

WEEK STARTING JANUARY 20

Song 34 and Prayer

□ **Congregation Bible Study:**

c/ chap. 1 ¶¶18-23, box on p. 14 (30 min.)

□ **Theocratic Ministry School:**

Bible reading: Genesis 11-16 (10 min.)

No. 1: Genesis 14:17–15:11 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: If Someone Says, ‘What Makes You Think There Is Only One Religion That Is Right?’—*rs* p. 332 ¶3 (5 min.)

No. 3: Abaddon—The Angel of the Abyss—Who Is He?—*it-1* p. 12 (5 min.)

□ **Service Meeting:**

Song 123

10 min: **What Do We Learn?** Discussion. Have Matthew 7:6-11 read. Consider how these verses can help us in our ministry.

10 min: **Show Respect for Those Who Are Working Hard Among You.** (1 Thess. 5:12, 13)

Discussion based on the following questions: (1) In what ways do the elders work hard in the congregation? (2) How can we show the elders extraordinary consideration? (3) Why do those taking the lead need encouragement? (4) How can we encourage the elders and their families? (5) How does being obedient to those taking the lead benefit both the congregation and the elders?

10 min: **“Be More Than a Silent Partner.”** Questions and answers. Invite audience to relate helpful tips they learned from someone they were working with in the ministry.

Song 93 and Prayer

Be More Than a Silent Partner

¹The apostle Paul viewed the time he spent with fellow believers as opportunities for “an interchange of encouragement.” (Rom. 1:12) When you work with another publisher in the ministry, do you take advantage of this time to encourage and assist him? Instead of being a silent partner, why

1. How may we imitate the apostle Paul’s attitude when we are working with others in the ministry?

not share what helps you to be an effective publisher?

² **Instill Confidence:** Some publishers lack confidence, which may be reflected in their facial expressions or tone of voice. We can bolster their confidence by giving them sincere commendation. What are some other ways to instill confidence? One traveling overseer freely tells his partner about his own fears and how he prays often for help to overcome such feelings. Another brother noted this regarding what helps him reflect confidence: “It starts with a smile. Sometimes I have to pray for help to make that simple expression.” Has something helped you to be more confident in the ministry? Share it with your field service partner.

³ **Share Methods:** Have you found a simple opening statement or question, perhaps something about a local event, to be effective in starting a conversation? Have you experienced good results from adding a personal touch to a sample presentation? Tell your partner. (Prov. 27:17) While traveling to a return visit, you can relate your objective for the visit and how you plan to achieve it. After a Bible study, you could explain why you chose a certain point, scripture, or teaching method to address the student’s needs.

⁴ First-century evangelizers were not just interested in helping unbelievers. They also saw the value of encouraging and strengthening one another. (Acts 11:23; 15:32) The apostle Paul trained young Timothy and then encouraged him to share what he had learned with others. (2 Tim. 2:2) When we do not forget to do good to fellow Christians while in the ministry, we not only increase their joy and effectiveness but we also please our heavenly Father.—Heb. 13:15, 16.

2. What can we do to bolster the confidence of our field service partner, and why is this important?

3. What can we share with our partner that may help him become more effective in his ministry?

4. Why should we be interested in helping fellow evangelizers?

Living Up to Our Name (Isaiah 43:10-12)

1. Glorious Jehovah, almighty, eternal,
Perfect in justice, in power, in love.
Source of all truth and of infinite wisdom,
You rule as Sov'reign in heaven above.
We as your people delight in your service;
Your Kingdom truth we delight to proclaim.

(CHORUS)

*Being your Witnesses, great is our priv'lege.
Oh, may we ever live up to our name!*

2. Working together in your sacred service
Binds us as brothers in love and in peace.
Teaching the truth and reflecting your glory
Fill us with joy as your praises increase.
Known by your name, O Jehovah, our Father,
We have the honor to add to your fame.

(Chorus)

look directly at Moses' face. (Exodus 33:21-23; 34:5-7, 29, 30) Surely, then, no mere human could look upon the Sovereign Lord himself in all his glory! Does this mean that he is any less real than what we can see and touch? No, we readily accept the reality of many things we cannot see—wind, radio waves, and thoughts, for example. Furthermore, Jehovah is permanent, unaffected by the passage of time, even untold billions of years! In that sense, he is far more real than anything we can touch or see, for the physical realm is subject to age and decay. (Matthew 6:19) Should we think of him, though, as merely some abstract, impersonal force or a vague First Cause? Let us see.

A God With Personality

¹⁸ Although we cannot see God, there are thrilling passages in the Bible that afford us glimpses into heaven itself. The first chapter of Ezekiel is one example. Ezekiel was given a vision of Jehovah's heavenly organization, which he saw as a vast celestial chariot. Especially impressive is the description of the mighty spirit creatures around Jehovah. (Ezekiel 1:4-10) These “living creatures” are closely associated with Jehovah, and their appearance tells us something important about the God they serve. Each one has four faces—that of a bull, a lion, an eagle, and a man. These evidently symbolize the four outstanding qualities of Jehovah's personality.—Revelation 4:6-8, 10.

¹⁹ In the Bible, a bull often represents power, and fittingly so, for it is an immensely strong animal. A lion, on the

18. What vision was Ezekiel given, and what do the four faces of the “living creatures” near Jehovah symbolize?

19. What quality is represented by (a) the bull's face? (b) the lion's face? (c) the eagle's face? (d) the man's face?

Some of Jehovah's Titles

Almighty. His power is limitless, irresistible.—Revelation 15:3.

Father. The source of all life, including everlasting life, he has fatherly love for his servants.—Proverbs 27:11; John 5:21.

Grand Instructor. He is the all-wise Teacher, to whom we should look for instruction and guidance.—Isaiah 30:20; 48:17.

The Rock. Unchanging, he is a secure refuge.—Deuteronomy 32:4.

