

WEEK STARTING MARCH 24

Song 104 and Prayer

☐ Congregation Bible Study:

cl chap. 4 ¶19-23, box on p. 45 (30 min.)

☐ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Genesis 47-50 (10 min.)

No. 1: Genesis 48:17–49:7 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: The Events Associated With Christ's Presence Take Place Over a Period of Years—*rs* p. 341 ¶1-2 (5 min.)

No. 3: Abimelech—Presumptuousness Ends in Personal Disaster—*it-1* p. 24, Abimelech No. 4 (5 min.)

☐ Service Meeting:

Song 56

10 min: Imitate the Example of Nehemiah. Discussion. Invite comments from the audience on how Nehemiah's example can help us as evangelizers.

10 min: Use Questions to Teach Effectively—**Part 1.** Discussion based on the *Ministry School* book, page 236, to page 237, paragraph 2. Briefly demonstrate at least one of the points from the material.

10 min: Jehovah's Ears Listen to the Supplication of the Righteous. (1 Pet. 3:12) Discussion based on the *2013 Yearbook*, page 66, paragraphs 1-3; and pages 104-105. Invite audience to comment on the lessons learned.

Song 6 and Prayer

WEEK STARTING MARCH 31

Song 105 and Prayer

☐ Congregation Bible Study:

cl chap. 5 ¶1-8 (30 min.)

☐ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Exodus 1-6 (10 min.)

No. 1: Exodus 2:1-14 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Christ's Return Is Invisible—*rs* p. 341 ¶3–p. 342 ¶2 (5 min.)

No. 3: Abiram—Opposing God-Appointed Authority Is Tantamount to Opposing Jehovah—*it-1* p. 25, Abiram No. 1 (5 min.)

☐ Service Meeting:

Song 63

10 min: "Make Good Use of Older Magazines." Discussion. Inform the congregation of older issues in stock that publishers can obtain for the ministry. Invite audience to relate experiences they have had using older magazines. Before concluding, invite the service overseer to report on the congregation's progress in distributing the Memorial invitations.

10 min: Local needs.

10 min: What Do We Learn? Discussion. Have Matthew 28:20 and 2 Timothy 4:17 read. Consider how these verses can help us in our ministry.

Song 135 and Prayer

Make Good Use of Older Magazines

Since older magazines do not benefit anyone when they are stored or thrown away, we should try to place them. A single magazine can spark a person's interest in the truth and move him to begin calling on the name of Jehovah. (Rom. 10:13, 14) The following are some suggestions for putting older magazines to good use.

- When preaching in territories that are not worked frequently, perhaps you can leave one out of sight at not-at-homes.
- When engaging in public witnessing where people are waiting, such as at bus stops or train stations, ask individuals if they would like something to read, show them several older issues of the magazines, and let them choose.

- When visiting laundromats, nursing homes, clinics, or similar places that are within your congregation's territory, leave a few older issues in the waiting area. It is usually good to obtain permission first from the person in charge if he or she is present. If you see a supply of magazines already there, do not leave more.
- When preparing for return visits, consider the interests of each person you plan to visit. Does he have a family? Does he like to travel? Does he enjoy gardening? Look through older issues of the magazines to see if there is an article that he may enjoy reading, and show it to him when you return.
- When you find an interested person at home again after making repeated attempts to contact him, show him some of the older magazines that he missed.

Praise Jah With Me

(Psalm 146:2)



Praise Jah with me; Loud let it ring! He gives us life, breath, and
 Praise Jah with me. He sat - is - fies And hears our prayers as our
 Praise Jah with me. Our God is just; He brings all com - fort, in



ev - 'ry good thing. Each day and night, His name we bless.
 needs he sup - plies. His might - y arm Strength - ens the weak;
 him we can trust. Wrongs he will right; Hearts he will heal.



His per - fect love clothes His al - might - i - ness.
 His ho - ly spir - it sus - tains all the meek.
 Rich King - dom bless - ings all man - kind will feel.



We sing his praise, and his name we con - fess.
 His name we praise; Of his pow - er we speak.
 Come let us praise him with joy and with zeal!

answer both yes and no. Yes, in that this attribute gives us ample reason for godly fear, the profound awe and respect we discussed briefly in the preceding chapter. Such fear, the Bible tells us, is “the beginning of wisdom.” (Psalm 111:10) We also answer no, however, in that God’s power gives us no reason to feel a morbid dread of him or to shy away from approaching him.

¹⁸ “Power tends to corrupt; absolute power corrupts absolutely.” So wrote English nobleman Lord Acton in 1887. His statement has often been repeated, perhaps because so many people see it as undeniably true. Imperfect humans often abuse power, as history has confirmed again and again. (Ecclesiastes 4:1; 8:9) For this reason, many mistrust the powerful and withdraw from them. Now, Jehovah has absolute power. Has it corrupted him in any way? Certainly not! As we have seen, he is holy, utterly incorruptible. Jehovah is unlike the imperfect men and women of power in this corrupt world. He has never abused his power, and he never will.

¹⁹ Remember, power is not Jehovah’s sole attribute. We have yet to study his justice, his wisdom, and his love. But we should not assume that Jehovah’s attributes come to the fore in a rigid, mechanical manner, as if he exercised only one quality at a time. On the contrary, we will see in the ensuing chapters that Jehovah *always* exercises his power in harmony with his justice, his wisdom, and his love. Think about another quality that God possesses, one that is rarely present in worldly rulers—self-restraint.

18. (a) Why do many mistrust powerful people? (b) How do we know that Jehovah cannot be corrupted by his power?

19, 20. (a) In harmony with what other qualities does Jehovah always exercise his power, and why is this reassuring? (b) How might you illustrate Jehovah’s self-restraint, and why is it appealing to you?

