

- Song 112 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “**Jacob and Laban Make a Covenant of Peace**”: (10 min.)

Ge 31:44-46—Jacob and Laban made a pile of stones on which the covenant meal was eaten (*it-1* 883 ¶1)

Ge 31:47-50—They named the place Galeed and the Watchtower (*it-2* 1172)

Ge 31:51-53—They promised to maintain peace between them

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)
Ge 31:19—Why might Rachel have stolen the teraphim statues that belonged to her father? (*it-2* 1087-1088)

Ge 31:41, 42—What does Jacob’s example teach us about how to react to employers who are “hard to please”? (1Pe 2:18; w13 3/15 21 ¶8)

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 31:1-18 (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 sister make the scripture application clear? How did she set up the return visit?
- **Initial Call:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Overcome a common objection. (4)
- **Initial Call:** (5 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer the *Good News* brochure and start a Bible study, using lesson 5. (8)

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

- Song 77
- **Local Needs:** (15 min.)
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 111 ¶1-9
- Concluding Comments (3 min. or less)
- Song 146 and Prayer

GENESIS 31 | Jacob and Laban Make a Covenant of Peace

31:44-53

Why did Jacob and Laban make a pile of stones?

- It served as a witness to all passersby of the covenant of peace that they had made
- It reminded them that Jehovah was watching to see that they kept their covenant of peace



Today, Jehovah expects his people to enjoy peaceful relationships. How will these three actions help us to maintain peace or to restore it?

- **Talking it out.**—Mt 5:23, 24
- **Forgiving freely.**—Col 3:13
- **Being patient.**—Ro 12:21



Jehovah, God of Peace

(Philippians 4:9)

C Am F Dm

Je - ho - vah, God of love, You have prom - ised us your peace.
 Your spir - it aids our sight As your Word gives need-ed light.
 You've gath - ered those you love, Both in heav - en and on earth,

E7b9 Am9 Am Am7/B B7 E G7/D

So we ask you for your spir - it; May its fruit - age yet in - crease.
 We are guid - ed and pro - tect - ed In a world as dark as night.
 We're u - nit - ed by your spir - it To pro - claim the King - dom's birth.

C Am F Dm

Our faith in your dear Son, Who is loy - al, ev - er true,
 Un - til the time has come When all wars and ter - rors cease,
 Your righ - teous King - dom rule Soon will bring an end to war.

E7b9 Am9 Am G/F F F#° C/G Dm/G C

Gives us ac - cess to your friend - ship; We are now at peace with you.
 May your spir - it bless our ef - forts To main - tain our god - ly peace.
 Then the meek ones will de - light to Live in peace for - ev - er - more.

the gutters before the eyes of the flocks, that they might get into heat by the staffs. **42** But when the animals were weak, he would not place the staffs there. So the weak ones always came to be La'ban's, but the robust ones became Jacob's.^a

43 And the man grew very prosperous, and he acquired great flocks and male and female servants and camels and donkeys.^b

31 In time he heard what the sons of La'ban were saying: "Jacob has taken everything that belonged to our father, and from what belonged to our father, he has amassed all this wealth."^c **2** When Jacob would look at the face of La'ban, he saw that his attitude toward him was not what it used to be.^d **3** Finally Jehovah said to Jacob: "Return to the land of your fathers and to your relatives,^e and I will continue with you." **4** Then Jacob sent a message to Rachel and Le'ah to come out to the field to his flock, **5** and he said to them:

"I have seen that your father's attitude toward me has changed,^f but the God of my father has been with me.^g **6** You yourselves certainly know that I have served your father with all my power.^h **7** And your father has tried to cheat me and has changed my wages ten times; but God has not allowed him to do me harm. **8** If on the one hand he would say, 'The speckled ones will be your wages,' then the whole flock produced speckled ones; but if on the other hand he would say, 'The striped ones will be your wages,' then the whole flock produced striped ones.ⁱ **9** So God kept taking your father's livestock away from him and giving it to me. **10** Once when the flock got into heat, I raised

CHAP. 30

a Ge 31:9

b Ge 32:5
Ge 36:6, 7

CHAP. 31

c Ge 30:33

d Ge 30:27

e Ge 28:15
Ge 32:9
Ge 35:27

f Ge 30:27

g Ge 48:15

h Ge 30:29, 30

i Ge 30:32

Second Col.

a Ge 30:39

b Ge 29:25
Ge 31:39

c Ge 12:8, 9
Ge 35:15

d Ge 28:18, 22

e Ge 35:14
Ge 37:1

f Ge 31:41
Ho 12:12

g Ge 31:1

h Ge 31:3

i Ge 33:13

j Ge 30:42, 43

k Ge 35:27

l Ge 35:2
Jos 24:2

m Ge 31:14

n Ge 15:18

o Nu 32:1

my eyes and saw in a dream that the he-goats mating with the flock were striped, speckled, and spotty.^a **11** Then the angel of the true God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob!' to which I said, 'Here I am.' **12** And he continued, 'Raise your eyes, please, and see that all the he-goats mating with the flock are striped, speckled, and spotty, for I have seen all that La'ban is doing to you.^b **13** I am the true God of Beth'el,^c where you anointed a pillar and where you made a vow to me.^d Now get up, go out of this land, and return to the land of your birth."^e

14 At this Rachel and Le'ah answered him: "Is there any share left for us to inherit in our father's house? **15** Does he not consider us as foreigners, since he has sold us and has been using up the money given for us?" **16** All the riches that God has taken away from our father are ours and our children's.^g So, then, do everything that God has told you to do."^h

17 Then Jacob got up and lifted his children and his wives on the camels,ⁱ **18** and he began driving all his herd and all the goods that he had accumulated,^j the livestock in his possession that he had accumulated in Pad'dan-a'ram, to go to Isaac his father in the land of Ca'naan.^k

