

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

DECEMBER 2015

MONTHLY THEME: “We must enter into the Kingdom of God through many tribulations.”—Acts 14:22.

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 7

Song 86 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

ia chap. 4 ¶1-15, box on p. 39 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: 2 Chronicles 10-14 (8 min.)

No. 1: 2 Chronicles 13:13-22 (3 min. or less)

No. 2: Epaphroditus—Theme: Have Respect for Trustworthy Men—*it-1* p. 731 (5 min.)

No. 3: What Is the Meaning of “Caesar”?—Glossary, *nwt* p. 1694 (5 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 85

10 min: “We Must Enter Into the Kingdom of God Through Many Tribulations.” Talk based on the monthly theme. Read and discuss Acts 14: 21, 22 and 1 Peter 4:12-14. (See *The Watchtower*, September 15, 2014, p. 13, pars. 3-6.) Briefly preview some of the Service Meeting parts for the month, and highlight how they relate to the theme. Encourage everyone to watch the video ‘Walk by Faith, Not by Sight’ in preparation for next week’s Service Meeting.

10 min: How Should You Answer? (Col. 4:6)

Talk based on the *Ministry School* book, page 69, paragraphs 1-3. Have two contrasting demonstrations. In the first demonstration, a publisher replies abruptly to a harsh comment made by the householder, resulting in a negative response. In the second, following the same harsh comment, the publisher briefly pauses, replies mildly, and receives a positive response from the householder.

10 min: “Take as a Pattern the Prophets—Habakkuk.” Questions and answers.

Song 74 and Prayer

Take as a Pattern the Prophets—Habakkuk

¹ As we face increasing wickedness in the world around us, we may feel as did Habakkuk:

1. Why may we be able to relate to the prophet Habakkuk?

kuk, who asked Jehovah: “Why do you make me witness wrongdoing? And why do you tolerate oppression?” (Hab. 1:3; 2 Tim. 3:1, 13) Meditating on Habakkuk’s message and faithful example can help to sustain us as we await Jehovah’s day of judgment.—2 Pet. 3:7.

² **Live by Faithfulness:** Instead of becoming paralyzed by self-pity, Habakkuk remained spiritually alert and active. (Hab. 2:1) Jehovah assured the prophet that His word would be fulfilled right on time and that “the righteous one will live by his faithfulness.” (Hab. 2:2-4) What does that mean for Christians living deep in the time of the end? More important than knowing *when* the end will come is being convinced that it *will* come. Faith moves us to remain watchful and give priority to the ministry.—Heb. 10:38, 39.

³ **Exult in Jehovah:** When Gog of Magog attacks Jehovah’s people, our faith will be tested. (Ezek. 38:2, 10-12) Conflict brings hardship, even to the eventual victors. Food may be scarce, property may be lost, and standards of living may drop. How will we react when difficulties arise? Habakkuk expected hardships, so he resolved to maintain his joy in serving Jehovah. (Hab. 3:16-19) “The joy of Jehovah” will also help us to endure future trials.—Neh. 8:10; Heb. 12:2.

⁴ Those whom Jehovah preserves through his coming day of judgment will continue to be educated in God’s way of life. (Hab. 2:14) Resurrected ones too will learn about Jehovah. Even now, may we use every opportunity to speak about Jehovah and his wonderful works!—Ps. 34:1; 71:17.

2. How can we show that we live by faithfulness today?

3. Why must we maintain our joy in serving Jehovah?

4. What joy can be ours now and in the future?

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 14

Song 50 and Prayer

□ Congregation Bible Study:

ia chap. 4 ¶16-31, review on p. 41 (30 min.)

□ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: 2 Chronicles 15-19 (8 min.)

No. 1: 2 Chronicles 16:1-9 (3 min. or less)

No. 2: Where Was Chaldea, and Who Were the Chaldeans?—Glossary, *nwt* p. 1695 (5 min.)

No. 3: Esau—Theme: Our Decisions Reveal Whether We Appreciate Sacred Things—*it-1* pp. 759-760 (5 min.)

□ Service Meeting:

Song 128

30 min: “Walk by Faith, Not by Sight.” Questions and answers. Use the information in the first and last paragraphs for a brief introduction and conclusion.

