

- Song 39 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“Jehovah Renamed Abram and Sarai—Why?”:** (10 min.)  
 Ge 17:1—Though imperfect, Abram could prove himself faultless (*it-1 817*)  
 Ge 17:3-5—Abram was renamed Abraham (*it-1 31 ¶1*)  
 Ge 17:15, 16—Sarai was renamed Sarah (*w09 2/1 13*)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)  
 Ge 15:13, 14—When did the 400 years of affliction begin and end? (*it-1 460-461*)

Ge 15:16—How did Abraham’s descendants return to Canaan “in the fourth generation”? (*it-1 778 ¶4*)

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

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ge 15:1-21 (10)

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Initial Call Video:** (4 min.) Discussion. Play the video. Then ask the audience the following questions: How did the publisher make good use of questions? How did he use an illustration to teach?
- **Initial Call:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Overcome a common objection. (3)
- **Initial Call:** (5 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer the *Good News* brochure, and start a Bible study in lesson 3. (6)

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 131
- **“How Couples Can Strengthen Their Marriage”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *How to Strengthen the Marriage Bond* (video category FAMILY).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 103
- Concluding Comments (3 min. or less)
- Song 92 and Prayer

GENESIS 15-17 | Jehovah Renamed Abram and Sarai—Why?

**17:1, 3-5, 15, 16**

Jehovah viewed Abram as faultless before Him. When he expanded on his promise to Abram, he gave Abram and Sarai names with prophetic meaning.

True to their names, Abraham became the father of many nations and Sarah became an ancestress of kings.




**Abraham**  
Father of a Multitude



**Sarah**  
Princess



 We cannot choose the name given to us at birth. But like Abraham and Sarah, we can establish our own reputation. Ask yourself:

‘How can I be viewed by Jehovah as faultless?’

‘What kind of name am I making with Jehovah?’

# Make a Good Name With God

(Ecclesiastes 7:1)

Bb/C Am/C Gm/C F F#° G7sus4

Through - out our life - time, We want to use each day  
 This world may cause us To try to make a name,  
 In God's re - mem - brance, We want our name to be

G7 Gm Bb/C C7b9 F

To make a good name And all God's laws o - bey.  
 To seek its fa - vor, To bask in its ac - claim.  
 And have a good name For all e - ter - ni - ty.

Cm/A D7b9 Gm Bbm Am7 F/A Dm

If in Je - ho - vah's sight We strive to do what's right,  
 But that is van - i - ty, For if its friend we'll be,  
 On him we can de - pend, So we his truth de - fend

Db7 F/C F#° Gm7 Bb/C C13 F

Then we will please him, To his de - light.  
 Je - ho - vah's fa - vor, We will not see.  
 And keep our good name Down to the end.

the king of Ad'mah, the king of Ze-boi'im, and the king of Be'la, that is, Zo'ar, and they drew up in battle formation against them in the Valley\* of Sid'dim, **9** against Ched-or-la-o'mer king of E'lam, Ti'dal king of Go'im, Am'ra-phel king of Shi'nar, and Ar'i-och king of El-la'sar<sup>a</sup>—four kings against the five. **10** Now the Valley\* of Sid'dim was full of bitumen pits, and the kings of Sod'om and Go-mor'rah tried to escape and fell into them, and those who remained fled to the mountainous region. **11** Then the victors took all the goods of Sod'om and Go-mor'rah and all their food and went on their way.<sup>b</sup> **12** They also took Lot, the son of A'bram's brother who was dwelling in Sod'om,<sup>c</sup> as well as his goods, and they continued on their way.

**13** After that a man who had escaped came and told A'bram the Hebrew. He was then dwelling\* among the big trees of Mam're the Am'or-ite,<sup>d</sup> the brother of Esh'col and A'ner.<sup>e</sup> These men were allies of A'bram. **14** Thus A'bram heard that his relative<sup>\*f</sup> had been taken captive. With that he mobilized his trained men, 318 servants born in his household, and went in pursuit up to Dan.<sup>g</sup> **15** During the night, he divided his forces, and he and his servants attacked and defeated them. And he pursued them up to Ho'bah, which is north of Damascus. **16** He recovered all the goods, and he also recovered Lot his relative, his goods, the women, and the other people.

**17** After A'bram returned from defeating Ched-or-la-o'mer and the kings who were with

14:8, 10, 17 \*Or "Low Plain." 14:13 \*Or "dwelling in tents." 14:14 \*Lit., "brother."

CHAP. 14

a Ge 14:1, 2

b Ge 14:16

c Ge 19:1

d Ge 13:18

e Ge 14:24

f Ge 11:27

g Jg 18:29

Second Col.

a 2Sa 18:18

b Ps 110:4  
Heb 6:20

c Heb 7:1, 2

d Ps 83:18  
Heb 5:5, 10

e Heb 7:4

f Ge 14:13

CHAP. 15

g Ps 27:1  
Isa 41:10  
Ro 8:31  
Heb 13:6

h De 33:29  
Pr 30:5

i Ge 17:5, 6

j Ge 24:2, 3

k Ge 12:7  
Ac 7:5

him, the king of Sod'om went out to meet A'bram at the Valley\* of Sha'veh, that is, the Valley of the King.<sup>a</sup> **18** And Mel-chiz'e-dek<sup>b</sup> king of Sa'lem<sup>c</sup> brought out bread and wine; he was priest of the Most High God.<sup>d</sup>

**19** Then he blessed him and said:

"Blessed be A'bram by the Most High God,  
Maker of heaven and earth;

**20** And praised be the Most High God,  
Who has handed your oppressors over to you!"

And A'bram gave him a tenth of everything.<sup>e</sup>

**21** After that the king of Sod'om said to A'bram: "Give me the people,\* but take the goods for yourself." **22** But A'bram said to the king of Sod'om: "I raise my hand in an oath to Jehovah the Most High God, Maker of heaven and earth, **23** that I will not take anything that is yours, from a thread to a sandal lace, so that you may not say, 'I made A'bram rich.' **24** I will take nothing except what the young men have already eaten. As for the share of the men who went with me, A'ner, Esh'col, and Mam're<sup>f</sup>—let them take their share."

**15** After this the word of Jehovah came to A'bram in a vision, saying: "Do not fear,<sup>g</sup> A'bram. I am a shield for you.<sup>h</sup> Your reward will be very great."<sup>i</sup>

**2** A'bram replied: "Sovereign Lord Jehovah, what will you give me, seeing that I continue childless and the one who will inherit my house is a man of Damascus, E-li-e'zer?"<sup>j</sup> **3** A'bram added: "You have given me no offspring,<sup>\*k</sup> and a member<sup>#</sup> of my household is succeeding me as heir." **4** But look! Jehovah's

14:21 \*Or "souls." 15:3 \*Lit., "seed." #Lit., "son."

word in reply to him was, "This man will not succeed you as heir, but your own son\* will succeed you as heir."<sup>a</sup>

**5** He now brought him outside and said: "Look up, please, to the heavens and count the stars, if you are able to do so." Then he said to him: "So your offspring\* will become."<sup>b</sup>

**6** And he put faith in Jehovah,<sup>c</sup> and He counted\* it to him as righteousness.<sup>d</sup> **7** Then he added: "I am Jehovah, who brought you out of Ur of the Chal-de-ans to give you this land as your possession."<sup>e</sup> **8** To this he said: "Sovereign Lord Jehovah, how will I know that I will take possession of it?" **9** He replied to him: "Take for me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon." **10** So he took all of these and cut them in two and put each part opposite the other,\* but he did not cut up the birds. **11** Then the birds of prey began to descend on the carcasses, but A'bram kept driving them away.

