

- Song 125 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

**TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD**

**“The Judgment Belongs to God”:** (10 min.)

[Play the video Introduction to Deuteronomy.]



**Elders must “judge with righteousness” (De 1:16; w96 3/15 23 ¶1)**

(Deuteronomy 1:16) 16 “At that time I instructed your judges, ‘When you hear a case between your brothers, you are to judge with righteousness between a man and his brother or a foreign resident.

\*\*\* w96 3/15 p. 23 Jehovah—A Lover of Righteousness and Justice \*\*\*

Appointed congregation elders are obliged to judge in cases of serious wrongdoing. (1 Corinthians 5:12, 13) When doing so, they remember that God’s justice seeks to extend mercy where possible. If there is no basis for it—as in the case of unrepentant sinners—mercy cannot be extended. But the elders do not expel such a wrongdoer from the congregation out of vindictiveness. They hope that the disfellowshipping action itself will bring him to his senses. (Compare Ezekiel 18:23.) Under Christ’s headship, the elders serve in the interests of justice, and this includes being like “a hiding place from the wind.” (Isaiah 32:1, 2) They must therefore show impartiality and reasonableness.—Deuteronomy 1:16, 17.

- (1 Corinthians 5:12, 13) For what do I have to do with judging those outside? Do you not judge those inside, 13 while God judges those outside? “Remove the wicked person from among yourselves.”
- (Ezekiel 18:23) “‘Do I take any pleasure at all in the death of a wicked person?’ declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. ‘Do I not prefer that he turn away from his ways and keep living?’
- (Isaiah 32:1, 2) Look! A king will reign for righteousness, And princes will rule for justice. 2 And each one will be like a hiding place from the wind, A place of concealment from the rainstorm, Like streams of water in a waterless land, Like the shadow of a massive crag in a parched land.
- (Deuteronomy 1:16, 17) “At that time I instructed your judges, ‘When you hear a case between your brothers, you are to judge with righteousness between a man and his brother or a foreign resident. 17 You must not be partial in judgment. You should hear the small one the same as the great one. You must not become intimidated by men, for the judgment belongs to God; and if a case is too difficult for you, you should present it to me, and I will hear it.’

**Elders “must not be partial in judgment” (De 1:17; w02 8/1 9 ¶4)**

(Deuteronomy 1:17) You must not be partial in judgment. You should hear the small one the same as the great one. You must not become intimidated by men, for the judgment belongs to God; and if a case is too difficult for you, you should present it to me, and I will hear it.’

\*\*\* w02 8/1 pp. 9-10 par. 4 Loyal Submit to Godly Authority \*\*\*

4 There was more to being a judge than knowing the Law, however. Being imperfect,

the older men had to be alert to curb any of their own wayward tendencies—such as selfishness, partiality, and greed—that might pervert their judgment. Moses told them: “You must not be partial in judgment. You should hear the little one the same as the great one. You must not become frightened because of a man, for the judgment belongs to God.” Yes, Israel’s judges were judging for God. What an awe-inspiring privilege that was!—Deuteronomy 1:16, 17.

- (Deuteronomy 1:16, 17) 16 “At that time I instructed your judges, ‘When you hear a case between your brothers, you are to judge with righteousness between a man and his brother or a foreign resident. 17 You must not be partial in judgment. You should hear the small one the same as the great one. You must not become intimidated by men, for the judgment belongs to God; and if a case is too difficult for you, you should present it to me, and I will hear it.’

How can we all show that we appreciate the elder arrangement?—Heb 13:17; Jas 5:13-15

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- (Hebrews 13:17) Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over you as those who will render an account, so that they may do this with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you.
- (James 5:13-15) Is there anyone suffering hardship among you? Let him carry on prayer. Is there anyone in good spirits? Let him sing psalms. 14 Is there

anyone sick among you? Let him call the elders of the congregation to him, and let them pray over him, applying oil to him in the name of Jehovah. 15 And the prayer of faith will make the sick one well, and Jehovah will raise him up. Also, if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

**Digging for Spiritual Gems:**

**De 1:19; 2:7—How did Jehovah care for his people during their 40-year trek through a “great and fearsome wilderness”? (w13 9/15 9 ¶9)**

(Deuteronomy 1:19) 19 “Then we departed from Hor’eb and marched through all that great and fearsome wilderness that you saw on the way to the mountainous region of the Am’or-ites, just as Jehovah our God had commanded us, and we eventually came to Ka’desh-bar’ne·a.

