

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 29

Song 37 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

c/ chap. 18 ¶1-8 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

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

Theocratic Ministry School Review (20 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 89

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

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

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

Song 124 and Prayer

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

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

Theocratic Ministry School Review

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

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

37 *The Scriptures—Inspired of God* (2 Timothy 3:16, 17)

1. God's Word is a shining light,
 Guides our feet through earth's dark night.
 If we follow it faithfully,
 Surely its truth will set us free.
2. That divine Word is inspired,
 Teaches us what is required.
 Help it gives, setting all things straight,
 And for God's discipline to wait.
3. By these Scriptures from above,
 We have come to know God's love.
 Reading daily will make us wise,
 Showing us how to gain life's prize.

Wisdom in “the Word of God”

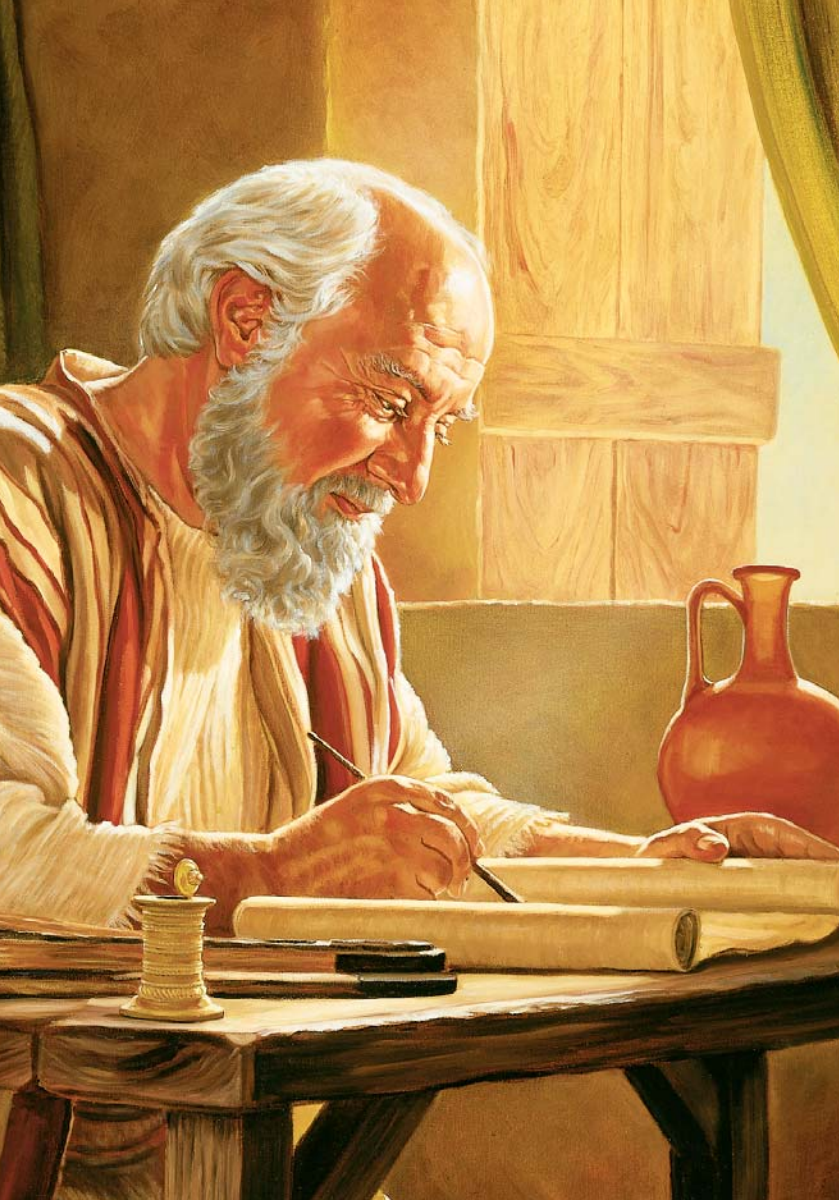
DO YOU recall the last time you received a letter from a loved one who lives far away? Few things bring us as much pleasure as a heartfelt letter from someone we hold dear. We are delighted to hear about his well-being, his experiences, and his plans. Such communication brings loved ones closer, even if they are physically far away.

² What, then, could bring us more pleasure than to receive a written message from the God we love? Jehovah has, in a sense, written us a “letter”—his Word, the Bible. In it he tells us who he is, what he has done, what he purposes to do, and much more. Jehovah has given us his Word because he wants us to be close to him. Our all-wise God chose the best possible way to communicate with us. There is incomparable wisdom in the way the Bible is written and in what it contains.

Why a Written Word?

³ Some may wonder, ‘Why did Jehovah not use a more dramatic method—say, a voice from heaven—to communicate with humans?’ In fact, Jehovah did at times speak from heaven by means of angelic representatives. He did so, for example, when he gave the Law to Israel. (Galatians 3:19) The voice from heaven was awe-inspiring—so much so that the terrified Israelites asked that Jehovah not speak with them in this manner but that he communicate through Moses. (Exodus 20:18-20) The Law, consisting of some 600 statutes, was thus transmitted to Moses orally, word-for-word.

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- 1, 2. What “letter” has Jehovah written us, and why?
 3. In what way did Jehovah transmit the Law to Moses?



⁴ What, though, if that Law had never been put in writing? Would Moses have been able to remember the precise wording of that detailed code and to convey it flawlessly to the rest of the nation? What about later generations? Would they have had to rely solely on word of mouth? That would hardly have been a reliable method of handing down God's laws. Imagine what would happen if you were to transmit a story to a long line of people by telling it to the first person and then having it relayed from one to another down the line. What the person at the end of the line heard would likely differ considerably from the original. The words of God's Law were in no such danger.

⁵ Jehovah wisely chose to have his words put in writing. He instructed Moses: "Write down for yourself these words, because it is in accordance with these words that I do conclude a covenant with you and Israel." (Exodus 34:27) So began the era of Bible writing, in 1513 B.C.E. Over the next 1,610 years, Jehovah "spoke on many occasions and in many ways" to some 40 human writers who then penned the Bible. (Hebrews 1:1) Along the way, devoted copyists took meticulous care to produce accurate copies so as to preserve the Scriptures.—Ezra 7:6; Psalm 45:1.

⁶ Jehovah has truly blessed us by communicating with us in writing. Have you ever received a letter that was so dear to you—perhaps because it offered needed comfort—that you saved it and read it again and again? So it is with Jehovah's "letter" to us. Because Jehovah put his

4. Explain why word-of-mouth transmission would not have been a reliable method of handing down God's laws.

5, 6. What did Jehovah instruct Moses to do with His words, and why is it a blessing for us to have Jehovah's Word in writing?

"All Scripture is inspired of God"

words in written form, we are able to read them regularly and to meditate on what they say. (Psalm 1:2) We can receive “the comfort from the Scriptures” whenever we need it.—Romans 15:4.

Why Human Writers?

