

WEEK STARTING JANUARY 27

Song 106 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

c/ chap. 2 ¶1-11 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Genesis 17-20 (10 min.)

No. 1: Genesis 17:18–18:8 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Jesus Did Not Go to Heaven in a Physical Body—rs p. 334 ¶1-3 (5 min.)

No. 3: Abba—How Is the Term “Abba” Used in the Scriptures, and How Have Men Misused It?—it-1 pp. 13-14 (5 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 121

5 min: Start a Bible Study on the First Saturday. Talk. Outline local arrangements for field service on the first Saturday in February, and encourage all to have a share. Include a brief demonstration using the sample presentation on page 4.

15 min: What Are Your Spiritual Goals? Discussion based on the *Organized* book, page 117, paragraph 2, to the end of the chapter. Interview one or two publishers who reached their goal of full-time service. What encouragement did they receive from others? What obstacles did they overcome? What blessings have they enjoyed?

10 min: “Magazine Routes—Useful for Starting Bible Studies.” Questions and answers. Invite audience to relate how they were eventually able to start a Bible study with someone who was on their magazine route.

Song 103 and Prayer

Magazine Routes—Useful for Starting Bible Studies

¹ Many people are not inclined to study the Bible with us, but they enjoy reading our magazines. Therefore, Jehovah’s organization has long encouraged publishers to develop a magazine route. As people regularly read our magazines, they often form a longing for God’s Word. (1 Pet. 2:2) Eventually, something they read could strike a re-

1. Why has Jehovah’s organization long encouraged publishers to develop a magazine route?

sponsive chord, causing them to accept a Bible study.

² **‘Water’ Seeds of Truth:** Rather than simply dropping the magazines off, engage the householder in conversation and try to build a rapport with him. This will help you to learn his circumstances, interests, and beliefs, which will enable you to speak with insight. (Prov. 16:23) Prepare for each visit. If possible, briefly highlight a point and related scripture from the magazines, watering any seeds of truth in his heart. (1 Cor. 3:6) Make a record of the date of each visit, the literature that was left, and the subjects and scriptures that were discussed.

³ **Return How Often?** You should return once a month to bring the latest magazines to those on your route. However, depending on your circumstances and the interest of the individual, you may choose to visit more often. For example, a week or two after leaving the magazines, you could return and say, “I stopped by briefly to point out something from the magazines I left you.” This will whet the person’s appetite to read a particular article. If he has already read it, you could ask him what he thought about the article and discuss it briefly. Or if the individual enjoys reading our literature, you might return and offer him the tract, brochure, or book that we are featuring that month.

⁴ Do not wait for the householder to ask you for a study. Take the initiative. Even if he has refused a Bible study in the past, from time to time you can feature “Bible Questions Answered” from *The Watchtower* and see if he is willing to discuss it with you. Perhaps you can start a doorstep study. However, if you are unable to start a study, you can continue bringing him the magazines to cultivate his interest.

2. How may we cultivate the interest of those on our route?

3. How often should we return to visit those on our magazine route?

4. From time to time, what can we do to determine if those on our route might be willing to study the Bible?

106 *Gaining Jehovah's Friendship*

(Psalm 15)

1. Who is your friend, O God?

Who in your tent may dwell?

Who gains your friendship? Who gains your trust?

Who really knows you well?

All who embrace your Word,

All who have faith in you,

All who are loyal, all who are just,

Living the truth for you.

2. Who is your friend, O God?

Who may approach your throne?

Who brings delight and Makes you rejoice?

Whose name to you is known?

All who exalt your name,

All who your Word obey,

All who are faithful, honest in heart,

Truthful in all they say.

3. Rolling our cares on you,

Baring our hearts in prayer,

Drawing us closer, bonding in love,

Feeling your daily care,

We yearn to be your friend.

Long may our friendship grow.

No greater Friend could we ever gain,

No greater Friend we'll know.

(See also Ps. 139:1; 1 Pet. 5:6, 7.)

Can You Really “Draw Close to God”?

HOW would you feel if the Creator of heaven and earth said of you, “This is my friend”? To many, that might sound farfetched. After all, how could a mere human ever enter into a friendship with Jehovah God? Yet, the Bible assures us that we really can be close to God.

² Abraham of old was one who enjoyed such closeness. Jehovah identified that patriarch as “my friend.” (Isaiah 41:8) Yes, Jehovah considered Abraham to be a personal friend. Abraham was granted that close relationship because he “put faith in Jehovah.” (James 2:23) Today, too, Jehovah looks for opportunities to “get attached” to those who serve him out of love. (Deuteronomy 10:15) His Word urges: “Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you.” (James 4:8) In these words we find both an invitation and a promise.

³ Jehovah invites us to draw near to him. He is ready and willing to receive us into his favor as friends. At the same time, he promises that if we take steps to draw close to him, he will take corresponding action. He will draw close to us. Thus we may enter into something truly precious—“intimacy with Jehovah.”* (Psalm 25:14) “Intima-

* Interestingly, the Hebrew word rendered “intimacy” is used at Amos 3:7, which says that the Sovereign Lord Jehovah reveals his “confidential matter” to his servants, making known to them in advance what he purposes to do.

1, 2. (a) What might sound farfetched to many, but of what does the Bible assure us? (b) Abraham was granted what close relationship, and why?

3. What invitation does Jehovah extend to us, and what promise is connected with it?

cy” conveys the idea of confidential talk with a special friend.

⁴ Do you have an intimate friend in whom you can confide? Such a friend is one who cares about you. You trust him, for he has proved to be loyal. Your joys are heightened when you share them with him. His sympathetic ear lightens the burden of your sorrows. Even when no one else seems to understand you, he does. Similarly, when you draw close to God, you come to have a special Friend who truly values you, deeply cares about you, and fully understands you. (Psalm 103:14; 1 Peter 5:7) You trust him with your inmost feelings, for you know that he is loyal to those who are loyal to him. (Psalm 18:25) However, this privileged intimacy with God is within our reach only because he has made it possible.

Jehovah Has Opened the Way

⁵ Left on our own, we as sinners could never be close to God. (Psalm 5:4) “But God recommends his own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us,” wrote the apostle Paul. (Romans 5:8) Yes, Jehovah arranged for Jesus “to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many.” (Matthew 20:28) Our faith in that ransom sacrifice makes it possible for us to be close to God. Since God “first loved us,” he laid the foundation for us to enter into friendship with him.—1 John 4:19.

⁶ Jehovah has taken another step: He has revealed himself to us. In any friendship, closeness is based on truly knowing a person, valuing his qualities and ways. So

4. How would you describe an intimate friend, and in what way does Jehovah prove to be such a friend to those who draw close to him?

5. What did Jehovah do to make it possible for us to be close to him?

6, 7. (a) How do we know that Jehovah is not a hidden, unknowable God? (b) In what ways has Jehovah revealed himself?

if Jehovah were a hidden, unknowable God, we could never be close to him. Yet, far from concealing himself, he wants us to know him. (Isaiah 45:19) Furthermore, what he reveals about himself is available to all, even to those of us who may be considered lowly by the world's standards.—Matthew 11:25.

