as if she were his mother. What love Jesus showed to the precious woman who had tenderly cared for him at his birth and was standing near him at his death!

⁸ *What can we learn from Jesus’ words?* Our bond with our Christian brothers and sisters can be stronger than our ties to immediate family members. Our relatives may oppose us or even abandon us, but as Jesus promised, by sticking to Jehovah and His organization, we will “get 100 times more” than we have lost. Many will become to us like a loving son, daughter, mother, or father. (Mark 10:29, 30) How do you feel about being part of a spiritual family who are united by faith and love—love for Jehovah and for one another?—Col. 3:14; 1 Pet. 2:17.

“MY GOD, WHY HAVE YOU FORSAKEN ME?”

⁹ *What did Jesus say?* Shortly before his death, Jesus called out: “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46) The Bible does not explain why Jesus said this. Consider, though, what those words tell us. For one thing, by saying these words,

8. What can we learn from Jesus’ words to Mary and John?

9. What do Jesus’ words recorded at Matthew 27:46 tell us?

Jesus was fulfilling the prophecy found at Psalm 22:1.* Furthermore, the words made it clear that Jehovah was not keeping “a protective hedge around” his Son. (Job 1:10) Jesus understood that his Father had released him fully into the hands of his enemies so that he could be tested to the limit—as no human has ever been tested. In addition, these words confirmed that he was innocent of any crime deserving of death.

¹⁰ *What can we learn from Jesus’ words?* One lesson we can learn is that we must not expect Jehovah to shield us from challenges that test our faith. Just as Jesus was tested to the limit, we too must be prepared to prove faithful to death if necessary. (Matt. 16:24, 25) However, we have the assurance that God will not let us be tested beyond what we can bear. (1 Cor. 10:13) Another lesson we learn is that, like Jesus, we may suffer unjustly. (1 Pet. 2:19, 20) Those who oppose us do so, not because we have done something wrong, but because we are no part of the world and we bear witness to the truth. (John 17:14; 1 Pet. 4:15, 16) Jesus understood why

* For a discussion of possible reasons why Jesus quoted from Psalm 22:1, see “Questions From Readers” in this issue.

10. What lessons can we learn from Jesus’ words to his Father?

Jehovah allowed him to suffer. Unlike him, however, faithful worshippers under trial have sometimes wondered why Jehovah allowed certain things to happen. (Hab. 1:3) Our merciful and patient God understands that such ones do not lack faith; they need the comfort that only he can provide.—2 Cor. 1:3, 4.

“I AM THIRSTY”

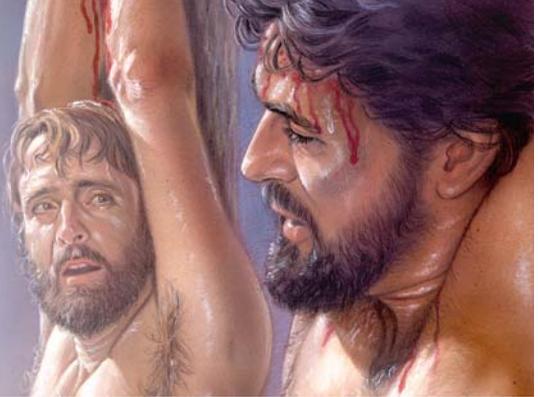
¹¹ *What did Jesus say? (Read John 19:28.)* Why did Jesus say: “I am thirsty”? He did so “in order to fulfill the scripture”—that is, the prophecy found at Psalm 22:15, which states: “My strength has dried up like a piece of pottery; my tongue sticks to my gums.” Also, after all that Jesus had suffered, including the agonizing pain on the torture stake, he must have been very thirsty. He needed help to quench his thirst.

¹² *What can we learn from Jesus’ words?* Jesus did not consider it to be a sign of weakness to express how he felt; nor should we. For much of our life, we may have preferred not to tell others about our needs. But if the time comes when we need help, we should not hesitate to ask others for assistance. For

11. Why did Jesus speak the words found at John 19:28?

12. What can we learn from Jesus’ words “I am thirsty”?

What We Learn From Jesus' Final Words



- 1. “Father, forgive them.”**
We need to be willing to forgive others.
- 2. “You will be with me in Paradise.”**
Jehovah is eager to show mercy to us.
- 3. “See! Your son! . . . See! Your mother!”**
We have a wonderful spiritual family.
- 4. “My God, why have you forsaken me?”**
Jehovah may not shield us from challenges that test our faith.
- 5. “I am thirsty.”**
It is not a sign of weakness to ask for help.
- 6. “It has been accomplished!”**
We must be determined to maintain our integrity every day.
- 7. “Into your hands I entrust my spirit.”**
Our life is safe in Jehovah’s hands.

example, if we are older or infirm, we may have to ask a friend to give us a ride to a grocery store or to a doctor's appointment. If we are downhearted or discouraged, we may need to ask an elder or other mature Christian friend to provide a listening ear or to share "a good word" to cheer us up. (Prov. 12: 25) Let us remember that our brothers and sisters love us, and they want to help us in "times of distress." (Prov. 17:17) But they cannot read our minds. They may not know that we need help unless we take the initiative to say something.