⁷ In his wisdom, Jehovah used humans to pen his Word. Consider this: If Jehovah had used angels to record the Bible, would it have the same appeal? Granted, angels could have portrayed Jehovah from their lofty viewpoint, expressed their own devotion to him, and reported on faithful human servants of God. But would we really have been able to identify with the perspective of perfect spirit creatures, whose knowledge, experience, and strength are far superior to our own?—Hebrews 2:6, 7.

⁸ Through his use of human writers, Jehovah provided just what we need—a record that is “inspired of God” yet retains the human element. (2 Timothy 3:16) How did he achieve this? In many cases, he evidently allowed the writers to use their own mental faculties in selecting “the delightful words and the writing of correct words of truth.” (Ecclesiastes 12:10, 11) This explains the Bible’s diversity of style; the writings reflect the background and personality of the individual writers.* Yet, these men “spoke from God as they were borne along by holy spirit.” (2 Peter 1:21) Hence, the end product truly is “the word of God.”—1 Thessalonians 2:13.

* For example, David, who was a shepherd, uses examples drawn from pastoral life. (Psalm 23) Matthew, who had been a tax collector, makes numerous references to numbers and money values. (Matthew 17:27; 26:15; 27:3) Luke, who was a physician, uses words that reflect his medical background.—Luke 4:38; 14:2; 16:20.

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7. How is Jehovah’s wisdom seen in his use of human penmen?
 8. In what way were the Bible writers allowed to use their own mental faculties? (See also footnote.)

commanded Moses his servant, so Moses commanded Joshua,^a and so Joshua did. He left nothing undone of all that Jehovah had commanded Moses.^b

16 Joshua conquered all this land, the mountainous region, all the Neg'eb,^c all the land of Go'a-bah,^e and the mountainous region of Israel and its She-phe'lah,^d the Ar'a-bah,^e and the mountainous region of Israel and its She-phe'lah,^e **17** from Mount Ha'lak, which goes up to Se'ir, and as far as Ba'al-gad^f in the Valley of Leb'a-non at the base of Mount Her'mon,^g and he captured all their kings and defeated them, putting them to death. **18** Joshua waged war with all these kings for quite some time. **19** There was no city that made peace with the Israelites except the Hi'vites inhabiting Gib'e-on.^h They conquered all the others by war.ⁱ **20** It was Jehovah who allowed their hearts to become stubborn^j so that they waged war against Israel, in order for him to devote them to destruction without any favorable consideration.^k They were to be annihilated, just as Jehovah had commanded Moses.^l

21 At that time Joshua wiped out the An'a-kim^m from the mountainous region, from Heb'ron, De'bir, A'nab, and all the mountainous region of Judah and all the mountainous region of Israel. Joshua devoted them and their cities to destruction.ⁿ **22** There were no An'a-kim left in the land of the Israelites; they remained^o only in Gaz'a,^p in Gath,^q and in Ash'dod.^r **23** So Joshua took control of all the land, just as Jehovah had promised Moses,^s and then Joshua gave it as an inheritance to Israel by their shares to be divided among their tribes.^t And the land had rest from war.^u

11:16 *Or "its foothills."

CHAP. 11

- a De 3:28
- De 7:1
- De 31:7
- b De 4:2, 5
- c Nu 13:17
- De 1:7
- d Jos 10:40, 41
- e Jos 12:7, 8
- f Jos 13:1, 5
- g De 4:48
- Jos 13:8, 11
- h Jos 9:7, 15
- i De 20:17
- j De 2:30
- k Ex 34:12
- De 7:2
- l De 20:16
- m Nu 13:22
- De 1:28
- Jos 15:13, 14
- n Le 27:29
- Jos 11:12
- Jos 24:11
- o Ex 23:28-30
- p Jg 1:18
- q 1Sa 17:4
- r 2Ch 26:1, 6
- s Ex 23:27
- De 11:23
- t Nu 26:53, 54
- Jos 14:1
- u Jos 14:15
- Jos 21:44
- Jos 23:1

Second Col.

CHAP. 12

- a De 2:24
- b De 3:8
- c De 4:47-49
- d Nu 21:23, 24
- e De 3:12
- f Nu 21:13
- g Joh 6:1
- h De 3:27
- i Nu 21:33-35
- j De 3:11
- k De 29:7
- l Jos 13:13
- m Nu 21:26
- n Nu 21:23, 24
- Nu 21:33-35
- o Nu 32:33
- De 3:12, 13
- p Jos 13:1, 5
- q Jos 1:4
- r Jos 11:16, 17
- s De 2:12

12 Now these are the kings of the land whom the Israelites defeated, whose land they took possession of on the east side of the Jordan, from the Ar'non Valley^{*a} up to Mount Her'mon^b and all the Ar'a-bah toward the east:^c **2** King Si'hon^d of the Am'or-ites, who lived in Hesh'bon and ruled from A-ro'er,^e which was on the rim of the Ar'non Valley,^{*f} and from the middle of the valley, and half of Gil'e-ad as far as the Valley[#] of Jab'bok, the boundary of the Am'mon-ites. **3** He also ruled over the Ar'a-bah as far as the Sea of Chin'ne-reth^{*g} toward the east and as far as the Sea of the Ar'a-bah, the Salt Sea,[#] to the east in the direction of Beth-jesh'i-moth, and toward the south under the slopes of Pis'gah.^h

4 Also the territory of King Ogⁱ of Ba'shan, who was one of the last of the Reph'a-im^j and who lived in Ash'ta-roth and Ed're-i **5** and ruled in Mount Her'mon, in Sal'e-cah, and in all Ba'shan,^k as far as the boundary of the Gesh'ur-ites and the Ma-ac'a-thites,^l and half of Gil'e-ad, to the territory of King Si'hon of Hesh'bon.^m

6 Moses the servant of Jehovah and the Israelites defeated them,ⁿ after which Moses the servant of Jehovah gave their land as a possession to the Reu'ben-ites, the Gad'ites, and the half tribe of Ma-nas'seh.^o

7 These are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the Israelites defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Ba'al-gad^p in the Valley of Leb'a-non^q and as far as Mount Ha'lak,^r which goes up to Se'ir,^s after which Joshua gave their land to the tribes

12:1, 2 *Or "Wadi Arnon." 12:2 #Or "Wadi." 12:3 *That is, the lake of Gennesaret, or the Sea of Galilee. #That is, the Dead Sea.

of Israel as a possession by their shares,^a **8** in the mountainous region, in the She-phe'lah, in the Ar'a-bah, on the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the Neg'eb^b—the land of the Hit'tites, the Am'or-ites,^c the Ca'naan-ites, the Per'iz-zites, the Hi'vites, and the Jeb'u-sites:^d

9 The king of Jer'i-cho,^e one; the king of A'i,^f which was beside Beth'el, one;

10 the king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Heb'ron,^g one;

11 the king of Jar'muth, one; the king of La'chish, one;

12 the king of Eg'lon, one; the king of Ge'zer,^h one;

13 the king of De'bir,ⁱ one; the king of Ge'der, one;

14 the king of Hor'mah, one; the king of A'rad, one;

15 the king of Lib'nah,^j one; the king of A-dul'lam, one;

16 the king of Mak-ke'dah,^k one; the king of Beth'el,^l one;

17 the king of Tap'pu-ah, one; the king of He'pher, one;

18 the king of A'phek, one; the king of Las-shar'on, one;

19 the king of Ma'don, one; the king of Ha'zor,^m one;

20 the king of Shim'ron-me'ron, one; the king of Ach'shaph, one;

21 the king of Ta'a-nach, one; the king of Me-gid'do, one;

22 the king of Ke'desh, one; the king of Jok'ne-amⁿ in Car'mel, one;

23 the king of Dor on the slopes of Dor,^o one; the king of Goi'im in Gil'gal, one;

24 the king of Tir'zah, one; a total of 31 kings.