⁷ How has Jehovah revealed himself to us? His creative works make known certain aspects of his personality—the vastness of his power, the richness of his wisdom, the abundance of his love. (Romans 1:20) But Jehovah's revelation of himself does not stop with the things he created. Ever the Great Communicator, he provided a written revelation of himself in his Word, the Bible.

Beholding “the Pleasantness of Jehovah”

⁸ The Bible itself is evidence of Jehovah's love for us. In his Word, he reveals himself in terms we can comprehend—proof not only that he loves us but that he wants us to know and love him. What we read in this precious book enables us to behold “the pleasantness of Jehovah” and moves us to want to be close to him. (Psalm 90:17) Let us discuss some of the heartwarming ways in which Jehovah reveals himself in his Word.

⁹ The Scriptures contain many direct statements identifying God's qualities. Note some examples. “Jehovah is a lover of justice.” (Psalm 37:28) God is “exalted in power.” (Job 37:23) “‘I am loyal,’ is the utterance of Jehovah.” (Jeremiah 3:12) “He is wise in heart.” (Job 9:4) He is “a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger

8. Why can it be said that the Bible itself is evidence of Jehovah's love for us?

9. What are some examples of direct statements in the Bible that identify God's qualities?

*The Bible helps us
draw close to Jehovah*

and abundant in loving-kindness and truth.” (Exodus 34:6) “You, O Jehovah, are good and ready to forgive.” (Psalm 86:5) And, as mentioned in the preceding chapter, one quality is predominant: “God is

love.” (1 John 4:8) As you reflect on these pleasing attributes, are you not drawn to this incomparable God?

¹⁰ In addition to telling us what his qualities are, Jehovah has lovingly included in his Word concrete examples of these qualities in action. Such accounts paint vivid mental pictures that help us see the various facets of his personality more clearly. That, in turn, helps us draw close to him. Consider an example.

¹¹ It is one thing to read that God is “vigorous in power.” (Isaiah 40:26) It is quite another to read about how he delivered Israel through the Red Sea and then sustained the nation in the wilderness for 40 years. You can visualize the surging waters splitting apart. You can picture the nation—perhaps 3,000,000 in all—walking over the dry seabed, the congealed waters standing like massive walls on either side. (Exodus 14:21; 15:8) You can see the evidence of God’s protective care in the wilderness. Water flowed out of rock. Food, resembling white seeds, appeared on the ground. (Exodus 16:31; Numbers 20:11) Jehovah here reveals not only that he has power but that he uses it in



10, 11. (a) To help us see his personality more clearly, what has Jehovah included in his Word? (b) What Bible example helps us visualize God’s power in action?

behalf of his people. Is it not reassuring to know that our prayers go up to a powerful God who “is for us a refuge and strength, a help that is readily to be found during distresses”?—Psalm 46:1.

¹² Jehovah, who is a spirit, has done even more to help us know him. As humans we are bound by visible realities and therefore cannot see into the spirit realm. For God to describe himself to us in spirit terms would be like trying to explain details of your appearance, such as your eye color or freckles, to someone born blind. Rather, Jehovah kindly helps us to “see” him in terms we can understand. At times, he employs metaphors and similes, likening himself to things that are known to us. He even describes himself as having certain human features.*

¹³ Notice the description of Jehovah found at Isaiah 40:11: “Like a shepherd he will shepherd his own drove. With his arm he will collect together the lambs; and in his bosom he will carry them.” Jehovah is here compared to a shepherd who picks up lambs with “his arm.” This denotes God’s ability to protect and support his people, even the more vulnerable ones. We can feel safe in his strong arms, for if we are loyal to him, he will never forsake us. (Romans 8:38, 39) The Great Shepherd carries the lambs “in his bosom”—an expression referring to

* For example, the Bible speaks of God’s face, eyes, ears, nostrils, mouth, arms, and feet. (Psalm 18:15; 27:8; 44:3; Isaiah 60:13; Matthew 4:4; 1 Peter 3:12) Such figurative expressions are not to be taken literally, any more than are such references to Jehovah as “the Rock” or “a shield.”—Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 84:11.

12. How does Jehovah help us to “see” him in terms we can understand?

13. What mental picture does Isaiah 40:11 create, and how does it affect you?

them: "You, though, who do you say I am?" **16** Simon Peter answered: "You are the Christ,^a the Son of the living God."^b **17** In response Jesus said to him: "Happy you are, Simon son of Jo'nah, because flesh and blood* did not reveal it to you, but my Father in the heavens did.^c **18** Also, I say to you: You are Peter,^d and on this rock^e I will build my congregation, and the gates of the Grave* will not overpower it. **19** I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you may bind on earth will already be bound in the heavens, and whatever you may loosen on earth will already be loosened in the heavens." **20** Then he sternly instructed the disciples not to tell anybody that he was the Christ.^f

21 From that time forward, Jesus began explaining to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed, and on the third day be raised up.^g **22** At this Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying: "Be kind to yourself, Lord; you will not have this happen to you at all."^h **23** But turning his back, he said to Peter: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, because you think, not God's thoughts, but those of men."ⁱ

24 Then Jesus said to his disciples: "If anyone wants to come after me, let him disown himself and pick up his torture stake* and keep following me.^j **25** For whoever wants to save his life* will lose it, but whoever loses his life* for my sake will find it.^k **26** Really, what good will it do a man if he gains the whole world

16:17 *Or "because a human." **16:18** *Or "Hades," that is, the common grave of mankind. See Glossary. **16:24** *See Glossary. **16:25, 26** *Or "soul."

CHAP. 16

- a Mr 8:29
- Lu 9:20
- Joh 1:40, 41
- Joh 4:25
- Joh 11:27
- b Ps 2:7
- Mt 14:33
- Ac 9:20, 22
- Heb 1:2
- 1Jo 4:15
- c Mt 11:27
- d Joh 1:42
- e Ro 9:33
- 1Co 3:11
- 1Co 10:4
- Eph 2:20
- 1Pe 2:6-8
- f Mr 8:29, 30
- Lu 9:20, 21
- g Ps 16:10
- Isa 53:12
- Mt 17:22, 23
- Mt 20:18, 19
- Mr 8:31
- Lu 9:22
- Lu 24:46
- 1Co 15:3, 4
- h Mr 8:32
- i Mr 8:33
- j Mt 10:38
- Mr 8:34
- Lu 9:23
- Lu 14:27
- k Mr 8:35
- Lu 9:24
- Lu 17:33
- Joh 12:25
- Re 12:11

Second Col.