Song 133 and Prayer

‘Walk by Faith, Not by Sight’

Shortly before the siege and eventual destruction of Jerusalem, the apostle Paul wrote that Christians, as fine soldiers of Christ, must expect hardship and not give priority to their own comfort and pleasure. (2 Tim. 2:3, 4) With calamity about to overtake this ungodly world, we need strong faith to maintain our focus on spiritual things. (2 Cor. 4:18; 5:7) Watch the video ‘Walk by Faith, Not by Sight.’ (Go to jw.org, and look under PUBLICATIONS > VIDEOS.) Notice how undue attachment to material things became a deadly snare to Na-

ham and Abital. Thereafter, review the following questions.

(1) What was “the disgusting thing . . . standing in a holy place” in the first century, and what decisive action did Christians living in Jerusalem need to take? (Matt. 24:15, 16) **(2)** Why did fleeing from the city require faith? **(3)** What sacrifices were involved in fleeing? **(4)** Why did Naham and Abital delay? (Matt. 24:17, 18) **(5)** What additional test of faith did Rachel face when leaving Jerusalem? (Matt. 10:34-37; Mark 10:29, 30) **(6)** How did Ethan set a fine example of faith and trust in Jehovah? **(7)** What hardships did Christians experience in Pella? **(8)** How did the faith of Naham and Abital gradually weaken? **(9)** How did Jehovah care for the Christians living in Pella? (Matt. 6:33; 1 Tim. 6:6-8) **(10)** How can we imitate Abraham and Sarah as we face the end of this system of things? (Heb. 11:8-10) **(11)** How did Naham and Abital convince themselves to return to Jerusalem, and why was their thinking faulty? (Luke 21:21) **(12)** What was the reality of life in Jerusalem when Naham and Abital returned? **(13)** Why must we strengthen our faith now—before the end of this system of things comes? —Luke 17:31, 32; 21:34-36.

Walking by faith means (1) trusting in Jehovah’s direction, (2) letting his direction guide our steps, and (3) showing that we value spiritual things over material things. May we be ever resolved to walk by faith, trusting that “the world is passing away and so is its desire, but the one who does the will of God remains forever.”—1 John 2:17.

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 21

Song 90 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

ia chap. 5 ¶1-13 (30 min.)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: 2 Chronicles 20-24 (8 min.)

No. 1: 2 Chronicles 20:13-20 (3 min. or less)

No. 2: Esther—Theme: *How True Beauty Is Made Manifest*—*it-1* pp. 761-762 (5 min.)

No. 3: What Does “Chief Agent” Mean?—Glossary, *nwt* p. 1695 (5 min.)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 96

5 min: Question Box. Talk.

10 min: Show Appreciation for Jehovah’s Generosity. Talk by an elder based on the November 15, 2015, *Watchtower*, pages 14-15.

15 min: Cautious as Serpents and yet Innocent as Doves. (Matt. 10:16) Discussion based on the 2015 *Yearbook*, page 72, paragraph 5, to page 73; and pages 111-116. Invite audience to comment on the lessons learned.

Song 137 and Prayer

QUESTION BOX

■ When is it appropriate to discontinue a Bible study?

If a student’s spiritual progress comes to a halt, you may have to discontinue his Bible study tactfully. (Matt. 10:11) Consider: Does he keep his appointments to study? Does he prepare his lesson in advance? Has he attended some congregation meetings? Does he share with others what he is learning? Is he making changes in harmony with Bible principles? Of course, make allowance for his age and abilities, recognizing that each person progresses at a different rate. Also, if you discontinue the study, keep the door open for him to resume his study in the future.—1 Tim. 2:4.

Theocratic Ministry School Review

The following questions will be considered at the Theocratic Ministry School during the week beginning December 28, 2015. The date when each point is scheduled for discussion is included so that research can be done when preparing for the school each week.