Questions for Meditation

2 Chronicles 16:7-13 How does the example of King Asa show the seriousness of failing to trust in Jehovah's power?

Psalms 89:6-18 What effect does Jehovah's power have upon his worshipers?

Isaiah 40:10-31 How is Jehovah's power here described, how extensive is it, and how can it benefit us individually?

Revelation 11:16-18 What does Jehovah promise to do with his power in the future, and why is this reassuring to true Christians?

²⁰ Imagine meeting a man so huge and powerful that you feel intimidated by him. However, in time you notice that he seems gentle. He is ever ready and eager to use his power to help and protect people, especially the defenseless and vulnerable. He never abuses his strength. You see him slandered without cause, yet his demeanor is firm but calm, dignified, even kind. You find yourself wondering if you would be able to show the same gentleness and restraint, especially if you were that strong! As you come to know such a man, would you not begin to feel drawn to him? We have far more reason for drawing close to the almighty Jehovah. Consider the full sentence that is the basis for the title of this chapter: "Jehovah is *slow to anger* and great in power." (Nahum 1:3) Jehovah is not quick to use his power against people, not even the wicked. He is mild-tempered and kind. He has proved to be "slow to anger" in the face of many provocations.—Psalms 78:37-41.

²¹ Consider Jehovah's self-restraint from a different

21. Why does Jehovah refrain from forcing people to do his will, and what does this teach us about him?

angle. If you had unlimited power, do you think you might, at times, be tempted to make people do things your way? Jehovah, with all his power, does not coerce people to serve him. Even though serving God is the only way to everlasting life, Jehovah does not force us into such service. Rather, he kindly dignifies each individual with freedom to choose. He warns of the consequences of bad choices and tells of the rewards of good choices. But the choice itself, he leaves to us. (Deuteronomy 30:19, 20) Jehovah simply has no interest in service performed out of coercion or out of morbid fear of his awesome power. He seeks those who will serve him willingly, out of love.—2 Corinthians 9:7.

²² Let us look at a final reason why we need not live in dread of Almighty God. Powerful humans tend to be fearful of sharing power with others. Jehovah, however, delights in empowering his loyal worshipers. He delegates considerable authority to others, such as his Son. (Matthew 28:18) Jehovah also empowers his servants in another way. The Bible explains: “Yours, O Jehovah, are the greatness and the mightiness and the beauty and the excellency and the dignity; for everything in the heavens and in the earth is yours. . . . In your hand there are power and mightiness, and in your hand is ability to make great and to give strength to all.”—1 Chronicles 29:11, 12.

²³ Yes, Jehovah will be pleased to give you strength. He even imparts “power beyond what is normal” to those who want to serve him. (2 Corinthians 4:7) Do you not feel drawn to this dynamic God, who uses his power in such kind and principled ways? In the next chapter, we will focus on how Jehovah uses his power to create.

22, 23. (a) What shows that Jehovah delights in empowering others? (b) What will we consider in the next chapter?

24 The sons of Naph'ta-li^a were Jah'ze-el, Gu'ni, Je'zer, and Shil'lem.^b

25 These are the sons of Bil'hah, whom La'ban gave to his daughter Rachel. She bore these to Jacob: seven persons* in all.

26 All those* who descended from Jacob and went into Egypt with him, aside from the wives of Jacob's sons, were 66.^c 27 Joseph's sons who were born to him in Egypt were two.* All the people[#] of the house of Jacob who came into Egypt were 70.^d

28 Jacob sent Judah^e ahead to tell Joseph that he was on the way to Go'shen. When they came into the land of Go'shen,^f

29 Joseph had his chariot prepared and went up to meet Israel his father at Go'shen. When he presented himself to him, he at once embraced him* and wept for some time.^g 30 Then Israel said to Joseph: "Now I am ready to die; I have seen your face and know that you are still alive."

31 Joseph then said to his brothers and to his father's household: "Let me go up and report to Phar'aoh^g and tell him, 'My brothers and my father's household who were in the land of Ca'naan have come here to me.'^h 32 The men are shepherds,ⁱ and they raise livestock,^j and they have brought their flocks and their herds and all that they have.'^k

33 When Phar'aoh calls you and asks, 'What is your occupation?'

34 you must say, 'Your servants have raised livestock from our youth until now, both we and our forefathers,'^l so that you may dwell in the land of Go'shen,^m for every herder of sheep is detestable to the Egyptians."ⁿ

46:25 *Or "seven souls." 46:26 *Or "All the souls." 46:27 *Or "two souls." #Or "souls." 46:29 *Lit., "fell upon his neck." #Or "wept on his neck again and again."

CHAP. 46

- a Ge 30:8
- b Nu 26:48, 49
- c Ge 35:10, 11
- d Ex 1:5
De 10:22
Ac 7:14
- e Ge 43:8
Ge 44:18
- f Ge 45:10
Ge 47:1
- g Ge 41:39, 40
- h Ge 45:19
Ac 7:13
- i Ge 31:17, 18
Ge 47:3
- j Ge 31:38
- k Ge 46:6
- l Ge 30:35, 36
- m Ge 45:17, 18
Ge 47:27
- n Ge 43:32

Second Col.

CHAP. 47

- a Ge 46:31
- b Ge 45:10
Ex 8:22
- c Ac 7:13
- d Ge 12:16
Ge 26:12, 14
Ge 31:17, 18
Ge 46:33, 34
- e Ge 15:13
De 26:5
Ps 105:23
Ac 7:6
- f Ac 7:11
- g Ge 45:10
- h Ge 45:17, 18
- i Job 14:1, 2
- j Ge 25:7
Ge 35:28

47 So Joseph went and reported to Phar'aoh:^a "My father and my brothers and their flocks and their herds and all that they possess have come from the land of Ca'naan, and they are in the land of Go'shen."^b 2 He took five of his brothers and presented them to Phar'aoh.^c

3 Phar'aoh said to his brothers: "What is your occupation?" They replied to Phar'aoh: "Your servants are herders of sheep, both we and our forefathers."^d

4 Then they said to Phar'aoh: "We have come to reside as foreigners in the land^e because there are no pastures for the flock of your servants, for the famine is severe in the land of Ca'naan.^f So please let your servants dwell in the land of Go'shen."^g

5 At that Phar'aoh said to Joseph: "Your father and your brothers have come here to you.

6 The land of Egypt is at your disposal. Have your father and your brothers dwell in the very best part of the land.^h Let them dwell in the land of Go'shen, and if you know of any capable men among them, put them in charge of my livestock."