- a Mr 8:36
- Lu 9:25
- b Ps 49:8
- c Ps 62:12
- Pr 24:12
- Lu 9:26
- Ro 2:6
- 1Pe 1:17
- d Mt 17:2
- Mr 9:1
- Lu 9:27

CHAP. 17

- e Mr 9:2-8
- Lu 9:28-36
- f Re 1:13, 16
- g Ps 2:7
- Isa 42:1
- Mt 3:17
- 2Pe 1:17, 18
- h De 18:15
- Mr 9:7
- Lu 9:35
- Ac 3:22, 23
- Heb 2:3
- i Mt 16:20
- Mr 9:9
- j Mr 9:11
- k Isa 40:3
- Mal 4:5, 6
- Mt 11:13, 14
- Mr 9:12
- Lu 1:17

but loses his life?^{*a} Or what will a man give in exchange for his life?^{*b} **27** For the Son of man is to come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and then he will repay each one according to his behavior.^c **28** Truly I say to you that there are some of those standing here who will not taste death at all until first they see the Son of man coming in his Kingdom."^d

17 Six days later Jesus took Peter and James and his brother John along and led them up into a lofty mountain by themselves.^e **2** And he was transfigured before them; his face shone as the sun, and his outer garments became brilliant* as the light.^f **3** And look! there appeared to them Moses and E-li-jah conversing with him. **4** Then Peter said to Jesus: "Lord, it is fine for us to be here. If you wish, I will erect three tents here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for E-li'jah." **5** While he was still speaking, look! a bright cloud overshadowed them, and look! a voice out of the cloud said: "This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved.^g Listen to him."^h **6** At hearing this, the disciples fell facedown and became very much afraid. **7** Then Jesus came near, and touching them, he said: "Get up. Have no fear." **8** When they looked up, they saw no one but Jesus himself. **9** As they were descending from the mountain, Jesus commanded them: "Tell the vision to no one until the Son of man is raised up from the dead."ⁱ

10 However, the disciples put the question to him: "Why, then, do the scribes say that E-li'jah must come first?"^j **11** In reply he said: "E-li'jah is indeed coming and will restore all things.^k **12** However, I say to you that

17:2 *Or "white."

E-li'jah has already come, and they did not recognize him but did whatever they wanted with him.^a In this way also, the Son of man is going to suffer at their hands."^b **13** Then the disciples perceived that he spoke to them about John the Baptist.

14 When they came toward the crowd,^c a man approached him, knelt down to him, and said: **15** "Lord, have mercy on my son, because he is an epileptic and is ill. He falls often into the fire and often into the water."^d **16** I brought him to your disciples, but they could not cure him." **17** In reply Jesus said: "O faithless and twisted generation,^e how long must I continue with you? How long must I put up with you? Bring him here to me." **18** Then Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him, and the boy was cured from that hour.^f **19** Then the disciples came to Jesus privately and said: "Why could we not expel it?" **20** He said to them: "Because of your little faith. For truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard grain, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move, and nothing will be impossible for you."^g **21** *—

22 It was while they were gathered together in Gal'i-lee that Jesus said to them: "The Son of man is going to be betrayed into men's hands,^h **23** and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised up."ⁱ And they were very much grieved.

24 After they arrived in Cap'er'na-um, the men collecting the two drachmas* tax approached Peter and said: "Does your teacher not pay the two drachmas tax?"^j **25** He said:

17:21 *See App. A3. 17:24 *Lit., "the double drachmas." See App. B14.

CHAP. 17

a Mr 9:13

b Mt 16:21
Lu 23:24, 25

c Lu 9:37

d Mr 9:17-29
Lu 9:38-42

e De 32:5, 20

f Mt 8:13
Mt 9:22
Mt 15:28
Joh 4:51, 52

g Mt 21:21
Mr 11:23
Lu 17:6

h Mt 20:18
Lu 9:44, 45

i Mt 16:21
Mr 9:31

j Ex 30:13, 14

Second Col.

a 1Co 10:32
2Co 6:3

CHAP. 18

b Mr 9:33-37
Lu 9:46-48
Lu 22:24

c Mt 19:14
1Pe 2:2

d Lu 18:17

e Pr 15:33
Mt 20:26
Mt 23:12
Lu 9:48
Lu 14:11
Lu 22:26
Jas 4:10
1Pe 5:5

f Mr 9:42
Lu 17:1, 2

"Yes." However, when he entered the house, Jesus spoke to him first and said: "What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth receive duties or head tax? From their sons or from the strangers?" **26** When he said: "From the strangers," Jesus said to him: "Really, then, the sons are tax-free. **27** But that we do not cause them to stumble,^a go to the sea, cast a fishhook, and take the first fish that comes up, and when you open its mouth, you will find a silver coin.* Take that and give it to them for me and you."

18 In that hour the disciples came near to Jesus and said: "Who really is greatest in the Kingdom of the heavens?"^b

2 So calling a young child to him, he stood him in their midst **3** and said: "Truly I say to you, unless you turn around* and become as young children,^c you will by no means enter into the Kingdom of the heavens."^d **4** Therefore, whoever will humble himself like this young child is the one who is the greatest in the Kingdom of the heavens;^e **5** and whoever receives one such young child on the basis of my name receives me also. **6** But whoever stumbles one of these little ones who have faith in me, it would be better for him to have hung around his neck a millstone that is turned by a donkey and to be sunk in the open sea.^f

7 "Woe to the world because of the stumbling blocks! Of course, it is inevitable that stumbling blocks will come, but woe to the man through whom the stumbling block comes! **8** If, then, your hand or your foot makes you stumble, cut it off

17:27 *Lit., "stater coin," considered to be the tetradrachma. See App. B14. 18:3 *Or "change."

and throw it away from you.^a It is better for you to enter into life maimed or lame than to be thrown with two hands or two feet into the everlasting fire.^b

9 Also, if your eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it away from you. It is better for you to enter one-eyed into life than to be thrown with two eyes into the fiery Ge-hen'na.^{*c} **10** See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I tell you that their angels in heaven always look upon the face of my Father who is in heaven.^d **11** *—

12 "What do you think? If a man has 100 sheep and one of them strays,^e will he not leave the 99 on the mountains and set out on a search for the one that is straying?^f **13** And if he finds it, I certainly tell you, he rejoices more over it than over the 99 that have not strayed. **14** Likewise, it is not a desirable thing to my^g Father who is in heaven for even one of these little ones to perish.^g

15 "Moreover, if your brother commits a sin, go and reveal his fault* between you and him alone.^h If he listens to you, you have gained your brother.ⁱ **16** But if he does not listen, take along with you one or two more, so that on the testimony* of two or three witnesses every matter may be established.^j **17** If he does not listen to them, speak to the congregation. If he does not listen even to the congregation, let him be to you just as a man of the nations^k and as a tax collector.^l

18 "Truly I say to you, whatever things you may bind on earth will be things already

18:9 *See Glossary. **18:11** *See App. A3. **18:14** *Or possibly, "your." **18:15** *Lit., "and reprove him." **18:16** *Lit., "mouth."