**12** When the sun was about to set, a deep sleep fell upon A'bram and a great and frightening darkness descended on him. **13** Then He said to A'bram: "Know for certain that your offspring\* will be foreigners in a land not theirs and that the people there will enslave them and afflict them for 400 years.<sup>f</sup> **14** But I will judge the nation they will serve,<sup>g</sup> and after that they will go out with many goods.<sup>h</sup> **15** As for you, you will go to your forefathers in peace; you will be buried at a good old

15:4 \*Lit., "one who comes out of your inward parts." 15:5, 13, 18 \*Lit., "seed." 15:6 \*Or "credited." 15:10 \*Or "put each part of them so as to match the other."

#### CHAP. 15

a Ge 17:15, 16  
Ge 21:12

b Ge 22:17  
De 1:10  
Ro 4:18  
Heb 11:12

c Heb 11:8

d Ro 4:13, 22  
Ga 3:6  
Jas 2:23

e Ge 11:31  
Ne 9:7

f Ge 21:9  
Ex 1:13, 14  
Ex 3:7  
Ac 7:6, 7

g Ex 7:4  
Nu 33:4

h Ex 3:22  
Ps 105:37

#### Second Col.

a Ge 25:8

b Jos 14:1  
Ac 7:7

c 1Ki 21:26  
2Ki 21:11

d Ge 17:19  
Ge 22:17

e Ex 3:8

f 1Ki 4:21

g 1Sa 15:6

h Jos 1:4

i Ex 3:17

j Jos 17:15

k De 7:1

#### CHAP. 16

l Ge 15:2, 3

m Ga 4:25

n Ge 30:1, 3

age.<sup>a</sup> **16** But they will return here<sup>b</sup> in the fourth generation, because the error of the Am'or-ites has not yet reached its full measure."<sup>c</sup>

**17** When the sun had set and it had become very dark, a smoking furnace appeared, and a fiery torch passed between the pieces. **18** On that day Jehovah made with A'bram a covenant,<sup>d</sup> saying: "To your offspring\* I will give this land,<sup>e</sup> from the river of Egypt to the great river, the river Eu-phra'tes:<sup>f</sup> **19** the land of the Ken'ites,<sup>g</sup> the Ken'iz-zites, the Kad'mon-ites, **20** the Hit'tites,<sup>h</sup> the Per'iz-zites,<sup>i</sup> the Reph'a-im,<sup>j</sup> **21** the Am'or-ites, the Ca'naan-ites, the Gir'ga-shites, and the Jeb'u-sites."<sup>k</sup>

**16** Now A'bram's wife Sar'ai had borne him no children,<sup>l</sup> but she had an Egyptian servant whose name was Ha'gar.<sup>m</sup> **2** So Sar'ai said to A'bram: "Please now! Jehovah has prevented me from bearing children. Please, have relations with my servant. Perhaps I can have children by means of her."<sup>n</sup> So A'bram listened to what Sar'ai said. **3** After A'bram had lived for ten years in the land of Ca'naan, A'bram's wife Sar'ai took her Egyptian servant Ha'gar and gave her to her husband A'bram as his wife. **4** So he had relations with Ha'gar, and she became pregnant. When she realized that she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress.

**5** At this Sar'ai said to A'bram: "The injury done to me is your fault. I was the one who put my servant in your arms,\* but when she realized that she was pregnant, she began to despise me. May Jehovah judge between me and you." **6** So A'bram said to Sar'ai: "Look! Your servant is under

16:5 \*Lit., "in your bosom."

your authority. Do to her whatever you think is best." Then Sar'ai humiliated her, and she ran away from her.

7 Later Jehovah's angel found her at a spring of waters in the wilderness, the spring on the way to Shur.<sup>a</sup> 8 And he said: "Ha'gar, servant of Sar'ai, where have you come from and where are you going?" To this she said: "I am running away from my mistress Sar'ai." 9 Jehovah's angel then said to her: "Return to your mistress and humble yourself under her hand." 10 Then Jehovah's angel said: "I will greatly multiply your offspring,\* so that they will be too numerous to count."<sup>b</sup> 11 Jehovah's angel added: "Here you are pregnant, and you will give birth to a son, and you must name him Ish'mael,\* for Jehovah has heard your affliction. 12 He will be a wild donkey\* of a man. His hand will be against everyone, and everyone's hand will be against him, and he will dwell opposite all his brothers."<sup>#</sup>

13 Then she called on the name of Jehovah, who was speaking to her: "You are a God of sight,"<sup>c</sup> for she said: "Have I here actually looked upon the one who sees me?" 14 That is why the well was called Be'er-la'hai-roi.\* (It is between Ka'desh and Be'ed.) 15 So Ha'gar bore to A'bram a son, and A'bram named his son, whom Ha'gar bore, Ish'mael.<sup>d</sup> 16 A'bram was 86 years old when Ha'gar bore Ish'mael to him.

16:10; 17:7-10 \*Lit., "seed." 16:11 \*Meaning "God Hears." 16:12 \*Or "an onager," a kind of wild donkey, though some think that it refers to a zebra. Likely a reference to an independent disposition. #Or possibly, "and he will live in hostility to all his brothers." 16:14 \*Meaning "Well of the Living One Who Sees Me."

CHAP. 16  
a Ge 25:17, 18  
Ex 15:22

b Ge 17:20  
Ge 25:13-16  
1Ch 1:29-31

c Pr 15:3

d Ge 21:9  
Ga 4:22, 24

Second Col.

CHAP. 17  
a Ge 15:18  
Ps 105:8-11

b Ge 22:17  
De 1:10  
Heb 11:11, 12

c Ps 105:9-11

d Ge 13:16  
Ro 4:17

e Ge 35:10, 11

f Lu 1:72, 73

g Ex 6:4  
Heb 11:8, 9

h De 14:2

i Ge 21:4  
Ro 2:29

j Ac 7:8  
Ro 4:11

**17** When A'bram was 99 years old, Jehovah appeared to A'bram and said to him: "I am God Almighty. Walk before me and prove yourself faultless.\*

2 I will establish my covenant between me and you,<sup>a</sup> and I will multiply you very, very much."<sup>b</sup>

3 At this A'bram fell face-down, and God continued to speak with him, saying: 4 "As for me, look! my covenant is with you,<sup>c</sup> and you will certainly become a father of many nations.<sup>d</sup>

5 Your name will no longer be A'bram;\* your name will become Abraham,<sup>e</sup> for I will make you a father of many nations. 6 I will make you very, very fruitful and will make you become nations, and kings will come from you.<sup>e</sup>

7 "And I will keep my covenant between me and you<sup>f</sup> and your offspring\* after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring\* after you. 8 And I will give to you and to your offspring\* after you the land in which you lived as a foreigner<sup>g</sup>—the entire land of Ca'naan—for a lasting possession, and I will be their God."<sup>h</sup>

9 God said further to Abraham: "As for you, you are to keep my covenant, you and your offspring\* after you throughout their generations. 10 This is my covenant between me and you, that you and your offspring\* after you will keep: Every male among you must get circumcised.<sup>i</sup> 11 You must circumcise the flesh of your fore-skins, and it will serve as a sign of the covenant between me and you.<sup>j</sup> 12 Throughout your generations, every male among you

17:1 \*Or "blameless." 17:5 \*Meaning "Father Is High (Exalted)." #Meaning "Father of a Crowd (Multitude); Father of Many."

eight days old must be circumcised,<sup>a</sup> anyone who is born in the house and anyone who is not one of your offspring\* and who was purchased with money from a foreigner. **13** Every man born in your house and every man purchased with your money must be circumcised,<sup>b</sup> and my covenant in your flesh must serve as a lasting covenant. **14** If any uncircumcised male will not circumcise the flesh of his foreskin, that person\* must be cut off<sup>#</sup> from his people. He has broken my covenant.”