19 Now La'ban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel stole the teraphim statues^{*i} that belonged to her father.^m **20** Moreover, Jacob outwitted La'ban the A-ra-mae'an, for he had not told him that he was running away. **21** And he ran away and crossed the River,^{*n} he and all he had. Then he headed toward the mountainous region of Gil'e-ad.^o **22** On the third day, La'ban was

31:19 *Or "household gods; idols."
31:21 *That is, the Euphrates.

told that Jacob had run away. **23** So he took his brothers* with him and pursued him for a journey of seven days and caught up with him in the mountainous region of Gil'e-ad. **24** Then God came to La'ban the A-ra-mae'an^a in a dream by night^b and said to him: "Be careful about what you say to Jacob, either good or bad."^c

25 So La'ban approached Jacob, as Jacob had pitched his tent in the mountain and La'ban had encamped with his brothers in the mountainous region of Gil'e-ad. **26** Then La'ban said to Jacob: "What have you done? Why have you resorted to outwitting me and carrying my daughters off like captives taken by the sword? **27** Why did you run away secretly and outwit me and not tell me? If you had told me, I could have sent you away with rejoicing and with songs, with tambourine and with harp. **28** But you did not give me a chance to kiss my grandchildren* and my daughters. You have acted foolishly. **29** It is in my power to do harm to you, but the God of your father spoke to me last night, saying, 'Be careful about what you say to Jacob, either good or bad.'^d **30** Now you have gone because you have been longing to return to the house of your father, but why have you stolen my gods?"^e

31 Jacob answered La'ban: "It was because I was afraid, for I said to myself, 'You might take your daughters away from me by force.' **32** Anyone with whom you find your gods will not live. Before our brothers, examine what I have, and take what is yours." But Jacob did not know

31:23 *Or "relatives." **31:24** *Lit., "Watch yourself that you do not speak with Jacob from good to bad." **31:28** *Lit., "sons."

CHAP. 31

a Ge 25:20
Ho 12:12

b Ge 20:3

c Ps 105:15

d Ge 31:24

e Ge 31:19
Ge 35:2

Second Col.

a Ge 46:18, 25

b Le 15:19

c Ge 31:19

d Ge 30:27

e 1Sa 17:34

f Ge 47:9

g Ge 31:7

h Ge 28:13
Ge 31:29

that Rachel had stolen them. **33** So La'ban went into the tent of Jacob and into the tent of Le'ah and into the tent of the two slave girls,^a but did not find them. Then he came out of Le'ah's tent and went into Rachel's tent. **34** Meanwhile, Rachel had taken the teraphim statues and put them in the woman's saddle basket of the camel, and she was sitting on them. So La'ban searched through the whole tent but did not find them. **35** Then she said to her father: "Do not be angry, my lord, because I am not able to get up before you, for the customary thing with women is upon me."^b So he searched on carefully but did not find the teraphim statues.^c

36 At that Jacob became angry and began to criticize La'ban. Jacob then said to La'ban: "What is my offense, and for what sin are you hotly pursuing me? **37** Now that you have searched through all my goods, what have you found that belongs to your house? Put it here in front of my brothers and your brothers, and let them decide between the two of us. **38** During these 20 years that I have been with you, your sheep and your goats never miscarried,^d and I never ate the rams of your flock. **39** I did not bring you any animal torn by wild beasts.^e I would stand the loss of it myself. Whether the animal was stolen by day or was stolen by night, you would demand compensation from me. **40** By day the heat consumed me, and the cold by night, and sleep would flee from my eyes.^f **41** This makes 20 years for me in your house. I have served you 14 years for your two daughters and 6 years for your flock, and you kept changing my wages ten times.^g **42** If the God of my father,^h the God of Abraham and

the One whom Isaac fears,^a had not been on my side, you would now have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the toil of my hands, and that is why he reproved you last night.”^b

43 Then La'ban answered Jacob: “The daughters are my daughters and the children my children and the flock my flock, and everything you are looking at is mine and my daughters’. What can I do today against these or against their children whom they have borne?”

44 Now come, let us make a covenant, you and I, and it will serve as a witness between us.”

45 So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar.^c **46** Then Jacob said to his brothers: “Pick up stones!” And they took stones and made a pile. After that they ate there on the pile of stones. **47** And La'ban began calling it Je'gar-sa-ha-du'tha,* but Jacob called it Gal'e-ed.”

48 La'ban then said: “This pile of stones is a witness between me and you today.” That is why he named it Gal'e-ed,^d

49 and the Watchtower, for he said: “Let Jehovah keep watch between you and me when we are out of each other's sight. **50** If you mistreat my daughters and if you start taking wives in addition to my daughters, though there is no man with us, remember that God will be a witness between you and me.”

51 La'ban went on to say to Jacob: “Here is this pile of stones, and here is the pillar that I have erected between you and me. **52** This pile of stones is a witness, and the pillar is something that bears witness,^e that I

31:42 *Lit., “the fear of Isaac.” 31:47 *An Aramaic expression meaning “Witness Pile.” ^aA Hebrew expression meaning “Witness Pile.”