CHAP. 12

a Jos 11:23

b Jos 10:40
Jos 11:16

c Ge 15:16

d Ex 3:8
Ex 23:23
De 7:1

e Jos 6:2

f Jos 8:29

g Jos 10:23, 26

h Jos 10:33

i Jos 10:38

j Jos 10:29

k Jos 10:28

l Jg 1:22

m Jos 11:1, 10

n Jos 21:34

o Jos 11:1, 2

Second Col.

CHAP. 13

a Jos 23:1

Jos 24:29

b Ex 23:29, 30

c 1Sa 27:8

d Ge 10:19

e Jg 3:1, 3
1Sa 6:4

f Jos 15:20, 46

g Jg 14:19

h 2Sa 21:19

i 1Sa 5:10

j De 2:23

k Jg 1:31

l 1Ki 5:18

m Nu 34:2, 8

n De 3:25

o Jos 11:8

p Jg 3:1-3

q Ex 23:30

r Nu 34:17
Jos 14:1

s Nu 33:54

t Nu 32:33
Jos 22:4

u De 3:12

v Nu 21:13

13 Now Joshua had grown old and was advanced in years.^a So Jehovah said to him: "You have grown old and are advanced in years; but much of the land remains to be taken in possession.* **2** This is the land remaining:^b all the regions of the Phi-lis'tines and all the Gesh'-ur-ites^c **3** (from the branch of the Nile* that is east of[#] Egypt up to the border of Ek'ron to the north, which used to be considered Ca'naan-ite territory)^d including that of the five lords of the Phi-lis'tines^e—the Gaz'ites, the Ash'dod-ites,^f the Ash'ke-lon-ites,^g the Git'tites,^h and the Ek'-ron-ites;ⁱ that of the Av'vim/**4** to the south; all the land of the Ca'naan-ites; Me-ar'ah, which belongs to the Si-do'ni-ans,^k as far as A'phek, to the border of the Am'or-ites; **5** the land of the Ge'bal-ites^l and all of Leb'a-non toward the east, from Ba'al-gad at the base of Mount Her'mon to Le'bo-ha'math;^m **6** all the inhabitants of the mountainous region from Leb'a-nonⁿ to Mis're-photh-ma'im;^o and all the Si-do'ni-ans.^p I will drive them out* before the Israelites.^q You have only to assign it to Israel as an inheritance, just as I have commanded you.^r **7** Now you must apportion this land as an inheritance to the nine tribes and the half tribe of Ma-nas'-seh."^s

8 With the other half tribe, the Reu'ben-ites and the Gad'ites took their inheritance that Moses gave them on the east side of the Jordan, just as Moses the servant of Jehovah had given them:^t **9** from A-ro'er,^u which is on the rim of the Ar'non Valley,^v and the city that

13:1 *Or "be conquered." **13:3** *Or "from Shihor." #Lit., "in front of." **13:5** *Or "the entrance of Hamath." **13:6** *Or "dispossess them." **13:9** *Or "Wadi Arnon."

is in the middle of the valley, and all the tableland* of Med'e-ba as far as Di'bon; **10** and all the cities of King Si'hon of the Am'or-ites, who reigned in Hesh'bon, up to the border of the Am'mon-ites;^a **11** also Gil'e-ad and the territory of the Gesh'ur-ites and the Ma-ac'a-thites^b and all Mount Her'mon and all Ba'shan^c as far as Sal'e-cah;^d **12** all the royal realm of Og in Ba'shan, who reigned in Ash'ta-roth and in Ed're-i. (He was one of the last of the Reph'a-im).^e Moses defeated them and drove them out.^f **13** But the Israelites did not drive out^g the Gesh'ur-ites and the Ma-ac'a-thites, for Gesh'ur and Ma'a-cath live in the midst of Israel to this day.

14 It was only to the tribe of the Levites that he did not give an inheritance.^h The offerings made by fire to Jehovah the God of Israel are their inheritance,ⁱ just as he promised them.^j

15 Then Moses gave an inheritance to the tribe of the Reu'ben-ites by their families, **16** and their territory was from A-ro'er, which is on the rim of the Ar'non Valley,* and the city in the middle of the valley, and all the tableland by Med'e-ba; **17** Hesh'bon and all its towns^k on the tableland, Di'bon, Ba'moz-ba'al, Beth-ba'al-me'on,^l **18** Ja'haz,^m Ked'e-moth,ⁿ Meph'a-ath,^o **19** Kir-i-a-tha'im, Sib'mah,^p and Ze'reth-sha'har on the mountain of the valley,^q **20** Beth-pe'or, the slopes of Pis-gah,^q Beth-jesh'i-moth,^r **21** all the cities of the tableland, and all the royal realm of King Si'hon of the Am'or-ites, who reigned in Hesh'bon.^s Moses defeated him^t

13:9 *Or "plateau." 13:12 *Or "dis-possessed them." 13:13 *Or "dispos- sess." 13:16 *Or "Wadi Arnon." 13:19, 27 *Or "low plain."

CHAP. 13

- a Nu 21:23, 24
- b De 3:14
- c Jos 17:1
- d 1Ch 5:11
- e De 3:11
- f Nu 21:23, 24
Nu 21:33-35
- g Nu 33:55
Jos 23:12, 13
- h Nu 18:20
De 10:9
De 12:12
- i Le 7:33-35
De 18:1
- j Nu 18:24
- k Nu 21:25, 26
- l Nu 32:37, 38
- m Nu 21:23
- n De 2:26
- o Jos 21:8, 37
- p Nu 32:37, 38
- q De 3:16, 17
- r Nu 33:48, 49
- s Nu 21:25
- t De 2:30

Second Col.

- a Nu 31:7, 8
- b Nu 22:5
2Pe 2:15
- c Nu 22:7
- d Nu 32:34, 35
- e Jos 12:2
Jg 11:13
- f 2Sa 11:1
- g Nu 21:26
- h Ge 32:2
Jos 21:8, 38
- i Nu 32:34, 36
- j Ge 33:17
- k Nu 21:26
- l Nu 34:2, 11
De 3:16, 17
Joh 6:1
- m De 3:13
- n 1Ch 6:77, 80
- o Nu 32:40, 41
De 3:14
- p Nu 21:33
- q Nu 32:39

and the Mid'i-an-ite chieftains E'vi, Re'kem, Zur, Hur, and Re'ba,^a vassals* of Si'hon who were dwelling in the land. **22** Ba-laam^b the son of Be'or, the divin-er,^c was one whom the Israelites killed with the sword along with the rest who were slain. **23** The boundary of the Reu'ben-ites was the Jordan; and this territory was the inheritance of the Reu'ben-ites by their families, with the cities and their settlements.