**15** Then God said to Abraham: “As for your wife Sar’-ai,<sup>c</sup> you must not call her Sar’-ai, because Sarah<sup>#</sup> will become her name. **16** I will bless her and also give you a son by her;<sup>d</sup> I will bless her and she will become nations; kings of peoples will come from her.” **17** At this Abraham fell facedown and began to laugh and to say in his heart:<sup>e</sup> “Will a man 100 years old have a child born to him, and will Sarah, a woman 90 years old, give birth?”<sup>f</sup>

**18** So Abraham said to the true God: “O that Ish’ma-el might live before you!”<sup>g</sup> **19** To this God said: “Your wife Sarah will definitely bear you a son, and you must name him Isaac.<sup>#h</sup> And I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant to his offspring\* after him.<sup>i</sup> **20** But as regards Ish’ma-el, I have heard you. Look! I will bless him and will make him fruitful and will multiply him very, very much. He will produce 12 chieftains, and I will make him become a great nation.<sup>j</sup> **21** However, I will estab-

17:12, 19 \*Lit., “seed.” 17:14 \*Or “soul.” #Or “put to death.” 17:15 \*Possibly meaning “Contentious.” #Meaning “Princess.” 17:19 #Meaning “Laughter.”

CHAP. 17

a Lu 2:21

b Ex 12:44

c Ge 11:29

d Ge 18:10

e Ge 18:12

f Ro 4:19  
Heb 11:11

g Ge 16:11

h Mt 1:2

i Ge 26:24

j Ge 16:10  
Ge 21:13, 18  
Ge 25:13-16  
1Ch 1:29-31

Second Col.

a Ge 26:3  
Heb 11:8, 9

b Ge 18:10, 14  
Ge 21:1

c Ge 17:13

d Ac 7:8  
Ro 4:11

e Ge 16:16

CHAP. 18

f Ge 16:7  
Jg 13:21

g Ge 13:18  
Ge 14:13

h Ge 19:1

i Ge 19:2  
Ge 24:32

lish my covenant with Isaac,<sup>a</sup> whom Sarah will bear to you at this appointed time next year.”<sup>b</sup>

**22** When God finished speaking with him, he went up from Abraham. **23** Abraham then took Ish’ma-el his son and all the men born in his house and everyone he had purchased with money, every male in the household of Abraham, and he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins on that very day, just as God had spoken with him.<sup>c</sup> **24** Abraham was 99 years old when he had the flesh of his foreskin circumcised.<sup>d</sup> **25** And Ish’ma-el his son was 13 years old when he had the flesh of his foreskin circumcised.<sup>e</sup> **26** On that very day, Abraham was circumcised and also his son Ish’ma-el. **27** All the men of his household, anyone born in the house and anyone purchased with money from a foreigner, were also circumcised with him.

**18** Afterward, Jehovah<sup>f</sup> appeared to him among the big trees of Mam’re<sup>g</sup> while he was sitting at the entrance of the tent during the hottest part of the day. **2** He looked up and saw three men standing some distance from him.<sup>h</sup> When he saw them, he ran from the entrance of the tent to meet them, and he bowed down to the ground. **3** Then he said: “Jehovah, if I have found favor in your eyes, please do not pass by your servant. **4** Please, let a little water be brought and have your feet washed;<sup>i</sup> then recline under the tree. **5** Seeing that you have come here to your servant, let me bring a piece of bread so that you may refresh yourselves.\* Then you may go on your way.” At this they said: “All right. You may do as you have spoken.”

18:5 \*Lit., “strengthen your heart.”

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True to their names, Abraham became the father of many nations and Sarah became an ancestress of kings.




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 We cannot choose the name given to us at birth. But like Abraham and Sarah, we can establish our own reputation. Ask yourself:

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**February 10-16 / Genesis 15-17**

## **Treasures From God's Word**

**"Jehovah Renamed Abram and Sarai—Why?":** (10 minutes)

### **Genesis 17:1—Though imperfect, Abram could prove himself faultless**

**Genesis 17:1:** When Abram was 99 years old, Jehovah appeared to Abram and said to him: "I am God Almighty. Walk before me and prove yourself faultless.

#### ***it-1* 817**

On the other hand, man's ways and productions are often faulty. Sin and error are the legacy all men have inherited from Adam. (Romans 5:12; Psalm 51:5) But Jehovah, himself faultless, "well knows the formation of us, remembering that we are dust," and is merciful. (Psalm 103:13, 14) He regarded faithful, obedient Noah as "faultless among his contemporaries." (Genesis 6:9) He commanded Abraham, "Walk before me and prove yourself faultless." (Genesis 17:1) Although both these men were imperfect and died, they were viewed as faultless by Jehovah, who "sees what the heart is." (1 Samuel 16:7; compare 2 Kings 20:3; 2 Chronicles 16:9.) He commanded Israel: "You should prove yourself faultless with Jehovah your God." (Deuteronomy 18:13; 2 Samuel 22:24) He provided his faultless Son (Hebrews 7:26) as a ransom sacrifice, and on this basis He can call those exercising faith and obedience "righteous," or faultless, while at the same time maintaining his position as the righteous and faultless Judge.—Romans 3:25, 26; see INTEGRITY; PERFECTION.

### **Genesis 17:3-5—Abram was renamed Abraham**

**Genesis 17:3-5:** At this Abram fell facedown, and God continued to speak with him, saying: "As for me, look! my covenant is with you, and you will certainly become a father of many nations. Your name will no longer be Abram; your name will become Abraham, for I will make you a father of many nations.

#### ***it-1* 31 paragraph 1**

Time passed. They had now been in Canaan for about ten years, yet Sarah continued barren. She therefore proposed to substitute her Egyptian maidservant Hagar so that she might have a child by



her. Abraham consented. And so in 1932 B.C.E., when Abraham was 86 years old, Ishmael was born. (Genesis 16:3, 15, 16) More time passed. In 1919 B.C.E., when Abraham was 99 years old, as a sign or seal to testify to the special covenant relationship existing between himself and Abraham, Jehovah commanded that all the males of Abraham's household be circumcised. At the same time Jehovah changed his name from Abram to Abraham, "because a father of a crowd of nations I will make you." (Genesis 17:5, 9-27; Romans 4:11) Soon after, three materialized angels, whom Abraham received hospitably in the name of Jehovah, promised that Sarah herself would conceive and give birth to a son, yes, within the coming year!—Genesis 18:1-15.