CHAP. 31
a Ge 31:53

b Ge 31:24

c Ge 28:18

d Ge 31:22, 23

e Ge 31:44, 45

Second Col.

a Ge 17:1, 7

b Ge 31:42

c Ge 31:28

d Ge 24:59, 60

e Ge 27:43
Ge 28:2

CHAP. 32

f Ge 27:39
Ge 36:8
De 2:5
Jos 24:4

g Ge 25:30

h Ge 31:41

i Ge 30:43
Ge 33:11

j Ge 33:1, 2

k Ge 27:41
Ge 32:11

will not pass beyond this pile of stones to bring harm to you and you will not pass beyond this pile of stones and this pillar to bring harm to me. **53** Let the God of Abraham^a and the God of Na'hor, the God of their father, judge between us.” And Jacob swore by the One whom his father Isaac fears.^b

54 After that Jacob offered a sacrifice in the mountain and invited his brothers to eat bread. So they ate and spent the night in the mountain. **55** However, La'ban got up early in the morning and kissed his grandchildren^c and his daughters and blessed them.^d Then La'ban departed and returned home.^e

32 Jacob then went on his way, and the angels of God met up with him. **2** As soon as he saw them, Jacob said: “This is the camp of God!” So he named that place Ma-ha-na'im.*

3 Then Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother E'sau in the land of Se'ir,^f the territory* of E'dom,^g **4** and he commanded them: “This is what you will say to my lord, to E'sau, ‘This is what your servant Jacob says: “I have resided* with La'ban for a long time until now.^h **5** And I have acquired bulls, donkeys, sheep, and male and female servants,ⁱ and I send this message to inform my lord, in order to find favor in your eyes.””

6 In time the messengers returned to Jacob, saying: “We met your brother E'sau, and he is now on his way to meet you, and there are 400 men with him.”^j **7** And Jacob became very frightened and anxious.^k So he divided the peo-

31:53 *Lit., “by the fear of his father Isaac.” 31:55 *Lit., “sons.” 32:2 *Meaning “Two Camps.” 32:3 *Lit., “field.” 32:4 *Or “resided as a foreigner.”

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- “**Jacob and Laban Make a Covenant of Peace**”: (10 min.)

Ge 31:44-46—Jacob and Laban made a pile of stones on which the covenant meal was eaten (it-1 883 ¶1)

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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

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- Concluding Comments (3 min. or less)
- Song 146 and Prayer

GENESIS 31 | Jacob and Laban Make a Covenant of Peace

31:44-53

Why did Jacob and Laban make a pile of stones?

- It served as a witness to all passersby of the covenant of peace that they had made
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April 13-19 / Genesis 31

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Treasures From God's Word

“Jacob and Laban Make a Covenant of Peace”: (10 minutes)

Genesis 31:44-46—Jacob and Laban made a pile of stones on which the covenant meal was eaten

Genesis 31:44-46: Now come, let us make a covenant, you and I, and it will serve as a witness between us.” So Jacob took a stone and set it up as a pillar. Then Jacob said to his brothers: “Pick up stones!” And they took stones and made a pile. After that they ate there on the pile of stones.

***it-1* 883 paragraph 1**

Peaceably settling the points over which they had disputed, Jacob and Laban concluded a covenant with each other. In this connection, Jacob set up a stone pillar and directed his “brothers” to make a heap of stones, perhaps in the form of a table, upon which the covenant meal was eaten. Thereupon, Laban called the place after this heap, giving it the Aramaic (Syrian) name “Jegar-sahadutha,” but which Jacob called “Galeed,” the Hebrew equivalent. Laban said: “This heap [Hebrew, *gal*] is a witness [Hebrew, *’edh*] between me and you today.” (Genesis 31:44-48) The heap of stones (and the stone pillar) served as a witness to all passersby. It was as verse 49 says, “The Watchtower [Hebrew, *mitspah*],” testifying that Jacob and Laban had agreed to preserve the peace between and within their respective families. (Genesis 31:50-53) On later occasions stones were used in a similar fashion as silent witnesses.—Joshua 4:4-7; 24:25-27.

Genesis 31:47-50—They named the place Galeed and the Watchtower

Genesis 31:47-50: And Laban began calling it Jegar-sahadutha, but Jacob called it Galeed. Laban then said: “This pile of stones is a witness between me and you today.” That is why he named it Galeed, and the Watchtower, for he said: “Let Jehovah keep watch between you and me when we are out of each other’s sight. If you mistreat my daughters and if you start taking wives in addition to my daughters, though there is no man with us, remember that God will be a witness between you and me.”

it-2 1172

A pile of stones was set up by Jacob and called “Galeed” (meaning “Witness Heap”) and “The Watchtower.” Laban then said: “Let Jehovah keep watch between me and you when we are situated unseen the one from the other.” (Genesis 31:45-49) This pile of stones would testify to the fact that Jehovah was watching to see that Jacob and Laban carried out their covenant of peace.

Genesis 31:51-53—They promised to maintain peace between them

Genesis 31:51-53: Laban went on to say to Jacob: “Here is this pile of stones, and here is the pillar that I have erected between you and me. This pile of stones is a witness, and the pillar is something that bears witness, that I will not pass beyond this pile of stones to bring harm to you and you will not pass beyond this pile of stones and this pillar to bring harm to me. Let the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us.” And Jacob swore by the One whom his father Isaac fears.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Genesis 31:19—Why might Rachel have stolen the teraphim statues that belonged to her father?

Genesis 31:19: Now Laban had gone to shear his sheep, and Rachel stole the teraphim statues that belonged to her father.

it-2 1087-1088

The findings of archaeologists in Mesopotamia and adjacent areas indicate that the possession of the teraphim images had a bearing on who would receive the family inheritance. According to one tablet found at Nuzi, the possession of the household gods could under certain circumstances entitle a son-in-law to appear in court and claim the estate of his deceased father-in-law. (*Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, edited by J. Pritchard, 1974, pages 219, 220, and footnote 51) Perhaps Rachel, with this in mind, reasoned that she was justified in taking the teraphim because of her father’s deceptive dealings with her husband Jacob. (Compare Genesis 31:14-16.) The importance of the teraphim with respect to inheritance rights would also explain why Laban was so anxious to recover them, even to the point of taking his brothers with him and pursuing Jacob for a distance of seven days’ journey. (Genesis 31:19-30) Of course, what Rachel had done was completely unknown to Jacob (Genesis 31:32), and there is no indication that he ever attempted to use the teraphim to gain the inheritance from Laban’s sons. Jacob had nothing to do with idols. At the latest, the teraphim would have been disposed of when Jacob hid all the foreign gods turned over to him by his household under the big tree that was close to Shechem.—Genesis 35:1-4.