Shepherd. He guides and protects his sheeplike servants and arranges for their spiritual sustenance.—Psalm 23:1.

other hand, often pictures justice, for true justice requires courage, a quality for which lions are renowned. Eagles are well-known for their keen eyesight, seeing even tiny objects miles away. So the eagle's face would well picture God's farsighted wisdom. And the man's face? Well, man, made in God's image, is unique in his ability to reflect God's dominant quality—love. (Genesis 1:26) These facets of Jehovah's personality—power, justice, wisdom, and love—are so frequently highlighted in Scripture that they may be referred to as God's cardinal attributes.

²⁰ Should we worry that God might have changed in the thousands of years since he was described in the Bible? No, God's personality does not alter. He tells us: "I am Jehovah; I have not changed." (Malachi 3:6) Rather than arbitrarily changing, Jehovah proves himself an ideal Father in the way he responds to each situation. He brings to the fore those aspects of his personality that are most appropriate. Of the four qualities, the one that predominates is love. It permeates everything God does. He ex-

20. Do we need to worry that Jehovah's personality might have changed, and why do you so answer?

ercises his power, justice, and wisdom in a loving way. In fact, the Bible says something extraordinary regarding God and this quality. It says: “God is love.” (1 John 4:8) Note that it does not say that God *has* love or that God is *loving*. Rather, it says that God *is* love. Love, his very essence, motivates him in all that he does.

“Look! This Is Our God”

²¹ Have you ever seen a small child point out his father to his friends and then say with innocent joy and pride, “That’s my daddy”? God’s worshipers have every reason to feel similarly about Jehovah. The Bible foretells a time when faithful people will exclaim: “Look! This is our God.” (Isaiah 25:8, 9) The more insight you gain into Jehovah’s qualities, the more you will feel that you have the best Father imaginable.

²² This Father is not cold, aloof, or distant—despite what some austere religionists and philosophers have taught. We would hardly feel drawn to a cold God, and the Bible does not portray our heavenly Father that way. On the contrary, it calls him “the happy God.” (1 Timothy 1:11) He has feelings both strong and tender. He is “hurt at his heart” when his intelligent creatures violate the guidelines that he provides for their well-being. (Genesis 6:6; Psalm 78:41) But when we act wisely according to his Word, we make his “heart rejoice.”—Proverbs 27:11.

²³ Our Father wants us to be close to him. His Word encourages us to “grope for him and really find him, although, in fact, he is not far off from each one of us.” (Acts 17:27) How, though, is it possible for mere humans to draw close to the Sovereign Lord of the universe?

21. How will we feel as we get to know Jehovah’s qualities better?

22, 23. How does the Bible portray our heavenly Father, and how do we know that he wants us to be close to him?

earth. **9** He became a mighty hunter in opposition to Jehovah. That is why there is a saying: "Just like Nim'rod, a mighty hunter in opposition to Jehovah." **10** The beginning of his kingdom was* Ba'bel,^a E'rech,^b Ac'cad, and Cal'neh, in the land of Shi'nar.^c **11** From that land he went into As-syr'i-a^d and built Nin'e-veh,^e Re-ho'both-Ir, Ca'lah, **12** and Re'sen, between Nin'e-veh and Ca'lah: This is the great city.*

13 Miz'ra-im became father to Lu'dim,^f An'a-mim, Le-ha'bim, Naph-tu'him,^g **14** Path-ru'sim,^h Cas-lu'him (from whom the Phi-lis'tinesⁱ came), and Caph-to-rim.^j

15 Ca'naan became father to Si'don,^k his firstborn, and Heth,^l **16** as well as the Jeb'u-site,^m the Am'or-ite,ⁿ the Gir-ga-shite, **17** the Hi'vite,^o the Ark'ite, the Si'nite, **18** the Ar'vad-ite,^p the Zem'a-rite, and the Ha'math-ite.^q Afterward, the families of the Ca'naan-ites were scattered. **19** So the boundary of the Ca'naan-ites was from Si'don as far as Ge'rar,^r near Gaz'a,^s as far as Sod'om, Go-mor'rah,^t Ad'mah, and Ze-boi'im,^u near La'sha. **20** These were the sons of Ham according to their families and their languages, by their lands and their nations.

21 Children were also born to Shem, the forefather of all the sons of E'ber^v and the brother of Ja'pheth the oldest.* **22** The sons of Shem were E'lam,^w As'shur,^x Ar-pach'shad,^y Lud, and A'ram.^z

23 The sons of A'ram were Uz, Hul, Ge'ther, and Mash.

10:10 *Or "The first cities of his kingdom were." **10:12** *Or possibly, "They form the great city." **10:21** *Or possibly, "and the older brother of Japheth."

CHAP. 10

- a Ge 11:9
- b Eze 4:9
- c Da 1:2
- d Mic 5:6
- e Jon 3:3
- Mt 12:41
- f Jer 46:9
- g 1Ch 1:11, 12
- h Eze 29:14
- i Jos 13:2, 3
- Jer 47:4
- j De 2:23
- k Jos 13:6
- Mr 7:24
- l Ge 25:10
- Ge 27:46
- 1Ch 1:13-16
- m Jg 1:21
- n Ge 15:16
- De 3:8
- o Jos 11:3
- p Eze 27:11
- q 1Ki 8:65
- r Ge 20:1
- s Jos 15:20, 47
- Ac 8:26
- t Ge 13:10
- Ge 19:24
- Jude 7
- u De 29:23
- v Ge 11:17
- w Eze 4:9
- Ac 2:8, 9
- x Eze 27:23
- y Ge 11:10
- z 1Ch 1:17

Second Col.

