

- Song 30 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- “Older Ones Have Much to Share”: (10 min.)  
Ge 48:21, 22—Jacob expressed faith in the future conquest of Canaan (*it-1* 1246 ¶8)  
Ge 49:1—Jacob’s deathbed prophecy revealed his faith (*it-2* 206 ¶1)  
Ge 50:24, 25—Joseph expressed faith in the fulfillment of Jehovah’s promises (*w07* 6/1 28 ¶10)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)  
Ge 49:19—How was Jacob’s prophecy regarding Gad fulfilled? (*w04* 6/1 15 ¶4-5)

Ge 49:27—How was Jacob’s prophecy regarding Benjamin fulfilled? (*it-1* 289 ¶2)

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 49:8-26 (5)

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Discussion. Play the video. Then ask the audience the following questions: How did the publishers cooperate in giving a witness? How can we imitate their conviction when we give a witness?
- **Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Overcome a common objection. (6)
- **Return Visit:** (5 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer the *Teach Us* book, and start a Bible study in chapter 9. (16)

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 138
- “What Can You Learn From Experienced Christians?": (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Maintaining Unity Under Ban* (video category INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 119
- Concluding Comments (3 min. or less)
- Song 25 and Prayer

GENESIS 48-50 | Older Ones Have Much to Share

**48:21, 22; 49:1; 50:24, 25**

Older ones strengthen our faith in Jehovah and his promises when they tell us firsthand accounts of the “wonderful works” that Jehovah has performed during these last days. (Ps 71:17, 18) If you are blessed with older ones in your congregation, ask them about

- how Jehovah helped them to overcome obstacles in serving him
- the increase that they have seen in the number of Kingdom proclaimers
- their joy at receiving clarifications in our understanding of Bible truth
- the refinements that they have observed in Jehovah’s organization



# 30 *My Father, My God and Friend* (Hebrews 6:10)

1. Life in this world can be hard.

Life in this world can bring tears and pain.  
Still ev'ry day I will say,  
"My life is not in vain."

*(CHORUS)*

*For God is not unrighteous,  
And he remembers the love I've shown.  
So he is ever near me;  
With Jehovah, I'm not alone.  
Yes, God is my provider  
and my protector down to the end.  
Yes, Jehovah is my Father,  
My God and Friend.*

2. Gone are the days of my youth;  
Days of calamity now are here.  
Still through the eyes of my faith,  
My hope is bright and clear.

*(Chorus)*

## Genesis 48-50

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

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

<sup>8</sup> Then Israel saw Joseph's sons and asked: “Who are these?” <sup>9</sup> So Joseph said to his father: “They are my sons whom God has given me in this place.” At this he said: “Bring them to me, please, so that I may bless them.” <sup>10</sup> Now the eyes of Israel were failing from age, and he was unable to see. So Joseph brought them close to him, and he kissed them and embraced them. <sup>11</sup> Israel said to Joseph: “I never

imagined I would see your face, but here God has also let me see your offspring.”<sup>12</sup> Joseph then removed them from Israel’s knees, and he bowed down with his face to the ground.

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

“The true God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,  
The true God who has been shepherding me during all my life until this day,

<sup>16</sup> The angel who has been recovering me from all calamity, bless the boys.

Let my name be called upon them and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac,  
Let them increase to a multitude in the earth.”

<sup>17</sup> When Joseph saw that his father kept his right hand placed on E'phra·im’s head, it was displeasing to him, so he tried to take hold of his father’s hand to move it from E'phra·im’s head to Ma·nas'seh’s head.<sup>18</sup> Joseph said to his father: “Not so, my father, because this is the firstborn. Put your right hand on his head.”<sup>19</sup> But his father kept refusing and said: “I know it, my son, I know it. He too will become a

people, and he too will become great. Nevertheless, his younger brother will become greater than he will, and his offspring will become the full equivalent of nations.”<sup>20</sup> So he continued to bless them on that day, saying:

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

Thus he kept putting E'phra·im before Ma·nas'seh.

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

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

<sup>3</sup> “Reu'ben, you are my firstborn, my vigor and the beginning of my procreative power, the excellence of dignity and the excellence of strength.”<sup>4</sup> With recklessness like turbulent waters, you will not excel, because you have gone up to your father's bed. At that time you defiled my bed. He actually went on to it!

<sup>5</sup> “Sim'e·on and Le'vi are brothers. Instruments of violence are their slaughter weapons.”<sup>6</sup> Into their company do not come, O my soul. With their assembly do not join, O my

honor, because in their anger they killed men, and for their pleasure they hamstringed bulls. <sup>7</sup> Cursed be their anger, because it is cruel, and their fury, because it is harsh. Let me disperse them in Jacob, and let me scatter them in Israel.

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

<sup>13</sup> “Zeb’u-lun will reside by the seashore, by the shore where the ships lie anchored, and his remote border will be toward Si’don.

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

<sup>16</sup> “Dan will judge his people as one of the tribes of Israel. <sup>17</sup> Let Dan be a serpent by the roadside, a horned snake beside the path, that bites the heels of the horse so that its

rider falls backward. <sup>18</sup> I will wait for salvation from you, O Jehovah.

<sup>19</sup> “As for Gad, a marauder band will raid him, but he will raid at their heels.

<sup>20</sup> “Ash'er’s bread will be abundant, and he will provide food fit for a king.

<sup>21</sup> “Naph'ta-li is a slender doe. He is speaking words of elegance.

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

<sup>27</sup> “Benjamin will keep on tearing like a wolf. In the morning he will eat the prey, and in the evening he will divide spoil.”

<sup>28</sup> All of these are the 12 tribes of Israel, and this is what their father said to them when he was blessing them. He gave each of them an appropriate blessing.