Genesis 31:41,42—What does Jacob’s example teach us about how to react to employers who are “hard to please”?

Genesis 31:41,42: This makes 20 years for me in your house. I have served you 14 years for your two daughters and 6 years for your flock, and you kept changing my wages ten times. If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the One whom Isaac fears, had not been on my side, you would now have sent me away empty-handed. God has seen my affliction and the toil of my hands, and that is why he reproved you last night.”

1 Peter 2:18

Let servants be in subjection to their masters with all due fear, not only to the good and reasonable but also to those hard to please.

w13 3/15 21 paragraph 8

When Jacob reached Haran, his uncle Laban extended a warm welcome to him and later gave him Leah and Rachel as wives. In time, though, Laban tried to exploit Jacob, changing his wages ten times! (Genesis 31:41,42) Yet, Jacob endured these injustices, confident that Jehovah would continue to care for him—and He did! Indeed, by the time God told Jacob to return to Canaan, the patriarch possessed “great flocks and maidservants and menservants and camels and asses.” (Genesis 30:43) Deeply appreciative, Jacob prayed: “I am unworthy of all the loving-kindnesses and of all the faithfulness that you have exercised toward your servant, for with but my staff I crossed this Jordan and now I have become two camps.”—Genesis 32:10.

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Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Conversations

INITIAL CALL

Question: What is God's purpose for humans?

Scripture: **Ge 1:28**

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

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:

• *bhs 29 ¶1*



FIRST RETURN VISIT

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

Scripture: **Isa 55:11**

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

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:

• *bhs 29 ¶2*



SECOND RETURN VISIT

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

Scripture: **Ps 37:10, 11**

Link: What must we do to benefit from God's promises?

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:

• *bhs 35 ¶17*



MEMORIAL INVITATION CAMPAIGN

(March 14–April 7):

“We’re here to invite you to a special event that will be attended by millions of people. It’s the anniversary of Jesus’ death.” Hand the person an invitation. “This invitation shows the time and location of the event in our area. We also invite you to a special talk the weekend before.”


Link When Interest Is Shown: Why did Jesus die?

5

What Is God's Purpose for the Earth?



1. Why did God create the earth?

Jehovah gave the earth to men and women. It is our home. Therefore, the first human couple, Adam and Eve, were not created to populate the heavens—God had already created angels to live in heaven. (Job 38:4, 7) Rather, God took the first man and settled him in a delightful paradise called the garden of Eden. (Genesis 2:15-17) Jehovah gave him and his future offspring the prospect of enjoying life without end on earth.  *Read Psalm 37:29; 115:16.*


Originally, only the garden of Eden was a paradise. The first human couple were to fill the earth with their offspring. In time, they were to subdue the entire globe and make it a paradise. (Genesis 1:28) The earth will never be destroyed. It will always be mankind's home.

 *Read Psalm 104:5.*

2. Why is the earth not a paradise now?

Adam and Eve disobeyed God, so Jehovah put them out of the garden. Paradise was lost, and no man has succeeded in restoring it. The Bible says: “Earth itself has been given into the hand of the wicked one.”—Job 9:24.

 *Read Genesis 3:23, 24.*

Has Jehovah abandoned his original purpose for mankind? No! He is almighty. He cannot fail. (Isaiah 45:18) He will restore the human race to the way he meant it to be.  *Read Psalm 37:11, 34.*

3. How will Paradise be restored?

Paradise will be restored on earth during Jesus' rule as God's King. In a battle called Armageddon, Jesus will lead

God's angels and destroy all who oppose God. Then Jesus will imprison Satan for 1,000 years. God's people will survive the destruction because Jesus will guide and protect them. They will enjoy everlasting life in Paradise on earth.

📖 *Read Revelation 20:1-3; 21:3, 4.*

4. When will suffering end?

When will God bring an end to evil on earth? Jesus gave a "sign" to indicate when the end would be near. Present world conditions threaten man's survival and show that we now live in "the conclusion of the system of things."

📖 *Read Matthew 24:3, 7-14, 21, 22.*

During Jesus' 1,000-year rule from heaven over the earth, he will bring all suffering to an end. (Isaiah 9:6, 7; 11:9) Besides serving as King, Jesus will act as High Priest and will cancel the sins of those who love God. Thus, by means of Jesus, God will eliminate sickness, aging, and death. 📖 *Read Isaiah 25:8; 33:24.*

5. Who will live in the future Paradise?

People who obey God will live in Paradise. (1 John 2:17) Jesus sent his followers to search for meek people and to teach them how to become acceptable to God. Today, Jehovah is preparing millions of people for life in the future Paradise on earth. (Zephaniah 2:3) At Kingdom Halls of Jehovah's Witnesses, people learn to be better husbands and fathers and to be better wives and mothers. Children and parents worship together and learn how to benefit from the good news. 📖 *Read Micah 4:1-4.*



At the Kingdom Hall, you will meet people who love God and want to learn how to please him

For more information, see chapter 3 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?*



Light in a Darkened World

(2 Corinthians 4:6)

Bb/C Ab/C Bb/C Ab/C Gm/C Fm/C

In these days, dark and law-less days,
Those who sleep need a wak-en-ing

Bb/C Ab/C Gm/C Eb/C F/C Bb/D

Shines a light we can see.
As the time ebbs a-way.

Ab/Eb Bb/Eb Ab/Eb Bb/Eb Ab/Eb Bb/Eb

Like the dawn of an-oth-er day
We give hope and en-cour-age-ment.