- a Ge 11:12
- Lu 3:23, 35
- b Ge 11:16
- c 1Ch 1:19
- d 1Ch 1:20-23
- e 1Ki 9:28
- 1Ki 10:11
- f Ge 10:5
- g Ge 9:7
- Ge 9:19
- Ac 17:26

CHAP. 11

- h Ge 10:9, 10
- Da 1:2
- i Ge 9:1

24 Ar-pach'shad became father to She'lah,^a and She'lah became father to E'ber.

25 Two sons were born to E'ber. The name of the one was Pe'leg,^b because in his lifetime the earth[#] was divided. The name of his brother was Jok'tan.^c

26 Jok'tan became father to Al-mo'dad, She'leph, Ha-zar-ma'veth, Je'rah,^d **27** Ha-do-ram, U'zal, Dik'lah, **28** O'bal, A-bim'a-el, She'ba, **29** O'phir,^e Hav'i-lah, and Jo'bab; all of these were the sons of Jok'tan.

30 Their place of dwelling extended from Me'sha as far as Se'phar, the mountainous region of the East.

31 These were the sons of Shem according to their families and their languages, by their lands and their nations.^f

32 These were the families of the sons of Noah according to their family lines and by their nations. From these the nations were spread abroad in the earth after the Flood.^g

11 Now all the earth continued to be of one language and of one set of words.* **2** As they traveled eastward, they discovered a valley plain in the land of Shi'nar,^h and they began dwelling there. **3** Then they said to one another: "Come! Let us make bricks and bake them with fire." So they used bricks instead of stone, and bitumen as mortar. **4** They now said: "Come! Let us build a city for ourselves and a tower with its top in the heavens, and let us make a celebrated name for ourselves, so that we will not be scattered over the entire face of the earth."ⁱ

10:25 *Meaning "Division." [#]Or "earth's population." **11:1** *Or "of one vocabulary."

5 Then Jehovah went down to see the city and the tower that the sons of men had built. 6 Jehovah then said: "Look! They are one people with one language,^a and this is what they have started to do. Now there is nothing that they may have in mind to do that will be impossible for them. 7 Come! Let us^b go down there and confuse their language in order that they may not understand one another's language." 8 So Jehovah scattered them from there over the entire face of the earth,^c and they gradually left off building the city. 9 That is why it was named Ba'bel,^{*d} because there Jehovah confused the language of all the earth, and Jehovah scattered them from there over the entire face of the earth.

10 This is the history of Shem.^e

Shem was 100 years old when he became father to Ar-pach'shad^f two years after the Flood. 11 After becoming father to Ar-pach'shad, Shem continued to live 500 years. And he became father to sons and daughters.^g

12 Ar-pach'shad lived for 35 years and then became father to She'lah.^h 13 After becoming father to She'lah, Ar-pach'shad continued to live 403 years. And he became father to sons and daughters.

14 She'lah lived for 30 years and then became father to E'ber.ⁱ 15 After becoming father to E'ber, She'lah continued to live 403 years. And he became father to sons and daughters.

16 E'ber lived for 34 years and then became father to Pe'-leg.^j 17 After becoming father to Pe'leg, E'ber continued to live 430 years. And he became father to sons and daughters.

18 Pe'leg lived for 30 years and then became father to Re'u.^k

CHAP. 11

a Ge 11:1

b Ge 1:26

c De 32:8

d Jer 50:1

e Ge 6:10
Lu 3:23, 36

f Ge 10:22
1Ch 1:17

g Ge 10:21

h Ge 10:24
1Ch 1:18
Lu 3:23, 35

i Ge 10:21
1Ch 1:18

j Ge 10:25
1Ch 1:19

k Lu 3:23, 35

Second Col.

a Ge 11:32
Lu 3:23, 34

b Ge 12:7
Ge 15:1, 6
Ge 17:5
Jas 2:23

c Jos 24:2

d Ge 12:4
Ge 19:1
2Pe 2:7

e Ge 15:7
Ne 9:7

f Ac 7:4

g Ge 12:11
Ge 17:15
Ge 20:12, 13
1Pe 3:6

h Ge 22:20
Ge 24:15

i Ge 16:1, 2
Ro 4:19
Heb 11:11

j Ge 11:27, 28

k Ge 10:19

l Ge 12:4
Ge 27:42, 43
Ac 7:2, 4

19 After becoming father to Re'u, Pe'leg continued to live 209 years. And he became father to sons and daughters.

20 Re'u lived for 32 years and then became father to Se'rug. 21 After becoming father to Se'rug, Re'u continued to live 207 years. And he became father to sons and daughters.

22 Se'rug lived for 30 years and then became father to Na'hor. 23 After becoming father to Na'hor, Se'rug continued to live 200 years. And he became father to sons and daughters.

24 Na'hor lived for 29 years and then became father to Te'rah.^a 25 After becoming father to Te'rah, Na'hor continued to live 119 years. And he became father to sons and daughters.

26 Te'rah lived for 70 years, after which he became father to A'bram,^b Na'hor,^c and Ha'ran.

27 This is the history of Te'rah.

Te'rah became father to A'bram, Na'hor, and Ha'ran; and Ha'ran became father to Lot.^d 28 While his father Te'rah was still alive, Ha'ran died in the land of his birth, in Ur^e of the Chal-de'ans.^f 29 A'bram and Na'hor took wives for themselves. The name of A'bram's wife was Sar'ai,^g and the name of Na'hor's wife was Mil'cah,^h the daughter of Ha'ran, the father of Mil'cah and Is'cah. 30 Now Sar'ai was barren;ⁱ she had no child.

31 Te'rah then took A'bram his son and Lot his grandson,^j the son of Ha'ran, and Sar'ai his daughter-in-law, the wife of A'bram his son, and they went with him out of Ur of the Chal-de'ans to go to the land of Ca'naan.^k In time they came to Ha'ran^l and began dwelling there. 32 The days of Te'rah were 205 years. Then Te'rah died in Ha'ran.

11:9 *Meaning "Confusion."