(Deuteronomy 2:7) 7 For Jehovah your God has blessed you in all that you have done. He is fully aware of your walking through this great wilderness. These 40 years Jehovah your God has been with you, and you have lacked nothing.”

\*\*\* w13 9/15 p. 9 par. 9 Jehovah’s Reminders Are Trustworthy \*\*\*

9 When the Israelites set out on what became a 40-year trek through a “fear-inspiring wilderness,” Jehovah did not give them specific details beforehand as to how he would direct, protect, and care for them. Still, he repeatedly demonstrated that they could trust in him and his instructions. Using a pillar of cloud by day and one of fire by night, Jehovah reminded the Israelites that he was backing them as he led them across that inhospitable terrain. (Deut. 1:19; Ex. 40:36-38) He also provided for their basic needs. “Their very garments did not wear out, and their feet themselves did not become

swollen.” Indeed, “they lacked nothing.”—Neh. 9:19-21.

- (Deuteronomy 1:19) “Then we departed from Hor'eb and marched through all that great and fearsome wilderness that you saw on the way to the mountainous region of the Am'or-ites, just as Jehovah our God had commanded us, and we eventually came to Ka'desh-bar'ne-a.
- (Exodus 40:36-38) And when the cloud lifted from the tabernacle, the Israelites would break camp during all stages of their journey. 37 However, if the cloud did not lift up, then they would not break camp until the day it lifted. 38 For Jehovah's cloud was over the tabernacle by day, and a fire remained over it by night in the sight of all the house of Israel during all stages of their journey.
- (Nehemiah 9:19-21) even then you, in your great mercy, did not abandon them in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud did not depart from over them by day to lead them in the way, nor the pillar of fire by night to light up for them the way they should go. 20 And you gave your good spirit to give them insight, and you did not hold back your manna from their mouth, and you gave them water when they were thirsty. 21 For 40 years you provided them with food in the wilderness. They lacked nothing. Their garments did not wear out, and their feet did not become swollen.

**Bible Reading: ) (4 min.)**  
**De 1:1-18 (th study 10)**

(Deuteronomy 1:1-18) 1 These are the words that Moses spoke to all Israel in the region of the Jordan in the wilderness, on the desert plains in front of Suph, between Pa'ran, To'phel, La'ban, Ha-ze'roth, and Di'za·hab. 2 It is 11 days from Hor'eb to Ka'desh-bar'ne-a by way of Mount Se'ir. 3 In the 40th year, in the 11th month, on the first of the month, Moses spoke to the Israelites according to all that Jehovah had instructed him to tell them. 4 This was after he defeated Si'hon the king of the Am'or-ites, who was dwelling in Hesh'bon, and Og the king of Ba'shan, who was dwelling in Ash'ta·roth, in Ed're·i. 5 In the region of the Jordan in the land of Mo'ab, Moses undertook to explain this Law, saying: 6 “Jehovah our God told us in Hor'eb, ‘You have stayed long enough in this mountainous region. 7 Turn and set out for the mountainous region of the Am'or-ites and toward all their neighbors in the Ar'a·bah, the mountainous region, the She·phe'lah, the Neg'eb, and the seacoast, the land of the Ca'naan-ites, and Leb'a·non, up to the great river, the river Eu·phra'tes. 8 See, I have set the land before you. Go in and take possession of the land about which Jehovah swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to give it to them and their offspring after them.’ 9 “And I told you at that time, ‘I am not able to carry you by myself. 10 Jehovah your God has multiplied you, and here you are today as numerous as the stars of the heavens. 11 May Jehovah, the God of your forefathers, multiply you a thousand times as many as you are, and may he bless you just as he has promised you. 12 How can I bear by myself the burden of you and the load of you and your quarreling? 13 Select wise, discreet, and experienced men of your tribes, and I will appoint them as heads over you.’ 14 You answered me, ‘What you have told us to do is good.’ 15 So I took the heads of your tribes, wise and experienced men, and appointed them as heads over you, chiefs of thousands, chiefs of hundreds, chiefs of fifties, chiefs of