D9ma7 Eb/Db Bbm7 Eb/Bb Cm7

That will soon come to be.
For their fu-ture we'll pray.

Light in a Darkened World

Chorus
Fm D♭ma7 Ab

Shin - ing through the dark - ness, Ours is a

B♭ Fm E♭/G Ab E♭sus4

mes - sage so bright. It of - fers hope and light-

B♭ Fm D♭ma7 Ab

Spar - kling like the day - light, Bring - ing to -

B♭ Fm E♭/G Ab E♭sus4 B♭

mor - row in sight- So ends the night.

(See also John 3:19; 8:12; Rom. 13:11, 12; 1 Pet. 2:9.)

- Song 112 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- “**Jacob and Laban Make a Covenant of Peace**”: (10 min.)

Ge 31:44-46—Jacob and Laban made a pile of stones on which the covenant meal was eaten (*it-1* 883 ¶1)

Ge 31:47-50—They named the place Galeed and the Watchtower (*it-2* 1172)

Ge 31:51-53—They promised to maintain peace between them

- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)
Ge 31:19—Why might Rachel have stolen the teraphim statues that belonged to her father? (*it-2* 1087-1088)

Ge 31:41, 42—What does Jacob’s example teach us about how to react to employers who are “hard to please”? (1Pe 2:18; w13 3/15 21 ¶8)

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 31:1-18 (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 sister make the scripture application clear? How did she set up the return visit?
- **Initial Call:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Overcome a common objection. (4)
- **Initial Call:** (5 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer the *Good News* brochure and start a Bible study, using lesson 5. (8)

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS


- Song 77
- **Local Needs:** (15 min.)
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 111 ¶1-9
- Concluding Comments (3 min. or less)
- Song 146 and Prayer

GENESIS 31 | Jacob and Laban Make a Covenant of Peace

31:44-53

Why did Jacob and Laban make a pile of stones?

- It served as a witness to all passersby of the covenant of peace that they had made
- It reminded them that Jehovah was watching to see that they kept their covenant of peace

 Today, Jehovah expects his people to enjoy peaceful relationships. How will these three actions help us to maintain peace or to restore it?

- **Talking it out.**—Mt 5:23, 24
- **Forgiving freely.**—Col 3:13
- **Being patient.**—Ro 12:21



THE APOSTLES ASK FOR A SIGN

MATTHEW 24:3-51 MARK 13:3-37 LUKE 21:7-38



It is Tuesday afternoon, and Nisan 11 is drawing to a close. Also ending are days of intense activity here on earth for Jesus. By day he has been teaching in the temple, and by night he has lodged outside the city. There has been great interest among the people, who “would come to him early in the morning to hear him in the temple.” (Luke 21:37, 38) Now that is past, and Jesus is seated on the Mount of Olives with four apostles—Peter, Andrew, James, and John.

These four have come to him privately. They are concerned about the temple because Jesus has just foretold that not a stone of it will be left upon a stone. They have more on their minds, though. Jesus had earlier urged them: “Keep ready, because at an hour that you do not think likely, the Son of man is coming.” (Luke 12:40) He had also spoken about the “day when the Son of man is revealed.” (Luke 17:30) Are those comments somehow related to what he just said about the temple? The apostles are very curious. “Tell us,” they say, “when will these things be, and what will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things?”—Matthew 24:3.

They may have in mind the end of the very temple that they can see not far away. Also, they ask about the presence of the Son of man. They may recall that Jesus gave an illustration about “a man of noble birth” who ‘traveled to secure kingly power and then to return.’ (Luke 19:11, 12) And, finally, they wonder what “the conclusion of the system of things” will involve.

In his detailed response, Jesus provides a sign that identifies when the existing Jewish system of things, including its temple, will end. But he provides more. This sign will help Christians in the future to know when they are living during his “presence” and near the end of the entire system of things on earth.

As the years go by, the apostles observe Jesus’ prophecy being fulfilled. Yes, many things that he foretold start to occur in their lifetime. Thus, alert Christians who are living 37 years later, in 70 C.E., are not caught unawares by the approaching destruction of the Jewish system with its temple. However, not all that Jesus foretells actually takes place in the period leading up to and including 70 C.E. Hence, what will yet mark his presence in Kingdom power? Jesus reveals the answer to the apostles.

Jesus foretells that there will be “wars and reports of wars” and that “nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom.” (Matthew 24:6, 7) He also says that “there will be great earthquakes, and in one place after another food shortages and pestilences.” (Luke 21:11) Jesus warns his disciples: “People will lay their hands on you and persecute you.” (Luke 21:12) False prophets will arise and mislead many. Lawlessness will increase, and the love of the greater number will grow cold. Additionally, he says that the “good news of the Kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”—Matthew 24:14.

-
- ◇ What prompts the apostles to ask about future events, but what else do they apparently have in mind?
 - ◇ When does Jesus’ prophecy start to be fulfilled, and how?
 - ◇ What are some conditions that are to mark Christ’s presence?
 - ◇ How does a “disgusting thing” appear, and what events follow its appearance?

Although Jesus' prophecy is fulfilled in some respects prior to and during the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, might Jesus be including a later, larger fulfillment? Do you see the evidence that Jesus' momentous prophecy has been undergoing its major fulfillment in modern times?

One thing that Jesus includes in the sign of his presence is the appearance of "the disgusting thing that causes desolation." (Matthew 24:15) In 66 C.E., this disgusting thing appears in the form of the "encamped armies" of Rome, with their idolatrous standards, or ensigns. The Romans surround Jerusalem and undermine some of its walls. (Luke 21:20) Thus, "the disgusting thing" is standing where it ought not, in what the Jews consider "a holy place."