12 And Jehovah said to A'bram: "Go out from your land and away from your relatives and from the house of your father to the land that I will show you.^a **2** I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and I will make your name great, and you will become a blessing.^b **3** I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who calls down evil on you,^c and all the families of the ground will certainly be blessed* by means of you."^d

4 So A'bram went just as Jehovah had told him, and Lot went with him. A'bram was 75 years old when he left Ha'ran.^e **5** A'bram took his wife Sar'ai^f and Lot the son of his brother^g and all the goods that they had accumulated^h and the people* whom they had acquired in Ha'ran, and they set out for the land of Ca'naan.ⁱ When they reached the land of Ca'naan, **6** A'bram traveled through the land as far as the site of She'chem,^j near the big trees of Mo'reh.^k At that time the Ca'naan-ites were in the land. **7** Jehovah then appeared to A'bram and said: "To your offspring*^l I am going to give this land."^m So he built an altar there to Jehovah, who had appeared to him. **8** Later he moved from there to the mountainous region east of Beth'elⁿ and pitched his tent with Beth'el on the west and A'i^o on the east. There he built an altar to Jehovah^p and began to call on the name of Jehovah.^q **9** Afterward, A'bram broke camp and journeyed toward the Neg'eb,^r moving his camp from one place to another.

10 Now a famine arose in the land, and A'bram went down toward Egypt to reside there for

CHAP. 12

- a Jos 24:3
- Ac 7:3, 4
- b Ge 13:14, 16
- Ge 15:1, 5
- Ge 17:5
- Ge 22:17, 18
- De 26:5
- c Ge 27:29, 30
- d Ac 3:25
- Ga 3:8
- e Heb 11:8
- f Ge 11:29
- g Ge 11:31
- h Ge 13:5, 6
- i Ge 26:3
- j Ac 7:15, 16
- k Ge 35:4
- De 11:29, 30
- l Ge 3:15
- Ge 21:12
- Ge 28:13, 14
- Ro 9:7
- Ga 3:16
- m Ge 13:14, 15
- Ge 15:1, 7
- Ge 17:1, 8
- De 34:4
- n Ge 28:16-19
- Ge 31:13
- o Ge 13:1, 3
- Jos 7:2
- p Ge 8:20
- Ge 35:2, 3
- q Ge 26:25
- r Ge 20:1
- Ge 24:62

Second Col.

- a Ps 105:13
- b Ge 26:1, 2
- c Ge 26:7
- d Ge 20:11, 12
- e Ge 20:14
- Ge 24:34, 35
- f Ge 11:29
- Ge 17:15
- Ge 23:2, 19
- g Ge 20:11, 12
- h Ps 105:14

CHAP. 13

- i Ge 12:9
- Ge 20:1
- j Ge 24:34, 35

a while,^{*a} because the famine in the land was severe.^b **11** As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sar'ai: "Please listen! I know what a beautiful woman you are.^c **12** So when the Egyptians see you, they will surely say, 'This is his wife.' Then they will kill me but keep you alive. **13** Please say you are my sister, so that it may go well with me because of you, and my life will be spared."^{*d}

14 As soon as A'bram entered Egypt, the Egyptians noticed that the woman was very beautiful. **15** And the princes of Phar'aoh also saw her, and they began praising her to Phar'aoh, so that the woman was taken to the house of Phar'aoh. **16** He treated A'bram well because of her, and he acquired sheep, cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels.^e **17** Then Jehovah struck Phar'aoh and his household with severe plagues because of Sar'ai, A'bram's wife.^f **18** So Phar'aoh called A'bram and said: "What is this you have done to me? Why did you not tell me that she was your wife? **19** Why did you say, 'She is my sister,'^g so that I was about to take her as my wife? Here is your wife. Take her and go!"

20 So Phar'aoh gave his men orders concerning him, and they sent him away with his wife and all that he had.^h

13 A'bram then went up out of Egypt to the Neg'eb,ⁱ he and his wife and all that he had, together with Lot. **2** A'bram was very rich in livestock, silver, and gold.^j **3** He camped in one place after another as he traveled from the Neg'eb to Beth'el, until he arrived at the place where his tent had been between

12:10 *Or "to live there as a foreigner."
12:13 *Or "my soul will stay alive."

12:3 *Or "will obtain a blessing for themselves."
12:5 *Or "souls."
12:7 *Lit., "seed."

Beth'el and A'i,^a 4 to the place where he had previously built an altar. There A'bram called on the name of Jehovah.

5 Now Lot, who was traveling with A'bram, also owned sheep, cattle, and tents. 6 So the land did not allow for all of them to stay in the same place; their goods had become so many that they could no longer dwell together. 7 As a result, a quarrel arose between the herders of A'bram's livestock and the herders of Lot's livestock. (At that time the Ca'naan-ites and the Per'iz-zites were dwelling in the land.)^b 8 So A'bram said to Lot:^c "Please, there should be no quarreling between me and you and between my herdsmen and your herdsmen, for we are brothers. 9 Is not the whole land available to you? Please, separate from me. If you go to the left, then I will go to the right; but if you go to the right, then I will go to the left." 10 So Lot raised his eyes and saw that the whole district of the Jordan^d was a well-watered region (before Jehovah destroyed Sod'om and Go-mor'rah), like the garden of Jehovah,^e like the land of Egypt, as far as Zo'ar.^f 11 Then Lot chose for himself the whole district of the Jordan, and Lot moved his camp to the east. So they separated from each other. 12 A'bram lived in the land of Ca'naan, but Lot lived among the cities of the district.^g Finally he set up his tent near Sod'om. 13 Now the men of Sod'om were wicked, gross sinners against Jehovah.^h

14 Jehovah said to A'bram, after Lot had separated from him: "Raise your eyes, please, and look from the place where you are, to the north and south, east and west, 15 because all the land that you see, I will give