### **Genesis 17:15, 16—Sarai was renamed Sarah**

**Genesis 17:15, 16:** Then God said to Abraham: "As for your wife Sarai, you must not call her Sarai, because Sarah will become her name. I will bless her and also give you a son by her; I will bless her and she will become nations; kings of peoples will come from her."

#### **w09 2/1 13**

God himself changed the names of certain adults for prophetic purposes. For example, he changed the name of Abram, meaning "Father Is Exalted," to Abraham, meaning "Father of a Multitude." True to his name, Abraham did become the father of many nations. (Genesis 17:5, 6) Consider, too, Abraham's wife, Sarai, possibly meaning "Contentious." How happy she must have been when God renamed her "Sarah," meaning "Princess," alluding to her becoming an ancestress of kings.—Genesis 17:15, 16.

## **Digging for Spiritual Gems**

### **Genesis 15:13, 14—When did the 400 years of affliction begin and end?**

**Genesis 15:13, 14:** Then He said to Abram: "Know for certain that your offspring will be foreigners in a land not theirs and that the people there will enslave them and afflict them for 400 years. But I will judge the nation they will serve, and after that they will go out with many goods.

#### **it-1 460-461**

Jehovah told Abram (Abraham): "You may know for sure that your seed will become an alien resident in a land not theirs, and they will have to serve them, and these will certainly afflict them for four hundred years." (Genesis 15:13; see also Acts 7:6, 7.) This was stated prior to the birth of the promised

heir or “seed,” Isaac. In 1932 B.C.E. Ishmael was born to Abram by the Egyptian servant girl Hagar, and in 1918 B.C.E. Isaac was born. (Genesis 16:16; 21:5) Counting back 400 years from the Exodus, which marked the end of the ‘afflicting’ (Genesis 15:14), would bring us to 1913 B.C.E., and at that time Isaac was about five years old. It appears that Isaac was weaned then and, already “an alien resident” in a land not his, he now experienced the start of the foretold affliction in the form of Ishmael’s “poking fun,” Ishmael being about 19. (Genesis 21:8, 9) Although in modern times Ishmael’s mocking of Abraham’s heir might be viewed as inconsequential, such was not the case in patriarchal times. This is evidenced by Sarah’s reaction and God’s approval of her insistence that Hagar and her son Ishmael be sent away. (Genesis 21:10-13) The very fact that this incident was recorded in detail in the divine record also points to its marking the commencement of the prophesied 400 year period of affliction that would not end until the Exodus.—Galatians 4:29.

### **Genesis 15:16—How did Abraham’s descendants return to Canaan “in the fourth generation”?**

**Genesis 15:16:** But they will return here in the fourth generation, because the error of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.”

#### **it-1 778 paragraph 4**

*“In the fourth generation.”* We must remember that Jehovah told Abraham that in the fourth generation his descendants would return to Canaan. (Genesis 15:16) In the entire 430 years from the time when the Abrahamic covenant took effect to the Exodus there were more than four generations, even considering the long life spans that they enjoyed during that time, according to the record. But it was only 215 years that the Israelites were *actually in Egypt*. The ‘four generations’ following their entering Egypt can be calculated in this way, using as an example just one tribe of Israel, the tribe of Levi: (1) Levi, (2) Kohath, (3) Amram, and (4) Moses.—Exodus 6:16, 18, 20.

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

**Bible Reading:** (4 minutes or less) Genesis 15:1-21 (*th* study 10)

- Song 39 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“Jehovah Renamed Abram and Sarai—Why?”:** (10 min.)  
 Ge 17:1—Though imperfect, Abram could prove himself faultless (*it-1 817*)  
 Ge 17:3-5—Abram was renamed Abraham (*it-1 31 ¶1*)  
 Ge 17:15, 16—Sarai was renamed Sarah (*w09 2/1 13*)

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)  
 Ge 15:13, 14—When did the 400 years of affliction begin and end? (*it-1 460-461*)

Ge 15:16—How did Abraham’s descendants return to Canaan “in the fourth generation”? (*it-1 778 ¶4*)

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

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Ge 15:1-21 (10)

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Initial Call Video:** (4 min.) Discussion. Play the video. Then ask the audience the following questions: How did the publisher make good use of questions? How did he use an illustration to teach?
- **Initial Call:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Overcome a common objection. (3)
- **Initial Call:** (5 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer the *Good News* brochure, and start a Bible study in lesson 3. (6)

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 131
- **“How Couples Can Strengthen Their Marriage”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *How to Strengthen the Marriage Bond* (video category FAMILY).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 103
- Concluding Comments (3 min. or less)
- Song 92 and Prayer

GENESIS 15-17 | Jehovah Renamed Abram and Sarai—Why?

**17:1, 3-5, 15, 16**

Jehovah viewed Abram as faultless before Him. When he expanded on his promise to Abram, he gave Abram and Sarai names with prophetic meaning.

True to their names, Abraham became the father of many nations and Sarah became an ancestress of kings.




**Abraham**  
Father of a Multitude



**Sarah**  
Princess



 We cannot choose the name given to us at birth. But like Abraham and Sarah, we can establish our own reputation. Ask yourself:

‘How can I be viewed by Jehovah as faultless?’

‘What kind of name am I making with Jehovah?’



## APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

### SAMPLE CONVERSATIONS

#### ● INITIAL CALL

○ Question: What is God's name?

○ Scripture: **Ps 83:18**

○ Link: What is Jehovah's main quality?

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



- *bhs* 12 ¶14
- *fg* lesson 2

#### VIDEO TRANSCRIPTION

**Jeff (Publisher 1):** Good evening.

**Lisa (Householder):** Good evening.

**Jeff (Publisher 1):** It's nice to find you at home. We're here because many people would like to feel closer to God. You'd probably agree that before we can form a relationship with someone, we need to know the person's name, but what about God? What's his name? What have you heard?

**Lisa (Householder):** I've just heard him called God.

**Kim (Publisher 2):** We've heard that too.

**Jeff (Publisher 1):** Thankfully, the Bible reveals God's personal name. Kim, would you read Psalm 83:18 for us?

**Kim (Publisher 2):** Sure, it says:

<sup>18</sup> *“May people know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth.”*

**Jeff (Publisher 1):** Thanks, so according to this, what's God's name?

**Lisa (Householder):** It says, Jehovah.

**Kim (Publisher 2):** Yeah, have you seen that name in the Bible before?

**Lisa (Householder):** No, I haven't.

**Jeff (Publisher 1):** The Bible also tells us that of all of Jehovah's qualities, one is dominant and stands out above the others. If it's okay, maybe we can talk about that next time.