Jesus further foretells: "There will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again." In 70 C.E., the Romans destroy Jerusalem. That destructive conquest of the Jews' 'holy city,' including its temple, proves to be a great tribulation, with many thousands being killed. (Matthew 4:5; 24:21) It is far greater than any destruction the city and the Jewish people have ever experienced, and it brings to an end the organized system of worship that the Jews had followed for centuries. Accordingly, any later, larger fulfillment of Jesus' prophetic words is certain to be horrific.

CONFIDENCE DURING THE FORETOLD DAYS

Jesus' discussion with his apostles regarding the sign of his presence in Kingdom power and of the end of the system of things is far from over. He now warns them about chasing after "false Christs and false prophets." Attempts will be made, he says, "to mislead, if possible, even the chosen ones." (Matthew 24:24) But these

chosen ones will not be misled. False Christs can make only a visible appearance. In contrast, Jesus' presence will not be visible.

Referring to a larger tribulation that would break out at the end of the present system of things, Jesus says: "The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken." (Matthew 24:29) The apostles hearing those chilling words do not know exactly what will occur, but it certainly will be awesome.

How will these shocking events affect mankind? Jesus says: "People will become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken." (Luke 21:26) Indeed, Jesus is describing what will be the darkest period of human existence.

Encouragingly, Jesus makes it clear to the apostles that not all will be lamenting when 'the Son of man comes with power and great glory.' (Matthew 24:30) He had already indicated that God will intervene "on account of the chosen ones." (Matthew 24:22) So how should such faithful disciples react to the shocking developments that Jesus is outlining? Jesus encourages his followers: "As these things start to occur, stand up straight and lift up your heads, because your deliverance is getting near." —Luke 21:28.

How, though, would Jesus' disciples who are living during this foretold period be able to determine the nearness of the end? Jesus gives an illustration about a fig tree: "Just as soon as its young branch grows tender and sprouts its leaves, you know that summer is near. Likewise also you, when you see all these things, know that he is near at the doors. Truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all these things happen."—Matthew 24:32-34.

"Making All Things New"

(Revelation 21:1-5)

F7 Bb F/A Bb F7/C Bb/D Eb Cm7 F7

"The signs of the times" prove God's rule has be - gun. In
 Let all men the pure New Je - ru - sa - lem see, The
 This cit - y so grand will be - come a de - light. Its

Bb F Bb F/A Fadd9/C F Gm C13 F F/Eb

glo - ry en - throned sits Je - ho - vah's Son. The
 bride of the Lamb shin - ing ra - diant - ly. A -
 gates will be o - pen both day and night. The

Bb/D F F#o Gm D+5 D7 Gm C#o

heav - ens are cleansed, Sa - tan's now de - based, And
 dorned for her hus - band in gems so bright, And
 na - tions will walk in her glo - ry bright; The

Dm Dm/F Bb7 A7sus4 A7 Dm //

soon on the earth let God's will take place.
 on - ly Je - ho - vah will be her light.
 ser - vants of God now re - flect that light. //

“Making All Things New”

Chorus

F7 B \flat B \flat ° Eb/B \flat B \flat B \flat ° B \flat sus4 B \flat

Re - joice! For God's tent is with men, And

B \flat ° Eb/B \flat B \flat Dm/F F7 B \flat Eb

he him - self re - sides with them. No more will there be pain or

C \sharp ° B \flat /D D° F7/E \flat F7/C F+5

wor - ry - ing, No sting of death nor an - y

B \flat F B \flat /D B \flat Eb/G B \flat ma7/F Eb Cm6/E \flat

sor - row - ing. For God has said: 'I'm mak - ing

D7sus4 D7 Gm E° B \flat /F Eb Cm7 F7 F7sus4 B \flat

all things new.' These words faith - ful are and true.

(See also Matt. 16:3; Rev. 12:7-9; 21:23-25.)

FEBRUARY 2020

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



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Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the modern-language *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*.

The Watchtower (ISSN 0043-1087) February 2020 is published by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; Harold L. Corkern, President; Mark L. Questell, Secretary-Treasurer; 1000 Red Mills Road, Wallkill, NY 12589-3299, and by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada, PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. © 2019 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. Printed in Canada.

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COVER PICTURE:

A young Israelite runs to Moses and Joshua to report that two men in the camp are behaving like prophets. Joshua asks Moses to restrain the men, but Moses refuses. Instead, he tells Joshua that he is happy that Jehovah put His spirit on the two men (See study article 8, paragraph 10)

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3 Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

(Proverbs 14:26)

C F G C G/B

O Je - ho - vah, you have giv - en us a
So Je - ho - vah, please in - still in us a

Am F Gsus4 G

hope that we hold dear. It's a
heart that won't for - get, For you've

C F G Am Am/G

hope we find so thrill - ing we
al - ways been our com - fort when

F Dm7 Gsus4 G

want the world to hear. But at
trou - bled times we've met. And these

Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

C F G C C/B

times thoughts this that life's lift anx and i - e - ties strength - en us are the can re -

Am F Gsus4 G G7/F

cause of fears with in, And the
vive that dy - ing flame, For they

C/E F G Am

hope fill that our hearts burned so with bright - ly cour - age has to

F Dm7 E7sus4 E7 Chorus

sud speak - den - ly a - bout grown your dim. name. You're our

Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence

Am Am/G G/F F C/E

strength, you're our hope, you're our con - fi - dence. What -

Detailed description: This system contains the first line of music. The treble staff has a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a 4/4 time signature. It features chords for Am, Am/G, G/F, F, and C/E. The melody consists of quarter and eighth notes. The bass staff provides a simple accompaniment with quarter notes.