<sup>29</sup> After that he gave these commands to them: “I am being gathered to my people. Bury me with my fathers in the cave that is in the field of E'phron the Hit'tite, <sup>30</sup> the cave in the field of Mach-pe'lah in front of Mam're in the land of Ca'naan, the field that Abraham purchased from E'phron the Hit'tite as a property for a burial place. <sup>31</sup> There they buried Abraham and his wife Sarah. There they buried Isaac and his wife Re-bek'ah, and there I buried Le'ah. <sup>32</sup> The field and the cave that is in it were purchased from the sons of Heth.”

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

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

<sup>4</sup> When the days of mourning for him passed, Joseph spoke to Phar'aoh's court, saying: “If I have found favor in your eyes, give this message to Phar'aoh: <sup>5</sup> ‘My father made me swear, saying: “Look! I am dying. You are to bury me in my burial place, which I have excavated in the land of Ca'naan.” Please, let me go up and bury my father, after



which I will return.”<sup>6</sup> Phar'aoh replied: “Go and bury your father just as he made you swear.”

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

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

<sup>15</sup> When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said: “It may be that Joseph is harboring animosity against us and that he will repay us for all the evil that we did to him.”<sup>16</sup> So they sent a message to Joseph in these words:

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

<sup>22</sup> And Joseph continued to dwell in Egypt, he and the household of his father, and Joseph lived for 110 years.

<sup>23</sup> Joseph saw the third generation of E'phra-im's sons, also the sons of Ma'chir, Ma-nas'seh's son. They were born upon Joseph's knees. <sup>24</sup> At length Joseph said to his brothers: “I am dying, but God will without fail turn his attention to you, and he will certainly bring you up out of this land to the land about which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.”

<sup>25</sup> So Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying: “God will without fail turn his attention to you. You must take my bones up out of here.” <sup>26</sup> And Joseph died at the age of 110, and they had him embalmed, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

- Song 30 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“Older Ones Have Much to Share”:** (10 min.)  
 Ge 48:21, 22—Jacob expressed faith in the future conquest of Canaan (*it-1 1246 ¶8*)  
 Ge 49:1—Jacob’s deathbed prophecy revealed his faith (*it-2 206 ¶1*)  
 Ge 50:24, 25—Joseph expressed faith in the fulfillment of Jehovah’s promises (*w07 6/1 28 ¶10*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)  
 Ge 49:19—How was Jacob’s prophecy regarding Gad fulfilled? (*w04 6/1 15 ¶4-5*)

Ge 49:27—How was Jacob’s prophecy regarding Benjamin fulfilled? (*it-1 289 ¶2*)

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 49:8-26 (5)

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Discussion. Play the video. Then ask the audience the following questions: How did the publishers cooperate in giving a witness? How can we imitate their conviction when we give a witness?
- **Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Overcome a common objection. (6)
- **Return Visit:** (5 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer the *Teach Us* book, and start a Bible study in chapter 9. (16)

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 138
- **“What Can You Learn From Experienced Christians?”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Maintaining Unity Under Ban* (video category INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy chap. 119*
- Concluding Comments (3 min. or less)
- Song 25 and Prayer

GENESIS 48-50 | Older Ones Have Much to Share

**48:21, 22; 49:1; 50:24, 25**

Older ones strengthen our faith in Jehovah and his promises when they tell us firsthand accounts of the “wonderful works” that Jehovah has performed during these last days. (Ps 71:17, 18) If you are blessed with older ones in your congregation, ask them about

- how Jehovah helped them to overcome obstacles in serving him
- the increase that they have seen in the number of Kingdom proclaimers
- their joy at receiving clarifications in our understanding of Bible truth
- the refinements that they have observed in Jehovah’s organization



## **June 15-21 / Genesis 48-50**

- Song 30 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 minute)

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

#### **"Older Ones Have Much to Share": (10 minutes)**

Genesis 48:21, 22; 49:1; 50:24, 25

Older ones strengthen our faith in Jehovah and his promises when they tell us firsthand accounts of the "wonderful works" that Jehovah has performed during these last days. (Psalm 71:17, 18) If you are blessed with older ones in your congregation, ask them about

- how Jehovah helped them to overcome obstacles in serving him
- the increase that they have seen in the number of Kingdom proclaimers
- their joy at receiving clarifications in our understanding of Bible truth
- the refinements that they have observed in Jehovah's

organization

Picture: An elderly brother showing a photo album to a young couple.

## **Genesis 48:21, 22—Jacob expressed faith in the future conquest of Canaan**

**Genesis 48:21, 22:** Then Israel said to Joseph: “Look, I am dying, but God will certainly continue with you and return you to the land of your forefathers. As for me, I do give you one portion of land more than to your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorites with my sword and my bow.”

### **it-1 1246 paragraph 8**

Shortly before his death, Jacob blessed his grandsons, Joseph’s sons, and, by divine guidance, put the younger Ephraim ahead of the older Manasseh. Then to Joseph, who would receive the firstborn’s double portion of the inheritance, Jacob declared: “I do give you one shoulder of land more than to your brothers, which I took from the hand of the Amorites by my sword and by my bow.” (Genesis 48:1-

22; 1 Chronicles 5:1) Since Jacob had peaceably purchased the plot of ground near Shechem from the sons of Hamor (Genesis 33:19, 20), it seems that this promise to Joseph was an expression of Jacob's faith, in which he prophetically spoke of the future conquest of Canaan by his descendants as if already accomplished by his own sword and bow. (See AMORITE.) Joseph's double portion of that conquered land consisted of the two allotments given to the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.

## **Genesis 49:1—Jacob's deathbed prophecy revealed his faith**

**Genesis 49:1:** And Jacob called his sons and said: "Gather yourselves together that I may tell you what will happen to you in the final part of the days.