**Lisa (Householder):** Okay, I'd like that.

**Jeff (Publisher 1):** By the way, my name is Jeff and this is my wife Kim.

**Lisa (Householder):** I'm Lisa.

**Kim (Publisher 2):** Will you be home at this time tomorrow? Lisa?

video source: [https://www.jw.org/en/library/videos/#en/mediaitems/VODSampleConversations/pub-mwv\\_202001\\_1\\_VIDEO](https://www.jw.org/en/library/videos/#en/mediaitems/VODSampleConversations/pub-mwv_202001_1_VIDEO)



# Our Christian Life and Ministry

## MEETING WORKBOOK

### Sample Conversations

Abraham teaches young Isaac about Jehovah

#### INITIAL CALL

**Question:** How can we know the future?

**Scripture:** Isa 46:10

**Link:** What Bible prophecies are we seeing fulfilled?

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



- *bhs* 29 ¶2
- *fg* lesson 3 ¶2

#### FIRST RETURN VISIT

**Question:** What Bible prophecies are we seeing fulfilled?

**Scripture:** 2Ti 3:1-5

**Link:** What blessings will people enjoy in the future that God promises?

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



- *bhs* 98 ¶10
- *fg* lesson 1 ¶3

#### SECOND RETURN VISIT

**Question:** What blessings will people enjoy in the future that God promises?

**Scripture:** Isa 65:21-23

**Link:** What role will God's Son play in bringing about these blessings?

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



- *bhs* 35 ¶20




# 3


## Is the Good News Really From God?

### 1. Who is the Author of the Bible?


The good news that people will live forever on earth is written in the Bible. (Psalm 37:29) The Bible is made up of 66 smaller books. God used about 40 faithful men to write them. The first five books were written by Moses about 3,500 years ago. The last book was written by the apostle John over 1,900 years ago. Whose ideas did Bible writers present? God communicated with the Bible writers by means of his holy spirit. (2 Samuel 23:2) They wrote down the thoughts of God, not their own thoughts. So Jehovah is the Author of the Bible.

 Read 2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20, 21.

### 2. How can we be sure the Bible is true?

We know that the Bible is from God because it accurately foretells the future in detail. No man can do that. (Joshua 23:14) Only Almighty God can accurately foresee mankind's future.  Read Isaiah 42:9; 46:10.


We would expect a book from God to be unique, and it is. Billions of copies of the Bible have been distributed in hundreds of languages. Though ancient, the Bible is in harmony with proved science. Also, its 40 writers did not contradict one another.\* Furthermore, the Bible bears the unmistakable stamp of God's love, and it still has the power to change people's lives for the better. These facts convince millions that the Bible is God's Word.

 Read 1 Thessalonians 2:13.


\* See the brochure *A Book for All People*.




### 3. What is the Bible about?


The Bible centers on the good news that God has a loving purpose for mankind. The Scriptures explain how man's privilege of living on a paradise earth was lost early in human history and how a paradise will finally be restored.  Read *Revelation 21:4, 5*.

God's Word also contains laws, principles, and advice. In addition, the Bible records the history of God's dealings with mankind—a history that reveals God's personality. Thus, the Bible can help you to know God. It explains how you can become his friend.

 Read *Psalm 19:7, 11; James 2:23; 4:8*.

### 4. How can you understand the Bible?

This brochure will help you to understand the Bible by using the same method that Jesus used. He referred to one Bible text after another and explained “the meaning of the Scriptures.”  Read *Luke 24:27, 45*.

Few things are as fascinating as the good news from God. Yet, some people are indifferent to it, and others are even annoyed by it. Do not be discouraged. Your hope of enjoying everlasting life depends on your getting to know God.  Read *John 17:3*.



# “What God Has Yoked Together”

(Matthew 19:5, 6)

C F/C Cma7 C F F/E Dm7 Fma7/C G/B

With dig - ni - ty and joy, A three - fold cord is bound.  
They both have searched God's Word To learn to do his will,

G E/G# G#+5 E7/G# Am G/B Bb/C C7

With God and men to wit - ness, These sa - cred vows re - sound.  
And now they seek his bless - ing, Their prom - ise to ful - fill.

*Chorus*  
C7/E F G/F C/E C Am7 Dm7 G Am

He vowed be - fore Je - ho - vah To love her from the heart.  
She vowed be - fore Je - ho - vah To love him from the heart.

R.H.

C/G F G/F C/E Am7 Dm7 Dm/G F/G C

“What God has yoked to - geth - er, Let no man put a - part.”

R.H.



- Song 39 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

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‘What kind of name am I making with Jehovah?’

## How to Strengthen the Marriage Bond

**(Wife)** My name is Kiara, and that's my husband, Shaan. Our son Akil moved out recently to help where the need is greater. I didn't realize just how much he made us laugh.

I miss that.

It's just more quiet now. But more than that, I felt we were growing apart.

I tried talking to him. It didn't go well.

**(Husband)** Ever since Akil left, things have been off between Kiara and I.

(While at work he receives a text from his wife: "I'm going over to Susan's this evening. There is food in the fridge.")

She is so serious now.

I wish she would just lighten up and laugh more, like when Akil was still here. As much as I hated to admit it, it felt like we were growing apart.

Even Akil noticed.

(On a video call with their son)

**(Son)** Anyway, can I ask you guys a question? Are you both doing OK? Because you don't look OK.

**(Husband)** Of course, we're OK. OK? We're doing wonderful, right?

**(Wife)** Yeah, we're doing good. Everything is good. Yeah.

**(Wife)** We weren't fooling anyone—except maybe ourselves. And for the first time, we both revealed to each other just how we had been really feeling. We knew we were headed down a dangerous path. We had to do something—fast.

We read aloud the scripture at Romans 12:10: "In showing honor to one another, take the lead."

**(Husband)** We thought about Abraham and Sarah. They weren't perfect, but they worked hard to show honor to each other by listening and by caring.

I told Kiara, "I know I can do better." And I wanted to, because I love her so much.

**(Wife)** I told Shaan, "Let's both try to do better."

So we did.

(They slow dance in their home alone, they study the Bible together, they play games together, they ride bicycles together, they sit around a campfire together and hold hands and talk.)

A few months later, we decided to pioneer together. Now it seemed we had a lot to talk about.

**(Husband)** I felt like I was seeing a whole new side of Kiara.

**(Wife)** Like Abraham and Sarah, our marriage wasn't perfect.

There are going to be stressful times. But by working hard to apply Bible principles, we got through that rough patch and it drew us even closer together.

## How Couples Can Strengthen Their Marriage

Abraham and Sarah are a good example of marriage mates who loved and respected each other. (Ge 12:11-13; 1Pe 3:6) Nevertheless, their marriage was not perfect, and they had to endure trials in life. What can married couples learn by considering the example of Abraham and Sarah?

Communicate with each other. Respond humbly to words spoken in frustration or irritation by your mate. (Ge 16:5, 6) Arrange to spend time together. By words and actions, assure your mate of your love. Above all things, keep Jehovah in your marriage by studying, praying, and worshipping together. (Ec 4:12) Strong marriages honor Jehovah, the Originator of this sacred arrangement.



**WATCH THE VIDEO *HOW TO STRENGTHEN THE MARRIAGE BOND*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

- In the dramatization, what were some signs that Shaan and Kiara were growing apart?

\_\_\_\_\_



- Why is honest, open communication vital in a marriage?

\_\_\_\_\_



- How did the example of Abraham and Sarah help Shaan and Kiara?

\_\_\_\_\_

- What steps did Shaan and Kiara take to strengthen their marriage?

\_\_\_\_\_

- Why must a husband and wife not expect perfection in their marriage?

\_\_\_\_\_

**You can strengthen your marriage!**

For additional material on how to strengthen your marriage, consider the following articles that appear in *Awake!* and on [jw.org](http://jw.org):

“When the Children Are Gone”—g17.4 10-11

“How to Be a Good Listener”—g 12/13 12-13

“How to Discuss Problems”—g16.3 10-11

“How to Stop Arguing”—g 2/13 4-5

“When You Are Disappointed With Your Marriage”—g 3/14 14-15

## THE TEMPLE CLEANSED AGAIN

MATTHEW 21:12, 13, 18, 19 MARK 11:12-18 LUKE 19:45-48 JOHN 12:20-27

Jesus and his disciples have spent three nights in Bethany since they arrived from Jericho. Now, early in the morning on Monday, Nisan 10, they are heading to Jerusalem. Jesus is hungry. So when he sees a fig tree, he walks toward it. Does it have figs?