Dm7 Am/C Bb Fadd9 G7sus4 G7

ev - er we lack, you sup - ply. When we

Detailed description: This system contains the second line of music. The treble staff has chords for Dm7, Am/C, Bb, Fadd9, G7sus4, and G7. The melody continues with quarter and eighth notes. The bass staff has chords for F, F, and Bb.

Am Am/G G/F F Dm7

preach, when we teach, we have con - fi - dence be -

Detailed description: This system contains the third line of music. The treble staff has chords for Am, Am/G, G/F, F, and Dm7. The melody continues with quarter and eighth notes. The bass staff provides a simple accompaniment with quarter notes.

C/E F6 F/G G13 C

cause it's on you we re - ly.

Detailed description: This system contains the fourth line of music. The treble staff has chords for C/E, F6, F/G, G13, and C. The melody continues with quarter and eighth notes. The bass staff has chords for C, C, and C. The final chord, C, is held over for two measures.

(See also Ps. 72:13, 14; Prov. 3:5, 6, 26; Jer. 17:7.)

SONG 3

Our Strength, Our Hope,
Our Confidence

PREVIEW

We know that our Father, Jehovah, loves us dearly and has brought us into his family of worshippers. In response, we are moved to love him. How can we express our love to our caring Father? This article will consider some specific things we can do.

We Love Jehovah, Our Father, Dearly

“We love, because he first loved us.”—1 JOHN 4:19.

JEHOVAH has invited us to join his family of worshippers. What a marvelous invitation that is! Our family is made up of those who have dedicated themselves to God and who exercise faith in the ransom sacrifice of his Son. Ours is a happy family. We enjoy a meaningful life now, and we rejoice in the prospect of life without end—whether in heaven or in Paradise on earth.

² Moved by love and at great cost to himself, Jehovah opened the way for us to be part of his family. (John 3:16) We were “bought with a price.” (1 Cor. 6:20) By means of the ransom, Jehovah made it possible for us to have a warm relationship with him. We have the honor of addressing the greatest Person in the universe as Father. And, as we considered in the preceding article, Jehovah is the ideal Father.

³ Like one Bible writer, we might ask: “With what will I repay Jehovah for all the good he has done for me?” (Ps. 116:12) The answer is that we can never repay our heavenly Father. Still, we feel moved to love him. The apostle John wrote: “We love, because he first loved us.” (1 John 4:19) In what ways can we show our heavenly Father that we love him?

1-2. Why and how did Jehovah open the way for us to be part of his family?

3. What questions might we ask? (See also the box “Does Jehovah Notice Me?”)

STAY CLOSE TO JEHOVAH

⁴ Jehovah wants us to draw close to him and to communicate with him. **(Read James 4:8.)** He urges us to “persevere in prayer,” and he makes himself available at all times. (Rom. 12:12) He is never too busy or too tired to listen to us. In turn, we listen to him by reading his Word, the Bible, along with publications that help us to understand it. We also listen to him by paying close attention at Christian meetings. Just as good communication helps children stay close to their parents, regular communication with Jehovah helps us remain close to him.

⁵ Think about the quality of your communication with God. Jehovah wants us to pour out our hearts to him in prayer. (Ps. 62:8) We do well to ask ourselves this question: ‘Do my prayers tend to be like superficial, reprinted messages, or are they like heartfelt, handwritten letters?’ No doubt you love Jehovah deeply, and you want to keep your relationship with him strong. To do that, you must communicate with him regularly. Confide in him. Share your joys and your pains with him. Be confident that you can go to him for help.

⁶ To stay close to our heavenly Father, we must maintain a grateful attitude. We agree with the psalmist who wrote: “How many things you have done, O Jehovah my God, your wonderful works and your thoughts toward us. None can

4. According to James 4:8, why should we make the effort to draw close to Jehovah?

5. How can we improve the quality of our prayers?

6. What must we do to stay close to our heavenly Father?

compare to you; if I were to try to tell and speak of them, they would be too numerous to recount!” (Ps. 40:5) We do more than *feel* appreciative; we *express* our appreciation to Jehovah by our words and actions. This makes us stand out as different from many today. We live in a world where people do not appreciate all that God does for them. In fact, one indication that we are living in “the last days” is that people are unthankful. (2 Tim. 3:1, 2) May we never adopt that attitude!

⁷ Parents do not want their children to squabble but to be friends. Similarly, Jehovah wants all his children to get along well with one another. In fact, the love we have for one another identifies us as being true Christians. (John 13:35) We agree with the psalmist who wrote: “How good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!” (Ps. 133:1) When we love our brothers and sisters, we prove to Jehovah that we love him. (1 John 4:20) How pleasant it is to be part of a family of brothers and sisters who are “kind to one another, tenderly compassionate”—Eph. 4:32.

SHOW YOUR LOVE BY BEING OBEDIENT

⁸ Jehovah expects children to obey their parents, and he expects us to obey him. (Eph. 6:1) He deserves our obedience because he is our Creator, the Sustainer of our life, and the wisest of all parents. However, the primary reason why we obey Jehovah is that we love

7. What does Jehovah want us to do, and why?

8. According to 1 John 5:3, what is the primary reason why we obey Jehovah?

him. **(Read 1 John 5:3.)** Although there are many reasons why we should obey Jehovah, he does not force us to do so. Jehovah gave us the gift of free will, so he is happy when we choose to obey him out of love for him.

⁹ Parents want their children to be safe. That is why they establish standards of behavior, which benefit their children. When children obey those guidelines, they show that they put trust in their parents and respect them. How much more important it is, then, that we know our heavenly Father's standards and live by them. When we do, we show

9-10. Why is it important to know God's standards and to live by them?

Jehovah that we love and respect him and we also benefit ourselves. (Isa. 48: 17, 18) By contrast, those who reject Jehovah and his standards end up hurting themselves.—Gal. 6:7, 8.