CHAP. 13

a Ge 12:8, 9
Jos 7:2

b Ge 10:19

c Ge 11:27

d Ge 19:28

e Ge 2:8, 9

f Ge 19:20-22

g Ge 19:28, 29

h Ge 18:20

Ge 19:5

2Pe 2:6-8

Jude 7

Second Col.

a Ge 12:7

Ge 15:18

Ge 24:7

Ex 33:1

b Ge 12:2

Ge 15:1, 5

Ex 1:7

Heb 11:12

c Ge 18:1

Ge 23:19

Ge 25:9, 10

Ge 35:27

d Ge 23:2

e Ge 12:7

CHAP. 14

f Ge 10:9, 10

g Ge 14:17

h Ge 10:22

i Ge 10:19

Ge 13:12

j Ge 13:10, 12

k De 29:23

l Ge 14:10

m Nu 34:2, 12

n De 2:10, 11

o De 2:12

p Ge 36:8

q Nu 20:1

r Ge 36:12

1Sa 15:2

s Ge 10:15, 16

t 2Ch 20:2

to you and your offspring* as a lasting possession.^a 16 And I will make your offspring* like the dust particles of the earth, so that if anyone could count the dust particles of the earth, then your offspring* could be counted.^b 17 Get up, travel through the length and breadth of the land, for to you I am going to give it." 18 So A'bram continued to live in tents. Later he came and dwelled among the big trees of Mam're,^c which are in Heb'ron,^d and there he built an altar to Jehovah.^e

14 Now in the days of Am'raphel king of Shi'nar,^f Ar'i-och king of El-la'sar, Ched-or-la-o'mer^g king of E'lam,^h and Ti'dal king of Go'im, 2 these made war with Be'ra king of Sod'om,ⁱ Bir'sha king of Go-mor'rah,^j Shi'nab king of Ad'mah, Shem'eber king of Ze-boi'im,^k and the king of Be'la, that is, Zo'ar. 3 All of these joined forces at the Valley* of Sid'dim,^l that is, the Salt Sea.^m

4 They had served Ched-or-la-o'mer for 12 years, but they rebelled in the 13th year. 5 So in the 14th year, Ched-or-la-o'mer and the kings who were with him came and defeated the Reph'a-im in Ash'te-rothkar-na'im, the Zu'zim in Ham, the E'mimⁿ in Sha'veh-kir-i-a-tha'im, 6 and the Hor'ites^o in their mountain of Se'ir^p down to El-pa'ran, which is at the wilderness. 7 Then they turned back and came to En-mish'pat, that is, Ka'desh,^q and conquered the whole territory of the A-mal'-ek-ites^r and also the Am'or-ites^s who were dwelling in Haz'a-zonta'mar.^t

8 At this point, the king of Sod'om went on the march, and also the king of Go-mor'rah,

13:15, 16 *Lit., "seed." 14:3 *Or "Low Plain." ^mThat is, the Dead Sea.

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

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

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

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

CHAP. 14

a Ge 14:1, 2

b Ge 14:16

c Ge 19:1

d Ge 13:18

e Ge 14:24

f Ge 11:27

g Jg 18:29

Second Col.

a 2Sa 18:18

b Ps 110:4
Heb 6:20

c Heb 7:1, 2

d Ps 83:18
Heb 5:5, 10

e Heb 7:4

f Ge 14:13

CHAP. 15

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

h De 33:29
Pr 30:5

i Ge 17:5, 6

j Ge 24:2, 3

k Ge 12:7
Ac 7:5

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

19 Then he blessed him and said:

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

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

And A'bram gave him a tenth of everything.^e

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

15 After this the word of Jehovah came to A'bram in a vision, saying: "Do not fear,^g A'bram. I am a shield for you.^h Your reward will be very great."ⁱ **2** A'bram replied: "Sovereign Lord Jehovah, what will you give me, seeing that I continue childless and the one who will inherit my house is a man of Damascus, E-li-e'zer?"^j **3** A'bram added: "You have given me no offspring,^{*k} and a member[#] of my household is succeeding me as heir." **4** But look! Jehovah's

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

word in reply to him was, "This man will not succeed you as heir, but your own son* will succeed you as heir."^a

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

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

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

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

CHAP. 15

a Ge 17:15, 16
Ge 21:12

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

c Heb 11:8

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

e Ge 11:31
Ne 9:7

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

g Ex 7:4
Nu 33:4

h Ex 3:22
Ps 105:37

Second Col.

a Ge 25:8

b Jos 14:1
Ac 7:7

c 1Ki 21:26
2Ki 21:11

d Ge 17:19
Ge 22:17

e Ex 3:8

f 1Ki 4:21

g 1Sa 15:6

h Jos 1:4

i Ex 3:17

j Jos 17:15

k De 7:1

CHAP. 16

l Ge 15:2, 3

m Ga 4:25

n Ge 30:1, 3

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

c Pr 15:3

d Ge 21:9
Ga 4:22, 24

Second Col.

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

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

c Ps 105:9-11

d Ge 13:16
Ro 4:17

e Ge 35:10, 11

f Lu 1:72, 73

g Ex 6:4
Heb 11:8, 9

h De 14:2

i Ge 21:4
Ro 2:29

j Ac 7:8
Ro 4:11

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

2 I will establish my covenant between me and you,^a and I will multiply you very, very much."^b

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

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

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

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

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

provides, and that is why you have a religion, is that not right?' **Then perhaps add:** 'Here at Matthew 7:13, 14 the Bible provides us some very valuable guidance in the words of Jesus. (Read it.) . . . Why might that be so?'

See also pages 322, 323.

'As long as you believe in Jesus, it really does not matter what church you belong to'

You might reply: 'There is no question about it, belief in Jesus is vital. And I assume that by that you mean accepting everything that he taught. No doubt you have observed, as I have, that many who say they are Christians really do not live up to what that name represents.' **Then perhaps add:** (1) 'Notice what Jesus said here at Matthew 7:21-23.' (2) 'There is a wonderful future for those who care enough to find out what God's will is and then do it. (Ps. 37:10, 11; Rev. 21:4)'

'What makes you think there is only one religion that is right?'