24 Furthermore, Moses gave an inheritance to the tribe of Gad, the Gad'ites by their fam-ilies, **25** and their territory in-cluded Ja'zer^d and all the cit-ies of Gil'e-ad and half of the land of the Am'mon-ites^e as far as A-ro'er, which faces Rab'-bah;^f **26** and from Hesh'bon^g to Ra'math-miz'peh and Bet'o-nim, and from Ma-ha-na'im^h to the border of De'bir; **27** and in the valley,^h Beth-ha'ram, Beth-nim'rah,ⁱ Suc'coth,^j and Za'phon, the rest of the royal realm of King Si'hon of Hesh'bon,^k with the Jordan as the border from the lower end of the Sea of Chin'-ne-reth^l on the east side of the Jordan. **28** This was the inher-itage of the Gad'ites by their families, with the cities and their settlements.

29 Further, Moses gave an in-heritance to the half tribe of Ma-nas'seh, to half of the tribe of Ma-nas'seh by their families.^m **30** And their territory extended from Ma-ha-na'imⁿ and took in all of Ba'shan, all the royal realm of King Og of Ba'shan, and all the tent villages of Ja'ir^o in Ba'shan, 60 towns. **31** And half of Gil'e-ad, and Ash'ta-roth and Ed're-i,^p the cities of the royal realm of Og in Ba'shan, went to the sons of Ma'chir^q the son of Ma-nas'-

13:21 *That is, kings who were subject to Sihon. 13:27 ^hThat is, the lake of Gennesaret, or the Sea of Galilee.

seh, to half of the sons of Ma'chir by their families.

32 These were the inheritances that Moses gave them on the desert plains of Mo'ab beyond the Jordan, east of Jericho.^a

33 But to the tribe of the Levites, Moses did not give an inheritance.^b Jehovah the God of Israel is their inheritance, just as he promised them.^c

14 Now this is what the Israelites took as an inheritance in the land of Ca'naan, which El-e-a'zar the priest and Joshua the son of Nun and the heads of the paternal houses of the tribes of Israel gave them to inherit.^d **2** Their inheritance was by lot,^e just as Jehovah had commanded through Moses for the nine and a half tribes.^f **3** Moses had given the inheritance of the other two and a half tribes on the other side* of the Jordan,^g and to the Levites he did not give an inheritance among them.^h **4** The descendants of Joseph were considered two tribes,ⁱ Ma-nas'seh and E'phra-im;^j and they did not give a share in the land to the Levites, except cities^k to dwell in and their pastures for their livestock and their property.^l **5** So the Israelites apportioned the land just as Jehovah had commanded Moses.

6 Then the men of Judah approached Joshua in Gil'gal,^m and Ca'lebⁿ the son of Je-phun'neh the Ken'iz-zite said to him: "You well know what Jehovah said^o to Moses the man of the true God^p about you and me at Ka'desh-bar'ne-a.^q **7** I was 40 years old when Moses the servant of Jehovah sent me out of Ka'desh-bar'ne-a to spy out the land,^r and I returned with a forthright

14:3 *That is, the east side.

CHAP. 13

a Nu 32:33
b De 10:9
Jos 18:7
c Nu 18:24
Nu 26:62, 63
De 18:1

CHAP. 14

d Nu 34:17
Jos 19:51
e Nu 26:55
Nu 33:54
Pr 16:33
Ac 13:19
f Nu 34:13
g Nu 32:29
h De 10:9
Jos 13:14
i Ge 48:5
1Ch 5:2
j Ge 48:19, 20
k Nu 35:7
Jos 21:1, 2
l Nu 35:2, 5
m Jos 4:19
Jos 10:43
n Nu 32:11, 12
o De 1:35, 36
p Nu 12:7, 8
q Nu 13:26
r Nu 13:2, 6

Second Col.

a Nu 13:30
Nu 14:6, 7
b Nu 14:24
Nu 32:11, 12
c De 1:36
d Jos 21:45
e Nu 14:29, 30
f Nu 14:33
g Nu 13:33
h Nu 13:22, 28
i Nu 14:8
Ro 8:31
j Jos 15:14
Jg 1:20
k Jos 10:36, 37
Jos 15:13
Jos 21:11, 12
1Ch 6:55, 56
l Nu 14:24
De 1:35, 36
Jos 14:8
m Ge 23:2
n Le 26:6
Jos 11:23

CHAP. 15

o Nu 26:55
p Ge 36:19

report.^{*a} **8** Although my brothers who went up with me caused the people to lose heart,^{*} I followed Jehovah my God wholeheartedly.^{#b} **9** Moses swore on that day, saying: "The land on which your foot has walked will become a lasting inheritance for you and your sons, because you have followed Jehovah my God wholeheartedly."^c **10** Now just as he promised,^d Jehovah has preserved me alive^e these 45 years since Jehovah made this promise to Moses when Israel walked in the wilderness;^f I am still here today, 85 years old. **11** And today I am as strong as on the day Moses sent me out. My strength is now as it was then, for war and for other activities. **12** Therefore, give me this mountainous region that Jehovah promised on that day. Though you heard on that day that there were An'a-kim^g there with great fortified cities,^h surely^{*} Jehovah will be with me,ⁱ and I will drive them out,[#] just as Jehovah promised."^j

13 So Joshua blessed him and gave Heb'ron to Ca'leb the son of Je-phun'neh as an inheritance.^k **14** That is why Heb'ron belongs to Ca'leb the son of Je-phun'neh the Ken'iz-zite as an inheritance to this day, because he followed Jehovah the God of Israel wholeheartedly.^l **15** The name of Heb'ron was previously Kir'i-ath-ar'ba^m (Ar'ba was the great man among the An'a-kim). And the land had rest from war.ⁿ

15 The land allotted^{*o} to the tribe of Judah for their families extended to the boundary of E'dom,^p the wilderness of

14:7 *Lit., "with a word just as with my heart." **14:8** *Lit., "caused the heart of the people to melt." #Lit., "fully; completely." **14:12** *Or "likely." #Or "dispossess them." **15:1** *Or "given by lot."

Zin, to the Neg'eb at its southern end. **2** Their southern boundary ran from the extremity of the Salt Sea,*^a from the bay that faces southward. **3** And it extended south to the ascent of A'krab'bim,^b passed over to Zin, then went up from the south to Ka'desh-bar'ne-a,^c over to Hez'ron, up to Ad'dar, and went around toward Kar'ka. **4** Then it passed on to Az'mon^d and extended to the Wadi* of Egypt,^e and the boundary ended at the Sea.^f This was their southern boundary.