7 Then Joseph brought in Jacob his father and presented him to Phar'aoh, and Jacob blessed Phar'aoh. 8 Phar'aoh asked Jacob: "How old are you?" 9 Jacob said to Phar'aoh: "The years of my wanderings^g are 130. Few and distressing the years of my life have been,ⁱ and they are not as long as the years of the lives of my forefathers during their wanderings."^j 10 After that Jacob blessed Phar'aoh and went out from before him.

11 So Joseph settled his father and his brothers, and he gave them a possession in the

47:9 *Or "sojourning; residing as a foreigner." #Or "sojourning; residing as foreigners."

land of Egypt, in the very best part of the land, in the land of Ram'e-ses,^a just as Phar'aoh had commanded. **12** And Joseph kept supplying his father and his brothers and the entire household of his father with food* according to the number of their children.

13 Now there was no food* in all the land, because the famine was very severe, and the land of Egypt and the land of Ca'naan became exhausted as a result of the famine.^b **14** Joseph was collecting all the money that was to be found in the land of Egypt and in the land of Ca'naan for the grain that people were buying,^c and Joseph kept bringing the money into Phar'aoh's house. **15** In time the money from the land of Egypt and the land of Ca'naan was spent, and all the Egyptians began coming to Joseph, saying: "Give us food! Why should we die before your very eyes because our money has run out?" **16** Then Joseph said: "If your money has run out, hand over your livestock, and I will give you food in exchange for your livestock." **17** So they began bringing their livestock to Joseph, and Joseph kept giving them food in exchange for their horses, the livestock of the flock and of the herd, and the donkeys, and he kept providing them with food in exchange for all their livestock during that year.

18 When that year came to its close, they began coming to him the next year and saying: "We will not hide from my lord that the money and the stock of domestic animals have already been given to my lord. We have nothing left for my lord but our bodies and our land. **19** Why should we die before your eyes, both we and our land? Buy us and our land in exchange for

CHAP. 47

a Ge 45:10
Ex 1:8, 11
Ex 12:37
Nu 33:3

b Ge 41:30, 31

c Ge 41:56
Ge 44:25

Second Col.

a Ge 41:48, 49

b Ge 41:45

c Ge 41:34

d Ge 45:5
Ac 7:11

e Ge 47:19

f Ge 47:22

g Ge 47:4

h Ex 1:7
De 10:22
Ps 105:24
Ac 7:17

i Ge 47:9

j Ge 49:33

food, and we together with our land will become slaves to Phar'aoh. Give us seed so that we may live and not die and that our land may not become desolate."

20 Joseph then bought all the land of the Egyptians for Phar'aoh because every Egyptian sold his field, for the famine was very severe; and the land became Phar'aoh's.

21 Then he moved the people into cities, from one end of the territory of Egypt to its other end.^a **22** Only the land of the priests he did not buy,^b because the rations for the priests were from Phar'aoh and they lived on their rations that Phar'aoh gave them. That is why they did not sell their land. **23** Then Joseph said to the people: "See, I have today bought you and your land for Phar'aoh. Here is seed for you, and you must sow the land with it. **24** When it produces, give a fifth to Phar'aoh,^c but four parts will be yours as seed for the field and as food for you and for those in your houses and for your children to eat."

25 So they said: "You have preserved our lives.^d Let us find favor in the eyes of my lord, and we will become slaves to Phar'aoh."^e **26** Then Joseph made it a decree, which is valid until today over the land of Egypt, that a fifth belongs to Phar'aoh. It was only the land of the priests that did not become Phar'aoh's.^f

27 Israel continued to dwell in the land of Egypt, in the land of Go'shen,^g and they settled in it and were fruitful and increased greatly.^h **28** And Jacob lived on in the land of Egypt for 17 years, so that the days of Jacob's life came to be 147 years.ⁱ

29 The time was approaching for Israel to die,^j so he called his son Joseph and said: "If, now, I have found favor in your eyes, place your hand, please,

47:12, 13 *Lit., "bread."

under my thigh, and show loyal love and faithfulness to me. Please, do not bury me in Egypt.^a **30** When I die,* you must carry me out of Egypt and bury me in the grave of my forefathers.^b Accordingly, he said: "I will do just as you say." **31** Then he said: "Swear to me." So he swore to him.^c At that Israel bowed down at the head of his bed.^d

48 After these things, Joseph was told: "Look, your father is getting weak." At that he took his two sons Ma-nas'seh and E'phra-im with him.^e **2** Then Jacob was told: "Here your son Joseph has come to you." So Israel gathered his strength and sat up on his bed. **3** And Jacob said to Joseph:

"God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Ca'naan and blessed me.^f **4** And he said to me, 'I am making you fruitful, and I will make you many, and I will transform you into a congregation of peoples,^g and I will give this land to your offspring* after you as a lasting possession.'^h **5** Now your two sons who were born to you in the land of Egypt before I came to you in Egypt are mine.ⁱ E'phra-im and Ma-nas'seh will become mine just as Reu'ben and Sim'e-on are mine.^j **6** But the children born to you after them will become yours. They will be called by the name of their brothers in their inheritance.^k **7** As for me, when I was coming from Pad'dan, Rachel died^l alongside me in the land of Ca'naan, while there was yet a good stretch of land before coming to Eph'rath.^m So I buried her there on the way to Eph'rath, that is, Beth'le-hem."ⁿ

8 Then Israel saw Joseph's sons and asked: "Who are these?" **9** So Joseph said to his

47:30 *Lit., "lie down with my fathers."
48:4, 11 *Lit., "seed."