It is now late March, but the season for figs is not until June. Still, the leaves are out, having sprouted early. Thus, Jesus feels that there might be early figs. He finds, though, that there are none. The leaves have given the tree a deceptive appearance. Jesus then says: "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." (Mark 11:14) Immediately the tree starts to wither, the meaning of which is to be learned the next morning.

Before long, Jesus and his disciples reach Jerusalem. He goes to the temple, which he inspected the previous afternoon. Today he does more than make an inspection; he takes action similar to what he did three years earlier at the Passover of 30 C.E. (John 2:14-16) This time Jesus throws out "those selling and buying in the temple." He also overturns "the tables of the money changers and the benches of those selling doves." (Mark 11:15) He does not even let anyone carrying things to another part of the city take a shortcut through the temple courtyard.

Why is Jesus taking decisive action against those changing money and selling animals in the temple? He says: "Is it not written, 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a cave of robbers." (Mark 11:17) His reason for calling these men robbers is that they demand exorbitant prices from those who have to buy animals needed for sacrifice. Jesus views their dealings as extortion, or robbery.

Of course, the chief priests, scribes, and principal ones of the people hear what Jesus has done, and they respond with renewed efforts to have him killed. However, they face a problem. They do not know how to do away with Jesus, because the people are flocking to hear him.

Not only natural Jews but also proselytes, converts to the Jews' religion, have come for the Passover. Among them are Greeks who have come to worship at the festival. These approach Philip, perhaps attracted by his Greek name, and ask to see Jesus. Philip may be unsure whether such a meeting is appropriate, so he confers with Andrew. The two take the matter to Jesus, who is apparently still at the temple.

Jesus knows that he is to die in a few days, so this is not the time to satisfy people's curiosity or to seek popularity. He responds to the two apostles with an illustration, saying: "The hour has come for the Son of man to be glorified. Most truly I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just one grain; but if it dies, it then bears much fruit." —John 12:23, 24.

One grain of wheat might seem of little value. Yet, if it is put into the soil and "dies" as a seed, it can germinate and in time grow into a productive stalk with many grains. Similarly, Jesus is one perfect man. Still, by his being faithful to God till his death, he will become the means of imparting everlasting life to many who have a similar spirit of self-sacrifice. Thus, Jesus says: "Whoever is fond of his life destroys it, but whoever hates his life in this world will safeguard it for everlasting life." —John 12:25.

Jesus is not thinking of himself only, for he says: "If anyone would minister to me, let him





follow me, and where I am, there my minister will be also. If anyone would minister to me, the Father will honor him.” (John 12:26) What a reward! Those honored by the Father will become Christ’s associates in the Kingdom.

Bearing in mind the great suffering and agonizing death that awaits him, Jesus says: “Now

I am troubled, and what should I say? Father, save me out of this hour.” But Jesus does not want to avoid accomplishing God’s will. He adds: “Nevertheless, this is why I have come to this hour.” (John 12:27) Jesus is in agreement with all that God has purposed, including his own sacrificial death.

- ◇ Why does Jesus expect to find figs, though it is not yet the normal season for them?
- ◇ Why is it appropriate for Jesus to call those selling in the temple “robbers”?
- ◇ How can Jesus be compared to a grain of wheat, and how does he feel about the suffering and death that awaits him?

# A Place Bearing Your Name

(1 Chronicles 29:16)

B $\flat$  Dm7/A Gm7 B $\flat$ /F E $\flat$  F7sus4

How great is the hon - or, Je - ho - vah, To build you a place for your  
And now may we hon - or you, Fa - ther, By fill - ing this place with your

B $\flat$  B $\flat$ /A Gm B $\flat$ /F F/E $\flat$  E $\flat$  Gm7/D

name! We of - fer it now with re - joic - ing To  
praise. May glo - ry as - cend with the in - crease Of

R.H.

Cm11 Cm7 B $\flat$ sus4/D E $\flat$ ma7 Fsus4 F B $\flat$  Dm7/A

add to your glo - ry and fame. What - ev - er the things we may  
those who are learn - ing your ways. Com - mit - ting this place to your

Gm7 B $\flat$ /F E $\flat$  E $\flat$ /D Cm Cm/B $\flat$

give you, They right - ly were yours from the start. Our  
wor - ship, We give it our gen - er - ous care. And

# A Place Bearing Your Name

Cm6/A D7sus4 D7 Gm9 Gm Ebm6/Gb Bb/F F13sus4 F7

la - bor, our skill, our pos - ses - sions, We joy - ful - ly give from the  
long may it stand as a wit - ness, Sup - port - ing the mes - sage we

Bb Bb/A *Chorus* Gm Dm/F Eb Gm/D

heart.  
bear. May we pre - sent this place to you, And

Cm7 F7sus4 F7 Bb Bb/A Gm Bbma7/F

here may your name be known. We ded - i - cate this place to

Ebma7 Ebm6/Gb Bb/F F13sus4 F7 Bb

you; Please ac - cept it as your own.



DECEMBER 2019

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
FEBRUARY 3–MARCH 1, 2020

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In the new world, we will enjoy doing useful and satisfying work (See study article 50, paragraph 17)

Visit the [jw.org](https://jw.org)® website, or scan code



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190805

# 22 The Kingdom Is in Place—Let It Come!

(Revelation 11:15; 12:10)

A D/A Fma7 G

Je - ho - vah, you al - ways have been, And al - ways you will  
 The time for the Dev - il is short; We know what this will  
 The an - gels in heav - en re - jice And sing with joy - ful

A F#m C#m Em

be. You've giv - en the throne to your Son; He  
 mean. Though liv - ing in times of dis - tress, We  
 cries. The heav - ens a - bove are re - lieved From

Bm7 A/C# E D/E C#m/E Bm/E A/E

rules by your de - cree. The King - dom has been  
 see the things un - seen. The King - dom has been  
 Sa - tan and his lies. The King - dom has been

R.H.

# The Kingdom Is in Place—Let It Come!

Bm/E C#m/E D/E F#m/E E D/E C#m/E D/E

brought to birth; His ru - ler - ship will  
 brought to birth; His ru - ler - ship will  
 brought to birth; His ru - ler - ship will

E D/E E *Chorus* A E A

fill the earth.  
 fill the earth. For now have come to pass Sal -  
 fill the earth.

D A/C# E A E/G#

va - tion and king - dom and might. The King - dom is in

F#m Bm Bm/D A/E E7 A

place. We pray: "Let it come, Let it come!"

**SONG 22**

The Kingdom Is in Place  
—Let It Come!

**PREVIEW**

Jehovah made a special arrangement for liberty, or freedom, to be declared in ancient Israel. It was the Jubilee. Christians are not under the Mosaic Law; yet, the Jubilee has meaning for us. In this article, we will see how the ancient Jubilee reminds us of a provision Jehovah has made for us and how we can benefit from it.