### **it-2 206 paragraph 1**

*Jacob's Deathbed Prophecy.* When Jacob said to his sons, "Gather yourselves together that I may tell you what will happen to you in the final part of the days" or "in days to come" (AT), he meant in that future time when his words

would begin undergoing fulfillment. (Genesis 49:1) Over two centuries earlier Jehovah had stated to Jacob's grandfather Abram (Abraham) that his offspring would suffer affliction for 400 years. (Genesis 15:13) Therefore, in this case, the future time referred to by Jacob as "the final part of the days" could not begin until after the 400 years of affliction ended. (For details on Genesis 49, see the articles on the sons of Jacob under their respective names.) A later application of the prophecy that would involve the spiritual "Israel of God" could also be expected.—Galatians 6:16; Romans 9:6.

### **Genesis 50:24, 25—Joseph expressed faith in the fulfillment of Jehovah's promises**

**Genesis 50:24, 25:** At length Joseph said to his brothers: "I am dying, but God will without fail turn his attention to you, and he will certainly bring you up out of this land to the land about which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." So Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying: "God will without fail turn his attention to you. You must take my bones up out of here."

## **w07 6/1 28 paragraph 10**

Older ones can also be a good influence on fellow believers. In his old age, Jacob's son Joseph performed a simple act of faith that had a profound effect on millions of true worshippers who lived after him. He was 110 when "he gave a command concerning his bones," namely, that when the Israelites finally left Egypt, they were to take his bones with them. (Hebrews 11:22; Genesis 50:25) That command served as an added ray of hope for Israel during the many years of hard slavery that followed Joseph's death, providing assurance that their deliverance would come.

### **Digging for Spiritual Gems**

**Genesis 49:19—How was Jacob's prophecy regarding Gad fulfilled?**

**Genesis 49:19:** "As for Gad, a marauder band will raid him, but he will raid at their heels."

## **w04 6/1 15 paragraphs 4-5**

4 Before entering the Promised Land, members of Israel's tribe of Gad requested that they be allowed to settle in the



cattle country east of the Jordan. (Numbers 32:1-5) Living there would mean coping with serious challenges. The tribes to the west would have the protection of the Jordan Valley—a natural barrier to military invasion. (Joshua 3:13-17) However, concerning the lands east of the Jordan, *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, by George Adam Smith, says: “[They] all roll off, with almost no intervening barrier, upon the great Arabian plateau. Consequently they have been exposed in all ages to the invasion of the hungry nomads, some of whom swarm upon them every year for pasture.”

5 How would the tribe of Gad fare under such unrelenting pressure? Centuries earlier, in his death-bed prophecy, their forefather Jacob foretold: “As for Gad, a marauder band will raid him, but he will raid the extreme rear.” (Genesis 49:19) At first glance those words may seem gloomy. In reality, though, they amounted to a command for the Gadites to strike back. Jacob assured them that if they did so, the raiders would make a humiliating retreat, with the Gadites pursuing their extreme rear.

## **Genesis 49:27—How was Jacob’s prophecy regarding Benjamin fulfilled?**

**Genesis 49:27:** “Benjamin will keep on tearing like a wolf. In the morning he will eat the prey, and in the evening he will divide spoil.”

### **it-1 289 paragraph 2**

The fighting ability of Benjamin’s descendants was pictured in Jacob’s deathbed prophecy in which he said of this beloved son: “Benjamin will keep on tearing like a wolf. In the morning he will eat the animal seized and at evening he will divide spoil.” (Genesis 49:27) Benjamite fighters were noted for their ability with the sling, slinging stones with either the right hand or the left and hitting the mark “to a hairbreadth.” (Judges 20:16; 1 Chronicles 12:2) Left-handed Judge Ehud, the slayer of oppressive King Eglon, was of Benjamin. (Judges 3:15-21) It may also be noted that it was “in the morning” of the kingdom of Israel that the tribe of Benjamin, though one “of the smallest of the tribes,” provided Israel’s first king, Saul the son of Kish, who proved to be a fierce fighter against the Philistines. (1 Samuel 9:15-17, 21) Likewise “at evening” time,

as far as the nation of Israel was concerned, the tribe of Benjamin provided Queen Esther and Prime Minister Mordecai, who served to save the Israelites from annihilation under the Persian Empire.—Esther 2:5-7.

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 49:8-26  
(th study 5)

- Song 30 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“Older Ones Have Much to Share”:** (10 min.)  
 Ge 48:21, 22—Jacob expressed faith in the future conquest of Canaan (*it-1 1246 ¶8*)  
 Ge 49:1—Jacob’s deathbed prophecy revealed his faith (*it-2 206 ¶1*)  
 Ge 50:24, 25—Joseph expressed faith in the fulfillment of Jehovah’s promises (*w07 6/1 28 ¶10*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)  
 Ge 49:19—How was Jacob’s prophecy regarding Gad fulfilled? (*w04 6/1 15 ¶4-5*)

Ge 49:27—How was Jacob’s prophecy regarding Benjamin fulfilled? (*it-1 289 ¶2*)

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 49:8-26 (5)

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Discussion. Play the video. Then ask the audience the following questions: How did the publishers cooperate in giving a witness? How can we imitate their conviction when we give a witness?
- **Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Overcome a common objection. (6)
- **Return Visit:** (5 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer the *Teach Us* book, and start a Bible study in chapter 9. (16)

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 138
- **“What Can You Learn From Experienced Christians?”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Maintaining Unity Under Ban* (video category INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 119
- Concluding Comments (3 min. or less)
- Song 25 and Prayer

GENESIS 48-50 | Older Ones Have Much to Share

**48:21, 22; 49:1; 50:24, 25**

Older ones strengthen our faith in Jehovah and his promises when they tell us firsthand accounts of the “wonderful works” that Jehovah has performed during these last days. (Ps 71:17, 18) If you are blessed with older ones in your congregation, ask them about

- how Jehovah helped them to overcome obstacles in serving him
- the increase that they have seen in the number of Kingdom proclaimers
- their joy at receiving clarifications in our understanding of Bible truth
- the refinements that they have observed in Jehovah’s organization





# Our Christian Life and Ministry

## MEETING WORKBOOK

### Sample Conversations\*

▲ Moses and Aaron appear before Pharaoh

#### INITIAL CALL

**Question:** Are we living in the last days?

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

**Link:** What will happen after the last days?

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



• *bhs* 98 ¶10

#### RETURN VISIT

**Question:** What will happen after the last days?

**Scripture:** Re 21:3, 4

**Link:** How can we enjoy the life God has promised?

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:



• *bhs* 100 ¶15

\* Beginning this month, the sample conversations will include only the initial call and return visit.