CHAP. 47

- a Ge 46:4
- Ge 50:13
- Ac 7:15,16
- b Ge 25:9,10
- Ge 49:29,30
- c Ge 50:5
- d Heb 11:21

CHAP. 48

- e Ge 41:50
- Jos 14:4
- f Ge 28:13,19
- Ho 12:4
- g Ge 35:10,11
- h Ge 28:13,14
- i Jos 14:4
- 1Ch 5:1
- j Ge 35:23
- k Jos 13:29
- Jos 16:5
- l Ge 35:19
- m Mic 5:2
- n 1Sa 17:12
- Mt 2:6

Second Col.

- a Ge 41:50
- b Heb 11:21
- c Ge 37:34,35
- Ge 42:36
- Ge 46:30
- d Ge 41:52
- e Ge 41:51
- f Ge 41:51
- Ge 46:20
- g 1Ch 5:2
- h Ge 17:1
- Ge 24:40
- i Ge 28:13
- Ps 23:1
- j Ge 28:15
- Ge 31:11
- Ps 34:7
- k Ge 32:26
- l Ex 1:7
- Nu 26:34,37

father: "They are my sons whom God has given me in this place."^a At this he said: "Bring them to me, please, so that I may bless them."^b **10** Now the eyes of Israel were failing from age, and he was unable to see. So Joseph brought them close to him, and he kissed them and embraced them. **11** Israel said to Joseph: "I never imagined I would see your face,^c but here God has also let me see your offspring."^d **12** Joseph then removed them from Israel's knees, and he bowed down with his face to the ground.

13 Joseph now took the two of them, E'phra-im^d with his right hand to Israel's left and Ma-nas'seh^e with his left hand to Israel's right, and brought them close to him. **14** However, Israel put out his right hand and placed it on E'phra-im's head, although he was the younger, and he placed his left hand on Ma-nas'seh's head. He purposely laid his hands this way, since Ma-nas'seh was the firstborn.^f **15** Then he blessed Joseph and said:^g

"The true God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,^h

The true God who has been shepherding me during all my life until this day,ⁱ

16 The angel who has been recovering me from all calamity,^j bless the boys.^k

Let my name be called upon them and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac,

Let them increase to a multitude in the earth."^l

17 When Joseph saw that his father kept his right hand placed on E'phra-im's head, it was displeasing to him, so he tried to take hold of his father's hand to move it from E'phra-im's head to Ma-nas'seh's head. **18** Joseph said to his father: "Not

so, my father, because this is the firstborn.^a Put your right hand on his head.” **19** But his father kept refusing and said: “I know it, my son, I know it. He too will become a people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will become greater than he will,^b and his offspring* will become the full equivalent of nations.”^c **20** So he continued to bless them on that day,^d saying:

“Let Israel mention you when they pronounce blessings, saying,
‘May God make you like E’phra-im and like Ma-nas’-seh.”

Thus he kept putting E’phra-im before Ma-nas’seh.

21 Then Israel said to Joseph: “Look, I am dying,^e but God will certainly continue with you and return you to the land of your forefathers.^f **22** As for me, I do give you one portion of land* more than to your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Am’or-ites with my sword and my bow.”

49 And Jacob called his sons and said: “Gather yourselves together that I may tell you what will happen to you in the final part of the days. **2** Assemble yourselves and listen, you sons of Jacob, yes, listen to Israel your father.

3 “Reu’ben,^g you are my first-born,^h my vigor and the beginning of my procreative power, the excellence of dignity and the excellence of strength. **4** With recklessness like turbulent waters, you will not excel, because you have gone up to your father’s bed.ⁱ At that time you defiled* my bed. He actually went on to it!

48:19 *Lit., “seed.” 48:22 *Or “one slope of land.” Lit., “one shoulder.” 49:4 *Or “profaned.”

CHAP. 48

- a Ge 41:51
- b Nu 2:18-21
- c Nu 1:32, 33
- d Heb 11:21
- e Ge 50:24
- f Ge 15:14
Ge 26:3
De 31:8

CHAP. 49

- g De 33:6
- h Ge 29:32
Ex 6:14
1Ch 5:1
- i Ge 35:22

Second Col.

- a Ge 29:33, 34
Ge 35:23
- b Ge 34:25
- c Ge 34:7
- d Ge 34:25
- e Jos 19:1
Jos 21:41
- f Ge 29:35
De 33:7
- g Ge 43:8, 9
Ge 46:28
1Ch 5:2
- h Jg 1:2
- i Nu 10:14
2Sa 5:3
- j Re 5:5
- k Nu 24:17
2Sa 2:4
2Sa 7:16, 17
- l Isa 9:6
Eze 21:27
Lu 1:32
Heb 7:14
- m Ps 2:8
Isa 11:10
Mt 2:6
- n De 33:18, 19
- o Mt 4:13
- p Jos 19:10
- q De 33:18
1Ch 7:5

5 “Sim’e-on and Le’vi are brothers.^a Instruments of violence are their slaughter weapons.^b **6** Into their company do not come, O my soul.* With their assembly do not join, O my honor,^c because in their anger they killed men,^c and for their pleasure they hamstring bulls. **7** Cursed be their anger, because it is cruel, and their fury, because it is harsh.^d Let me disperse them in Jacob, and let me scatter them in Israel.^e

8 “As for you, Judah,^f your brothers will praise you.^g Your hand will be on the neck of your enemies.^h The sons of your father will bow down before you.ⁱ **9** Judah is a lion cub.^j From the prey, my son, you will certainly go up. He has crouched down and stretched himself out like a lion, and like a lion, who dares rouse him? **10** The scepter will not depart from Judah,^k neither the commander’s staff from between his feet, until Shi’loh* comes,^l and to him the obedience of the peoples will belong.^m **11** Tying his donkey to a vine and his donkey’s colt to a choice vine, he will wash his clothing in wine and his garment in the blood of grapes. **12** Dark red are his eyes from wine, and his teeth are white from milk.

