

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

DECEMBER 2014

MONTHLY THEME: Send out “good things” out of the good treasure entrusted to us.—Matt. 12:35a.

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 8

Song 6 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

cl chap. 17 ¶1-8 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Joshua 1-5 (10 min.)

No. 1: Joshua 1:1-18 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: What Holy Spirit Is—rs p. 380 ¶2—p. 381 ¶1 (5 min.)

No. 3: Adultery—How Could One Become Guilty of Spiritual Adultery?—it-1 p. 54 ¶2 (5 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 94

10 min: “Good Things” in Store for Us This Month. Talk. Highlight monthly theme. (Matt. 12:35a) We received spiritual treasures from someone who taught us the truth. (See *The Watchtower*, April 1, 2002, p. 16, pars. 5-7.) In turn, we should share our “good things” with others. (Gal. 6:6) Arouse interest in the “good things” we will receive this month at upcoming Service Meetings. We will be helped to develop our teaching skills as well as learn to sing new songs.

20 min: “Improving Our Skills in the Ministry—Demonstrating a Bible Study by Using the *Bible Teach* Book.” Discussion. Have a well-qualified publisher or a pioneer demonstrate a Bible study using the *Bible Teach* book.

Song 96 and Prayer

Improving Our Skills in the Ministry—Demonstrating a Bible Study by Using the *Bible Teach* Book

Why Important: Many people may not understand what we mean when we say that we offer free home Bible studies. They may think that they have to join a study group or take some sort of correspondence course. Instead of simply *offering* a study, why not *demon-*

strate a study? In just a few minutes, even on the doorstep, you can *show* a person what an easy and enlightening experience it can be to study the Bible.

How to Do It:

- After introducing yourself, ask the householder if he is concerned about the future.
- Mention that many people have similar concerns, and show him the table of contents in the *Bible Teach* book. Explain that this book has easy-to-understand lessons that show what the Bible teaches about the future and other subjects, and ask him which chapter he is interested in.
- Hand him a copy of the book, and direct him to the chapter that he selected. Explain that the questions at the beginning of the chapter are answered in the paragraphs that follow.
- Ask the householder to read the first paragraph if he feels comfortable doing so. Then read the question for that paragraph, and consider the answer together. Look up and discuss scriptures cited in support of the answer. Show him how you have highlighted the answer in your book.
- Consider the next paragraph, but this time ask the householder to try answering the question in his own words.
- Commend him, and make arrangements to return to complete the lesson.
- If appropriate, direct attention to the video on jw.org entitled *What Happens at a Bible Study?*

Try This During the Month:

- Pray for Jehovah to bless your efforts to start a new Bible study.—Phil. 2:13.
- Try to demonstrate a Bible study using the *Bible Teach* book or show the video *What Happens at a Bible Study?* at least once while engaging in the ministry.

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 15

Song 1 and Prayer

❑ **Congregation Bible Study:**

cl chap. 17 ¶19-16 (30 min.)

❑ **Theocratic Ministry School:**

Bible reading: Joshua 6-8 (10 min.)

No. 1: Joshua 8:18-29 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: What Gives Evidence That a Person Has Holy Spirit?—rs p. 381 ¶3—p. 382 ¶1 (5 min.)

No. 3: Adversary—The Most Wicked Adversary of All Is Satan the Devil—it-1 p. 54 (5 min.)

❑ **Service Meeting:**

Song 101

15 min: “Conducting Effective Bible Studies.” Questions and answers. After considering paragraph 3, have a two-part demonstration showing a publisher and a Bible student discussing paragraph 8 in chapter 15 of the *Bible Teach* book. In the first demonstration, the publisher talks too much. In the second, the publisher asks viewpoint questions to help him discern the student’s thinking.

15 min: A Tool to Help You Prepare to Conduct Bible Studies. Discussion. Draw the attention of the audience to the section of jw.org entitled “What Does the Bible Teach?” (Look under BIBLE TEACHINGS > TEENAGERS.) Discuss how this material can be used to help us conduct effective Bible studies with young people as well as with older ones. How can the questions raised on these work sheets help us reach the student’s heart? Include a soliloquy of a publisher using one of these work sheets to help him think about the needs of his student and prepare effective questions. Conclude by encouraging the audience to become better teachers by endeavoring to reach their students’ hearts by using the good things we have to help others.—Prov. 20:5.
Song 99 and Prayer

Conducting Effective Bible Studies

¹ No one can serve God unless Jehovah “draws him.” (John 6:44) Even so, publishers who conduct Bible studies must do their part in helping people to draw close to their heavenly Father. (Jas. 4:8) This requires preparation. Simply reading each paragraph and asking the printed question is not enough to help our students grasp the message and make progress.