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

tens, and officers of your tribes. 16 “At that time I instructed your judges, ‘When you hear a case between your brothers, you are to judge with righteousness between a man and his brother or a foreign resident. 17 You must not be partial in judgment. You should hear the small one the same as the great one. You must not become intimidated by men, for the judgment belongs to God; and if a case is too difficult for you, you should present it to me, and I will hear it.’ 18 At that time I instructed you regarding all the things that you should do.

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

**Initial Call: (3 min.) Use the sample conversation. Overcome a common objection. (th study 16)**

Initial Call

Question: What is God’s purpose for humans?

Scripture: Ge 1:28

- (Genesis 1:28) 28 Further, God blessed them, and God said to them: “Be fruitful and become many, fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving on the earth.”

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: (4 min.) Begin with the sample conversation. Give the householder a meeting invitation, and introduce (but do not play) the video What Happens at a Kingdom Hall? (th study 11)**

Return Visit

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

Scripture: Isa 55:11

- (Isaiah 55:11) 11 So my word that goes out of my mouth will be. It will not return to me without results, But it will certainly accomplish whatever is my delight, And it will have sure success in what I send it to do.

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

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:

- bhs 29 ¶2

**Talk: (5 min.) w13 8/15 11 ¶7—Theme: Avoid Uttering or Listening to Negative Speech. (th study 13)**

\*\*\* w13 8/15 p. 11 par. 7 Never Become “Enraged Against Jehovah” \*\*\*

7 The negative speech of others can influence us. (Read Deuteronomy 1:26-28.) The Israelites had just been delivered from slavery in Egypt. Jehovah had miraculously brought ten plagues on that oppressive nation and thereafter destroyed Pharaoh and his military force in the Red Sea. (Ex. 12:29-32, 51; 14:29-31; Ps. 136:15) God’s people were poised to enter the Promised Land. Yet, at that crucial moment, the Israelites started to complain about Jehovah. What caused this lack of faith? Their hearts melted because of the negative report of some who had been sent to spy out the land. (Num. 14:1-4) What resulted? A whole generation was not allowed to enter into that “good land.” (Deut. 1:34, 35) Could we at times allow the negative speech of others to weaken our faith and cause us to grumble about Jehovah’s dealings with us?

- (Deuteronomy 1:26-28) But you refused to go up, and you rebelled against the order of Jehovah your God. 27 You kept grumbling in your tents and were saying,

'It was because Jehovah hated us that he brought us out of the land of Egypt to hand us over to the Am'or-ites to annihilate us. 28 What kind of place are we going to? Our brothers made us lose heart by saying, "They are a people greater and taller than we are, and their cities are great and fortified to the heavens, and we saw the sons of the An'a·kim there."

- (Exodus 12:29-32) Then at midnight, Jehovah struck down every firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Phar'aoh who was sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the prison, and every firstborn of the animals. 30 Phar'aoh got up that night along with all his servants and all the other Egyptians, and there was a great outcry among the Egyptians, because there was not a house where someone was not dead. 31 At once he called Moses and Aaron by night and said: "Get up, get out from among my people, both you and the other Israelites. Go and serve Jehovah, just as you have said. 32 Take also your flocks and your herds and go, just as you have said. But you must also bless me."
- (Exodus 12:51) On this very day, Jehovah brought the Israelites along with their multitudes out of the land of Egypt.
- (Exodus 14:29-31) But the Israelites walked on dry ground in the midst of the seabed, and the waters formed a wall on their right hand and on their left. 30 Thus Jehovah saved Israel on that day from the hand of the Egyptians, and Israel saw the Egyptians dead on the seashore. 31 Israel also saw the great power that Jehovah wielded against the Egyptians, and the people began to fear Jehovah and to put faith in Jehovah and in his servant Moses.