## Jehovah Provides for Your Liberty

*“You must . . . proclaim liberty in the land to all its inhabitants.”—LEV. 25:10.*

IN SOME countries, special celebrations are arranged to mark the 50th year of the reign of a king or queen. That 50th year is often known as the sovereign’s jubilee year. The festivities that accompany the jubilee might go on for a day, a week, or even longer, but they eventually come to an end, and the joy they brought is soon forgotten.

<sup>2</sup> We will examine a better jubilee, even better than the year-long festival that was proclaimed every 50 years in ancient Israel. That ancient Jubilee brought liberty to the people who observed it. Why is that of interest to us today? Because Israel’s Jubilee year reminds us of a wonderful provision for lasting liberty that Jehovah is making even now, liberty that Jesus spoke about.—**Read Luke 4:16-18.**

<sup>3</sup> We can better understand what Jesus meant when he spoke of liberty by first considering the Jubilee that God arranged for his ancient people. Jehovah told the Israelites: “You must sanctify the 50th year and proclaim liberty in the land to all its inhabitants. It will become a Jubilee for you, and each of you will *return to his property* and each of you should *return to his family.*” (**Read Leviticus 25:8-12.**) In the preceding article, we considered

1-2. (a) What is a jubilee? (See the box “What Was the Jubilee?”)  
(b) As recorded at Luke 4:16-18, what did Jesus speak about?

3. As outlined at Leviticus 25:8-12, how did the Israelites benefit from the Jubilee?





The Jubilee in Israel produced rejoicing, as those who had been slaves returned to their family and their land (See paragraph 3)

how the Israelites benefited from the weekly Sabbath. How, though, did the Israelites benefit from the Jubilee? Well, suppose an Israelite had fallen into debt and, as a result, had been forced to sell his land to pay off the debt. During the Jubilee year, that land was to be returned to him. Therefore, the man could “return to his property,” and the future inheritance of his children would not be lost. In another case, a man who fell on hard times might have had to sell one of his children—or even himself—into slavery in order to pay a debt. During the Jubilee year, the slave was to “return to his family.” So no one would become a slave permanently with no hope! How thoughtful of Jehovah!

<sup>4</sup> What was another benefit of the Jubilee? Jehovah explained: “No one among you should become poor, for Jehovah will surely bless you in the land

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4-5. Why should the ancient Jubilee interest us today?

that Jehovah your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance.” (Deut. 15:4) What a contrast to what is happening in the world today, where the rich often get richer and the poor, poorer!

<sup>5</sup> As Christians, we are not under the Mosaic Law. This means that we are not holding to the ancient Jubilee arrangement about freeing slaves, forgiving debts, and returning inherited land. (Rom. 7:4; 10:4; Eph. 2:15) Nonetheless, we have reason to be interested in the Jubilee. Why? Because we can enjoy liberty, or freedom, that reminds us of what Jehovah set in place for the Israelites.

### JESUS PROCLAIMED LIBERTY

<sup>6</sup> All of us need to be liberated because we are slaves in one grim sense—slaves to sin. As a result of being sinners, we are subject to aging, sickness, and death. Many see evidence of that when they

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6. From what does mankind need to be liberated?

## What Was the Jubilee?

A jubilee is a special anniversary. The Israelites were to celebrate their Jubilee every 50 years. Starting with the time of entering the Promised Land, the nation of Israel was to count six years during which the land was sown, cultivated, and harvested. The seventh year was to be a sabbath year, during which no sowing or pruning could be done. Seven of these seven-year periods ( $7 \times 7 = 49$ ) were to be counted, and the following year, the 50th, was to be a Jubilee year. Starting the count of years with the entry of the Israelites into the Promised Land, their first Jubilee year began in Tishri, 1424 B.C.E.—Lev. 25:2-4, 8-10.

look into a mirror or go to a doctor for treatment. We are also discouraged when we commit sins. The apostle Paul admitted that he was led “captive to sin’s law that [was in his] body.” He added: “Miserable man that I am! Who will rescue me from the body undergoing this death?”—Rom. 7:23, 24.

<sup>7</sup> Happily, God arranged a way for us to be rescued, or freed from sin. Jesus is the key to that liberation. In the eighth century before our Common Era, the prophet Isaiah foretold a future grand liberation. That grand liberation would

7. What did Isaiah foretell about liberty?

accomplish far more than did the liberation during Israel’s Jubilee year. He wrote: “The spirit of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah is upon me, because Jehovah anointed me to declare good news to the meek. He sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, **to proclaim liberty to the captives.**” (Isa. 61:1) To whom does that prophecy apply?

<sup>8</sup> That important prophecy about liberation began to be fulfilled after Jesus started his ministry. When he went to the synagogue in his hometown of Nazareth, Jesus read those very words of Isaiah to the Jews assembled there. Jesus applied to himself the words: “Jehovah’s spirit is upon me, because he anointed me to declare good news to the poor. He sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and a recovery of sight to the blind, to send the crushed ones away free, to preach Jehovah’s acceptable year.” (Luke 4:16-19) How did Jesus fulfill that prophecy?

### THE FIRST TO BE LIBERATED

<sup>9</sup> The liberty, or freedom, that Isaiah foretold and that Jesus read about began to be granted in the first century. Jesus confirmed this when he announced: “**Today** this scripture that you just heard is fulfilled.” (Luke 4:21) Many who heard what Jesus read were probably looking for some political change, for liberation from Rome. They may have felt like the two men who said: “We were hoping that this man was the one

8. To whom does Isaiah’s prophecy about liberation apply?

9. Many in Jesus’ time hoped for what sort of liberation?

who was going to deliver Israel.” (Luke 24:13, 21) But you know that Jesus did not urge his followers to revolt against the heavy yoke of Rome. Instead, he instructed them to pay “Caesar’s things to Caesar.” (Matt. 22:21) So how did Jesus bring freedom at that time?

<sup>10</sup> God’s Son came to help people gain liberty, or freedom, in two ways. First, Jesus opened the way to liberty from the oppressive doctrines taught by the religious leaders. Many Jews back then were enslaved to traditions and mistaken beliefs. (Matt. 5:31-37; 15:1-11) Those who presumed to be spiritual guides were in a sense blind. In rejecting the Messiah and the spiritual enlightenment he offered, they remained in darkness and in sin. (John 9:1, 14-16, 35-41) By his correct teachings and good example, Jesus made known to meek ones a spiritual liberation.—Mark 1:22; 2:23-3:5.

<sup>11</sup> The second way in which Jesus provided liberation involved freeing mankind from enslavement to inherited sin. On the basis of Jesus’ sacrifice, God could forgive the sins of those who show faith and who accept the ransom He provided. (Heb. 10:12-18) Jesus said: “If the Son sets you free, you will be truly free.” (John 8:36) That freedom was certainly greater than what could be gained during Israel’s Jubilee year! For instance, a man set free during the Jubilee might again become a slave, and in any case, he would eventually die.

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10. Jesus opened the way to liberty from what?

