



## EXPLORE THE BIBLE.

Session 9: Worthy

Suggested Week of Use: July 30, 2023

Core Passage: Jeremiah 35:5-19

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### News Story Summary

The United States Supreme Court recently ruled in favor of a postal worker who had resigned his position because the United States Postal Service (USPS) would not accommodate his request for a religious exemption on Sundays. Gerald Groff, a Christian mail carrier from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, worked part-time filling in when other carriers had the day off. When he began working at the post office in 2012, USPS did not deliver on Sundays. After USPS contracted with Amazon to deliver packages on Sundays, Groff asked for a religious accommodation, which was granted. He worked extra shifts during the week to make up for not working on Sundays. Despite working non-Sunday holidays so others could have those days off, a tense situation developed with his co-workers. He finally resigned in 2019 and filed suit against USPS. Lower courts ruled against him, but the Supreme Court unanimously decided in his favor, overturning a precedent related to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act. Title VII states that employers must make accommodations for an employee's religion unless those accommodations create "undue hardship." The Court's ruling clarifies that "undue hardship" must be defined more substantially than the minimum standard that has used in the past. "To me, it's not just about going to church," Groff said. "It's about obeying the Lord and putting the entire day aside to honor and glorify Him."

For more about this story, search "Supreme Court rules in favor of postal worker."

### Focus Attention

To replace the Engage activities, ask: *Would you quit your job over a religious belief? Why or why not?* Share the story about the Supreme Court's recent ruling in favor of a Christian mail carrier who would not work on Sundays. Ask: *What do you think about Gerald Groff and how he handled the situation?* Say: *In today's session, we'll see how a group of people who lived by their beliefs served as an example for the Israelites who continually disobeyed God.*

### Summarize and Challenge

To supplement the Challenge activities, remind the group of Gerald Groff's stand against the U.S. Postal Service. Ask: *How would things have been different if Gerald had caved to his employer's wishes? How is Gerald's commitment similar to the Rechabites in today's session? What can learn from the Rechabites about standing up for what we believe?* Close with prayer that the group will honor God through their obedience.