

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

February 2004

For United States of America

km-E Us 2/04 Vol. 47, No. 2

A Work Backed by God

¹ Among God's servants today, few possess outstanding education, wealth, or prominence in the present system of things. For that reason, some people dismiss our ministry as of little account. (Isa. 53:3) However, the Bible educational work that we do has brought comfort and hope to millions of people around the globe. How have ordinary people achieved such outstanding results? Only with God's backing. (Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8) "God chose the weak things of the world," explained the apostle Paul, "that he might put the strong things to shame."—1 Cor. 1:26-29.

² The apostles and other first-century Christians were largely

"unlettered and ordinary." (Acts 4:13) Yet, they boldly pursued their commission to preach the good news, and Jehovah blessed their efforts. Despite obstacles and opposition, 'the word of Jehovah kept growing and prevailing in a mighty way.' Nothing could stop the work because it was backed by God. (Acts 5:38, 39; 19:20) The same has been true in modern times. Not even determined opposition by powerful rulers has been able to keep the good news from prevailing and growing.—Isa. 54:17.

³ **All Credit to God:** Does our favored position as God's ministers give us reason to boast in ourselves? Not at all. Referring to the Christian ministry, Paul

wrote: "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the power beyond what is normal may be God's and not that out of ourselves." (2 Cor. 4:7) Paul appreciated that he was able to carry out his ministry only in the strength that God supplied. —Eph. 6:19, 20; Phil. 4:13.

⁴ We likewise recognize that it is only because we have "obtained the help that is from God" that the preaching work is being accomplished. (Acts 26:22) By such worldwide proclamation, Jehovah is using us in a mighty way to send a tremor through the nations—a portent of the judgmental shattering soon to come. (Hag. 2:7) How privileged we are to be "God's fellow workers" in the grand spiritual harvest!—1 Cor. 3:6-9.

Regular Meeting Attendance —A Priority

¹ Christian families give priority to attending congregation meetings regularly. But the demands of life today can present a challenge. Are household duties, secular work, or schoolwork starting to encroach on time that has been set aside for the worship of Jehovah? Looking at things from Jehovah's standpoint will help us to maintain our priorities. —1 Sam. 24:6; 26:11.

² By gathering wood on the Sabbath, one Israelite man deliberately failed to consider Jehovah's point of view. He may have reasoned that he was providing for his family or that it was just a small thing. By means of the judgment rendered, however, Jehovah showed

that pursuing mundane activities during times designated for worship is a serious matter. —Num. 15:32-36.

³ **Meeting the Challenge:** For many it is a battle to keep secular work from interfering with meeting attendance. Some have met this challenge by speaking to their employer, trading shifts with workmates, seeking a more suitable job, or simplifying their life-style. Assuredly, such sacrifices in behalf of true worship are well-pleasing to God.—Heb. 13:16.

⁴ Schoolwork can also pose a challenge. "I do some of my schoolwork before the meetings and the rest after I come home," said one youth. If all assigned homework cannot be

completed on meeting nights, some parents have explained to teachers that attendance at Christian meetings is a priority for their family.

⁵ Cooperation and good planning are keys to accomplishing household chores in preparation for attending meetings on time as a family. (Prov. 20:18) Even younger children can be taught to be dressed and ready to leave for the meeting at a specified time. By their example, parents can impress upon their children the importance of meetings.—Prov. 20:7.

⁶ As the pressures of the present system of things increase, it is vital that we attend congregation meetings regularly. May we continue to view matters from Jehovah's standpoint and make regular meeting attendance a priority.—Heb. 10:24, 25.

SERVICE MEETING SCHEDULE

Week Starting February 9

Song 225

10 min: Local announcements. Using the suggestions on page 8, demonstrate how to present the February 15 *Watchtower* and the February 22 *Awake!* In each case, both magazines should be offered as a set, even though only one is featured. In one of the presentations, demonstrate how to handle the conversation stopper "I have my own religion."—See *Reasoning* book, pages 18-19.

10 min: "Benefit From Studying *Draw Close to Jehovah*." A talk by a Congregation Book Study overseer based on the article. When considering paragraph 2, draw attention to the study schedule. When considering paragraph 3, read and discuss paragraph 23 on page 25 of the publication.