CHAP. 18

a Col 3:5

b Mt 25:41
Mr 9:43-48

c Mt 5:22
Mt 5:29
Mr 9:47
Ro 8:13

d Lu 1:19
Heb 1:7, 14

e 1Pe 2:25

f Lu 15:3-7

g 2Pe 3:9

h Lu 19:17
Pr 25:8, 9
Lu 17:3

i Jas 5:20

j De 19:15
2Co 13:1
1Ti 5:19

k Joh 18:28
Ac 10:28
Ac 11:2, 3

l Ro 16:17
1Co 5:11

Second Col.

a Mr 11:24
Joh 14:13
Joh 16:23, 24
1Jo 3:22
1Jo 5:14

b 1Co 5:4, 5

c Mt 6:12
Mr 11:25
Lu 17:4
Eph 4:32
Col 3:13

d Ex 21:7
Le 25:39
2Ki 4:1
Ne 5:8

e 1Jo 1:9

bound in heaven, and whatever things you may loosen on earth will be things already loosened in heaven. **19** Again I tell you truly, if two of you on earth agree concerning anything of importance that they should request, it will take place for them on account of my Father in heaven.^a **20** For where there are two or three gathered together in my name,^b there I am in their midst.^c

21 Then Peter came and said to him: "Lord, how many times is my brother to sin against me and am I to forgive him? Up to seven times?" **22** Jesus said to him: "I say to you, not up to seven times, but up to 77 times.^c

23 "That is why the Kingdom of the heavens may be likened to a king who wanted to settle accounts with his slaves. **24** When he started to settle them, a man was brought in who owed him 10,000 talents.* **25** But because he did not have the means to pay it back, his master ordered him and his wife and his children and all the things he owned to be sold and payment to be made.^d **26** So the slave fell down and did obeisance* to him, saying, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay back everything to you.' **27** Moved with pity at this, the master of that slave let him off and canceled his debt.^e **28** But that slave went out and found one of his fellow slaves, who owed him 100 de-nar'i-i,* and grabbed him and began to choke him, saying, 'Pay back whatever you owe.' **29** So his fellow slave fell down and began to beg him, saying, 'Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.' **30** However, he was not willing, but he went and

18:24 *10,000 talents of silver equaled 60,000,000 denarii. See App. B14. **18:26** *Or "bowed down." **18:28** *See App. B14.

had him thrown into prison until he could pay back what he owed.

31 When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they became greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all the things that had happened. **32** Then his master summoned him and said to him: 'Wicked slave, I canceled all that debt for you when you pleaded with me. **33** Should you not also have shown mercy to your fellow slave as I showed mercy to you?'^a **34** With that his master, provoked to wrath, handed him over to the jailers until he repaid all that he owed. **35** My heavenly Father will also deal with you in the same way^b if each of you does not forgive your brother from your heart."^c

19 When Jesus had finished speaking these things, he departed from Gal'i-lee and came to the borders* of Ju-de'a across the Jordan.^d **2** Also, large crowds followed him, and he cured them there.

3 And Pharisees came to him intent on testing him, and they asked: "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife on every sort of grounds?"^e **4** In reply he said: "Have you not read that the one who created them from the beginning made them male and female^f **5** and said: 'For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and will stick to his wife, and the two will be one flesh?'^g **6** So that they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has yoked together, let no man put apart."^h **7** They said to him: "Why, then, did Moses direct giving a certificate of dismissal and divorcing her?"ⁱ **8** He said to them: "Out of regard for your hard-heartedness, Moses made the concession to you of divorcing

CHAP. 18

a Isa 55:7
Mt 6:12
Mt 7:12
Jas 2:13
b Ro 2:6
c Mt 6:14
Mr 11:25
Lu 17:3
Eph 4:32

CHAP. 19

d Mr 10:1
e De 24:1
Mr 10:2-12
f Ge 1:27
Ge 5:2
g Ge 2:24
Eph 5:31
h Mr 10:9
1Co 7:11
i De 24:1
Mt 5:31

Second Col.

a Mr 10:5
b Ge 2:24
c Mal 2:14
Mt 5:32
Mr 10:11, 12
Lu 16:18
Ro 7:3
1Co 7:10
Heb 13:4
d 1Co 7:7
e 1Co 7:32, 38
1Co 9:5
f Mr 10:13-16
Lu 18:15-17
g Mt 18:3
Mr 10:14
Lu 18:16
h Mr 10:17-22
Lu 18:18-23
i Mr 10:18
j Lu 18:5
Lu 10:25-28
k Ex 20:13
De 5:17
l Ex 20:14
De 5:18
m Ex 20:15
De 5:19
n Ex 20:16
De 5:20
o Ex 20:12
De 5:16
p Lu 19:18
Mt 22:39
Mr 12:31
Lu 10:27
Ro 13:9

your wives,^a but that has not been the case from the beginning.^b **9** I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except on the grounds of sexual immorality,^c and marries another commits adultery."^c

10 The disciples said to him: "If that is the situation of a man with his wife, it is not advisable to marry." **11** He said to them: "Not all men make room for the saying, but only those who have the gift.^d **12** For there are eunuchs who were born that way, and there are eunuchs who were made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs on account of the Kingdom of the heavens. Let the one who can make room for it make room for it."^e

13 Then young children were brought to him for him to place his hands on them and offer prayer, but the disciples reprimanded them.^f **14** Jesus, however, said: "Let the young children alone, and do not try to stop them from coming to me, for the Kingdom of the heavens belongs to such ones."^g **15** And he placed his hands on them and departed from there.

16 Now look! someone came up to him and said: "Teacher, what good must I do to gain everlasting life?"^h **17** He said to him: "Why do you ask me about what is good? One there is who is good.ⁱ If, though, you want to enter into life, observe the commandments continually."^j **18** He said to him: "Which ones?" Jesus said: "You must not murder,^k you must not commit adultery,^l you must not steal,^m you must not bear false witness,ⁿ **19** honor your father and your mother,^o and you must love your neighbor as yourself."^p

20 The young man said to him: "I have kept all of these; what

19:1 *Or "frontiers."

19:9 *Greek, *por-nei'a*. See Glossary.

am I still lacking?" **21** Jesus said to him: "If you want to be perfect,* go sell your belongings and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven;^a and come be my follower."^b

22 When the young man heard this, he went away grieved, for he had many possessions.^c

23 Then Jesus said to his disciples: "Truly I say to you that it will be difficult for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of the heavens.^d **24** Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to get through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God."^e

25 When the disciples heard that, they were greatly astounded, saying: "Who really can be saved?"^f

26 Looking at them intently, Jesus said to them: "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."^g

27 Then Peter said in reply: "Look! We have left all things and followed you; what, then, will there be for us?"^h **28** Jesus said to them: "Truly I say to you, in the re-creation, when the Son of man sits down on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will sit on 12 thrones, judging the 12 tribes of Israel.ⁱ **29** And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands for the sake of my name will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit everlasting life.^j

30 "But many who are first will be last and the last first.^k

20 "For the Kingdom of the heavens is like the master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard.^l **2** After he had agreed with the workers for a de-nar'i-us* a day, he sent them into his vineyard.

19:21 *Or "complete." 20:2, 9, 10, 13 *See App. B14.

CHAP. 19

a Mt 6:20

b Lu 12:33
Lu 18:22
Php 3:7

c Lu 18:23

d Mr 10:23
Lu 18:24
1Ti 6:10

e Mr 10:25
Lu 18:25

f Mr 10:26, 27
Lu 18:26, 27

g Job 42:2

h Mr 10:28
Lu 5:11
Lu 18:28
Php 3:8

i Da 7:14
Mt 20:21
Lu 22:28-30
1Co 6:2
Re 20:4

j Mr 10:29, 30
Lu 18:29, 30
Heb 10:34

k Mt 20:16
Mr 10:31
Lu 13:30

CHAP. 20

l Mt 21:33

Second Col.

a Le 19:13
De 24:14, 15

b Mt 20:2

c Mt 6:23

d Mt 19:30
Mr 10:31
Lu 13:30

3 Going out also about the third hour,* he saw others standing unemployed in the marketplace;

4 and to those he said, 'You too go into the vineyard, and I will give you whatever is fair.' **5** So off they went. Again he went out about the sixth hour* and the ninth hour[#] and did likewise.