"IT HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED!"

¹³ *What did Jesus say?* About three o'clock on the afternoon of Nisan 14, Jesus called out: "It has been accomplished!" (John 19:30) With his death just moments away, Jesus had completed all that Jehovah expected him to do. By maintaining his integrity till he died, Jesus accomplished a number of things. First, he proved Satan a liar. Jesus showed that a perfect human could keep perfect integrity in spite of all that Satan could do. Second, Jesus gave his life as a ransom. His sacrificial death made it possible for imperfect humans to have a

13. What did Jesus accomplish by maintaining his integrity down to death?

righteous standing with God, and it gave them the prospect of living forever. Third, Jesus upheld the righteousness of Jehovah's sovereignty and cleared his Father's name of reproach.

¹⁴ *What can we learn from Jesus' words?* We must be determined to maintain our integrity every single day. Consider the comments of Brother Maxwell Friend, who served as an instructor at the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. At an international assembly, Brother Friend said in a talk about faithfulness: "Don't postpone for tomorrow what you can do or say today. Are you sure there will be a tomorrow? Live each day as if it were your last chance to show yourself worthy of living forever." May we live each day as if it were our last chance to maintain our integrity! Then, even if we should face death, we would be able to say, "Jehovah, I have done my best to keep my integrity, to prove Satan a liar, and to vindicate your name and your sovereignty!"

"INTO YOUR HANDS I ENTRUST MY SPIRIT"

¹⁵ *What did Jesus say?* (Read Luke 23:46.) With complete confidence, Jesus said: "Father, into your hands I entrust my spirit." Jesus knew that his fu-

14. How should we be determined to live each day? Explain.

15. According to Luke 23:46, what confidence did Jesus express?

ture depended on Jehovah, and he was certain that his Father would remember him.

16 *What can we learn from Jesus' words?* Be willing to put your life in Jehovah's hands. To do that, you must "trust in Jehovah with all your heart." (Prov. 3:5) Consider the example of Joshua, a 15-year-old Witness with a terminal illness. He refused to accept medical procedures that violate God's law. Shortly before he died, he told his mother: "Mom, I'm in Jehovah's hands. . . . I can tell you this, Mom, with all certainty: I know Jehovah is definitely going to bring me back in the resurrection. He has read my heart, and I truly love him."* Each of us would do well to ask, 'If I were to face a life-threatening situation that tests my faith, would I put my life in Jehovah's hands and trust in him to remember me?'

17 *What powerful lessons we can learn from Jesus' final words!* We are reminded of the need to forgive others and to trust that Jehovah will forgive us. We

* See the article "Joshua's Faith—A Victory for Children's Rights" in the January 22, 1995, issue of *Awake!*

16. What do you learn from the experience of a 15-year-old Witness?

17-18. What lessons have we learned? (See also the box "What We Learn From Jesus' Final Words.")

are privileged to have a wonderful spiritual family of brothers and sisters who are ready to help us. But when we need help, we must take the initiative to ask for it. We know that Jehovah will help us endure any trial that comes upon us. And we see the importance of living each day as if it were our last day to prove our integrity, confident that our life is safe in Jehovah's hands.

¹⁸ Truly, the words Jesus spoke as he was dying on the execution stake are filled with meaning! By applying the lessons we have learned, we will be heeding Jehovah's own words regarding his Son: "Listen to him."—Matt. 17:5.

WHAT LESSONS HAVE YOU LEARNED FROM JESUS' WORDS RECORDED AT . . .

■ Luke 23:34, 43, 46?

■ Matthew 27:46?

■ John 19:26-28, 30?

SONG 126

Stay Awake, Stand Firm, Grow Mighty

126 Stay Awake, Stand Firm, Grow Mighty

(1 Corinthians 16:13)

1. Stay awake, stand firm, grow mighty,
Be determined to endure.
Carry on with manly courage,
For the victory is sure.
We obey Christ Jesus' clear command;
Under him we firmly take our stand.

(CHORUS)

*Stay awake, stand firm, and grow mighty!
Carry on right to the end!*

2. Stay awake, and keep your senses,
Always ready to obey.
Stay alert to Christ's direction
Through his faithful slave today.
Heed the counsel of the older men,
Who protect his sheep and truth defend.

(Chorus)

3. Stay awake, remain united
As the good news we defend.
Though our enemies will fight it,
We will preach until the end.
Join the shout of praise throughout the land.
Look! Jehovah's day is soon at hand!

(Chorus)