25 min: "Keep Telling About Jehovah's Wonderful Works."*(Paragraphs 1-10) To be handled by the service overseer. Use the questions that are provided. Build enthusiasm for increased field service activity during the Memorial season.

Song 90 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting February 16

Song 41

10 min: Local announcements. Selected Announcements from *Our Kingdom Ministry*.

15 min: "A Work Backed by

God."* Include comments on the *Proclaimers* book, pages 547-8.

20 min: "Keep Telling About Jehovah's Wonderful Works."*(Paragraphs 11-17) Use the questions that are provided. Include a brief demonstration of a publisher inviting a return visit to the Memorial. Song 75 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting February 23

Song 118

10 min: Local announcements. Accounts report. Using the suggestions on page 8, demonstrate how to present the March 1 *Watchtower* and the March 8 *Awake!* In each case, both magazines should be offered as a set, even though only one is featured. At the conclusion of one of the presentations, raise a thought-provoking question that can be answered on the next visit using the *Require* brochure.

15 min: "Regular Meeting Attendance—A Priority."* Arrange in advance for one or two to comment on the measures they have taken to be present at each congregation meeting.

20 min: Praise Jehovah "in the Middle of the Congregation." Audience discussion based on September 1, 2003, *Watchtower*, pages 19-22. (1) How does Psalm 22:22, 25 highlight our reason for commenting at meetings? (2) Why is prayer helpful?

(3) Why is preparation needed? (4) What goal should all of us have at meetings? (5) Why is our being seated toward the front helpful? (6) Why is it important to listen to what others say? (7) How can we answer in our own words? (8) How can we encourage others with our comments? (9) What responsibility rests on the conductor?

Song 81 and concluding prayer.

Week Starting March 1

Song 156

10 min: Local announcements. Remind publishers to turn in field service reports for February. Mention literature offer for March, and briefly review one of the suggested presentations from the January 2002 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert.

15 min: Local needs.

20 min: "We Can Do What Jehovah Asks."* Use the questions that are provided. As time permits, highlight the cited scriptures.

Song 98 and concluding prayer.

* Limit introductory comments to less than a minute, and follow with a question-and-answer discussion.

NOVEMBER SERVICE REPORT

Number of:	Av. Hrs.	Av. Mags.	Av. R.V.	Av. Bl.St.
Sp'l Pios.	202	105.3	90.0	44.6
Pios.	92,570	64.3	41.9	20.8
Aux. Pios.	21,838	49.1	35.7	13.3
Pubs.	867,299	9.4	8.3	3.6
TOTAL	981,909			Baptized: 2,715

Keep Telling About Jehovah's Wonderful Works

¹ No one can compare to our great God, Jehovah! David wrote: "Many things you yourself have done, O Jehovah my God, even your wonderful works and your thoughts toward us; there is none to be compared to you." (Ps. 40:5) Jehovah's wonderful works include the creation of the universe, the Messianic Kingdom, acts of loving-kindness toward his people, and the worldwide preaching campaign. (Ps. 17:7, 8; 139:14; Dan. 2:44; Matt. 24:14) Love for Jehovah and appreciation for all that he has done move us to tell others about him. (Ps. 145:5-7) During March, April, and May, we will have opportunity to do this more fully.

² **As an Auxiliary Pioneer:** Can you arrange your schedule to spend 50 hours in the ministry during one or more of these months of special activity? It will surely be worth any adjustments you make in your routine. (Eph. 5:16) Many have found that auxiliary pioneering helps them to improve the quality of their ministry. They become more comfortable at the door and make greater use of the Bible. Spending more time in the ministry makes it easier to follow up any interest they find, and some who had not previously conducted a Bible study have started one while auxiliary pioneering. Because auxiliary pioneering involves expending ourselves in behalf of others, it is a joyful activity.—Acts 20:35.

³ Do not be quick to conclude that your circumstances do not allow you to have a share. One elder who auxiliary pioneered last year has two children and a full-time job. How did this busy brother do it? Since he works during the week, he planned long days in service on the weekends, starting with street witnessing at 7:00 a.m. on Saturdays. Several in the congregation who had similar circumstances also pioneered, and they supported and encouraged one another. In another congregation, a 99-year-old sister decided to pioneer in May after being invited by her daughter to

join her. Others in the congregation assisted this elderly sister to go from door to door and on Bible studies by pushing her wheelchair. She also engaged in telephone witnessing, street witnessing, and letter writing. She is convinced that this was done, not in her own strength, but only with Jehovah's help.— Isa. 40:29-31.