You might reply: 'Without doubt, there are sincere people in almost every religion. But what really counts is what God's Word says. How many true faiths does it refer to? Notice what is written here at Ephesians 4:4, 5.' **Then perhaps add:** (1) 'That agrees with what other texts state. (Matt. 7:13, 14, 21; John 10:16; 17:20, 21)' (2) 'So, the challenge that we must face is identifying that religion. How can we do it? (Perhaps use material on pages 328-330.)' (3) (See also what is on pages 199, 200, under the heading "Jehovah's Witnesses.")

'I just read my Bible at home and pray to God for understanding'

You might reply: 'Have you succeeded in reading the entire Bible as yet?' **Then perhaps add:** 'As you work on that, you will find something very interesting at Matthew 28:19, 20. . . . This is significant because it shows that Christ uses other humans to help us to understand

During the following 70-year Babylonian exile, this fifth month was a time of fastings and wailings by the Jews in memory of the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem. (Zec 7:3, 5; 8:19) It was also in the month Ab that Ezra returned to the restored Jerusalem to instruct the Jews in the Law of Jehovah.—Ezr 7:8, 9, 25.

ABADDON (A-bad'don) [from Heb., meaning "Destruction"]. At Revelation 9:11 this Hebrew word is transliterated into the English text. There we read concerning the symbolic plague of locusts that they have "a king, the angel of the abyss. In Hebrew his name is Abaddon, but in Greek he has the name Apollyon."

In Hebrew the word '*avad-dohn*' means "destruction" and may also refer to "the place of destruction." It appears in the original Hebrew text a total of five times, and in four of the occurrences it is used to parallel "the burial place," "Sheol," and "death." (Ps 88:11; Job 26:6; 28:22; Pr 15:11) The word '*avaddohn*' in these texts evidently refers to the destructive processes that ensue with human death, and these scriptures indicate that decay or destruction takes place in Sheol, the common grave of mankind. At Job 31:12 '*avad-dohn*' designates the damaging effect of an adulterous course. Job declared: "That [adulterous course] is a fire that would eat clear to destruction [*adh-avad-dohn*'], and among all my produce it would take root."—Compare Pr 6:26-28, 32; 7:26, 27.

Abaddon, the angel of the abyss
—who is he?

At Revelation 9:11, however, the word "Abaddon" is used as the name of "the angel of the abyss." The corresponding Greek name Apollyon means "Destroyer." In the past century there were efforts made to show that this text prophetically applied to individuals such as Emperor Vespasian, Muhammad, and even Napoleon, and the angel was generally regarded as "satanic." It should be noted, however, that at Revelation 20:1-3 the angel having "the key of the abyss" is shown to be God's representative from heaven, and rather than being "satanic," he binds and hurls Satan into the abyss. Commenting on Revelation 9:11, *The Interpreter's Bible* says: "Abaddon, however, is an angel not of Satan but of God, performing his work of destruction at God's bidding."

In the Hebrew scriptures just considered, it is evident that '*avad-dohn*' is paralleled with Sheol and death. At Revelation 1:18 we find Christ Jesus

stating: "I am living forever and ever, and I have the keys of death and of Hades." His power with regard to the abyss is shown at Luke 8:31. That he has destroying power, including the power of destruction over Satan, is evident from Hebrews 2:14, which says that Jesus partook of blood and flesh in order that "through his death he might bring to nothing the one having the means to cause death, that is, the Devil." At Revelation 19:11-16 he is clearly represented as God's appointed Destroyer or Executioner.—See APOLLYON.

ABAGTHA (A-bag'tha). The name of one of seven court officials who ministered to the Persian king Ahasuerus, the husband of the Jewess Esther, in his palace in Shushan, then capital of Persia.—Es 1:10.

In the *King James Version*, Abagtha is said to be one of seven "chamberlains," and the marginal reading says "eunuchs." While eunuchs were frequently used as trusted servants within royal households in Middle Eastern countries, the original Hebrew word *sa-ris*' primarily has the meaning of "court official" and only secondarily has reference to a castrated person. Since these seven court officials were attendants of the king and apparently not assigned as guardians of the women (as was Hegai, the king's eunuch mentioned at Esther 2:3), they may not have been eunuchs in the physical sense.

ABANAH (A-ba'nah). One of the two rivers of Damascus referred to by the Syrian army commander Naaman when scorning Elisha's instructions to bathe himself in the waters of the Jordan as a cure for his leprosy.—2Ki 5:12.

This river is generally identified with the Nahr Barada, which rises in the Anti-Lebanon mountains to the NW of Damascus and, after traversing the mountains, emerges from a gorge just to the W of Damascus. Then it courses through the northern part of the city and fans out to irrigate a large area before finally losing itself in a body of marshes to the E of the city. Its waters, used to irrigate fields and orchards by means of canals and conduits, create an extensive verdant oasis. It can well be said that Damascus owes its existence to the Barada. It has long been the source of water for the city's cisterns, fountains, and baths. Classical writers called it Golden River (Chrysorrhoeas). So, Naaman's high opinion of the river appears to have had a solid basis.

The word "Amana" or "Amanah" is used instead of "Abanah" at 2 Kings 5:12 in *An American Translation*, also in the translation published by The Jewish Publication Society of America, and

123 *Shepherds—Gifts in Men* (Ephesians 4:8)

1. Help in our lives, Jehovah provides,
 Shepherds to tend his flock.
 By their example they serve as guides,
 Showing us how to walk.

(CHORUS)

*God gives us men who have earned our trust,
Men who are loyal and true.
They show concern for his precious flock;
Love them for all that they do.*

2. Shepherds who love us care how we feel;
 Gently they guide the way.
 When we are hurt, they help us to heal,
 Kind in the words they say.