13 “Zeb’u-lunⁿ will reside by the seashore, by the shore where the ships lie anchored,^o and his remote border will be toward Si’don.^p

14 “Is’sa-char^q is a strong-boned donkey, lying down between the two saddlebags. **15** And he will see that the resting-place is good and that the land is pleasant. He will bend his shoulder to bear the burden and will submit to forced labor.

49:6 *See Glossary. ^oOr possibly, “disposition.” 49:10 *Meaning “He Whose It Is; He to Whom It Belongs.”

16 "Dan^a will judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel.^b

17 Let Dan be a serpent by the roadside, a horned snake beside the path, that bites the heels of the horse so that its rider falls backward.^c 18 I will wait for salvation from you, O Jehovah.

19 "As for Gad,^d a marauder band will raid him, but he will raid at their heels.^e

20 "Ash'er's' bread* will be abundant,^f and he will provide food fit for a king.^g

21 "Naph'ta-li^h is a slender doe. He is speaking words of elegance.ⁱ

22 "Joseph^j is the offshoot of a fruitful tree, a fruitful tree by a spring, whose branches extend over the wall. 23 But the archers kept harassing him and shot at him and kept harboring animosity against him.^k 24 And yet his bow remained in place,^l and his hands stayed strong and agile.^m This was from the hands of the powerful one of Jacob, from the shepherd, the stone of Israel. 25 He* is from the God of your father, and he will help you, and he is with the Almighty, and he will bless you with the blessings of the heavens above, with the blessings of the deep below,ⁿ with the blessings of the breasts and womb. 26 The blessings of your father will be superior to the blessings of the eternal mountains, to the desirable things of the enduring hills.^o They will continue upon the head of Joseph, upon the crown of the head of the one singled out from his brothers.^p

27 "Benjamin^q will keep on tearing like a wolf.^r In the morning he will eat the prey, and in the evening he will divide spoil."^s

28 All of these are the 12 tribes of Israel, and this is what

49:20 *Or "food." #Lit., "fat." 49:25 *That is, Joseph.

CHAP. 49

- a De 33:22
- b Jg 13:2, 24
Jg 15:20
- c Jg 14:19
Jg 15:15
- d De 33:20
- e Jos 13:8
- f De 33:24
- g 1Ki 4:7, 16
- h De 33:23
- i Mt 4:13, 15
- j De 33:13-17
- k Ge 37:5, 8
Ge 40:15
- l Ge 50:20
- m Jos 1:1, 6
Jg 11:32
- n De 33:13
- o Jos 17:14
- p De 33:16
- q De 33:12
- r Jg 20:15, 16
1Sa 9:16
- s Es 2:5
Es 8:7

Second Col.

- a Heb 11:21
- b Ge 35:29
Ge 49:33
- c Ge 23:17, 18
- d Ge 23:2, 19
Ge 25:9, 10
- e Ge 35:29
- f Ge 23:17, 18
- g Ac 7:15

CHAP. 50

- h Ge 46:4
- i Ge 50:26
- j Ge 47:29-31
- k Ge 48:21
- l Ge 46:4
Ge 47:29
- m Ge 23:17, 18
Ge 49:29, 30

their father said to them when he was blessing them. He gave each of them an appropriate blessing.^a

29 After that he gave these commands to them: "I am being gathered to my people.*^b Bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of E'phron the Hit'tite,^c 30 the cave in the field of Mach-pe'lah in front of Mam're in the land of Ca'naan, the field that Abraham purchased from E'phron the Hit'tite as a property for a burial place.

31 There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah.^d There they buried Isaac^e and his wife Rebek'ah, and there I buried Le'ah.

32 The field and the cave that is in it were purchased from the sons of Heth."^f

33 Thus Jacob finished giving these instructions to his sons. Then he drew his feet up onto the bed and breathed his last and was gathered to his people.^g

50 Joseph then threw himself on his father^h and wept over him and kissed him. 2 After that Joseph commanded his servants, the physicians, to embalmⁱ his father. So the physicians embalmed Israel, 3 and they took the full 40 days for him, for this is the full period for the embalming, and the Egyptians continued to shed tears for him 70 days.

4 When the days of mourning for him passed, Joseph spoke to Phar'ao'h's court,* saying: "If I have found favor in your eyes, give this message to Phar'ao'h: 5 'My father made me swear,^j saying: "Look! I am dying.^k You are to bury me in my burial place,^l which I have excavated in the land of Ca'naan."^m Please, let me go up and bury

49:29, 33 *This is a poetic expression for death. 50:4 *Or "household."

my father, after which I will return.” **6** Phar’aoah replied: “Go and bury your father just as he made you swear.”^a

7 So Joseph went up to bury his father, and all of Phar’aoah’s servants went with him, the elders^b of his court and all the elders of the land of Egypt **8** and all of Joseph’s household and his brothers and the household of his father.^c Only their little children and their flocks and their herds they left in the land of Go’shen. **9** Chariots^d and horsemen also went up with him, and the camp was very numerous. **10** Then they came to the threshing floor of A’tad, which is in the region of the Jordan, and there they carried on a very great and bitter mourning, and he kept mourning for his father seven days. **11** The inhabitants of the land, the Ca’naanites, saw them mourning at the threshing floor of A’tad, and they exclaimed: “This is a great mourning for the Egyptians!” That is why it was named A’bel-miz’ra-im,* which is in the region of the Jordan.