11. What was the second way in which Jesus provided liberation?



Jesus announces liberty in the synagogue of Nazareth  
(See paragraphs 8-9)

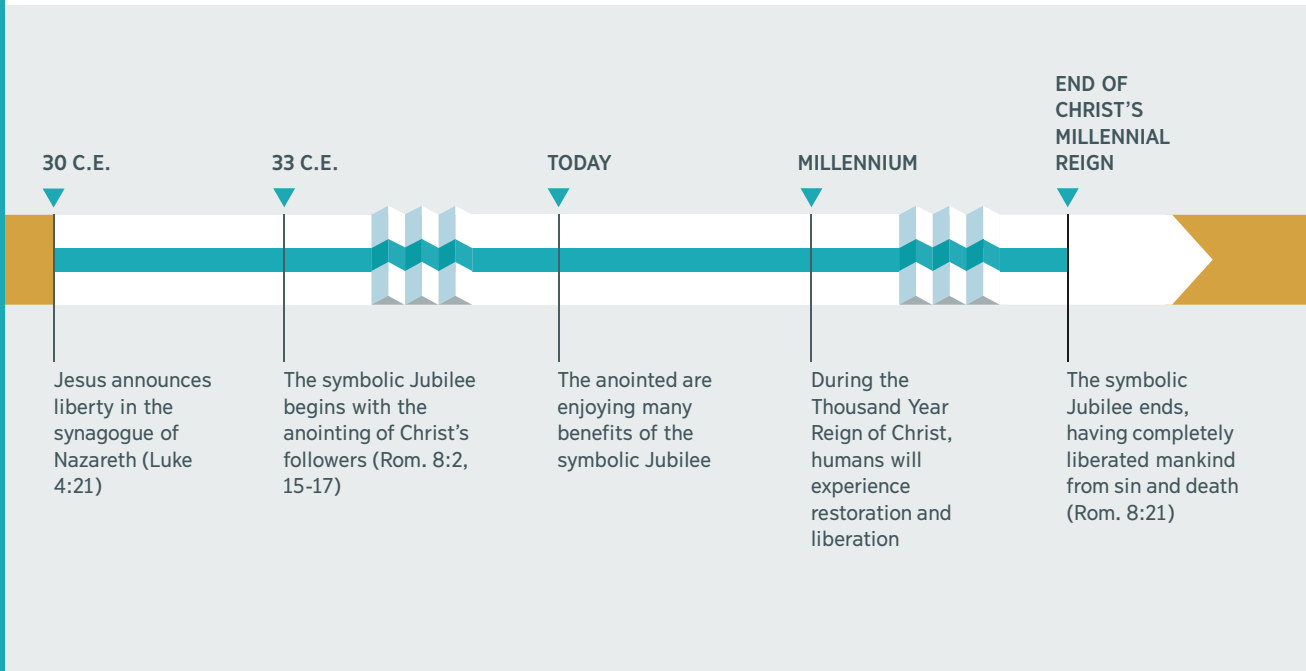
<sup>12</sup> On the day of Pentecost 33 C.E., Jehovah anointed with holy spirit the apostles and other faithful men and women. He adopted them as his sons so that in time they would be resurrected to heaven to reign with Jesus. (Rom. 8:2, 15-17) These were the first to benefit from the liberty that Jesus announced in the synagogue of Nazareth. Those men and women were no longer enslaved to false teachings and unscriptural practices of the Jewish religious leaders. God also considered them liberated from the deadly effects of sin. The

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12. Who were the first to benefit from the liberty announced by Jesus?



## Aspects of the Symbolic Jubilee



symbolic Jubilee that began with the anointing of Christ's followers in 33 C.E. will end at the conclusion of Jesus' Thousand Year Reign. What will have been accomplished by that time?

### MILLIONS MORE TO BE LIBERATED

<sup>13</sup> In modern times, millions of sincere people out of all nations are of the "other sheep." (John 10:16) They have not been called by God to reign in heaven with Jesus. Rather, they have the Bible-based prospect of living forever on earth. Is that your hope?

13-14. Besides anointed Christians, who can receive the liberty that Jesus announced?

<sup>14</sup> Even now you are receiving some benefits enjoyed by those who will be part of God's heavenly Kingdom. By your faith in Jesus' shed blood, you can ask for forgiveness of your sins. That results in a right standing with God and a good conscience before him. (Eph. 1:7; Rev. 7:14, 15) Think, too, of the blessings you enjoy because you have been liberated from long-held unscriptural beliefs. Jesus said: "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32) What a joy to have such freedom!

<sup>15</sup> You can expect greater freedom to

15. What freedom and blessings can we expect in the future?

come. In the near future, Jesus will act decisively to eliminate false religion and corrupt human rulership. God will protect “a great crowd” who serve him, and then he will allow them to enjoy blessings in an earthly paradise. (Rev. 7:9, 14) A vast number will be resurrected and will have the opportunity to be liberated from all the effects of Adam’s sin.—Acts 24:15.

<sup>16</sup> During the Thousand Year Reign, Jesus and his corulers will help to raise mankind to perfect physical and spiritual health. This time of restoration and liberation will be like the Jubilee in Israel. The result for all on earth who serve Jehovah loyally will be human perfection, free from sin.

<sup>17</sup> A prophetic description of life on earth is found at **Isaiah 65:21-23**. **(Read.)** That life will not be a life of idleness. Rather, the Bible indicates that

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16. What grand liberation awaits mankind?

17. Isaiah 65:21-23 foretells what for God’s people? (See cover picture.)

God’s people at that time will be doing useful, satisfying work. At the end of that period, we can be sure that “the creation itself will also be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God.”—Rom. 8:21.

<sup>18</sup> Just as Jehovah arranged for the Israelites to balance work and rest, so it will be for his people in the coming Thousand Year Rule of Christ. There will certainly be time for spiritual activities. Worship of God is essential to happiness today, and it will be so in the new world. Yes, we have good reason to rejoice over the good work and spiritual activity that we can expect when believing mankind enjoys life during Christ’s Millennial Reign.

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18. Why can we trust that a bright future awaits us?

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**PICTURE DESCRIPTION Page 9:** During the Jubilee, men who had been slaves were freed and could return to their family and their land.

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## HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- What was the Jubilee in Israel, and how did the nation benefit from it?
- How has Jehovah extended liberty to the anointed?
- How will Jehovah extend complete liberty to the “other sheep”?

# Holding Fast to Our Hope

(Hebrews 6:18, 19)

Dm Dsus4 Dm A Dm/A Gadd9/B A/C# Dm Gm/D

Man - kind has stum - bled for cen - tu - ries in dark - ness.  
 "God's day is near!" rings the King - dom proc - la - ma - tion;

Dm Dsus4 Dm A Dm/A Gadd9/B A/C# Dm

Vain is their quest as they try to catch the wind.  
 Men will no long - er cry out to God: "How long?"

Dm7 Gm Gm/Bb G7/B C Bb/D C7/E F F/A

Man's trag - ic flaw is re - vealed in its stark - ness;  
 Soon he will free all his groan - ing cre - a - tion.

Bb Gm6/Bb Bb Gm6/Bb Bb6 E7/B B° A/C#

None can they save, for they all have sinned.  
 Praise God Al - might - y, and join our song.

# Holding Fast to Our Hope

## Chorus

D Dma7 G G/B Gm/Bb A Bm7 A7/C# D F#/C#  
 Sing with good cheer, for God's King - dom is here! His

Bm Bm/A G Em7 A7 G/B A7/C# D  
 Son's might - y reign brings us free - dom from fear.

Dma7 G G/B Gm/Bb A Bm7 A7/C# D F#/C#  
 Through him, at last, e - vil soon will be past; This

Bm Bm/A G G/B Gm/Bb A7 G/A A7 D  
 hope, like an an - chor, is hold - ing us fast.