6 Finally, about the 11th hour,* he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why have you been standing here all day unemployed?'

7 They replied, 'Because nobody has hired us.' He said to them, 'You too go into the vineyard.'

8 "When evening came, the master of the vineyard said to his man in charge, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages,^a starting with the last and ending with the first.'

9 When the 11th-hour men came, they each received a de-nar'i-us.* **10** So when the first came, they assumed that they would receive more, but they too were paid at the rate of a de-nar'i-us.* **11** On receiving it, they began to complain against the master of the house **12** and said, 'These last men put in one hour's work; still you made them equal to us who bore the burden of the day and the burning heat!'

13 But he said in reply to one of them, 'Fellow, I do you no wrong. You agreed with me for a de-nar'i-us,* did you not?'^b **14** Take what is yours and go. I want to give to this last one the same as to you.

15 Do I not have the right to do what I want with my own things? Or is your eye envious* because I am good?'^c **16** In this way, the last ones will be first, and the first ones last."^d

20:3 *That is, about 9:00 a.m. **20:5** *That is, about 12:00 noon. [#]That is, about 3:00 p.m. **20:6** *That is, about 5:00 p.m. **20:15** *Lit., "bad; wicked."

^aOr "generous."

^bOr "generous."

^cOr "generous."

^dOr "generous."

^eOr "generous."

^fOr "generous."

^gOr "generous."

^hOr "generous."

ⁱOr "generous."

17 While going up to Jerusalem, Jesus took the 12 disciples aside privately and said to them on the road:^a **18** "Look! We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man will be handed over to the chief priests and the scribes. They will condemn him to death^b **19** and hand him over to men of the nations to be mocked and scourged and executed on a stake;^c and on the third day he will be raised up."^d

20 Then the mother of the sons of Zeb'e-dee^e approached him with her sons, doing obeisance* and asking for something from him.^f **21** He said to her: "What do you want?" She replied to him: "Give the word that these two sons of mine may sit down, one at your right hand and one at your left, in your Kingdom."^g **22** Jesus answered: "You do not know what you are asking for. Can you drink the cup that I am about to drink?"^h They said to him: "We can." **23** He said to them: "You will indeed drink my cup,ⁱ but to sit down at my right hand and at my left is not mine to give, but it belongs to those for whom it has been prepared by my Father."^j

24 When the ten others heard about it, they became indignant at the two brothers.^k **25** But Jesus called them to him and said: "You know that the rulers of the nations lord it over them and the great men wield authority over them.^l **26** This must not be the way among you;^m but whoever wants to become great among you must be your minister,ⁿ **27** and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave.^o **28** Just as the Son of man came, not to be ministered to, but to minister^p and to give his life* as a ransom in exchange for many."^q

20:20 *Or "bowing down." 20:28 *Or "soul."

CHAP. 20

a Mr 10:32
Lu 18:31
b Mt 16:21
Mr 10:33, 34
Lu 9:22
Lu 18:32, 33
c Mt 27:31
Joh 19:1
d Mt 17:22, 23
Mt 28:6
Ac 10:40
1Co 15:4
e Mt 4:21
Mt 27:55, 56
f Mr 10:35-40
g Mt 19:28
h Mt 26:39
Mr 10:38
Mr 14:36
Joh 18:11
i Ac 12:2
Ro 8:17
2Co 1:7
Re 1:9
j Mr 10:39, 40
k Mr 10:41-45
Lu 22:24
l Mr 10:42
m 2Co 1:24
1Pe 5:3
n Mt 18:4
Mt 23:11
Mr 10:43, 44
Lu 22:26
o Mr 9:35
p Lu 22:27
Joh 13:14
Php 2:7
q Isa 53:11
Mr 10:45
1Ti 2:5, 6
Tit 2:13, 14
Heb 9:28

Second Col.

a Mt 9:27
Mr 10:46-52
Lu 18:35-43
b Mt 9:29

CHAP. 21

c Mr 11:1-3
Lu 19:28-31
d Isa 62:11
Joh 12:15
e Mt 11:29
f Zec 9:9
g Mr 11:4-6
Lu 19:32-35
h 1Ki 1:38, 40
Mr 11:7-11
Joh 12:14, 15
i Lu 19:36-38

29 As they were going out of Jer'i-cho, a large crowd followed him. **30** And look! two blind men sitting beside the road heard that Jesus was passing by and cried out: "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!"^a **31** But the crowd rebuked them, telling them to keep silent; yet they cried all the louder, saying: "Lord, have mercy on us, Son of David!" **32** So Jesus stopped, called them, and said: "What do you want me to do for you?" **33** They said to him: "Lord, let our eyes be opened." **34** Moved with pity, Jesus touched their eyes,^b and immediately they recovered their sight, and they followed him.

21 When they got close to Jerusalem and arrived at Beth'pha-ge on the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,^c **2** saying to them: "Go into the village that is within sight, and you will at once find a donkey tied and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. **3** If someone says anything to you, you must say, 'The Lord needs them.' At that he will immediately send them."

4 This actually took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet, who said: **5** "Tell the daughter of Zion: 'Look! Your king is coming to you,^d mild-tempered^e and mounted on a donkey, yes, on a colt, the offspring of a beast of burden.'"^f

6 So the disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them.^g **7** They brought the donkey and its colt, and they put their outer garments on them, and he sat on them.^h **8** Most of the crowd spread their outer garments on the road,ⁱ while others were cutting down branches from the trees and spreading them on the road. **9** Moreover, the crowds going ahead of him and those following him kept

375-378. For evidence as to the origin of Christendom's belief in an immaterial, immortal soul, see pages 379, 380.

Was Jesus raised in a body of flesh, and does he have such a body in heaven now?

1 Pet. 3:18: "Christ died once for all time concerning sins, a righteous person for unrighteous ones, that he might lead you to God, he being put to death in the flesh, but being made alive in the spirit ["by the Spirit," *KJ*; "in the spirit," *RS, NE, Dy, JB*]." (At his resurrection from the dead, Jesus was brought forth with a spirit body. In the Greek text the words "flesh" and "spirit" are put in contrast to each other, and both are in the dative case; so, if a translator uses the rendering "by the spirit" he should also consistently say "by the flesh," or if he uses "in the flesh" he should also say "in the spirit.")

Acts 10:40, 41: "God raised this One [Jesus Christ] up on the third day and granted him to become manifest, not to all the people, but to witnesses appointed beforehand by God." (Why did not others see him too? Because he was a spirit creature and when, as angels had done in the past, he materialized fleshly bodies to make himself visible, he did so only in the presence of his disciples.)

1 Cor. 15:45: "It is even so written: 'The first man Adam became a living soul.' The last Adam [Jesus Christ, who was perfect as was Adam when created] became a life-giving spirit."

What does Luke 24:36-39 mean regarding the body in which Jesus was resurrected?