# 138 *Beauty in Gray-Headedness* (Proverbs 16:31)

1. Here with us are aged ones,  
Those whose youth has passed.  
Here among us they endure;  
Still they're holding fast.  
Loss of strength besets them all;  
Loss of mates for some.  
Father, please confirm their faith  
In the life to come.

*(CHORUS)*

*Father, you remember  
How in faith they've run.  
Give them your assurance;  
May they hear, "Well done!"*

2. Splendid is gray-headedness  
Found in ways of right.  
Beautiful are faithful ones  
In Jehovah's sight.  
May we always recognize  
They were once young too.  
Loyally they gave their best  
When their strength was new.

*(Chorus)*

- Song 30 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

**TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD**

- **“Older Ones Have Much to Share”:** (10 min.)  
 Ge 48:21, 22—Jacob expressed faith in the future conquest of Canaan (*it-1 1246 ¶8*)  
 Ge 49:1—Jacob’s deathbed prophecy revealed his faith (*it-2 206 ¶1*)  
 Ge 50:24, 25—Joseph expressed faith in the fulfillment of Jehovah’s promises (*w07 6/1 28 ¶10*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)  
 Ge 49:19—How was Jacob’s prophecy regarding Gad fulfilled? (*w04 6/1 15 ¶4-5*)

Ge 49:27—How was Jacob’s prophecy regarding Benjamin fulfilled? (*it-1 289 ¶2*)

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 49:8-26 (5)

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Return Visit Video:** (5 min.) Discussion. Play the video. Then ask the audience the following questions: How did the publishers cooperate in giving a witness? How can we imitate their conviction when we give a witness?
- **Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Overcome a common objection. (6)
- **Return Visit:** (5 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then offer the *Teach Us* book, and start a Bible study in chapter 9. (16)

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 138
- **“What Can You Learn From Experienced Christians?”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Maintaining Unity Under Ban* (video category INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES).
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 119
- Concluding Comments (3 min. or less)
- Song 25 and Prayer

GENESIS 48-50 | Older Ones Have Much to Share

**48:21, 22; 49:1; 50:24, 25**

Older ones strengthen our faith in Jehovah and his promises when they tell us firsthand accounts of the “wonderful works” that Jehovah has performed during these last days. (Ps 71:17, 18) If you are blessed with older ones in your congregation, ask them about

- how Jehovah helped them to overcome obstacles in serving him
- the increase that they have seen in the number of Kingdom proclaimers
- their joy at receiving clarifications in our understanding of Bible truth
- the refinements that they have observed in Jehovah’s organization



## What Can You Learn From Experienced Christians?



In our congregations we find those who have served Jehovah for many decades. We can learn from their firm reliance on Jehovah. We can ask them about the history of Jehovah’s organization and about the challenges they have faced and overcome with Jehovah’s help. We may even invite one of these dear ones to share experiences during a Family Worship evening.

If you are an experienced Christian, freely express your faith to younger Christians. Jacob and Joseph shared their experience with their offspring. (Ge 48:21, 22; 50:24, 25) Jehovah later expected family heads to teach their children about his mighty acts. (De 4:9, 10; Ps 78:4-7) In our day, parents and others in the congregation can pass on to the future generation the wonderful things that they have seen Jehovah accomplish through his organization.

**WATCH THE VIDEO *MAINTAINING UNITY UNDER BAN*, AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

- How did the Austria branch help our brothers in some countries where our work was banned?

---

- How did the brothers in these countries keep their faith strong?

---

- Why did many publishers in Romania separate from Jehovah’s organization, and how did they return?

---

- How do these experiences strengthen your faith?

---



**Find spiritual treasures  
in the heart of  
experienced Christians!**

What if most of the publishers in your congregation were baptized in recent years? You can find experiences of longtime Witnesses on [jw.org](http://jw.org) in the Library section under “Videos” (video category INTERVIEWS AND EXPERIENCES) or in the *Watch Tower Publications Index* under “Life Stories of Jehovah’s Witnesses.”



## **Gerrit Lösch: Maintaining Unity Under Ban**

(Raw Transcript)

I was serving at the Austria branch from about the mid-1970's to 1990. We had a small department that was assigned to help certain countries in Eastern Europe.

And that included visiting the brothers under ban, bringing them spiritual food, having secret meetings with them, and also strengthening the local organization that was exposed to persecution and ban.

We would print books on Bible paper in miniature size. This way, more books or literature could be taken to these countries. The couriers transported literature to these countries in their own private cars. This way, hundreds of books could be transported.

At the border, if a courier would be found transporting literature, they would interrogate the driver. But these brothers were trained; they knew what to say to protect the work and to not give away any secrets. Usually, after a day or two days, the officials would let them go back home to their home country but not with their car; they had to use public transportation because their cars would be confiscated. But the brothers had the spirit of sacrifice; they

were willing to risk that. But the majority got through, and actually every year, thousands of miniature books were transported secretly to Eastern Europe. So it was not just a matter of us being so clever in hiding things and getting it to the brothers, but we were always fully convinced and had evidence that it was Jehovah's holy spirit that helped us.