12 So his sons did for him exactly as he had instructed them.^e **13** His sons carried him into the land of Ca’naan and buried him in the cave of the field of Mach-pe’lah, the field in front of Mam’re that Abraham had purchased from E’phron the Hit’ite as property for a burial place.^f **14** After he buried his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all those who had gone with him to bury his father.

15 When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said: “It may be that Joseph is harboring animosity against us and that he will repay us for

50:11 *Meaning “Mourning of the Egyptians.”

CHAP. 50

a Ge 47:31

b Ps 105:21, 22

c Ge 46:27

d Ge 41:43

Ge 46:29

e Ge 47:29

f Ge 23:17, 18

Ge 25:9, 10

Ge 35:27

Ge 49:29, 30

Second Col.

a Ge 37:18, 28

Ge 42:21

Ps 105:17

b Ge 37:7, 9

c Ge 37:18

d Ge 45:5

Ps 105:17

e Ge 47:12

f 1Ch 7:20

g Jos 17:1

1Ch 7:14

h Ex 4:31

i Ge 12:7

Ge 17:8

Ge 26:3

Ge 28:13

j Ex 13:19

Jos 24:32

Heb 11:22

k Ge 50:2

all the evil that we did to him.”^a

16 So they sent a message to Joseph in these words: “Your father gave this command before his death: **17** ‘This is what you are to say to Joseph: “I beg you, please pardon the transgression of your brothers and the sin they committed in bringing such harm to you.” Now, please, pardon the transgression of the servants of your father’s God.’ And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. **18** Then his brothers also came and fell down before him and said: “Here we are as slaves to you!”^b **19** Joseph said to them: “Do not be afraid. Am I in the place of God? **20** Although you meant to harm me,^c God intended it to turn out well and to preserve many people alive, as he is doing today.^d **21** So now do not be afraid. I will keep supplying you and your little children with food.”^e Thus he comforted them and spoke reassuringly to them.

22 And Joseph continued to dwell in Egypt, he and the household of his father, and Joseph lived for 110 years. **23** Joseph saw the third generation of E’phraim’s sons,^f also the sons of Ma’chir,^g Ma-nas’sseh’s son. They were born upon Joseph’s knees.* **24** At length Joseph said to his brothers: “I am dying, but God will without fail turn his attention to you,^h and he will certainly bring you up out of this land to the land about which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”ⁱ **25** So Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying: “God will without fail turn his attention to you. You must take my bones up out of here.”^j **26** And Joseph died at the age of 110, and they had him embalmed,^k and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

50:23 *That is, treated as sons and given special favor.

return) occurs at a given time, his presence may thereafter extend over a period of years. In the Bible the Greek word *er'kho-mai* (meaning “to come”) is also used with reference to Jesus’ directing his attention to an important task at a specific time *during* his presence, namely, to his work as Jehovah’s executioner at the war of the great day of God the Almighty.

Do the events associated with Christ’s presence take place in a very brief time or over a period of years?

Matt. 24:37-39: “Just as the days of Noah were, so the presence [“coming,” *RS, TEV*; “presence,” *Yg, Ro, ED*; Greek, *pa·rou·si’a*] of the Son of man will be. For as they were in those days before the flood, eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark; and they took no note until the flood came and swept them all away, so the presence of the Son of man will be.” (The events of “the days of Noah” that are described here took place over a period of many years. Jesus compared his presence with what occurred back then.)

At Matthew 24:37 the Greek word *pa·rou·si’a* is used. Literally it means a “being alongside.” Liddell and Scott’s *Greek-English Lexicon* (Oxford, 1968) gives “*presence, of persons,*” as its first definition of *pa·rou·si’a*. The sense of the word is clearly indicated at Philippians 2:12, where Paul contrasts his presence (*pa·rou·si’a*) with his absence (*a·pou·si’a*). On the other hand, in Matthew 24:30, which tells of the “Son of man *coming* on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory” as Jehovah’s executioner at the war of Armageddon, the Greek word *er·kho·me·non* is used. Some translators use ‘coming’ for both Greek words, but those that are more careful convey the difference between the two.

Will Christ return in a manner visible to human eyes?

John 14:19: “A little longer and the world will behold me no more, but you [Jesus’ faithful apostles] will behold me, because I live and you will live.” (Jesus had promised his apostles that he would come again

ABIJAM. See ABIJAH No. 5.

ABILENE (Abi-le'ne). A Roman district, or tetrarchy, in the region of the Anti-Lebanon mountains N of Mount Hermon. It was named after its capital, Abila, a city situated in a picturesque gorge by the bank of the river Abanah (modern Barada).

At Luke 3:1 we are told that in the 15th year of Tiberius Caesar (28/29 C.E.) the district was ruled by Lysanias. This fact is confirmed by an inscription found at Abila in connection with a temple dedication dating from the reign of Tiberius. This inscription bears the name "Lysanias the tetrarch." Previously, Abilene had formed part of the kingdom of Herod the Great, but following his death, about the year 1 B.C.E., it was included in the province of Syria. Josephus records that the tetrarchy of Lysanias was joined to Palestine, in 37 C.E., under Herod Agrippa I, and that it was thereafter bestowed upon Herod Agrippa II by Claudius, in 53 C.E.

ABIMAEEL (A-bim'a-el). A descendant of Shem through Arpachshad. His father was Joktan, whose brother, Peleg, was an ancestor of Abraham. (Ge 10:28; 1Ch 1:17-27) It is likely that Abimael and his 12 brothers were the progenitors of 13 different Arabian tribes that settled in the Arabian Peninsula.