5 The eastern boundary was the Salt Sea* up to the end of the Jordan, and the boundary at the northern corner was at the bay of the sea, at the end of the Jordan.^f **6** The boundary went up to Beth-hog'lah^g and passed over at the north of Beth-ar'a-bah,^h and the boundary went up to the stone of Bo'hanⁱ the son of Reu'ben. **7** The boundary went up to De'bir at the Valley* of A'chor^j and turned northward to Gil'gal,^k which is in front of the ascent of A-dum'mim that is south of the wadi, and the boundary passed over to the waters of En-she'mesh^l and ended at En-ro'gel.^m **8** The boundary went up to the Valley of the Son of Hin'nomⁿ to the slope of the Jeb'-u-site^o at the south, that is, Jeru-salem,^p and the boundary went up to the top of the mountain that faces the Valley of Hin'nom to the west, which is at the extremity of the Valley* of Reph'-a-im to the north. **9** And the boundary was marked from the top of the mountain to the spring of the waters of Neph-to'ah^q and extended to the cities of Mount E'phron; and the boundary was marked to Ba'al-ah, that

15:2, 5 *That is, the Dead Sea. 15:4 *See Glossary. ^fThat is, the Great Sea, the Mediterranean. 15:7, 8 *Or "Low Plain."

CHAP. 15

- a Nu 34:2, 3
- b Jg 1:36
- c Nu 34:4
- d Nu 34:2, 5
- e 1Ki 8:65
- f Nu 34:12
- g Jos 18:19, 20
- h Jos 18:21, 22
- i Jos 18:17, 20
- j Jos 7:26
- k Jos 5:8, 9
- l Jos 18:17, 20
- m 1Ki 1:9
- n Jos 18:16, 20
- 2Ki 23:10
- Jer 7:31
- o Jg 1:21
- p Jos 18:28
- Jg 19:10
- q Jos 18:15, 20

Second Col.

- a Jos 9:16, 17
- 2Sa 6:2
- 1Ch 13:6
- b Jos 21:8, 16
- c Jos 19:43, 48
- Jg 14:1, 2
- 2Ch 28:18
- d 1Sa 5:10
- 1Sa 7:14
- 2Ki 1:2
- e Nu 34:2, 6
- De 11:24
- f Nu 13:30
- De 1:36
- g Ge 23:2
- Ge 35:27
- Jos 20:7
- Jos 21:11, 12
- h Nu 13:33
- Jos 11:21
- i Nu 13:22
- Jg 1:10, 20
- j Jos 10:38, 39
- k Jg 3:9-11
- l 1Ch 4:13
- m 1Ch 2:49
- n Jg 1:14, 15

is, Kir'i-ath-je'a-rim.^a **10** The boundary went around from Ba'al-ah westward to Mount Se'ir and passed over to the slope of Mount Je'a-rim at the north, that is, Ches'a-lon, and it went down to Beth-she'mesh^b and passed over to Tim'nah.^c **11** And the boundary extended to the slope of Ek'ron^d to the north, and the boundary was marked to Shik'ke-ron and passed over to Mount Ba'al-ah and extended to Jab'ne-el, and the boundary ended at the sea.

12 The western boundary was at the Great Sea*^e and its coast. This was the boundary of the descendants of Judah by their families on all sides.

13 And to Ca'leb^f the son of Je-phun'neh, he gave a share among the descendants of Judah at the order of Jehovah to Joshua, namely, Kir'i-ath-ar'ba (Ar'ba was the father of A'nak), that is, Heb'ron.^g **14** So Ca'leb drove out from there the three sons of A'nak:^h She'shai, A-hi'man, and Tal'mai,ⁱ descendants of A'nak. **15** Then he went up from there against the inhabitants of De'bir.^j (The name of De'bir was previously Kir'i-ath-se'pher.) **16** Ca'leb then said: "To the man who strikes Kir'i-ath-se'pher and captures it, I will give my daughter Ach'sah as a wife." **17** And Oth'ni-el^k the son of Ke'naz,^l Ca'leb's brother, captured it. So he gave him his daughter Ach'sah^m as a wife. **18** While she was going home, she urged him to ask her father for a field. Then she dismounted from her donkey.* Ca'leb asked her: "What do you want?"ⁿ **19** She said: "Please grant me a blessing, for you have given me a piece of land in the south;* give me also

15:12 *That is, the Mediterranean. 15:18 *Or possibly, "she clapped her hands while on the donkey." 15:19 *Or "the Negeb."

Gul'loth-ma'im.* So he gave her Upper Gul'loth and Lower Gul'loth.

20 This was the inheritance of the tribe of Judah by their families.

21 The cities at the extremity of the tribe of Judah toward the boundary of E'dom^a in the south were: Kab'ze-el, E'der, Ja'gur, **22** Ki'nah, Di-mo'nah, A-da'dah, **23** Ke'desh, Ha'zor, Ith'nan, **24** Ziph, Te'lem, Be-a'loth, **25** Ha'zor-ha-dat'tah, and Ke'ri-oth-hez'ron, that is, Ha'zor, **26** A'mam, She'ma, Mo-la'dah,^b **27** Ha'zar-gad'dah, Hesh'mon, Beth-pel'et,^c **28** Ha'zar-shu'al, Be'er-she'ba,^d Biz-i-o-thi'ah, **29** Ba'al-ah, I'im, E'zem, **30** El-to'lal, Che'sil, Hor'mah,^e **31** Zik'lag,^f Mad-man'nah, San-san'nah, **32** Le-ba'oth, Shil'him, A'in, and Rim'mon^g—a total of 29 cities together with their settlements.

33 In the She-phe'lah,^h there were: Esh'ta-ol, Zo'rah,ⁱ Ash'nah, **34** Za-no'ah, En-gan'nim, Tap'pu-ah, E'nam, **35** Jar'muth, A-dul'lam,^j So'coh, A-ze'kah,^k **36** Sha'a-ra'im,^l Ad-i-tha'im, and Ge-de'rah and Ged-e-ro-tha'im*—14 cities and their settlements.

37 Ze'nan, Ha-dash'ah, Mig'dal-gad, **38** Di'le-an, Miz'peh, Jok'the-el, **39** La'chish,^m Boz'kath, Eg'lon, **40** Cab'bon, Lah'mam, Chit'lish, **41** Ge-de'roth, Beth-da'gon, Na'a-mah, and Mak-ke'dahⁿ—16 cities and their settlements.

42 Lib'nah,^o E'ther, A'shan,^p **43** Iph'tah, Ash'nah, Ne'zib, **44** Kei'lah, Ach'zib, and Ma-re'shah—nine cities and their settlements.

45 Ek'ron and its dependent* towns and its settlements; **46** from Ek'ron westward, all

15:19 *Meaning "Basins (Bowls) of Water." 15:36 *Or possibly, "Gederah and its sheepfolds." 15:45, 47 *Or "surrounding."

CHAP. 15

- a Nu 34:2, 3
De 2:5
b Jos 19:1, 2
c Ne 11:25, 26
d Ge 21:31
Jos 19:1-3
e Nu 14:44, 45
Jos 19:1, 4
Jg 1:17
f Jos 19:1, 5
1Sa 27:5, 6
1Ch 12:1
g Jos 19:1, 7
Ne 11:25, 29
h Jg 1:9
i Jos 19:40, 41
Jg 16:31
j 1Sa 22:1
k 1Sa 17:1
l 1Sa 17:52
m 2Ki 18:14
n Jos 10:28
o Jos 10:29
2Ki 8:22
p Jos 19:1, 7

Second Col.