Also, we transported stencils for local production so that in their countries they could reproduce the same material with mimeographing machines. In most cases, the mimeographing machines were transported secretly by the couriers. The other method was to build it within the country. I remember that there was a brother who was a very skilled engineer, and under his direction, they decided to build it themselves.

So there were self-made offset printing presses.

The brothers had a number of underground printeries that they had dug out under their own homes. In many cases, the brothers had to do what they did during the night

because in Communist countries, they had to go during the day to a factory or whatever else and do some secular work. But it testifies to the great spirit of sacrifice that the brothers

showed—to forfeit so much of their private life as a family to do at night the printing of the spiritual food.

Some had only a few hours of sleep, but they loved Jehovah and the brothers so much

that they did it. There was no Kingdom Hall. The brothers had secret meetings in private homes, and they would not all come at the same time because if the neighbors would see certain persons all the time going to a specific house, there could be suspicions.

And every week, they had the meetings in a different home of the brothers. And this helped to protect the work so that it could be kept secret. Singing was very important for the brothers,

and they didn't have to have a songbook in hand. They knew the text of the song by heart, and immediately after saying a number, they could sing the song. That affected the heart—the emotions of the brothers—so they were strengthened in their determination to be faithful.

A lot of pressure was on the brothers in Romania. The Communist Party tried to sow distrust among the brothers, meeting with them separately and telling some brothers one thing and telling other brothers something else. Sometimes it

happened that an official posed as an interested person and was clever enough to disguise that and pretend to make progress in the truth—not only to the point of getting baptized but even to the point of becoming an elder. But he was in reality an agent of the secret police

with an aim to find out everything about the organization. So it did lead to, in one case, the brothers starting to distrust someone

that was actually appointed by headquarters. And these brothers then separated from the organization that Jehovah used, and some of them were separated for not just a few years but for decades. And they were a large number, up to 5,000 publishers. They continued to meet together. They were preaching and using material that they had left over from earlier years, but they hardly got any new material to study because they were not in touch with the organization that was used by headquarters. Attempts to bring the brothers back into the organization were made from time to time, but it seemed that the brothers from the separated organization did not have sufficient trust. But when we presented to the leader of the separated group that one from the Governing Body would come,

he was happy about that and he had enough trust in that case

to agree that we should have a meeting and seriously talk about reunification.

And so from the separated group, there were Brother Albu, who was the leader, and four of his main elders. And from our side, there was Brother Jaracz, our translator, and I was part of that group. Also, there were several from the Country Committee of Romania.

I remember that the first night there were a lot of accusations about what the others had done or not done, which did not create the best spirit,

and we mainly listened. But everybody agreed to meet another night. And the second night, Jehovah obviously wanted the brothers to unite again because the whole spirit was different, and the brothers talked the matters over and clarified some misunderstandings. And at the end of the second evening, I remember that the leader of the separated group, Brother Albu, said, 'Let's do it because if we don't do it now, we may never have another opportunity again.'

And so the decision was made.

That doesn't happen every day that 5,000 brothers come back to the organization.

From then on, all the practical things were put in place to accomplish this reunification. They were asked to merge with our congregations. And that also took a lot of humility on their part, but they were willing to do it. So they were really brothers in their heart and loved the truth.

And so the reunification was accomplished, and that was a wonderful victory for Jehovah and against Satan.

Reflecting on the experience with the brothers in Romania, we can see that there could always be misunderstandings among humans and there could always be even legitimate complaints about the misconduct of some responsible brothers.

But the important thing is never to lose trust that this is Jehovah's organization. That's where Jehovah's blessing is. Jehovah sees it all. Jehovah uses his holy spirit to keep the organization together,

and what he wants to have accomplished will happen. If we work with the holy spirit, then Jehovah will bless our efforts and it will be successful to his praise.

# JESUS—THE WAY, THE TRUTH, THE LIFE

JOHN 14:1-31

---

- JESUS IS GOING AWAY TO PREPARE A PLACE
  - HE PROMISES HIS FOLLOWERS A HELPER
  - THE FATHER IS GREATER THAN JESUS
- 

Still in the upper room with the apostles after the memorial meal, Jesus encourages them: “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Exercise faith in God; exercise faith also in me.”—John 13:36; 14:1.

Jesus gives the faithful apostles reason not to be troubled over his departure: “In the house of my Father are many dwelling places. . . . If I go my way and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will receive you home to myself, so that where I am you also may be.” The apostles, however, do not grasp that he is speaking about going to heaven. Thomas asks: “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?”—John 14:2-5.

“I am the way and the truth and the life,” Jesus answers. Only by accepting him and his teachings





and imitating his life course can one enter the heavenly house of his Father. Jesus says: “No one comes to the Father except through me.”—John 14:6.

Philip, listening intently, requests: “Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us.” Philip seems to want some manifestation of God, like the visions that Moses, Elijah, and Isaiah received. However, the apostles have something better than such visions. Jesus highlights that, replying: “Even after I have been with you men for such a long time, Philip, have you not come to know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father also.” Jesus perfectly reflects the Father’s personality; hence, living with and observing Jesus is like seeing the Father. Of course, the Father is superior to the Son, for Jesus points out: “The things I say to you I do not speak of my own originality.” (John 14:8-10) The apostles can see that Jesus is giving all credit for his teachings to his Father.

Jesus’ apostles have seen him do wonderful works and have heard him proclaim the good news about the Kingdom of God. Now he tells them: “Whoever

exercises faith in me will also do the works that I do; and he will do works greater than these.” (John 14:12) Jesus is not saying that they will perform greater miracles than he did. They will, though, carry out their ministry for a much longer time, over a much greater area, and to far more people.

Jesus’ departure will not leave them abandoned, for he promises: “If you ask anything in my name, I will do it.” Moreover, he says: “I will ask the Father and he will give you another helper to be with you forever, the spirit of the truth.” (John 14:14, 16, 17) He guarantees them that they will receive the holy spirit, this other helper. That happens on the day of Pentecost.