ABIMELECH (A-bim'e-lech) [My Father Is King]. Either a personal name or an official title of several Philistine kings, perhaps similar to the title Pharaoh among the Egyptians and Caesar among the Romans.

1. The king of the city of Gerar, where Abraham and Sarah took up temporary residence in about 1919 B.C.E. Thinking the couple were brother and sister, he took Sarah to become his wife but, providentially, did not touch her. Warned by Jehovah in a dream, the king returned Sarah to Abraham together with compensation consisting of livestock and slaves and, in addition, a thousand shekels of silver (c. \$2,200) as a guarantee of Sarah's chastity. Sometime later this king concluded a covenant of peace and mutual confidence with Abraham at Beer-sheba.—Ge 20:1-18; 21:22-34.

2. Possibly another king of Gerar at the time Isaac went there because of a famine. This was after the death of Abraham in 1843 B.C.E. Isaac, like his father Abraham, attempted to pass Rebekah off as his sister, but when the king, by accident, discovered she was Isaac's wife, he issued a public decree granting them protection. Isaac's God-given prosperity, however, became the object of

envy, and so the king requested Isaac to move out. Sometime later this king of Gerar concluded a covenant of peace with Isaac similar to the one his predecessor had made with Abraham.—Ge 26:1-31.

3. The Philistine king of the city of Gath in David's day.—Ps 34:Sup; see ACHISH.

4. A son of Judge Gideon born to his concubine at Shechem. After his father's death, Abimelech with presumptuous impudence sought to make himself king. Cunningly, he appealed to the landowners of Shechem through his mother's influential family. Upon obtaining their financial support he hired some ruffians, went to his father's house at Ophrah, and there massacred his half brothers upon a single stone. Of the 70 half brothers, only the youngest, Jotham, escaped the slaughter.

Abimelech was then proclaimed king, but Jehovah allowed a bad spirit to develop between the Shechemites and their new "king," in order to avenge the bloodguilt of all those connected with the conspiracy. A revolt was organized by Gaal. Abimelech quickly crushed it, captured and destroyed the city of Shechem, and sowed it with salt. Then he attacked the vault of the house, or sanctuary, of El-berith and set it afire, and in the conflagration about a thousand of his previous collaborators, the landowners of the tower of Shechem who had taken refuge there, were burned to death. Immediately Abimelech followed up this success by attacking Thebez to the N, only to have a woman on the city tower hurl an upper millstone down upon his head. Abimelech's three-year "reign" came to an end when his armor-bearer, in compliance with his dying request, ran him through with the sword, so that it could not be said that a woman had killed him.—Jg 8:30, 31; 9:1-57; 2Sa 11:21.

5. The Masoretic text, followed by the *King James Version*, reads "Abimelech" in 1 Chronicles 18:16. The Greek *Septuagint*, Latin *Vulgate*, Syriac *Peshitta*, and 12 Hebrew manuscripts read "Ahimelech," which is in agreement with 2 Samuel 8:17.

ABINADAB (A-bin'a-dab) [Father Is Willing (Noble; Generous)].

1. An inhabitant of the city of Kiriath-jearim in the territory of Judah about 14 km (8.5 mi) WNW of Jerusalem, in whose home the ark of the covenant was kept for a time.

When the sacred Ark was brought up from Beth-shemesh after its disastrous seven-month sojourn among the Philistines, it was deposited in the home of Abinadab, and his son Eleazar was sanctified to guard it. Here in this home the Ark

Please Hear My Prayer

(Psalm 54)



Heav - en - ly Fa - ther, please hear my song.
 Thank you, Dear God, for grant - ing this day,
 O how I long to do what is right!



You are my God; to you I be - long.
 Giv - ing me life, and show - ing the way.
 Help me, O Lord, to walk in the light.



Great is your name, be - yond all com - pare.
 How I de - light in your ten - der care.
 Give me the strength all bur - dens to bear.

Chorus



Gra - cious Je - ho - vah, please hear my prayer.

What do you need to do?

Use questions in a way that will achieve a desired result. Your aim may be to get an oral response; it may be to stimulate a mental response. What you ask and how you ask it have a direct bearing on your success in the use of questions.

BECAUSE questions call for a response—either oral or mental—they help to get your listeners involved. Questions can help you to start conversations and to enjoy a stimulating exchange of thoughts. As a speaker and a teacher, you may use questions to arouse interest, to help someone reason on a subject, or to add emphasis to what you say. When you make good use of questions, you encourage others to think actively instead of listening passively. Have an objective in mind, and ask your questions in a manner that will help to achieve it.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Questions that are effective help listeners to get involved. Answers to well-chosen questions may also provide valuable feedback for a teacher.

To Encourage Conversation. When you engage in the field ministry, be alert to opportunities to invite people to express themselves if they are willing to do so.

Many Witnesses begin interesting discussions by simply asking, “Have you ever wondered . . . ?” When they choose a question that truly is on the minds of many people, they will almost assuredly have a fine time in the field ministry. Even if the question is new to the thinking of the other person, it may stimulate curiosity. A wide variety of matters can be introduced with such expressions as “What do you think . . . ?,” “How do you feel . . . ?,” and “Do you believe . . . ?”

When the evangelizer Philip approached an Ethiopian court official who was reading aloud the prophecy of Isaiah, Philip simply asked: “Do you actually know [or, do you understand] what you are reading?” (Acts 8:30) This question opened the way for Philip to explain truths about Jesus Christ. Using a similar question, some modern-day Witnesses have found people who were truly hungering for a clear understanding of Bible truth.

Once they are given opportunity to express their own views, many people will be more inclined to listen to you. After asking a ques-

tion, listen attentively. Be kind rather than critical in acknowledging the person's response. Offer commendation when you can do so sincerely. On one occasion, after a scribe had "answered intelligently," Jesus commended him, saying: "You are not far from the kingdom of God." (Mark 12:34) Even if you do not share the same view as the other person, you can thank him for expressing himself. What he said may make you aware of an attitude that you need to take into account in sharing Bible truth with him.