¹⁰ When we live in a way that pleases Jehovah, we are protected from physical, emotional, and spiritual harm. Jehovah knows what is best for us. Aurora, who lives in the United States, says, "I know that obeying Jehovah always results in the best life possible." That is true for all of us. How have you benefited from obeying Jehovah's loving direction?

¹¹ Prayer helps us to be obedient, even when doing so is difficult. At times,

11. How does prayer help us?



we will struggle to obey Jehovah, but we must constantly fight our tendency to sin. The psalmist pleaded with God: “Stir within me a willingness to obey you.” (Ps. 51:12) Denise, who is a regular pioneer, says, “If I find it difficult to obey one of Jehovah’s commands, I pray for strength to do what is right.” We can be certain that Jehovah will always answer that type of request.—Luke 11:9-13.

HELP OTHERS TO LOVE OUR FATHER

12 Read Ephesians 5:1. As Jehovah’s “beloved children,” we do our best to im-

12. According to Ephesians 5:1, what should we do?

itate him. We imitate his qualities by being loving, kind, and forgiving in our dealings with others. When those who do not know God see our fine conduct, they may be motivated to learn more about him. (1 Pet. 2:12) Christian parents have good reason to imitate Jehovah in the way they treat their children. When they do, their children may want to form their own friendship with our loving Father.

13 A young child is proud of his father and is happy to talk about him. Likewise, we are proud of our heavenly Father, Jehovah, and want others to come to know him. In our heart, we all feel as

13. On what do we need to focus?

We show how dearly we love our heavenly Father, Jehovah, by staying close to him in prayer, by obeying him, and by helping others to love him
(See paragraphs 4-14)



Does Jehovah Notice Me?

Have you ever asked yourself, ‘Of all the billions of people alive on earth, why would Jehovah take notice of me?’ If so, you are in good company. King David wrote: “O Jehovah, what is man that you should notice him, the son of mortal man that you should pay attention to him?” (Ps. 144:3) David was confident that Jehovah knew him well. (1 Chron. 17:16-18) And through his Word and his organization, Jehovah reassures you that he notices the love you show for him. Consider some statements in God’s Word that can help you be certain of that fact:

- Jehovah noticed you even before you were born.—Ps. 139:16.
- Jehovah knows what is in your heart, and he knows what you are thinking.—1 Chron. 28:9.
- Jehovah personally listens to each one of your prayers.—Ps. 65:2.
- Your actions affect Jehovah’s feelings.—Prov. 27:11.
- Jehovah has personally drawn you to him.—John 6:44.
- If you die, Jehovah knows you so well that he will be able to resurrect you. He will reconstruct your body and restore your mind along with your memories and other unique aspects of your personality.—John 11:21-26, 39-44; Acts 24:15.



did King David, who wrote: “I will boast in Jehovah.” (Ps. 34:2) What, though, if we are timid? How can we become bold? We grow bold when we focus on how happy we can make Jehovah and how much others will benefit from learning about him. Jehovah will give us the courage we need. He helped our first-century brothers to become bold, and he will help us too.—1 Thess. 2:2.

¹⁴ Jehovah is not partial, and he is happy when he sees us show love to others, no matter what their background may be. (Acts 10:34, 35) One of the best ways we can show love to others is by sharing the good news with them. (Matt. 28:19, 20) What can this work accomplish? Those who listen to us can improve their lives now and gain the prospect of enjoying everlasting life in the future.—1 Tim. 4:16.

LOVE OUR FATHER AND BE HAPPY

¹⁵ Jehovah is a loving parent, so he

14. What are some reasons why it is important to share in the disciple-making work?

15-16. What reasons do we have for being happy?

wants his family to be happy. (Isa. 65:14) There are many reasons why we can be cheerful right now, even though we may be facing difficulties. For example, we are certain that our heavenly Father loves us dearly. We have an accurate knowledge of God’s Word, the Bible. (Jer. 15:16) And we are part of a unique family made up of people who love Jehovah, love his high moral standards, and love one another.—Ps. 106:4, 5.

¹⁶ We can remain happy because we have the sure hope that life will get even better in the future. We know that soon Jehovah will remove all the wicked and that under the direction of his Kingdom, the earth will be restored to Paradise. We also have the wonderful hope that those who have died will be raised to life and reunited with their loved ones. (John 5:28, 29) What a joy that will be! And most important, we are sure that soon everyone in heaven and on earth will give our loving Father the honor, praise, and devotion that he deserves.

WHY DO YOU FEEL THAT WE SHOULD . . .

- pray often?
- be obedient to Jehovah?
- speak to others about our heavenly Father?

Great God, Jehovah

(Exodus 34:6, 7)

C Cma7 C6 Cma7 F/C Cma7 Dm/C G7 C

Great God, Je - ho - vah, you are de - serv - ing,
 Fa - ther, we feel your ten - der com - pas - sion.
 Heav - en and earth now sing of your glo - ry.

Dm/F A/E Dm Dm9/C Dm/B F/A G7 Dm/F C/E Dm7 Dm7/G G7

Wor - thy of the high - est praise, Good and just in all your ways.
 We are dust, and still you care; Gra - cious - ly you hear our prayer.
 Joy - ful - ly with voic - es raised, We ex - alt you all our days.

C Cma7 C6 Cma7 F/C Cma7 Dm/C G7 C

You have such pow - er, deep love, and wis - dom.
 How you sus - tain us, teach us, and guide us!
 Great God, Je - ho - vah, you are de - serv - ing.

Dm/F C/E Dm7 Dm7/G G7 C G7sus4 C

You are God to end - less days.
 Help from you is al - ways there.
 Please ac - cept our heart - felt praise.
 R.H.

(See also Deut. 32:4; Prov. 16:12; Matt. 6:10; Rev. 4:11.)