² To conduct effective studies, publishers must help their students to (1) understand what the Bible teaches, (2) accept what the Bible teaches, and (3) put into practice what the Bible teaches. (John 3:16; 17:3; Jas. 2:26) It can take months to guide an individual through these steps. Yet, each step represents a stage in his developing a relationship with Jehovah and making a dedication to him.

³ **What Is the Bible Student Thinking?:** To discern if our Bible student understands and accepts what he is learning, avoid doing all the talking and encourage the student to express himself. (Jas. 1:19) Does he understand what the Bible says on the subject being considered? Can he explain the subject in his own words? How does he feel about what he has learned? Does he believe that what the Bible teaches is reasonable? (1 Thess. 2:13) Does he understand that what he is learning should make a difference in the way he lives his life? (Col. 3:10) In order to get answers to such questions, we need to ask

1. What responsibility do publishers who conduct Bible studies have?
2. What will an effective Bible study accomplish?
3. Why do effective teachers ask viewpoint questions?

tactful viewpoint questions and then *listen*.—Matt. 16:13-16.

⁴ Habits and thought patterns are often deeply entrenched and take time to unlearn. (2 Cor. 10:5) What if our student does not accept or put into practice what he is being taught? Patience is required

4. What should be done if a student has difficulty understanding or applying what he is being taught from the Bible?

to allow a reasonable amount of time for God's Word and holy spirit to work on the student's heart. (1 Cor. 3:6, 7; Heb. 4:12) Rather than pressuring him, it is often better to move on to another subject if the student is having difficulty understanding or applying a Bible teaching. As we continue to teach him patiently and lovingly from the Bible, he may in time be moved to make the needed adjustments.

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 22

Song 15 and Prayer

❑ **Congregation Bible Study:**

cl chap. 17 ¶17-23, box on p. 177 (30 min.)

❑ **Theocratic Ministry School:**

Bible reading: Joshua 9-11 (10 min.)

No. 1: Joshua 9:16-27 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: **There Is No Spirit Part of Man That Survives Death**—*rs* p. 382 ¶5—p. 383 ¶12 (5 min.)

No. 3: **Affection—Maintain a Warm Personal Attachment to Jehovah and to Those Who Love Him**—*it-1* p. 55 (5 min.)

❑ **Service Meeting:**

Song 119

5 min: Local needs.

25 min: “2015 Theocratic Ministry School Helps Us Improve Our Teaching.” Discussion by the Theocratic Ministry School overseer. The school overseer may choose to have certain paragraphs read before considering them. Emphasize the changes to Assignment No. 1, the timing for the Bible Highlights, and the counsel by the school overseer. Have paragraph 7 read, and after discussing it, have a model demonstration of an elder conducting a family study with his wife and child, using the material on page 18 of the *New World Translation*. Encourage all to take full advantage of the excellent theocratic training provided in the school and to make good use of the textbook *Benefit From Theocratic Ministry School Education*.

Song 117 and Prayer

2015 Theocratic Ministry School Helps Us Improve Our Teaching

¹ The psalmist David wrote: “May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing to you, O Jehovah, my Rock and my Redeemer.” (Ps. 19:14) We too want our words to be pleasing to Jehovah because we treasure our privilege of speaking the truth in the congregation and in the ministry. The Theocratic Ministry School is one of the ways that Jehovah trains us for the ministry. This training takes place each week in the more than 111,000 congregations worldwide. It has helped brothers and sisters around the globe and from all walks of life to become adequately qualified as ministers of the good news, capable of teaching with persuasion, tact, and boldness.—Acts 19:8; Col. 4:6.

² The school schedule for 2015 will include subjects considered in “An Introduction to God's Word” and the “Glossary of Bible Terms” found in the *New World Translation*, as well as material from *Insight on the Scriptures*, Volume 1. Additionally, adjustments have been made in the time allotted for Bible highlights

and Assignment No. 1. These changes along with instructions on how parts on the school are to be presented are considered in the following paragraphs.