Luke 24:36-39: "While they [the disciples] were speaking of these things he himself stood in their midst and said to them: 'May you have peace.' But because they were terrified, and had become frightened, they were imagining they beheld a spirit. So he said to them: 'Why are you troubled, and why is it doubts come up in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; feel me and see, because a spirit does not have flesh and bones just as you behold that I have.'"

Humans cannot see spirits, so the disciples evidently thought they

the margin of the Masoretic text as well as the Syriac *Peshitta* so read. At Song of Solomon 4:8 reference is made to "Amana" in many translations, and it is understood to refer to the Anti-Lebanon mountains in which the river here discussed has its source. Hence, the river may have taken on the name of the mountains in which it originated.

ABARIM (Ab'a-rim) [Fords (Crossings); Borderland (Regions Beyond)]. This name doubtless applies to a region E of the Jordan River and, more particularly, E of the Dead Sea. At Jeremiah 22:20 it is mentioned along with regions of Lebanon and Bashan.

In the other instances where it appears in the Bible record, it is connected with a range or system of mountains. The term "Abarim," as referring to the "regions beyond," may indicate that the ones originating the term were located on the western side of the Jordan; and it is possible that this term was originally used by Abraham and was still retained by the Israelites on leaving Egypt.

It was near the end of the 40-year trek through the wilderness that the Israelites reached this territory and encamped "in the mountains of Abarim." (Nu 33:47, 48) Thereafter they descended to the Plains of Moab, which lie E of the Jordan at the N end of the Dead Sea. Here they made their final encampment before crossing the Jordan River. Here, too, Jehovah said to Moses: "Go up into this mountain of Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, which fronts toward Jericho, and see the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the sons of Israel as a possession."—De 32:49; Nu 27:12.

It would appear from this that the region of Abarim, together with its range of mountains, was in the NW part of the territory of Moab. However, it may possibly have extended the full length of the chain of mountain bluffs that rise along the entire E side of the Dead Sea from N to S. At Numbers 21:11 and 33:44 reference is made to a stopping point on the route of the Israelites called "Iye-abarim," and the context places this to the S of Moab and at the S end of the Dead Sea. It may have marked the southernmost point of the region called Abarim.—See IYE-ABARIM.

Mount Nebo was evidently one of the higher mountains of Abarim, if not the highest.—See NEBO No. 3.

ABBA (Ab'ba). The word 'ab-ba' in Aramaic corresponds to the emphatic or definite form of 'av, literally meaning "the father," or "O Father." It

was the intimate name used by children for their fathers and combines some of the intimacy of the English word "papa" while retaining the dignity of the word "father," being both informal and yet respectful. It was, therefore, an endearing form of address rather than a title and was among the first words a child learned to speak.

This Aramaic word appears three times in the Scriptures. It is always in transliterated form in the original Greek and usually is transliterated in English translations. Each time the term is followed immediately by the translation *ho pater*' in Greek, which literally means "the father" or, used as the vocative, "O Father." In each case it is used with reference to the heavenly Father, Jehovah.

Mark records that Jesus used the term when praying to Jehovah God in Gethsemane shortly before his death, saying: "Abba, Father, all things are possible to you; remove this cup from me. Yet not what I want, but what you want." (Mr 14:36) Here is the fervent appeal of a son to a beloved father, followed quickly by an assurance that, in any event, he would remain obedient.

The two other occurrences are in Paul's letters, at Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6. In both places the word is used in connection with Christians called to be spirit-begotten sons of God and indicates the intimacy of their relationship with their Father. While they are "slaves to God" and "bought with a price," yet they are also sons in the house of a loving Father, and they are made positively aware of this status by holy spirit through their Lord Jesus.—Ro 6:22; 1Co 7:23; Ro 8:15; Ga 4:6.

Rather than as just a translation from Aramaic into Greek, some see in the use of both 'Ab-ba' and "Father" together, first, the trust, confidence, and submissiveness of a child, followed by a mature appreciation of the filial relationship and its responsibilities. It seems evident from these texts that, in apostolic times, the Christians made use of the term 'Ab-ba' in their prayers to God.

The word 'Ab-ba' came to be applied as a title of honor to the Jewish rabbis in the early centuries of the Common Era and is found as such in the Babylonian Talmud. (*Berakhot* 16b) The one acting in the capacity of vice-president of the Jewish Sanhedrin already held the title of 'Av, or Father of the Sanhedrin. In later periods the title was also applied to the bishops of the Coptic, Ethiopic, and Syrian churches and, more particularly, became the title of the Bishop of Alexandria, thereby making him the "papa" or "pope" of that part of the Eastern church. The English words "abbot" and "abbey" are both derived from the Aramaic

'*ab-ba*'. Jerome, the translator of the Latin *Vulgate*, objected to the use of the title "abbot" as applied to the Catholic monks in his time and did so on the basis that it violated Jesus' instructions at Matthew 23:9: "Moreover, do not call anyone your father on earth, for one is your Father, the heavenly One."

ABDA (Ab'da) [Servant].

1. The father of Adoniram. (1Ki 4:6) His son, Adoniram, was a prince over those conscripted for forced labor during David's and Solomon's reigns, and is evidently the Adoram, or Hadoram, referred to in other texts. (2Sa 20:24; 1Ki 12:18; 2Ch 10:18) Hence, Abda probably was a contemporary of King David.

2. A descendant of Jeduthun, of the tribe of Levi. (Ne 11:17, 18) Abda the Levite is evidently the same as the "Obadiah" mentioned at 1 Chronicles 9:16. He was among the exiles to return to Jerusalem from Babylon.

ABDEEL (Ab'de-el) [Servant of God]. Father of Shelemiah, one of three men sent by King Jehoiakim to seize the prophet Jeremiah and his secretary Baruch.—Jer 36:26.

ABDI (Ab'di) [shortened form of Abdiel].

1. A Levite of the house of Merari. He was the father of Kishi and probably a contemporary of Saul, whose reign ran from 1117 to 1078 B.C.E.—1Ch 6:31, 33, 39, 44.

2. Also a Levite of the house of Merari. He was the father of Kish. (2Ch 29:12) Because of the similarity of their sons' names, this Abdi and the one described above are represented in some Bible dictionaries as being the same person. However, the fact that this second Abdi's son, Kish, lived in the time of King Hezekiah some 250 years after David's time, makes such a conclusion illogical. This second Abdi was probably a contemporary of Kings Jotham and Ahaz, whose reigns cover the period from 777 B.C.E. to about 746 B.C.E.

3. A man of the family of Elam who lived in postexilic times. (Ezr 10:26) He was among those Israelites who had taken foreign wives but who put them away in response to Ezra's exhortation following his return to Jerusalem in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes (Longimanus) (468 B.C.E.).—Ezr 7:8; 10:1-4, 10-12, 26, 44.

ABDIEL (Ab'di-el) [Servant of God]. The son of Guni and the father of Ahi, of the tribe of Gad. (1Ch 5:15) He lived in the region of Gilead and Bashan, E of the Jordan, an area prominent for cattle raising.—1Ch 5:16.

ABDON (Ab'don) [from a root meaning "servant"].