- a 1Sa 5:1
b Ge 10:19
c Nu 34:2, 5
d Jos 21:8, 14
e 1Ch 6:57
f Jos 11:16
g 2Sa 15:12
h Jos 14:15
i 1Sa 23:25
1Sa 25:2, 3
j 1Sa 23:14
k Ge 38:12
l Jos 9:16, 17
Jos 18:11, 14
1Sa 7:1
m Jos 18:21, 22
n 1Sa 23:29
o Ge 10:15, 16
p 1Ch 11:4
q Nu 33:55
Jg 1:8, 21
Jg 19:11
2Sa 5:6

CHAP. 16

- r Nu 26:55
Nu 33:54
Pr 16:33
s Ge 49:22
De 33:13

that is alongside Ash'dod and their settlements.

47 Ash'dod,^a its dependent* towns and its settlements; Gaz'a,^b its dependent towns and its settlements, down to the Wadi of Egypt, the Great Sea,^c and the adjacent region.^c

48 And in the mountainous region, Sha'mir, Jat'tir,^d So'coh, **49** Dan'nah, Kir'i-ath-san'nah, that is, De'bir, **50** A'nab, Esh-te-moh,^e A'nim, **51** Go'shen,^f Ho'lon, and Gi'loh^g—11 cities and their settlements.

52 Arab, Du'mah, E'shan, **53** Ja'nim, Beth-tap'pu-ah, A-phe'kah, **54** Hum'tah, Kir'i-ath-ar'ba, that is, Heb'ron,^h and Zi'or—nine cities and their settlements.

55 Ma'on,ⁱ Car'mel, Ziph,^j Jut'tah, **56** Jez're-el, Jok'de-am, Za-no'ah, **57** Ka'in, Gib'e-ah, and Tim'nah^k—ten cities and their settlements.

58 Hal'hul, Beth-zur, Ge'dor, **59** Ma'a-rath, Beth-a'noth, and El'te-kon—six cities and their settlements.

60 Kir'i-ath-ba'al, that is, Kir'i-ath-je'a-rim,^l and Rab'bah—two cities and their settlements.

61 In the wilderness, Beth-ar'a-bah,^m Mid'din, Se-ca'cah, **62** Nib'shan, the City of Salt, and En-ged'iⁿ—six cities and their settlements.

63 As for the Jeb'u-sites^o who were dwelling in Jerusalem,^p the men of Judah were not able to drive them away,^q so the Jeb'u-sites continue dwelling with the people of Judah in Jerusalem to this day.

16 And the land that fell by lot*^r to the descendants of Joseph^s was from the Jordan at Jer'i-cho to the waters east of

15:47 *That is, the Mediterranean. 16:1 *Or "was allotted."

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 29

Song 37 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

c/ chap. 18 ¶1-8 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

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

Theocratic Ministry School Review (20 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 89

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

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

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

Song 124 and Prayer

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

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

Theocratic Ministry School Review

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

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

Theocratic Ministry School Review

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

1. How do we view the command at Deuteronomy 14:1 prohibiting self mutilation during a period of mourning for a dead person?

[w04 9/15 p. 27 par. 5] Self-mutilation shows disrespect for the human body, may be connected with false religion, and must be avoided. (1 Kings 18:25-28) Our hope in the resurrection makes such an extreme expression of mourning for the dead inappropriate.

2. What was the objective of having the kings of Israel make a copy of God's Law and 'read from it all the days of their life'? (Deut. 17:18-20)

[w02 6/15 p. 12 par. 4] ⁴ Yes, the king that Jehovah would choose for his worshipers was to make a personal copy of writings that you can find in your Bible. Then the king was to read in that copy daily, repeatedly. That was not a memory exercise. It was study, and it had a beneficial objective. The king who would have Jehovah's approval needed to pursue such study to develop and retain the right heart attitude. He also needed to study those inspired writings to be a successful, insightful king.—2 Kings 22:8-13; Proverbs 1:1-4.

3. Why is it stated that "you must not plow with a bull and a donkey together," and how does the command about uneven yoking apply to Christians? (Deut. 22:10)

[w03 10/15 p. 32] **"Do Not Become Unevenly Yoked"**

AS YOU can see here, the camel and the bull that are plowing together look very uncomfortable. The yoke linking them together—intended for two animals of similar size and strength—makes both beasts suffer. Concerned about the welfare of such draft animals, God told the Israelites: "You must not plow with a bull and an ass together." (Deuteronomy 22:10) The same principle would apply to a bull and a camel.

Normally, a farmer would not impose such a hardship on his animals. But if he did not have two bulls, he might yoke together two animals he had available. Apparently, this is what the 19th-century farmer in the illustration decided to do. Because of the difference in their size and weight, the weaker animal would have to struggle to keep up the pace, and the stronger would have a greater burden to bear.

The apostle Paul used the illustration of an uneven yoking to teach us an important lesson. "Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers," he wrote. "For what fellowship do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what sharing does light have with darkness?" (2 Corinthians 6:14) How could a Christian become unevenly yoked?

One way would be if a Christian chose a marriage mate who did not share his or her beliefs. Such a union would prove uncomfortable for both parties, the couple disagreeing on fundamental issues.

When Jehovah originated marriage, he gave the wife the role of "a complement," or "counterpart." (Genesis 2:18; footnote) Likewise, through the prophet Malachi, God referred to a wife as a "partner." (Malachi 2:14) Our Creator wants married couples to pull together in the same spiritual direction, sharing the burdens and reaping the benefits equitably.

By marrying "only in the Lord," a Christian shows respect for our heavenly Father's counsel. (1 Corinthians 7:39) This lays a foundation for a united marriage, which can bring praise and honor to God as both spouses serve him as 'genuine yokefellow' in a special sense.—Philippians 4:3.

4. Why was seizing “a hand mill or its upper millstone as security for a loan” prohibited? (Deut. 24:6)

[w04 9/15 p. 26 par. 3] Why was seizing “a hand mill or its upper grindstone as a pledge” likened to seizing “a soul”? A hand mill and its upper grindstone represented a person’s “soul,” or his means of life. Seizing either of these would deprive the entire family of its daily supply of bread.

5. With what attitude were the Israelites to be obedient, and what should be the motivating force for our service to Jehovah? (Deut. 28:47)

[w10 9/15 p. 8 par. 4]⁴ With what attitude were the Israelites to be obedient? God’s Law stated that he would be displeased if his people failed to serve him “with rejoicing and joy of heart.” (*Read Deuteronomy 28:45-47.*) Jehovah deserves more than mechanical obedience to specific orders, such as can be performed even by animals or demons. (Mark 1:27; Jas. 3:3) Genuine obedience to God is an expression of love. It is marked by joy that stems from faith that Jehovah’s commandments are not burdensome and that “he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him.”—Heb. 11:6; 1 John 5:3.