- (Psalm 136:15) He shook off Phar'aoh and his army into the Red Sea, For his loyal love endures forever.
- (Numbers 14:1-4) Then all the assembly raised their voice, and the people continued crying out and weeping all through that night. 2 All the Israelites began to murmur against Moses and Aaron, and the whole assembly spoke against them, saying: "If only we had died in the land of Egypt, or if only we had died in this wilderness! 3 Why is Jehovah bringing us to this land to fall by the sword? Our wives and children will become plunder. Is it not better for us to return to Egypt?" 4 They were even saying to one another: "Let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt!"
- (Deuteronomy 1:34, 35) "All the while Jehovah heard what you were saying, and he became indignant and solemnly swore, 35 'Not one of these men of this evil generation will see the good land that I swore to give to your fathers,

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

Song 30

**"Remain Prepared During the Last of 'the Last Days'": (15 min.) Discussion by an elder. Play the video Are You Prepared for a Natural Disaster? Include reminders from the branch office and the body of elders, if provided.**



Remain Prepared During the Last of "the Last Days"

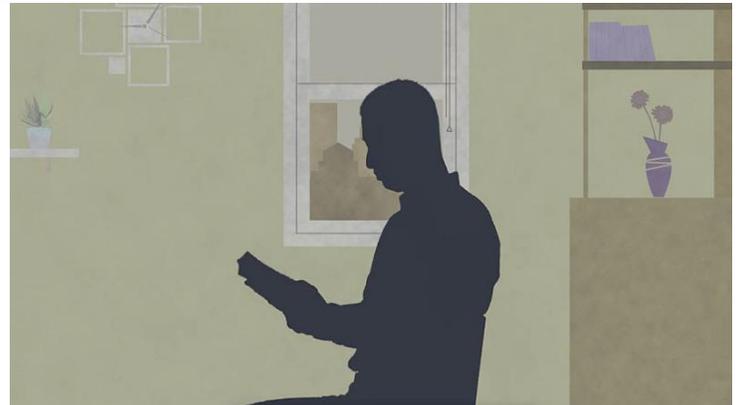
As we endure the last of “the last days,” we expect troubles of increasing intensity. (2Ti 3:1; “pangs of distress” study note on Mt 24:8, nwtsty) When facing a disaster, Jehovah’s people often receive timely and lifesaving direction. Our survival then may depend on our obedient preparation now, both spiritually and physically.—Lu 16:10.

• Prepare spiritually: Develop a good routine. Learn different forms of the ministry. Do not panic if you are temporarily separated from others in the congregation. (Isa 30:15) You are never isolated from Jehovah and Jesus.—od 176 ¶15-17

• Prepare physically: In addition to go bags, each household should have a reasonable reserve of food, water, medicine, and similar items in case it is necessary to shelter in place for an extended period of time.—Pr 22:3; g17.5 4, 6

- (2 Timothy 3:1) But know this, that in the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here.
- (Luke 16:10) The person faithful in what is least is faithful also in much, and the person unrighteous in what is least is unrighteous also in much.
- (Isaiah 30:15) For this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, says: “By returning to me and resting, you will be saved; Your strength will be in keeping calm and showing trust.” But you were unwilling.
- (Proverbs 22:3) The shrewd one sees the danger and conceals himself, But the inexperienced keep right on going and suffer the consequences.

WATCH THE VIDEO ARE YOU PREPARED FOR A NATURAL DISASTER? AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:



• How can we prepare spiritually for a disaster?

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Why should we . . . maintain good communication with the elders?

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• Why should we . . . prepare an emergency kit?