“In a little while,” Jesus says, “the world will see me no more, but you will see me, because I live and you will live.” (John 14:19) Not only will Jesus appear to them in bodily form after his resurrection but he will, in time, resurrect them to be with him in heaven as spirit creatures.

Now Jesus states a simple truth: “Whoever has my commandments and observes them is the one

who loves me. In turn, whoever loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and will clearly show myself to him.” At this the apostle Judas, who is also called Thaddaeus, asks: “Lord, what has happened that you intend to show yourself clearly to us and not to the world?” Jesus replies: “If anyone loves me, he will observe my word, and my Father will love him . . . Whoever does not love me does not observe my words.” (John 14:21-24) Unlike his followers, the world does not recognize Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life.

Jesus is going away, so how will his disciples be able to recall all that he taught them? Jesus explains: “The helper, the holy spirit, which the Father will send in my name, that one will teach you all things and bring back to your minds all the things I told you.” The apostles have seen how powerfully the holy spirit can work, so this assurance is comforting. Jesus adds: “I leave you peace; I give you my peace. . . . Do not let your hearts be troubled nor let them shrink out of fear.” (John 14:26, 27) The disciples have reason, then, not to be

troubled—they will have direction and protection from Jesus' Father.

Evidence of God's protection will soon be seen. Jesus says: "The ruler of the world is coming, and he has no hold on me." (John 14:30) The Devil was able to enter into Judas and get a hold on him. But there is no sinful weakness in Jesus that Satan can play on to turn him against God. Nor will the Devil be able to restrain Jesus in death. Why not? Jesus states: "I am doing just as the Father has commanded me to do." He is certain that his Father will resurrect him.—John 14:31.

- ◇ Where is Jesus going, and what assurance does Thomas receive regarding the way there?
- ◇ What does Philip apparently want Jesus to provide?
- ◇ How will Jesus' followers do greater works than he is doing?
- ◇ Why is it reassuring that the Father is greater than Jesus?

# *A Special Possession*

(1 Peter 2:9)

1. God has a new creation,  
His spirit-anointed sons.  
He has bought them from mankind;  
His approval they've won.

*(CHORUS)*

*A special possession,  
They're a people for your name.  
They love you. They praise you.  
As one they declare abroad your fame.*

2. They are a holy nation,  
Who handle the truth aright.  
God has called them from darkness  
To his wonderful light.

*(Chorus)*

3. Faithful to their commission,  
They gather the other sheep.  
To the Lamb they are loyal.  
His commandments they keep.

*(Chorus)*

APRIL 2020

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
JUNE 1–JULY 5, 2020

---

Study Article 14: June 1-7	2
<b>An Attack Coming From the North!</b>	

---

Study Article 15: June 8-14	15
<b>How Do You View the Fields?</b>	

---

Study Article 16: June 15-21	27
<b>Listen, Learn, and Show Compassion</b>	

---

Study Article 17: June 22-28	39
<b>“I Have Called You Friends”</b>	

---

Study Article 18: June 29–July 5	51
<b>“Run the Race to the Finish”</b>	

**COVER PICTURE:**

Brother J. F. Rutherford and other anointed servants who took the lead boldly proclaimed God’s judgments against this wicked system of things (See study article 14, paragraph 8)

This publication is not for sale. It is provided as part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations. To make a donation, please visit [donate.jw.org](https://donate.jw.org).

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

*The Watchtower* (ISSN 0043-1087) April 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. © 2020 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. Printed in Canada.

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



WIP20.04-E  
191226

# 101      *Working Together in Unity*

(Ephesians 4:3)

1. From a world divided and cold,  
    God has brought us into his fold.  
    Unity and peace we possess,  
    Bringing us happiness.  
    Unity we cherish;  
    Harmony is sweet.  
    In God's work there's much to be done.  
    He directs us now through his Son.  
    May we serve obediently,  
    Working in harmony.
2. As we pray to be of one mind,  
    Always tender, loving, and kind,  
    Love will grow and praise will increase,  
    Giving us joy and peace.  
    Peace is so refreshing,  
    Bringing such delight.  
    As we show true brotherly love,  
    God will grant us peace from above.  
    With his help, united we'll be,  
    Serving him endlessly.



# Listen, Learn, and Show Compassion

*“Stop judging by the outward appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”—JOHN 7:24.*

---

## SONG 101

Working Together in Unity

---

## PREVIEW

As imperfect humans, we have a tendency to make quick assumptions about people and their motives. Jehovah, on the other hand, “sees into the heart.” (1 Sam. 16:7) This article will discuss how he lovingly helped Jonah, Elijah, Hagar, and Lot. And it will help us to imitate Jehovah in the way we deal with our brothers and sisters.

**WOULD** you like people to judge you based on the color of your skin, the shape of your face, or the size of your body? Likely, you would not. How comforting it is to know, then, that Jehovah does not judge us by what human eyes can see! For example, when Samuel looked at the sons of Jesse, he did not see what Jehovah saw. Jehovah had told Samuel that one of Jesse's sons would become king of Israel. But which one? When Samuel saw Jesse's oldest son, Eliab, he said: "Surely here before Jehovah stands his anointed one." Eliab looked like a king. "But Jehovah said to Samuel: 'Do not pay attention to his appearance and how tall he is, for I have rejected him.'" The lesson? Jehovah continued: "Man sees what appears to the eyes, but Jehovah sees into the heart."—1 Sam. 16:1, 6, 7.