1. A judge, the son of Hillel the Pirathonite of Ephraim. (Jg 12:13-15) According to Josephus (*Jewish Antiquities*, V, 273 [vii, 15]), his rule of eight years was one of peace, and the Bible record makes no mention of wars during that period. Abdon's 40 sons and 30 grandsons all "rode on seventy full-grown asses," a sign of considerable wealth and rank at that time. At the end of his judgeship, Abdon was buried in his native Ephraim.

Some would connect Abdon with "Bedan," mentioned at 1 Samuel 12:11; however, Bedan is more likely identified with Barak, whose name appears in this text in both the Greek *Septuagint* and the Syriac *Peshitta*.

2. A Benjamite, firstborn son of Jeiel and evidently a brother of Ner, Saul's grandfather.—1Ch 8:30; 9:36, 39.

3. An official in King Josiah's court (2Ch 34:20), called Achbor at 2 Kings 22:12.—See **ACHBOR** No. 2.

4. A son of Shashak of the tribe of Benjamin; a headman dwelling in Jerusalem.—1Ch 8:23-28.

5. One of four cities in the territory of Asher given to the Levites of the family of Gershon. (Jos 21:27-30; 1Ch 6:71-74) It is probably Khirbet 'Abdeh (Tel 'Avdon) about 6 km (3.5 mi) E of Achzib. This site lies on the N side of the Wadi Qarn (Nahal Keziv) and at the foot of the hills of Galilee and hence near the N end of the Plain of Asher.

ABEDNEGO (A-bed'ne-go) [probably, Servant of Nebo [a Babylonian god]]. The name given to Azariah, one of the youths of the Jewish royalty or nobility taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar in 617 B.C.E.—Da 1:3, 4, 7.

Some scholars believe "Nego" to be an intentional corruption of the name Nebo, a Babylonian god, so as not to offend Azariah. (See **NEBO** No. 4.) The name Azariah means "Jehovah Has Helped," and it appears that these Hebrews, among themselves, continued to use their original names. (Da 2:17) In Babylon he, along with Daniel, Hananiah, and Mishael, passed, with high honors, a three-year training course and a regal examination personally conducted by Nebuchadnezzar, after having first demonstrated religious integrity in matters of food and drink. (Da 1:4, 5, 8-20) Later, at Daniel's request, the king made Azariah and his two companions administrators over the jurisdictional district of Babylon.—Da 2:49.

121 *Encourage One Another* (Hebrews 10:24, 25)

1. As we encourage one another
 To serve Jehovah faithfully,
We find the bonds of love are strengthened;
 Fine works bring peace and unity.
 The love we find among God's people
 Gives each the courage to endure.
Our congregation is a refuge,
 A place where we can feel secure.

2. A word when spoken at the right time
 Is, oh, how comforting to hear!
We hear these words of consolation
 From friends so faithful and so dear.
 How good it is to work together
 With those whose hopes and goals we share!
We seek to strengthen one another
 And help each one his burden bear.

3. As we with eyes of faith are seeing
 The nearness of Jehovah's day,
We need our gathering together
 To keep us walking in the way.
 United with Jehovah's people,
 We hope to serve eternally.
So we encourage one another
 To hold to our integrity.

(See also Luke 22:32; Acts 14:21, 22; Gal. 6:2; 1 Thess. 5:14.)

WEEK STARTING FEBRUARY 3

Song 22 and Prayer

- ❑ **Congregation Bible Study:**
cl chap. 2 ¶12-20 (30 min.)
- ❑ **Theocratic Ministry School:**
Bible reading: Genesis 21-24 (10 min.)
No. 1: Genesis 23:1-20 (4 min. or less)
No. 2: Why Did Jesus Appear in Materialized Bodies?—rs p. 334 ¶4–p. 335 ¶2 (5 min.)
No. 3: Abel—Exercise Faith That Pleases God—it-1 p. 15, Abel No. 1 (5 min.)
- ❑ **Service Meeting:**

Song 81

10 min: Offer the Magazines During February. Discussion. Start by demonstrating how the magazines may be offered, using the sample presentations on this page. Then analyze the sample presentations from beginning to end by reading each part, a sentence or two at a time, and inviting the audience to comment on its purpose. Remind publishers that they should use their own words, and they can choose to alter the sample presentation or prepare another one. Conclude by briefly encouraging all to become well-acquainted with the magazines and to share enthusiastically in their distribution.

10 min: Local needs.

10 min: By Their Fruits You Will Recognize Them. (Matt. 7:16) Discussion based on the *2013 Yearbook*, page 47, paragraphs 1-2; and page 52, paragraph 1, to page 53, paragraph 1. Invite audience to comment on the lessons learned.

Song 25 and Prayer

Announcements

- Literature offer for **January and February:** Feature one of the following 32-page brochures: *Good News From God!*, *Listen to God*, or *Listen to God and Live Forever*. **March and April:** The *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines.
- Since March has five full weekends, it would be an excellent month to auxiliary pioneer.

Sample Presentations

To Start Bible Studies on the First Saturday in February

“People we speak to have different opinions about the Bible. Some believe it’s God’s Word, while others view it as just an ordinary book. How do you feel about the Bible?” Allow for response. Show the back of the February 1 *Watchtower*, and consider together the material under the first question and at least one of the cited scriptures. Offer the magazines, and arrange to return to discuss the next question.

 **February 1**
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

“Most people would like to see an end to war. Do you think that world peace is a realistic goal? [Allow for response.] Notice what the Scriptures promise. [Read Psalm 46:9.] Interestingly, events that occurred during World War I and thereafter give us confidence that very soon God will fulfill this prophecy and end war forever. This magazine explains.”

Awake!® February

“We’re visiting briefly to discuss a common problem. It seems that there’s never enough time to accomplish everything. Do you think that our schedules are full because we have too much to do or because we waste too much of our time? [Allow for response.] Many are not aware that the Bible gives practical advice to help us manage time. Here’s one example. [Read Philippians 1:10a.] This magazine outlines four strategies that have helped many people to use their time more wisely.”

Field Service Highlights

We are happy to report that 4,705 newly dedicated ones were baptized during the month of July 2013. Also, 804 books, 351 brochures, and 291 magazines were requested by interested persons submitting coupons found in our publications. Like leaven, the Kingdom-preaching work promotes spiritual growth with Jehovah’s blessing.—Matt. 13:33.



Are you in a position to assist in this aspect of sacred service? If you are a baptized publisher and are willing to share in such activity, the Regional Building Committee would very much appreciate your offering to assist. If you are unskilled in building trades or are an unbaptized publisher in good standing in the congregation, you may be able to assist with the building of a Kingdom Hall in your area. Why not let the local elders and circuit overseer know of your availability to help? Some baptized publishers who qualify have even been in a position to volunteer for international construction work on Kingdom Hall and Assembly Hall projects in other countries.

WHAT ARE YOUR SPIRITUAL GOALS?

If you have dedicated your life to Jehovah, your expressed desire is to serve Jehovah forever. But what are your spiritual goals along the way? Having spiritual goals will help you to direct your energies and other resources wisely. (1 Cor. 9:26) You will be able to aim for something worthwhile. Such goals are conducive to spiritual growth and will help you to concentrate on the more important things as you reach out for additional service privileges.—Phil. 1: 10; 1 Tim. 4:15,16.