³ **Bible Highlights:** Brothers assigned this part will have *two minutes* to consider *one* interesting and practical Scriptural point from the weekly Bible reading. Good preparation will result in sharing a point of value with the congregation within the allotted time. Thereafter, the congregation will have the customary *six minutes* to offer comments of 30 seconds or less on interesting points they found in the weekly Bible reading. It takes preparation and self-discipline to make a meaningful comment in 30 seconds, but doing so is good training for us. It also allows time for others to comment on what they have learned in their personal research.

⁴ **Assignment No. 1:** The time allotted for the Bible reading has been reduced to *three minutes or less* and will cover less material. Those who receive a reading assignment should rehearse it several times by reading it aloud and paying close attention to proper pronunciation and fluency in order to convey thoughts with understanding. All of Jehovah's people should strive to read well, since reading plays an important role in our worship. How delighted we are that so many of our children read well! Parents are to be commended for their loving efforts to help their children become good readers.

⁵ **Assignment No. 2:** This will be a *five-minute* presentation assigned to a sister. The assigned theme should be used. When an assignment is based on material found in the *New World Translation*, it should be applied to an aspect of field service that is realistic and practical for the local territory. When the assignment is based on a Bible character in *Insight on the Scriptures*, Volume 1, the student should study the information found under the Bible character's name, select appropriate scriptures to be used, and show what can be learned from the example of the Bible character. Additional scriptures that tie in with the theme may be included. The school overseer will assign one assistant.

⁶ **Assignment No. 3:** This will be a *five-minute* presentation assigned to a brother or a sister. When assigned to a sister, this part should be presented as outlined for Assignment No. 2. When assigned to a brother, the material that is based on *Insight* should be given as a talk with the audience in mind. The student should develop the assigned theme, select appropriate scriptures to be used, and show what can be learned from the example of the Bible character.

⁷ **A New Feature of Assignment No. 3 for Brothers:** When the assignment is based on the material in the *New World Translation*, it should be presented as a demonstration of family worship or field service. Usually the school overseer will assign an assistant and the setting. The assistant should be a member of

the student's family or a brother in the congregation. Additional scriptures that highlight Bible principles that tie in with the theme may be included in the presentation. From time to time, an elder may be assigned to present this part. Elders may choose their own assistant and setting. Undoubtedly, it will be encouraging for the congregation to see elders demonstrate the art of teaching with a family member or another brother.

⁸ **Counsel:** The school overseer will use *two minutes* after each student's presentation to give commendation as well as constructive counsel based on *Benefit From Theocratic Ministry School Education*. When the school overseer introduces a student's part on the program, he will not announce the point of counsel the student is working on. After each presentation, the overseer should give the student sincere commendation, *announce the point of counsel the student is working on* and state specifically why the student did well on that point or kindly explain why it would be beneficial for the student to give that particular point further attention.

⁹ The student's counsel form can be found on pages 79 to 81 of his personal copy of the *Ministry School* book. After a student cares for his as-

signment, the school overseer will make the appropriate notations in the student's book and will privately ask whether the student did the exercise related to the assigned counsel point. Commendation as well as additional helpful suggestions may be given to the student after the meeting or at another time. The personal attention that each student receives in the school should be viewed as an opportunity to help him make spiritual advancement.—1 Tim. 4:15.

¹⁰ If a student talk runs overtime, the school overseer or an assistant should be alert to give a signal, such as a bell or a tapping noise, to indicate in a discreet manner that the student's time is up. The student should acknowledge the signal by completing his sentence and leaving the platform.—See *Ministry School* book, p. 282, par. 4.

¹¹ All who meet the requirements are encouraged to enroll in the Theocratic Ministry School. (See *Ministry School* book, p. 282, par. 6.) The education that this school provides has enabled Jehovah's people to preach and teach the good news of the Kingdom with conviction, dignity, and love. Jehovah is undoubtedly pleased to be praised by all those who are benefiting so much from theocratic education!—Ps. 148:12, 13; Isa. 50:4.



WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 29

Song 37 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

c/ chap. 18 ¶1-8 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Joshua 12-15 (10 min.)