<sup>2</sup> As imperfect humans, all of us have a tendency to judge others by their outward appearance. (Read **John 7:24**.) But we learn only a little about a person from what we see with our eyes. To illustrate, even a brilliant and experienced doctor can learn only so much by just looking at a patient. He must listen attentively if he is to learn about the patient's medical history, his emotional makeup, or any symptoms he is having. The doctor may even order an X-ray to see the

- 
1. The Bible reveals what comforting truth about Jehovah?
  2. As indicated at John 7:24, why should we not judge a person by his appearance? Illustrate.

inside of the patient’s body. Otherwise, the doctor could misdiagnose the problem. Similarly, we cannot fully understand our brothers and sisters by simply looking at their outward appearance. We must try to look beneath the surface—at the inner person. Of course, we cannot read hearts, so we will never understand others as well as Jehovah does. But we can do our best to imitate Jehovah. How?

<sup>3</sup> How does Jehovah deal with his worshippers? He *listens* to them. He *takes into account* their background and situation. And he *shows compassion* for them. As we consider how Jehovah did that for Jonah, Elijah, Hagar, and Lot, let us see how we can imitate Jehovah when dealing with our brothers and sisters.

## LISTEN ATTENTIVELY

<sup>4</sup> From our limited viewpoint, we could judge Jonah as unreliable, even disloyal. He received a direct command from Jehovah to proclaim judgment in Nineveh. But instead of obeying, Jonah boarded a ship traveling in the opposite direction, “away from Jehovah.” (Jonah 1:1-3) Would you have given Jonah another chance to handle the assignment? Possibly not. Yet, Jehovah saw reasons to do so.—Jonah 3:1, 2.

---

3. How will the Bible accounts in this article help us to imitate Jehovah?

4. Why might we view Jonah negatively?

<sup>5</sup> Jonah revealed the type of person he really was in his prayer. (Read Jonah 2:1, 2, 9.) That prayer—doubtless one of many Jonah offered—helps us to see him as far more than a man who ran away from an assignment. His words show that he was humble, thankful, and determined to obey Jehovah. No wonder Jehovah looked beyond Jonah’s actions, responded to his prayer, and continued to use him as a prophet!

<sup>6</sup> To *listen attentively to others*, we need to be humble and patient. It is worth the effort for at least three reasons. First, we will be less likely to jump to wrong conclusions about people. Second, we can discern feelings and motives in our brother, and that will help us to be more empathetic. And third, we may help the person to learn something about himself. Sometimes we do not really understand even our own emotions until we express those emotions in words. (Prov. 20:5) An elder in Asia admits: “I remember making the mistake of speaking before listening. I told a sister that she needed to improve the quality of her comments at the meeting. Later, I learned that she has difficulty reading and that it takes a lot of effort for her to

---

5. What do you learn about Jonah from his words recorded at Jonah 2:1, 2, 9?

6. Why is it worth the effort for us to listen attentively?

give comments.” How important it is that each elder “hears the facts” before giving counsel!—Prov. 18:13.

<sup>7</sup> Some of our brothers and sisters find it difficult to talk about their feelings because of their background, culture, or personality. How can we make it easier for them to open their hearts to us? Remember the way Jehovah dealt with Elijah when he fled from Jezebel. It took many days before Elijah expressed himself completely to his heavenly Father. Jehovah listened attentively. He then encouraged Elijah and gave him constructive work to do. (1 Ki. 19:1-18) It may take time for our brothers and sisters to feel comfortable speaking to us, but only when they do will we be able to discern their true feelings. If we imitate Jehovah

---

7. What do you learn from the way Jehovah dealt with Elijah?

---

If we get the facts, we can be more empathetic  
(See paragraph 6)



by being patient, we can earn their confidence. Then, when they are ready to share their feelings, we should listen attentively.

## **GET TO KNOW YOUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS**

<sup>8</sup> Hagar, the maidservant of Sarai, acted foolishly after she was given as a wife to Abram. Hagar became pregnant and then began to look down on Sarai, who had no children of her own. The situation became so bad that Sarai chased Hagar away. (Gen. 16:4-6) From our imperfect viewpoint, Hagar might appear to be no more than a spiteful woman who got what she deserved. But Jehovah saw more in Hagar. He sent his angel to her. When the angel found her, he helped her to adjust her attitude and blessed her. Hagar sensed that Jehovah had been watching her and knew all about her situation. She was moved to call him “a God of sight, . . . the one who sees me.”—**Read Genesis 16:7-13.**

<sup>9</sup> What did Jehovah see in Hagar? He was fully aware of her background and everything she had been through. (Prov. 15:3) Hagar was an Egyptian living in a Hebrew household. Did she sometimes feel like an outsider? Did she miss her family and her homeland? She was not Abram’s only wife. For a time, some faithful men had more than one wife. But that was not Je-

---

8. According to Genesis 16:7-13, how did Jehovah help Hagar?

9. What did God take into account when he dealt with Hagar?

hovah's original purpose. (Matt. 19:4-6) It is no surprise, then, that such an arrangement caused jealousy and resentment. While Jehovah did not excuse Hagar's disrespect for Sarai, we can be sure that he took Hagar's background and her situation into account.

<sup>10</sup> We can imitate Jehovah by trying to understand one another. *Get to know your brothers and sisters better.* Talk with them before and after meetings, work with them in the ministry, and if possible, invite them for a meal. When you do, you may learn that a sister who seems unfriendly is actually shy, a brother whom you thought to be materialistic is hospitable, or a family that often comes late to the meetings is enduring opposition. (Job 6:29) Of course, we should not become "meddlers in other people's affairs." (1 Tim. 5:13) However, it is good to know something about our brothers and sisters and the circumstances that have shaped their personality.

<sup>11</sup> Elders in particular need to know the background of brothers and sisters under their care. Consider the example of a brother named Artur who was serving as a circuit overseer. He and another elder visited a sister who seemed shy and withdrawn. "We learned that her husband died soon after they got married," Artur says. "Despite the challenges, she raised two

---

10. How can we get to know our brothers and sisters better?

11. Why is it important for elders to know the sheep well?

spiritually strong daughters. Now, though, her eyesight was failing, and she suffered from depression. Even so, her love for Jehovah and her faith in him remained strong. We realized that we had a lot to learn from this sister's good example." (Phil. 2:3) This circuit overseer was following Jehovah's example. Jehovah knows his sheep and the pain they suffer. (Ex. 3:7) Elders who know the sheep well are in a better position to help them.