(Chorus)

3. Godly advice and counsel they give,
 That we may never stray.
 Thus they assist us, God's way to live,
 Serving him ev'ry day.

(Chorus)

yourselves treasures in heaven,^a where neither moth nor rust consumes,^b and where thieves do not break in and steal. **21** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

22 "The lamp of the body is the eye.^c If, then, your eye is focused,^{*} your whole body will be bright.[#] **23** But if your eye is envious,^{*d} your whole body will be dark. If the light that is in you is really darkness, how great that darkness is!

24 "No one can slave for two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other,^e or he will stick to the one and despise the other. You cannot slave for God and for Riches.^f

25 "On this account I say to you: Stop being anxious^g about your lives^{*} as to what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your bodies as to what you will wear.^h Does not life[#] mean more than food and the body than clothing?ⁱ **26** Observe intently the birds of heaven;^j they do not sow seed or reap or gather into storehouses, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than they are? **27** Who of you by being anxious can add one cubit^{*} to his life span?^k **28** Also, why are you anxious about clothing? Take a lesson from the lilies of the field, how they grow; they do not toil, nor do they spin; **29** but I tell you that not even Sol'o-mon^l in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. **30** Now if this is how God clothes the vegetation of the field that is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much rather clothe you, you with little faith? **31** So never be anxious^m

6:22 *Or "clear." Lit., "simple." #Or "full of light." 6:23 *Lit., "bad; wicked." 6:25 *Or "souls." #Or "the soul." 6:27 *See App. B14.

CHAP. 6

a Mt 19:21
Mr 10:21
Lu 12:33, 34
Lu 18:22

b 1Pe 1:3, 4

c Pr 4:25
Lu 11:34
Eph 1:18

d Mt 20:15

e Jas 4:4

f Mt 13:22
Lu 16:13

g Ps 55:22
Php 4:6
1Pe 5:6, 7

h 1Ti 6:8
Heb 13:5

i Lu 12:22-28

j Job 38:41
Ps 147:9
Mt 10:29

k Ps 39:5

l 1Ki 10:4, 5

m Lu 10:41

Second Col.

a Lu 12:29-31

b Ps 37:25

c Ex 16:4, 19

CHAP. 7

d Lu 6:37
Ro 2:1
Ro 14:13

e Mt 18:33, 34
Jas 2:13

f Mr 4:24
Lu 6:38
Ga 6:7

g Lu 6:41, 42

h Pr 9:7
Mt 10:14

i Mr 11:24
Jas 1:5
1Jo 5:14

j Lu 11:9-13

k Joh 14:13
1Jo 3:22

and say, 'What are we to eat?' or, 'What are we to drink?' or, 'What are we to wear?'^a **32** For all these are the things the nations are eagerly pursuing. Your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.

33 "Keep on, then, seeking first the Kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you.^b

34 So never be anxious about the next day,^c for the next day will have its own anxieties. Each day has enough of its own troubles.

7 "Stop judging^d that you may not be judged; **2** for with the judgment you are judging, you will be judged,^e and with the measure that you are measuring out, they will measure out to you.^f **3** Why, then, do you look at the straw in your brother's eye but do not notice the rafter in your own eye?^g **4** Or how can you say to your brother, 'Allow me to remove the straw from your eye,' when look! a rafter is in your own eye? **5** Hypocrite! First remove the rafter from your own eye, and then you will see clearly how to remove the straw from your brother's eye.

6 "Do not give what is holy to dogs nor throw your pearls before swine,^h so that they may never trample them under their feet and turn around and rip you open.

7 "Keep on asking, and it will be given you;ⁱ keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and it will be opened to you;^j **8** for everyone asking receives,^k and everyone seeking finds, and to everyone knocking, it will be opened. **9** Indeed, which one of you, if his son asks for bread, will hand him a stone? **10** Or if he asks for a fish, he will not hand him a serpent, will he? **11** Therefore, if you, although being wicked, know how to give

good gifts to your children, how much more so will your Father who is in the heavens give good things^a to those asking him!^b

12 "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must do to them.^c This, in fact, is what the Law and the Prophets mean.^d

13 "Go in through the narrow gate,^e because broad is the gate and spacious is the road leading off into destruction, and many are going in through it; **14** whereas narrow is the gate and cramped the road leading off into life, and few are finding it.^f

15 "Be on the watch for the false prophets^g who come to you in sheep's covering,^h but inside they are ravenous wolves.ⁱ

16 By their fruits you will recognize them. Never do people gather grapes from thorns or figs from thistles, do they?^j **17** Likewise, every good tree produces fine fruit, but every rotten tree produces worthless fruit.^k **18** A good tree cannot bear worthless fruit, nor can a rotten tree produce fine fruit.^l **19** Every tree not producing fine fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.^m **20** Really, then, by their fruits you will recognize those men.ⁿ

21 "Not everyone saying to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter into the Kingdom of the heavens, but only the one doing the will of my Father who is in the heavens will.^o **22** Many will say to me in that day: 'Lord, Lord,^p did we not prophesy in your name, and expel demons in your name, and perform many powerful works in your name?'^q **23** And then I will declare to them: 'I never knew you! Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness!'^r

24 "Therefore, everyone who hears these sayings of mine and does them will be like a discreet

CHAP. 7

- a Jas 1:17
- b Lu 11:13
- c Lu 6:31
- d Ro 13:10
Ga 5:14
- e Lu 13:24
- f Ac 14:22
1Pe 4:18
- g Mt 24:11
2Pe 2:1
1Jo 4:1
- h Lu 6:26
- i Ac 20:29, 30
- j Lu 6:44
- k Mt 12:33
- l Lu 6:43
- m Mt 3:10
Lu 13:6, 9
- n Mt 12:33
- o Ro 2:13
Jas 1:22
1Jo 2:17
1Jo 5:3
- p Lu 6:46
- q Jer 14:14
Jer 27:15
- r Lu 13:25-27

Second Col.