6. What three basic requirements for life are found at Deuteronomy 30:19, 20?

[w10 2/15 p. 28 par. 17]¹⁷ First, ‘we must love Jehovah our God.’ We demonstrate that we love God by acting in accord with his righteous ways. (Matt. 22:37) Second, ‘we must listen to Jehovah’s voice’ by studying God’s Word and obeying his commandments. (1 John 5:3) This calls for our regular presence at Christian meetings, where the Bible is discussed. (Heb. 10:23-25) Third, ‘we must stick to Jehovah.’ Regardless of what we must face, let us always exercise faith in God and follow his Son.—2 Cor. 4:16-18.

7. Are we required to utter in a low voice all the words we read from Genesis to Revelation? Explain. (Josh. 1:8)

[w13 4/15 p. 7 par. 4]⁴ Jehovah does not want his servants to rush through a reading of his Word. He told Joshua of ancient times: “This book of the law should not depart from your *mouth*, and you must in an *undertone* read in it day and night.” (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2) Does this instruction require that you literally utter in a low voice all the words you read from Genesis to Revelation? No. It means that you should read at a pace that allows for meditation. When you read the Bible “in an undertone,” it will help you to fix attention on portions that are especially useful and encouraging to you at that moment. On finding such phrases, verses, or accounts, read them slowly, perhaps forming the words with the tongue and lips. The full weight of a Scriptural point may strike you in a deeply personal way. Why is this important? Because getting the sense of God’s counsel gives you strong motivation to put it into practice.

8. Who is “the prince of Jehovah’s army” mentioned at Joshua 5:14, 15, and how can this account encourage us?

[w04 12/1 p. 9 par. 2] Who is “the prince of the army of Jehovah”? The prince who comes to strengthen Joshua as the conquest of the Promised Land begins is likely none other than “the Word”—Jesus Christ in his prehuman existence. (John 1:1; Daniel 10:13) How strengthening it is to have the assurance that the glorified Jesus Christ is with God’s people today as they engage in spiritual warfare!

9. What led to Achan's fall into sin, and what can we learn from his bad example? (Josh. 7:20, 21)

[w10 4/15 pp. 20-21 pars. 2, 5] ² What we look at, however, can also be to our detriment. The link between our sight and our mind is so strong that what we see with our eyes can initiate or intensify ambitions and desires in our heart. And because we live in a depraved and self-gratifying world ruled by Satan the Devil, we are bombarded with images and propaganda that can easily lead us astray—even if we would give them only a quick glance. (1 John 5:19) It is no wonder, then, that the psalmist implored God: “Make my eyes pass on from seeing what is worthless; preserve me alive in your own way.”—Ps. 119:37.

⁵ Centuries later, the Israelite Achan's eyes seduced him into stealing some items from the captured city of Jericho. God had commanded that all things in that city should be destroyed except for certain things that were to be given to the treasury of Jehovah. The Israelites were warned: “Keep away from the thing devoted to destruction, for fear you may get a desire” and take some items from the city. When Achan disobeyed, the people of Israel suffered defeat at the city of Ai, and a number of them died. Achan did not admit to his theft until he was exposed. “When I got to see” the items, Achan said, “then I wanted them, and I took them.” The desire of his eyes led to his destruction, along with “everything that was his.” (Josh. 6:18, 19; 7:1-26) Achan desired in his heart what was forbidden to him.

10. How does Caleb's example serve as encouragement for us today? (Josh. 14:10-13)

[w04 12/1 p. 12 par. 2] Though 85 years of age, Caleb asks for the difficult assignment of clearing out the region of Hebron. The area is occupied by the Anakim—men of unusual size. With Jehovah's help, this seasoned warrior succeeds, and Hebron becomes a city of refuge. (Joshua 15:13-19; 21:11-13) Caleb's example encourages us not to shy away from difficult theocratic assignments.

Jehovah's Warm Appeal:
"Be Wise, My Son"
(Proverbs 27:11)

1. Young man and young woman,
do give your heart to me.
My foe who now taunts me
will then be made to see.
Your youth and devotion
to me you freely give;
You show all the world
that for me you really live.

(CHORUS)

*Beloved son and precious daughter,
Be wise and make my heart rejoice.
That out of your own heart you serve me,
And furnish praise by your own choice.*

2. Rejoice and take pleasure
in giving me your all,
And though you may stumble,
I'll raise you if you fall.
No matter who fails you
or proves to be untrue,
Take comfort in knowing
I'll always cherish you.

(Chorus)

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 29

Song 37 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

c/ chap. 18 ¶1-8 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

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

Theocratic Ministry School Review (20 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 89

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

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

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

Song 124 and Prayer

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

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

Theocratic Ministry School Review

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

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

Perhaps we are busy in the work of the Lord, but we are discouraged because we do not see results. (1 Cor. 15:58) Or it may seem that those with whom we are studying are making little progress. Others we are helping may even turn their backs on Jehovah. What can we do to gain a balanced view of our ministry? One thing that can help us is that we grasp fully the meaning of Jesus' illustrations recorded in the Holy Scriptures. Let us consider three of those illustrations and see what lessons we can learn.

THE SOWER WHO SLEEPS

4 Read Mark 4:26-29. What is the meaning of Jesus' illustration about the sower who sleeps? The man in the illustration represents individual Kingdom proclaimers. The seed is the Kingdom message that is preached to honest-hearted ones. As in a normal routine of life, the sower "sleeps at night and rises up by day." The growing process takes place over a period of time, from the initial planting to the final harvesting. During that period "the seeds sprout and grow tall." This growth takes place "on its own," gradually and in stages. In a similar way, spiritual growth occurs gradually and in stages. When an individual progresses to the point that he is motivated to serve God, he bears fruit in the sense that he dedicates his life to Jehovah and gets baptized.

5 Why did Jesus tell this illustration? Jesus helps us to realize that Jehovah is the one who makes the truth grow in the hearts of "rightly disposed" ones. (Acts

4. What is the meaning of Jesus' illustration about the sower who sleeps?

5. Why did Jesus tell the illustration of the sower who sleeps?

13:48; 1 Cor. 3:7) We plant and water, but we do not control the growth. We cannot force it or speed it up. Just like the man in the illustration, we do not know how the growth takes place. It often goes unnoticed by us as we go about our normal, daily activities. In time, though, the Kingdom seed may bear fruit. The new disciple then joins us in the harvest work, and we benefit from his assistance.—John 4:36-38.

6 What can we learn from this illustration? First of all, we have to admit that we have no control over the spiritual growth of a Bible student. Modesty on our part will help us to avoid the temptation to pressure or force a student to get baptized. We do all we can to assist and support the person, but we humbly admit that ultimately the decision to make a dedication belongs to that person. Dedication is something that must spring from a willing heart motivated by love for God. Anything less would not be acceptable to Jehovah.—Ps. 51:12; 54:6; 110:3.