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- Why should we . . review the types of disasters that might occur and what to do in each situation?

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- What are three ways we can help others when they experience a disaster?

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ASK YOURSELF, 'What lessons regarding being prepared can I learn from the COVID-19 pandemic?'

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**Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)**

rr chap. 9 ¶10-17

Paragraph 10

(Matthew 13:24-30) He presented another illustration to them, saying: "The Kingdom of the heavens may be likened to a man who sowed fine seed in his field. 25 While men were sleeping, his enemy came and oversowed weeds in among the wheat and left. 26 When

the stalk sprouted and produced fruit, then the weeds also appeared. 27 So the slaves of the master of the house came and said to him, 'Master, did you not sow fine seed in your field? How, then, does it have weeds?' 28 He said to them, 'An enemy, a man, did this.' The slaves said to him, 'Do you want us, then, to go out and collect them?' 29 He said, 'No, for fear that while collecting the weeds, you uproot the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest, and in the harvest season, I will tell the reapers: First collect the weeds and bind them in bundles to burn them up; then gather the wheat into my storehouse.'"

Paragraph 11

(Ezekiel 6:9) And those who escape will remember me among the nations where they are taken captive. They will realize that I was brokenhearted over their unfaithful heart that turned away from me and at their eyes that are lusting after their disgusting idols. They will be ashamed of and loathe all the evil and detestable things they have done.

(Jeremiah 46:28) So do not be afraid, my servant Jacob,' declares Jehovah, 'for I am with you. I will make an extermination among all the nations where I dispersed you, But you I will not exterminate. I will discipline you to the proper degree, But I will by no means leave you unpunished.'"

Paragraph 12

(Ezekiel 5:13) Then my anger will come to an end, and my wrath against them will subside, and I will be satisfied. And they will have to know that I, Jehovah, have spoken in my insistence on exclusive devotion, when I have finished unleashing my wrath against them.

Paragraph 13

(Ezekiel 6:8-10) ""But I will leave a remnant, for some of you will escape the sword among the nations when you are scattered throughout the lands. 9 And those who escape will remember me among the nations where they

are taken captive. They will realize that I was brokenhearted over their unfaithful heart that turned away from me and at their eyes that are lusting after their disgusting idols. They will be ashamed of and loathe all the evil and detestable things they have done. 10 They will have to know that I am Jehovah and that my threats to bring this calamity on them were not empty.”

(Ezekiel 12:16) But I will spare a few of them from the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, so that they may tell about all their detestable practices among the nations where they will go; and they will have to know that I am Jehovah.”

(Daniel 9:1-27) In the first year of Da·ri'us the son of A·has·u·e'rus—a descendant of the Medes who had been made king over the kingdom of the Chal·de'ans— 2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, discerned by the books the number of years mentioned in the word of Jehovah to Jeremiah the prophet to fulfill the desolation of Jerusalem, namely, 70 years. 3 So I turned my face to Jehovah the true God, entreating him in prayer, along with fasting and sackcloth and ashes. 4 I prayed to Jehovah my God and made confession and said: “O Jehovah the true God, the great and awe-inspiring One, who keeps his covenant and shows loyal love to those who love him and keep his commandments, 5 we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled; and we have deviated from your commandments and your judgments. 6 We have not listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, our forefathers, and all the people of the land. 7 To you, O Jehovah, belongs righteousness, but to us belongs shame as is the case today, to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and all Israel, those nearby and far away, in all the lands to which you dispersed them because they acted unfaithfully toward you. 8 “O Jehovah, to us belongs shame, to our kings, our princes, and our forefathers, because we have sinned against you. 9 To Jehovah our