<sup>12</sup> When you get to know the background of a fellow Christian whom you find irritating, you are more likely to feel empathy for that one. Consider an example. "A sister in my congregation was very loud when she spoke," says Yip Yee, who lives in Asia. "I felt that she lacked good manners. But when I worked with her in the ministry, I learned that she used to help her parents sell fish in a market. She had to speak loudly to attract customers." Yip Yee adds: "I learned that to understand my brothers and sisters, I need to know their background." It takes effort to get to know your brothers better. Still, when you follow the Bible's counsel to open your heart wide, you imitate Jehovah, who loves "all sorts of people."—1 Tim. 2:3, 4; 2 Cor. 6:11-13.

---

12. How did a sister named Yip Yee benefit from getting to know a sister in the congregation?





Get to know your brothers and sisters better  
(See paragraphs 10-12)

---

## SHOW COMPASSION

<sup>13</sup> At a critical time in his life, Lot was slow to obey Jehovah’s instructions. Two angels visited Lot and told him to bring his family out of Sodom. Why? They said: “We are going to destroy this place.” (Gen. 19: 12, 13) The next morning, Lot and his family were still at home. So the angels again warned Lot. But “he kept lingering.” We may judge Lot as being apathetic, even disobedient. However, Jehovah did not give up on him. “Because of Jehovah’s compassion for him,” the angels took the family by the hand and led them outside the city.—**Read Genesis 19:15, 16.**

---

13. As recorded at Genesis 19:15, 16, what did the angels do when Lot kept lingering, and why?

<sup>14</sup> Jehovah might have felt compassion for Lot for a number of reasons. Lot may have been reluctant to leave his home because he feared the people outside the city. There were other dangers too. Lot likely knew of the two kings who had fallen into pits of bitumen, or asphalt, in a nearby valley. (Gen. 14:8-12) As a husband and father, Lot must have worried about his family. In addition, Lot was wealthy, so he may have owned a fine house in Sodom. (Gen. 13:5, 6) Of course, none of those factors excused Lot for failing to obey Jehovah immediately. However, Jehovah looked beyond Lot's mistake and viewed him as a "righteous man."—2 Pet. 2:7, 8.

<sup>15</sup> Rather than judge another person's actions, do your best to understand how he feels. Veronica, a sister in Europe, tried to do that. "One sister always seemed to be in a bad mood," she relates. "She kept isolating herself from others. Sometimes, I was afraid to approach her. But I thought, 'If I were in her situation, I would need a friend.' So I decided to ask her how she was feeling. And she started to open up her heart! Now I understand a lot more about her."

<sup>16</sup> The only person who fully understands us is Jehovah. (Prov. 15:11) So ask him to help you to see in

---

14. Why might Jehovah have felt compassion for Lot?

15. Rather than judge a person's actions, what should we do?

16. Why should we pray for help to cultivate empathy?



By listening, we may come to understand  
how we can show compassion  
(See paragraphs 15-16)

---

others what he sees and to *understand how to show compassion* for them. Prayer helped a sister named Anzhela to be more empathetic. A sister in her congregation had become difficult to get along with. Anzhela admits: “It would have been very easy to fall into the trap of criticizing the sister and to ‘wash my hands’ of her. But then I asked Jehovah to help me empathize with this sister.” Did Jehovah answer Anzhela’s prayer? She continues: “We went in the ministry together and talked afterward for hours. I listened to her with compassion. Now I have more love for her, and I’m determined to help her.”

<sup>17</sup> You cannot pick which brothers and sisters deserve your tender compassion. All of them face

---

17. What should we be determined to do?

problems as did Jonah, Elijah, Hagar, and Lot. In a number of cases, they have brought the problems on themselves. Realistically, all of us have done that at some point. It is reasonable, then, for Jehovah to ask us to show fellow feeling for one another. (1 Pet. 3:8) When we obey Jehovah, we add to the unity of our remarkable and diverse global family. So when dealing with one another, may we be determined to listen, learn, and show compassion.

---

**PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Page 31:** An older brother is disturbed by a younger brother's late arrival at the meeting but later finds out that he was late because he was in an auto accident. **Page 35:** Although the service group overseer at first thought that a sister was a loner and aloof, he later learned that she was just shy and uncomfortable around people she did not know well. **Page 37:** When a sister got to know another sister better socially, she realized that the sister was not moody and uncaring as she had originally thought when they first met at the Kingdom Hall.

---

#### HOW CAN WE IMITATE THE WAY JEHOVAH . . .

- listened attentively to Jonah and Elijah?
- took Hagar's circumstances into consideration?
- showed compassion for Lot?

## *Come! Be Refreshed*

(Hebrews 10:24, 25)

1. We live in a world that is wayward and lost;  
The way of our God is not known.  
We need sure direction to safeguard our steps;  
We cannot succeed on our own.  
  
Our meetings refresh us and brighten our hope;  
They help us build faith in our God.  
They move us with words that incite to fine deeds,  
They give us the strength to go on.  
  
We'll never forsake what Jehovah commands;  
His will is what we want to do.  
Our meetings instruct us in ways that are right;  
Our love for the truth they renew.
2. Jehovah is keenly aware of our needs;  
His counsel by us should be heard.  
To buy out the time for occasions to meet  
Shows wisdom and trust in his Word.  
  
By wholesome instruction from God-fearing men,  
We learn how our faith can be shown.  
With loving support from our fam'ly of faith,  
We know that we're never alone.  
  
So as we look forward to much better times,  
We'll meet with the ones whom we love.  
And here at these meetings we'll learn how to live  
With wisdom that comes from above.