- a Lu 6:47-49
Jas 1:25
- b Jas 1:23, 24
- c 1Co 3:13
- d Mr 1:22
Lu 4:32
- e Joh 7:46

CHAP. 8

- f Mr 1:40-44
Lu 5:12-14
- g Mr 1:41
Lu 5:13
- h Isa 53:4
- i Mt 9:30
Mt 12:15, 16
Mr 7:35, 36
- j Le 14:2
Lu 17:14
- k Le 14:3, 4
Le 14:19, 20
- l Lu 7:1-9

man who built his house on the rock.^a **25** And the rain poured down and the floods came and the winds blew and lashed against that house, but it did not cave in, for it had been founded on the rock. **26** Furthermore, everyone hearing these sayings of mine and not doing them will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand.^b **27** And the rain poured down and the floods came and the winds blew and struck against that house,^c and it caved in, and its collapse was great.^d

28 When Jesus finished these sayings, the effect was that the crowds were astounded at his way of teaching,^e **29** for he was teaching them as a person having authority,^e and not as their scribes.

8 After he came down from the mountain, large crowds followed him. **2** And look! a leper came up and did obeisance* to him, saying: "Lord, if you just want to, you can make me clean."^f **3** So stretching out his hand, he touched him, saying: "I want to! Be made clean."^g Immediately his leprosy was cleansed away.^h **4** Then Jesus said to him: "See that you tell no one,ⁱ but go, show yourself to the priest,^j and offer the gift that Moses appointed,^k for a witness to them."

5 When he entered Ca-per-na-um, an army officer came to him, pleading with him^l **6** and saying: "Sir, my servant is laid up in the house with paralysis, and he is suffering terribly." **7** He said to him: "When I get there, I will cure him." **8** The army officer replied: "Sir, I am not worthy to have you come under my roof, but just say the word and my servant will be healed. **9** For I too am a man under authority, hav-

*8:2 *Or "bowed down."

WEEK STARTING JANUARY 20

Song 34 and Prayer

□ **Congregation Bible Study:**

c/ chap. 1 ¶¶18-23, box on p. 14 (30 min.)

□ **Theocratic Ministry School:**

Bible reading: Genesis 11-16 (10 min.)

No. 1: Genesis 14:17–15:11 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: If Someone Says, ‘What Makes You Think There Is Only One Religion That Is Right?’—*rs* p. 332 ¶3 (5 min.)

No. 3: Abaddon—The Angel of the Abyss—Who Is He?—*it-1* p. 12 (5 min.)

□ **Service Meeting:**

Song 123

10 min: **What Do We Learn?** Discussion. Have Matthew 7:6-11 read. Consider how these verses can help us in our ministry.

10 min: **Show Respect for Those Who Are Working Hard Among You.** (1 Thess. 5:12, 13)

Discussion based on the following questions: (1) In what ways do the elders work hard in the congregation? (2) How can we show the elders extraordinary consideration? (3) Why do those taking the lead need encouragement? (4) How can we encourage the elders and their families? (5) How does being obedient to those taking the lead benefit both the congregation and the elders?

10 min: **“Be More Than a Silent Partner.”** Questions and answers. Invite audience to relate helpful tips they learned from someone they were working with in the ministry.

Song 93 and Prayer

Be More Than a Silent Partner

¹The apostle Paul viewed the time he spent with fellow believers as opportunities for “an interchange of encouragement.” (Rom. 1:12) When you work with another publisher in the ministry, do you take advantage of this time to encourage and assist him? Instead of being a silent partner, why

1. How may we imitate the apostle Paul’s attitude when we are working with others in the ministry?

not share what helps you to be an effective publisher?

² **Instill Confidence:** Some publishers lack confidence, which may be reflected in their facial expressions or tone of voice. We can bolster their confidence by giving them sincere commendation. What are some other ways to instill confidence? One traveling overseer freely tells his partner about his own fears and how he prays often for help to overcome such feelings. Another brother noted this regarding what helps him reflect confidence: “It starts with a smile. Sometimes I have to pray for help to make that simple expression.” Has something helped you to be more confident in the ministry? Share it with your field service partner.

³ **Share Methods:** Have you found a simple opening statement or question, perhaps something about a local event, to be effective in starting a conversation? Have you experienced good results from adding a personal touch to a sample presentation? Tell your partner. (Prov. 27:17) While traveling to a return visit, you can relate your objective for the visit and how you plan to achieve it. After a Bible study, you could explain why you chose a certain point, scripture, or teaching method to address the student’s needs.

⁴ First-century evangelizers were not just interested in helping unbelievers. They also saw the value of encouraging and strengthening one another. (Acts 11:23; 15:32) The apostle Paul trained young Timothy and then encouraged him to share what he had learned with others. (2 Tim. 2:2) When we do not forget to do good to fellow Christians while in the ministry, we not only increase their joy and effectiveness but we also please our heavenly Father.—Heb. 13:15, 16.

2. What can we do to bolster the confidence of our field service partner, and why is this important?

3. What can we share with our partner that may help him become more effective in his ministry?

4. Why should we be interested in helping fellow evangelizers?

“Let Your Light Shine”

(Matthew 5:16)

1. Jesus has commanded
That we shine our light,
Like the sun, impartial,
That all might gain sight.
Through God’s Holy Scriptures,
Words of wisdom shine.
May we now reflect his light
By our deeds so fine.
2. With God’s Kingdom message
Light on hearts is shed,
Comfort brought to mourners,
Hope for those now dead.
Light from Scripture guides us
As we do His will;
Gracious words, well-seasoned too,
Make it brighter still.
3. Light from fine works gleaming,
Brightens up this world,
To our words adds luster,
Like a priceless pearl.
May our light keep shining
As we do what’s right,
Then our works will always be
Pleasing in God’s sight.