God belong mercy and forgiveness, for we have rebelled against him. 10 We have not obeyed the voice of Jehovah our God by following his laws that he set before us through his servants the prophets. 11 All Israel has overstepped your Law and turned away by not obeying your voice, so that you poured out on us the curse and the sworn oath written about in the Law of Moses the servant of the true God, for we have sinned against Him. 12 He has carried out his words that he spoke against us and against our rulers who ruled over us, by bringing great calamity on us; nothing has ever been done under the whole heavens such as what was done in Jerusalem. 13 Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this calamity has come upon us, yet we have not begged for the favor of Jehovah our God by turning away from our error and by showing insight into your truth. 14 “So Jehovah kept watchful and brought calamity on us, for Jehovah our God is righteous in all the works that he has done; yet we have not obeyed his voice. 15 “Now, O Jehovah our God, the One who brought your people out of the land of Egypt by a mighty hand and made a name for yourself down to this day, we have sinned and acted wickedly. 16 O Jehovah, according to all your righteous acts, please, may your anger and wrath turn away from your city Jerusalem, your holy mountain; for because of our sins and the errors of our forefathers, Jerusalem and your people are an object of reproach to all those around us. 17 And now listen, O our God, to the prayer of your servant and to his entreaties, and cause your face to shine upon your sanctuary that is desolate, for your own sake, O Jehovah. 18 Incline your ear, O my God, and hear! Do open your eyes and see our desolate condition and the city that has been called by your name; for we are not entreating you because of our righteous acts but because of your great mercy. 19 O Jehovah, do hear. O Jehovah, do forgive. O Jehovah, do pay attention and act! Do not delay, for your own sake, O my God, for your own name has been called upon your city and upon your people.” 20 While I was still speaking and praying and

confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and making my request for favor before Jehovah my God concerning the holy mountain of my God, 21 yes, while I was yet speaking in prayer, the man Ga'bri-el, whom I had previously seen in the vision, came to me when I was extremely weary at about the time of the evening gift offering. 22 And he gave me understanding, saying: "O Daniel, now I have come to give you insight and understanding. 23 When you began your entreaty the word went out, and I have come to report it to you, because you are someone very precious. So consider the matter and understand the vision. 24 "There are 70 weeks that have been determined for your people and your holy city, in order to terminate the transgression, to finish off sin, to make atonement for error, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and the prophecy, and to anoint the Holy of Holies. 25 You should know and understand that from the issuing of the word to restore and to rebuild Jerusalem until Mes-si'ah the Leader, there will be 7 weeks, also 62 weeks. She will be restored and rebuilt, with a public square and moat, but in times of distress. 26 "And after the 62 weeks, Mes-si'ah will be cut off, with nothing for himself. "And the people of a leader who is coming will destroy the city and the holy place. And its end will be by the flood. And until the end there will be war; what is decided upon is desolations. 27 "And he will keep the covenant in force for the many for one week; and at the half of the week, he will cause sacrifice and gift offering to cease. "And on the wing of disgusting things there will be the one causing desolation; and until an extermination, what was decided on will be poured out also on the one lying desolate."

#### Paragraph 14

(Ezekiel 36:22) "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: "Not for your sakes am I acting, O house of Israel, but for my holy name, which you profaned among the nations where you have gone.'"

#### Paragraph 15

(Ezekiel 11:18) And they will return there and remove from it all its disgusting things and detestable practices.

(Ezekiel 12:24) For there will no longer be any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel.

#### Paragraph 16

(Ezekiel 11:17) "Therefore say, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah says: "I will also collect you from the peoples and gather you from the lands to which you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.

(Isaiah 14:4) you will recite this proverb against the king of Babylon: "How the one forcing others to work has met his end! How the oppression has ended!

(Isaiah 14:17) Who made the inhabited earth like the wilderness And overthrew its cities, Who refused to let his prisoners go home?'

(Ezekiel 36:30) I will make the fruitage of the tree and the produce of the field abound, so that you may never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations.

#### Paragraph 17

(Ezekiel 20:40) "'For in my holy mountain, on a high mountain of Israel,' declares the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, 'is where the whole house of Israel, all of them, will serve me in the land. I will take pleasure in them there, and I will require your contributions and the firstfruits of your offerings, all your holy things.

- Concluding Comments (3 min.)

- Song 64 and Prayer