To Introduce Important Thoughts. When you talk to a group or converse with an individual, try to use questions to lead up to important thoughts. Be sure that your questions involve matters of genuine interest to your audience. You may also use questions that are intriguing because the answer is not readily apparent. If you pause briefly after posing a question, your audience will likely listen with heightened interest to what follows.

On one occasion, the prophet Micah used a number of questions. After asking what God expects of those who worship him, the prophet set out four more questions, each including a possible answer. All those questions help to prepare readers for the insightful answer with which he concluded that part of his discussion. (Mic. 6:6-8) Could you do something like that when teaching? Try it.

To Reason on a Subject. Questions can be used to help others follow the logic of an argument. When delivering a serious pronouncement to Israel, Jehovah did this, as shown at Malachi 1:2-10. First he told them: "I have loved you people." They failed to appreciate that love, so he asked: "Was not Esau the brother of Jacob?" Then Jehovah pointed to the desolate condition of Edom as evidence that because of their wickedness, God did not love that nation. He followed this with illustrations interspersed with questions to emphasize Israel's failure to respond properly to his love. Some of the questions are phrased as if the unfaithful priests were asking them. Others are questions that Jehovah asked the priests. The dialogue stirs emotions and holds our attention; the logic is irrefutable; the message, unforgettable.

Some speakers effectively use questions in a similar way. Although

HOW TO DO IT

To encourage conversation, use questions involving matters that are truly important to the other person.

Before you state an important idea, try to use a question that will make others want to hear it.

Use questions to help people see the basis for statements made, the logic of truths presented, and the good effects these can have on their lives.

Use questions to invite the student not only to recite facts but also to express how he feels about what he is learning.

encouraging Bible talk. The next day at seven in the evening, the publishers along with two other couples were welcomed to the ship's bridge. Assembled there were 15 of the 16-member crew. After an opening prayer, a brother gave a talk on the subject "Disasters—An Act of God?" The crew was able to read the cited Bible verses because the publishers had brought extra Bibles and helped everyone to look up the scriptures. After the concluding prayer, all the crew remained seated and talked with the brothers. The sailors felt relieved and thankful. One of them said, "This is an answer to our prayers." The crew took 20 books as well as Bibles and other publications, after which the captain handed the publishers an envelope containing \$200 (U.S.) as a contribution for the literature.

She Prayed That She Could Help

Irene, who lives in **Sweden**, wrote: "I am 80 years old, and because of pain I am unable to go out in field service. I prayed to Jehovah that I might help someone whom I visited long ago and who would now be willing to have conversations or visits.

"One day, our telephone rang, and my husband answered. It was a woman who said to him: 'Excuse me, you were the only ones I could remember, so I made this call. Would your wife like to visit me to discuss God's Word? I studied 15 or 20 years ago, but my late husband was opposed, so I quit the study.'

"I remembered that I had visited the woman with another sister, who studied with her. To my astonishment, the woman remembered me. Delighted, I arranged to meet with her. Since then, we have had a study each week. She attended the Memorial and

the special talk. She has also been attending meetings. I thank Jehovah every day for answering my prayer.”

No Chocolate for the Contribution Box

Eight-year-old Sergio, who lives in **Italy**, wanted to convince the elders that he was ready to become an unbaptized publisher. One day, he went with his father who, for work, had to repair a lock for a couple in their 70's. Sergio brought a set of magazines with him. “While my dad was working,” he explained, “I offered the magazines to the husband, who was so surprised that he called his wife and showed them to her. Then I made a note of their name, address, and telephone number so that I could call again. The wife gave me all this information and handed me a big bar of chocolate.” A few days later, Sergio and one of the elders made a return visit on the couple. Sergio rang the bell, and when the wife answered, he explained that he wanted to give them the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* The woman was happy to accept it. She gave him another bar of chocolate. “I couldn't put the chocolate in the contribution box, so I ate it,” said Sergio, who then added, “The elders finally understood how much I wanted to become an unbaptized publisher.”

The Pastor Wanted to Learn More

Simeon was the pastor of a church in Gurkovo, **Bulgaria**, where there are no Witnesses. His study of the Bible had made him aware of the differences between what the Bible teaches and what the church teaches. One day, he received some of our magazines while traveling by train.

6

The Prayer of God's Servant

(Ephesians 6:18)



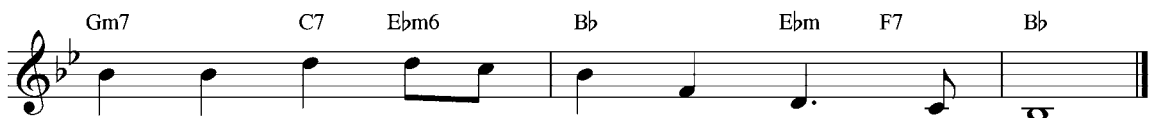
Heav - en - ly Fa - ther, Sov - er - eign Lord, May your great name for -
 Love for the truth with - in us in - still. Help us, O God, to
 Wis - dom we seek from heav - en a - bove. Please grant this gift, and



ev - er be a - dored. Your ten - der mer - cies long will en - dure,
 car - ry out your will. All your com - mand - ments we want to keep,
 fill our hearts with love. Help us our love and mer - cy to show,



Ev - er so faith - ful, ev - er so sure. Ev - er faith - ful,
 Find - ing and feed - ing your pre - cious sheep. Find - ing, feed - ing
 Help - ing all men our great God to know. Help - ing all our



ev - er sure, All your mer - cies will en - dure.
 your dear sheep, Your com - mands we want to keep.
 God to know, May our love and mer - cy show.