Theocratic Ministry School Review (20 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 89

20 min: Progressively Teach “Good Things” to Bible Students and Believing Children. (Matt. 12:35a) Discussion. Use the following scriptures

to show what we should expect of Bible students and believing children: 1 Corinthians 13: 11; 1 Peter 2:2, 3, footnote. Explain what it means to “taste” the “milk of the word” and how we can help our students and children to do this. Explain the principle at Mark 4:28. (See *The Watchtower*, December 15, 2014, p. 12, pars. 6-8.) Interview an experienced publisher or parent who can explain how he or she helped a Bible student or a child make spiritual progress.—Eph. 4: 13-15; see the May 2014 *Our Kingdom Ministry* Question Box.

10 min: “Share ‘Good Things’ by Being Hospitable (Matt. 12:35a).” Discussion. What benefits or experiences have some had because of showing hospitality? Invite comments about how we can show hospitality to others, especially those in full-time service. Mention local arrangement to provide a meal for each visiting speaker.

Song 124 and Prayer

Share “Good Things” by Being Hospitable (Matt. 12:35a)

All of us undoubtedly want to share “good things” with others by following “the course of hospitality.” (Rom. 12:13) The elders take the lead in arranging for visiting speakers to receive hospitality and reimbursement for their travel expenses. However, we personally might hesitate to show hospitality because of having limited means, or we might feel anxious about having others come to our home. Our taking to heart Jesus’ counsel to Martha can help us overcome such feelings. (Luke 10:39-42) He emphasized that “the good portion” of hospitality is the fellowship and encouragement, not an elaborate meal or fine home decor. By applying this counsel, we all can share “good things” with our brothers in accord with God’s Word.—3 John 5-8.

Theocratic Ministry School Review

The following questions will be considered at the Theocratic Ministry School during the week beginning December 29, 2014.

1. How do we view the command at Deuteronomy 14:1 prohibiting self-mutilation during a period of mourning for a dead person? [Nov. 3, w04 9/15 p. 27 par. 5]
2. What was the objective of having the kings of Israel make a copy of God’s Law and ‘read from it all the days of their life’? (Deut. 17:18-20) [Nov. 3, w02 6/15 p. 12 par. 4]
3. Why is it stated that “you must not plow with a bull and a donkey together,” and how does the command about uneven yoking apply to Christians? (Deut. 22:10) [Nov. 10, w03 10/15 p. 32]
4. Why was seizing “a hand mill or its upper millstone as security for a loan” prohibited? (Deut. 24:6) [Nov. 17, w04 9/15 p. 26 par. 3]
5. With what attitude were the Israelites to be obedient, and what should be the motivating force for our service to Jehovah? (Deut. 28:47) [Nov. 24, w10 9/15 p. 8 par. 4]
6. What three basic requirements for life are found at Deuteronomy 30:19, 20? [Nov. 24, w10 2/15 p. 28 par. 17]
7. Are we required to utter in a low voice all the words we read from Genesis to Revelation? Explain. (Josh. 1:8) [Dec. 8, w13 4/15 p. 7 par. 4]
8. Who is “the prince of Jehovah’s army” mentioned at Joshua 5:14, 15, and how can this account encourage us? [Dec. 8, w04 12/1 p. 9 par. 2]
9. What led to Achan’s fall into sin, and what can we learn from his bad example? (Josh. 7:20, 21) [Dec. 15, w10 4/15 pp. 20-21 pars. 2, 5]
10. How does Caleb’s example serve as encouragement for us today? (Josh. 14:10-13) [Dec. 29, w04 12/1 p. 12 par. 2]

New Songs for Worship!

¹ At the most recent annual meeting of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, which was held on October 4, 2014, plans were announced to revise our current songbook. That truly was exciting news! All in attendance were reminded of the important place that our Kingdom songs ought to have in our worship.—Ps. 96:2.

² You may wonder, ‘Why is it necessary to revise the songbook?’ There are several reasons. First of all, our understanding of the Scriptures continues to be refined, and that can affect the lyrics of our songs. (Prov. 4:18) Another reason for the revision: Many expressions and phrases that are used in the current songbook were drawn from the earlier edition of the *New World Translation*. Those lyrics must now be adjusted to correspond with the wording of the revised edition. Since extensive work would need to be done just to bring the lyrics up-to-date, it was decided to add a few new songs to the book.

³ Will we have to wait until a new songbook is printed before we can begin using the new songs? No. We are pleased to inform you that over the next several months, a number of new songs will be released on our Web site, jw.org. When a new song is released, it will be scheduled at the end of a Service Meeting with the notation “new song.”