7 Second, understanding the lesson behind this illustration will help us not to be discouraged if we do not at first see results from our work. We need to be patient. (Jas. 5:7, 8) Even though the seed does not bear fruit, if we have done our best to help the student, we realize that this outcome is not a sign of unfaithfulness on our part. Jehovah allows the seed of truth to flourish only in a humble heart that is willing to make changes. (Matt. 13:23) So we should not judge the

6. What should we acknowledge with regard to spiritual growth?

7. 8. (a) What other lessons do we learn from Jesus' illustration of the sower who sleeps? Give an example. (b) What does this teach us about Jehovah and Jesus?

effectiveness of our ministry merely by the results. In Jehovah's eyes the success of our ministry is not determined by the response of those whom we teach. Rather, he treasures our faithful efforts regardless of the results.—**Read Luke 10:17-20; 1 Corinthians 3:8.**

⁸ Third, we do not always discern the changes that are taking place within a person. For example, a couple with whom a missionary had been studying approached him, asking to become unbaptized publishers. He reminded the couple that in order to qualify, they would have to stop smoking. Much to his surprise, they told him that they had quit several months before. Why did they quit? They had come to realize that Jehovah could see them smoking and that he hates hypocrisy. So their hearts motivated them to make a decision—either smoke in front of the missionary or stop altogether. Their newly developed love for Jehovah helped them to make the right decision. They had grown spiritually, even though the missionary had no idea of the change that had taken place.

THE DRAGNET

⁹ **Read Matthew 13:47-50.** What is the meaning of Jesus' illustration about the dragnet? Jesus likened the preaching of the Kingdom message to all mankind to the lowering of a large dragnet into the sea. Just as such a net indiscriminately catches large numbers of "fish of every kind," our preaching work attracts millions of people of all kinds. (Isa. 60:5) The large number of individuals who attend our conventions and the Memorial each year is evidence of this fact. Some

9. What is the meaning of the illustration about the dragnet?

of these symbolic fish are "fine" and are gathered into the Christian congregation. Others, though, are found to be "unsuitable"; not all those gathered prove to be acceptable to Jehovah.

¹⁰ **Why did Jesus tell this illustration?** The symbolic separating of fish does not refer to the final judgment during the great tribulation. Rather, it highlights what would happen during the last days of this wicked system. Jesus showed that not all those attracted to the truth will take a stand for Jehovah. Many have associated with us at our meetings. Others have been willing to study the Bible with us but are not willing to make a commitment. (1 Ki. 18:21) Still others are no longer associating with the Christian congregation. Some youths have been raised by Christian parents and yet have not developed a love for Jehovah's standards. No matter what the situation, Jesus emphasized that everyone needs to make a personal decision. Those who do are viewed by him as "the precious," or "desirable," things "of all the nations."—Hag. 2:7; ftn.

¹¹ **How can we benefit from the illustration of the dragnet?** Understanding the lesson of this illustration helps us to avoid being overly distraught or disappointed if a Bible student or one of our children does not make the truth his own. This may happen despite all our best efforts. Agreeing to have a Bible study or being raised around the truth does not automatically mean that a person will develop a strong personal relationship with Jehovah. Those unwilling

10. Why did Jesus tell the illustration about the dragnet?

11, 12. (a) How can we benefit from the illustration of the dragnet? (b) What does this teach us about Jehovah and Jesus?

WEEK STARTING MAY 26

Song 60 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

cl chap. 7 ¶¶18-22, box on p. 75 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Exodus 34-37 (10 min.)

No. 1: Exodus 34:1-16 (4 min. or less)

No. 2: Why Moral Restraint Was Not Removed When the Ten Commandments Came to an End—rs p. 349 ¶¶1-2 (5 min.)

No. 3: Abraham—Abundant Blessings Should Not Make a Man of God Proud—*it-1* p. 31 ¶¶6—p. 32 ¶¶1 (5 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 32

10 min: Start a Bible Study on the First Saturday. Discussion. Invite audience to relate experiences they had starting a Bible study on the first Saturday of the month. Demonstrate how a study may be started on the first Saturday in June, using the sample presentation on page 4. Encourage all to have a share.

10 min: Enduring Persecution Leads to a Fine Witness. (Luke 21:12, 13) Discussion based on the *2013 Yearbook*, page 124, paragraph 1; and page 128, paragraphs 1-2. Invite audience to comment on the lessons learned.

10 min: Question Box. Discussion by an elder. Invite adults to comment on how they benefited from being taught deeper Bible truths by their parents.

Song 88 and Prayer

QUESTION BOX

■ What must children learn in order to grow to spiritual maturity?

Christian parents do much to bring their children up “in the discipline and instruction of Jehovah.” (Eph. 6:4; ftn.) For example, parents have found it beneficial to consider the daily text with their children each morning. During family worship and on other occasions, families may watch and discuss a video together, talk about specific material from *Young People Ask* articles, reenact a Bible account, or have practice sessions. However, in order for children to “press on to maturity,” they must also be taught deeper Bible truths.—Heb. 6:1.

Consider what we teach those we meet in our territory. On the initial call or on a subsequent visit, we generally endeavor to start a Bible study using *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* After completing that publication, we use “*Keep Yourselves in God’s Love.*” Why? The *Bible Teach* book gives students a basic knowledge of the Scriptures. The “*God’s Love*” book teaches them how to apply Bible principles in everyday life. Consideration of both publications helps new ones to become “rooted” in Christ and “stabilized in the faith.” (Col.

2:6, 7) Would this material not also benefit our children? They too need to be taught about the ransom, the Kingdom, and the condition of the dead. Children also need to know why God permits suffering and how to identify the last days of this system of things. They must be convinced that Jehovah’s Witnesses have the truth. Young ones also need to understand Bible principles and how to train “their powers of discernment.” (Heb. 5:14) Of course, parents must consider the age and comprehension level of their children. However, many children have the ability to begin learning deeper Bible truths even when they are quite young.—Luke 2:42, 46, 47.

To help parents, study guides that are based on the *Bible Teach* book will appear on jw.org. Families can find these on our Web site by looking under BIBLE TEACHINGS > TEENAGERS. In the future, additional study guides will be prepared based on the “*God’s Love*” book. Of course, the printed version of these books can also be used. Parents can determine whether they will use this material during a portion of their Family Worship evening, when conducting a separate study with one of their children, or when training a child to do his own personal study.

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 29

Song 37 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

c/ chap. 18 ¶1-8 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

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

Theocratic Ministry School Review (20 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 89

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

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

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

Song 124 and Prayer

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

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

Theocratic Ministry School Review

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

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

124 Receive Them With Hospitality **(Acts 17:7)**

1. Jehovah shows sincere hospitality.

He cares for all without partiality.

He gives both rain and sun,

withholding these from none;

He fills our hearts with food and good cheer.

Whenever we show favor to lowly ones,

We imitate our God as beloved sons.

Our Father will repay the goodness we display,

Our kindness that is truly sincere.

2. We never know the good that may come about

When we see those in need and we help them out.

Though strangers they may be, in hospitality,

We lend a hand to care for their needs.

Like Lydia of old, we say: 'Be my guest.'

When they come to our home,

they find peace and rest.

Our Father is aware of all those ev'rywhere,

Who imitate his merciful deeds.