1. Did David treat his captives savagely, as some conclude from 1 Chronicles 20:3? [Nov. 2, *w05* 2/15 p. 27]
2. What moved David to show a spirit of generosity, and what will help us to do the same? (1 Chron. 22:5) [Nov. 9, *w05* 10/1 p. 11 par. 7]
3. What did David mean when he said to Solomon: “Know the God of your father”? (1 Chron. 28:9) [Nov. 16, *w10* 11/1 p. 30 pars. 3, 7]
4. What did Solomon’s request at 2 Chronicles 1:10 reveal about him, and what might we learn by analyzing our personal prayers to Jehovah? (2 Chron. 1:11, 12) [Nov. 23, *w05* 12/1 p. 19 par. 6]
5. According to 2 Chronicles 6:29, 30, what unique ability does Jehovah possess, and why should we open our heart to him in prayer? (Ps. 55:22) [Nov. 30, *w10* 12/1 p. 11 par. 7]
6. On what basis did Asa pray for victory over an enormous military force, and of what may we be sure in connection with our spiritual warfare? (2 Chron. 14:11) [Dec. 7, *w12* 8/15 p. 8 par. 6–p. 9 par. 1]
7. How does the way in which Jehovah dealt with King Jehoshaphat’s failings assure us of God’s love, and how should this affect our view of others? (2 Chron. 19:3) [Dec. 14, *w03* 7/1 p. 17 par. 13; *cl* p. 245 par. 12]
8. Why and how must we “take [our] position” and “stand still” in our day? (2 Chron. 20:17) [Dec. 21, *w05* 12/1 p. 21 par. 2; *w03* 6/1 p. 21 pars. 15-16]
9. What sobering reminder do we discern in 2 Chronicles 21:20 in connection with the death of Jehoram? [Dec. 21, *w98* 11/15 p. 32 par. 4]
10. According to 2 Chronicles 26:5, who exercised a good influence on young Uzziah, and how can youths today benefit from mature Christians in the congregation? [Dec. 28, *w07* 12/15 p. 10 pars. 2, 4]

WEEK STARTING DECEMBER 28

Song 79 and Prayer

❑ **Congregation Bible Study:**

1a chap. 5 ¶14-26, review on p. 50 (30 min.)

❑ **Theocratic Ministry School:**

Bible reading: 2 Chronicles 25-28 (8 min.)

Theocratic Ministry School Review (20 min.)

❑ **Service Meeting:**

Song 122

15 min: Pray for Your Brothers. Discussion. Start by having Acts 12:1-11 read. Consider pertinent points from the *Bearing Witness* book, pages 77-80, paragraphs 5-12. Thereafter, mention recent items posted on jw.org under “Newsroom.” Encourage all to pray for members of our worldwide brotherhood who have been affected by various trials, even mentioning them by name if possible.—2 Cor. 1:11; 1 Tim. 2:1, 2.

15 min: Local needs.

Song 124 and Prayer

Announcements

■ Literature offer for **December:** *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* or one of the following tracts: *Can the Dead Really Live Again?*, *How Do You View the Bible?*, *How Do You View the Future?*, *What Is the Key to Happy Family Life?*, *What Is the Kingdom of God?*, *Who Really Controls the World?*, *Will Suffering Ever End?* **January and February:** *Good News From God!*, *Listen to God*, or *Listen to God and Live Forever*. **March:** *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines.

■ The Memorial for **2017** will be Tuesday, April 11, 2017.

■ Since January has five full weekends, it would be an excellent month to auxiliary pioneer.

Sample Presentations

THE WATCHTOWER® January 1
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

“Do you think that the world would be a better place if everyone lived by this principle? [Read Hebrews 13:18, and allow for response.] The Bible encourages us to be honest in all things. This month’s issue of *The Watchtower* discusses how honesty affects every aspect of our life.”

Awake!® January

“I’m here to give you this month’s issue of *Awake!* [Hand the magazines to the person.] Notice the question on page 2 and some common answers. What’s your opinion? [Allow for response.] This article discusses some Bible principles that can help us to improve our outlook on life.”

Field Service Highlights

When comparing June 2015 to the same month last year, the number of publishers increased by 3.7 percent in the Bahamas, 8.8 percent in Bermuda, 1.2 percent in Puerto Rico, 1.6 percent in the British Virgin Islands, and 9 percent in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The harvest is not over! Let us therefore continue to carry out our ministry with zeal, joy, and a positive attitude until the end.—Matt. 24:13.



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