⁴ **How to Learn the New Songs:** It can be challenging to learn a new song. Still, like the psalmist, we want to sing out at congregation meetings and “not keep silent.” (Ps. 30:12) To learn a new song, follow these simple steps.

- Listen repeatedly to the piano recording of the song, which will be posted on our Web site. The more you listen to the melody, the easier it will be for you to remember it.

- Study the lyrics, and try to memorize them.
- Sing the melody together with the lyrics. Do so until you have mastered the song.
- Rehearse the new songs a few times during your Family Worship session until your family is comfortable with them.

⁵ In future months when a new song is scheduled to conclude the Service Meeting, the congregation will listen once to the piano recording. The audience will then sing the song along with the piano recording, as we do for the other songs.

⁶ When you think about it, singing at our meetings affords us the joy of unitedly joining our voices in praise to Jehovah. Therefore, we should not get into the habit of leaving our seats unnecessarily when a song is introduced at our Christian meetings.

⁷ There is another way we can show proper appreciation for our sacred music. At assemblies and conventions, a musical interlude is played before each session begins. Twice a year, devoted brothers and sisters from the four corners of the earth travel at their own expense to Patterson, New York, in order to produce beautiful music for use in our worship. Thus, when the chairman invites us to take our seats and listen to what the orchestra has prepared, we should do so. Our doing this will help us to prepare our hearts for the information that will follow.—Ezra 7:10.

⁸ We will conclude our meeting today with the new song entitled “The Kingdom Is in Place—Let It Come!” This song, which was featured at the recent annual meeting, was specially composed to mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of the Kingdom.

⁹ The new songs are certainly “good things” from Jehovah. (Matt. 12:35a) Let us make it our resolve to learn these new songs and sing them from our hearts, giving fitting praise and honor to our God!—Ps. 147:1.

WEEK STARTING JANUARY 5

Song 113 and Prayer

☐ Congregation Bible Study:

cl chap. 18 ¶19-19 (30 min.)

☐ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Joshua 16-20 (8 min.)

No. 1: Joshua 17:11-18 (3 min. or less)

No. 2: Who Is God?—*nwt* p. 6 ¶1-3 (5 min.)

No. 3: King Ahab—Theme: There Can Be No Peace for the Wicked—*it-1* pp. 59-60 (5 min.)

☐ Service Meeting:

Song 28

30 min: “New Songs for Worship!”

Discussion. When considering paragraph 6, have the piano recording of “The Kingdom Is in Place—Let It Come!” played for the congregation. Then invite the audience to stand and sing the new song. It may be necessary to sing the song twice to help the congregation learn this new song.

New song “The Kingdom Is in Place—Let It Come!” and Prayer

Announcements

■ Literature offer for **December:** *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* or *Would You Like to Know the Truth?* **January and February:** *Good News From God!* or *Was Life Created?* **March:** *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines.

■ The Memorial for **2016** will be Wednesday, March 23, 2016.

■ Beginning January 1, 2015, the arrangement for congregations to use the first Saturday of each month to concentrate on starting Bible studies will be discontinued. Instead, publishers may offer magazines as they do on other Saturdays. We can offer Bible studies anytime during the month, using magazines or other study publications.

Sample Presentations

THE WATCHTOWER[®] January 1 ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

“It seems as if corruption in government has always been a problem. Why do you think that is so? [Allow for response.] I found this comment in the Bible to be interesting. [Read Ecclesiastes 7:20.] This magazine highlights the Bible’s solutions to corruption. Please take a little time to read it. Here is your copy.”

Awake![®] January

“Many people believe that evolution explains how life began, but others are not so sure. How do you think life began? [Allow for response.] Decades of research indicate that life comes only from preexisting life. This agrees with this simple statement found in the Bible. [Read Psalm 36:9.] This magazine discusses why many have concluded that life is too complex and marvelous to be the result of evolution.”

Good News From God!

“We’re visiting the families on your street to share an encouraging thought from the Bible. Many that we’ve talked to wonder why a loving God would allow so much suffering in the world. Do you think that suffering was part of God’s original purpose for the earth?” Allow for response. Turn to Lesson 5, read and discuss the first two paragraphs and the scriptures in italics, and offer the brochure.

Field Service Highlights

Puerto Rico reported a new all-time peak of 3,279 regular pioneers for the month of June. In the United States branch territory, a total of 6,746 newly dedicated ones were baptized in June, during which month both international and regional conventions were held. How we rejoice to see this increase!—Isa. 60:22.