In his illustration of the sower, Jesus emphasized that good soil produces varying amounts of fruitage. He said: "As for the one sown upon the fine soil, this is the one hearing the word and getting the sense of it, who really does bear fruit and produces, this one a hundredfold, that one sixty, the other thirty." (Matt. 13:23) If we have got the sense of the word in our heart, should we not exert ourselves so as to produce abundant fruitage to Jehovah's praise? Do we not want to bear much Kingdom fruitage as we zealously

share in the ministry? And do we not want to produce abundantly the fruitage of God's spirit in our life every day? (John 15:2, 3; Gal. 5:22, 23) Having spiritual goals can help us do all of that.

The apostle Paul set a fine example for us to imitate in our service to God. (1 Cor. 11:1) Paul exerted himself vigorously in serving Jehovah to the very best of his ability. He recognized that Jehovah's service provided him with many opportunities. To the brothers in Corinth, Paul wrote: "A large door that leads to activity has been opened to me." Is this not true in our case also? Are there not many opportunities for us to serve Jehovah in association with the congregation, especially in preaching the Kingdom good news? But like Paul, we must keep in mind that going through that "large door" involves contending with "many op-posers." (1 Cor. 16:9) Paul was willing to discipline himself consistently, even as would an athlete whose heart's desire was to win a crown in the games, a crown that would quickly fade. Notice what Paul said: "I pummel my body and lead it as a slave." (1 Cor. 9:24-27) Are we of that same mind?

Many are serving as missionaries today because with encouragement from their parents and others, they set Gilead training and missionary work as a theocratic goal early in life, even while they were yet children. Similarly, many now serving at Bethel set Bethel service as a goal, either while they were very young or when they first became acquainted with the good news and learned about this special privilege of service.

According to differing personal circumstances in life, each one is encouraged to work toward theocratic goals. Some goals might be participating in field service each week, starting and conducting a home Bible study, making more time to prepare

for congregation meetings, enrolling as an auxiliary or a regular pioneer, serving where the need is greater, constructing Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls, serving at Bethel or in the missionary field. Of course, at congregation meetings, at conventions, and in the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses, attention may be drawn to other theocratic goals that you, according to your own personal circumstances, may want to consider and strive to reach. The important thing is that you remain steadfast and fully accomplish your ministry. If you do, you will honor God and reach your ultimate goal, that of serving Jehovah forever.—Luke 13:24; 1 Tim. 4:7b, 8.

CHAPTER 11

ARRANGEMENTS FOR PLACES OF WORSHIP

TRUE worshipers of Jehovah are commanded to assemble together to receive instruction and to encourage one another. (Deut. 31:12; Heb. 10:23-25) The first place of worship for God's chosen people—the Israelites—was "the tabernacle," or "the tent of meeting." (Ex. 39:32, 40) Later, David's son Solomon built a house, a temple, for God's glory. (1 Ki. 9:3) After that temple was destroyed in 607 B.C.E., the Jews arranged to meet in small buildings called synagogues to worship God. In time the temple was rebuilt, and once again, it served as a center of true worship. Jesus taught both in synagogues and in the temple. (Luke 4:16; John 18:20) Jesus even arranged for a meeting on a mountain to teach the crowds who were following him.—Matt. 5:1-7:29.

Eventually, separating themselves from those who turned aside from the truth, Jesus' disciples began

WEEK STARTING JANUARY 27

Song 106 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

c/ chap. 2 ¶1-11 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Genesis 17-20 (10 min.)

No. 1: Genesis 17:18–18:8 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Jesus Did Not Go to Heaven in a Physical Body—rs p. 334 ¶1-3 (5 min.)

No. 3: Abba—How Is the Term “Abba” Used in the Scriptures, and How Have Men Misused It?—it-1 pp. 13-14 (5 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 121

5 min: Start a Bible Study on the First Saturday. Talk. Outline local arrangements for field service on the first Saturday in February, and encourage all to have a share. Include a brief demonstration using the sample presentation on page 4.

15 min: What Are Your Spiritual Goals? Discussion based on the *Organized* book, page 117, paragraph 2, to the end of the chapter. Interview one or two publishers who reached their goal of full-time service. What encouragement did they receive from others? What obstacles did they overcome? What blessings have they enjoyed?

10 min: “Magazine Routes—Useful for Starting Bible Studies.” Questions and answers. Invite audience to relate how they were eventually able to start a Bible study with someone who was on their magazine route.

Song 103 and Prayer

Magazine Routes—Useful for Starting Bible Studies

¹ Many people are not inclined to study the Bible with us, but they enjoy reading our magazines. Therefore, Jehovah’s organization has long encouraged publishers to develop a magazine route. As people regularly read our magazines, they often form a longing for God’s Word. (1 Pet. 2:2) Eventually, something they read could strike a re-

1. Why has Jehovah’s organization long encouraged publishers to develop a magazine route?

sponsive chord, causing them to accept a Bible study.

² **‘Water’ Seeds of Truth:** Rather than simply dropping the magazines off, engage the householder in conversation and try to build a rapport with him. This will help you to learn his circumstances, interests, and beliefs, which will enable you to speak with insight. (Prov. 16:23) Prepare for each visit. If possible, briefly highlight a point and related scripture from the magazines, watering any seeds of truth in his heart. (1 Cor. 3:6) Make a record of the date of each visit, the literature that was left, and the subjects and scriptures that were discussed.

³ **Return How Often?** You should return once a month to bring the latest magazines to those on your route. However, depending on your circumstances and the interest of the individual, you may choose to visit more often. For example, a week or two after leaving the magazines, you could return and say, “I stopped by briefly to point out something from the magazines I left you.” This will whet the person’s appetite to read a particular article. If he has already read it, you could ask him what he thought about the article and discuss it briefly. Or if the individual enjoys reading our literature, you might return and offer him the tract, brochure, or book that we are featuring that month.

⁴ Do not wait for the householder to ask you for a study. Take the initiative. Even if he has refused a Bible study in the past, from time to time you can feature “Bible Questions Answered” from *The Watchtower* and see if he is willing to discuss it with you. Perhaps you can start a doorstep study. However, if you are unable to start a study, you can continue bringing him the magazines to cultivate his interest.

2. How may we cultivate the interest of those on our route?

3. How often should we return to visit those on our magazine route?

4. From time to time, what can we do to determine if those on our route might be willing to study the Bible?

1. From house to house, from door to door,
Jehovah’s word we spread.
From town to town, from farm to farm,
Jehovah’s sheep are fed.
This good news that God’s Kingdom rules,
As Jesus Christ foretold,
Is being preached throughout the earth
By Christians young and old.
2. From house to house, from door to door,
Salvation we proclaim.
It comes to those who choose to call
Upon Jehovah’s name.
But how can they call on the name
Of One they do not know?
So to their houses and their doors,
The sacred name must go.
3. So let us go from door to door
To spread the Kingdom news.
And whether it’s embraced or not,
We’ll let the people choose.
At least we’ll name Jehovah’s name,
His glorious truth declare.
And as we go from door to door,
We’ll find his sheep are there.