⁴ Try writing out a schedule that best fits your circumstances. The sample schedules in this issue may be helpful. Do you work full-time or go to school? A schedule that utilizes primarily the weekends may be the most practical for you. If you have health problems and your energy does not allow for long days in the ministry, a schedule that calls for spending a little time each day may be best. Talk with others about your desire to auxiliary pioneer. Perhaps they will also make it their goal.

⁵ **Ways That Youths Can Share:** Jehovah is pleased when young ones tell about his wonderful works. (Ps. 71:17; Matt. 21:16) If you are young and are baptized, perhaps you can auxiliary pioneer during a month that includes a school vacation. If you cannot serve as an auxiliary pioneer, can you set specific goals to increase your share and improve the quality of your ministry during these months? If you have been sharing in the ministry with your parents but are not yet an unbaptized publisher, now would be a good time to try to qualify. You need not feel that you must be an expert at answering Bible questions or that you have to know as much as baptized adults. Do you understand basic Bible teachings? Do you adhere to the Bible's moral standards? Do you want to be identified as one of Jehovah's Witnesses? Then talk with your parents about this. They can arrange to approach the elders with you to see if you meet the requirements. —See the *Our Ministry* book, pages 98-9.

⁶ **Helping Others to Preach:** Progressive Bible students may qualify to join us as publishers during the upcoming months of special

1. What are some of Jehovah's wonderful works that you particularly appreciate?
2. How do we personally benefit by auxiliary pioneering?
3. How have some been able to auxiliary pioneer even with challenging circumstances?

4. What factors might we consider when making a schedule to auxiliary pioneer?
5. What goals can youths set for March, April, and May?
6. How can we help Bible students to become publishers of the good news?

activity. If you have a Bible student who is making good progress, enlist the help of your book study overseer or the service overseer. One of them can join you on the study to evaluate the student's progress. If the student qualifies and has the desire to become a publisher, the presiding overseer can arrange for two elders to meet with you and the student. (See *The Watchtower*, November 15, 1988, page 17.) Once the student is approved, begin training him in the ministry right away.

⁷ Book study overseers will want to give special attention to any who are inactive or irregular in their group. Extend a personal invitation to them to work with you in the ministry. If they have been inactive for a long time, it is advisable that two elders first speak with them to see if they qualify. (See the November 2000 *Our Kingdom Ministry Question Box*.) The zeal of the congregation during these months of special activity may stimulate them to make the ministry a regular feature of their lives once again.

⁸ **Prepare Now for Increased Activity:** Elders, begin now to build up enthusiasm in the congregation for auxiliary pioneering. You can do much by your positive comments and good example. (1 Pet. 5:3) What was the congregation's previous peak of auxiliary pioneers? Can it be exceeded this year? Book study overseers and their assistants should seek ways to encourage all in the group to increase their activity. Service overseers may schedule additional meetings for field service. Inform the congregation in advance what is arranged. Make sure that capable publishers are assigned to take the lead and that meetings for service start and conclude on time. (See the September 2001 *Our Kingdom Ministry Question Box*.) The service overseer should also arrange for there to be sufficient territory, magazines, and literature.

⁹ Last year the elders of one congregation started enthusiastically and well in advance to encourage auxiliary pioneering, with several of them submitting applications. They arranged additional meetings for field service—one at 5:30 a.m. for street witnessing, another at 3:00 p.m. for those getting out of

7. How might irregular and inactive publishers be assisted?

8, 9. What can the elders do to build enthusiasm for the special activity?

school, and a third at 6:00 p.m. for those getting off work. In addition, three meetings for field service were arranged on Saturdays. The congregation responded with 66 enrolling as auxiliary pioneers in April!

¹⁰ Why not set aside time during your next family study to set realistic goals for the coming months? With good cooperation and planning, some or all in the family may be able to auxiliary pioneer. If that is not possible, set goals to increase your activity by lengthening your usual service periods or by going out on additional occasions. Make it a matter of prayer as a family. You can be confident that Jehovah will bless your efforts.—1 John 3:22.

¹¹ **God's Most Wonderful Work:** Jehovah's greatest expression of love is the gift of his Son as a ransom in our behalf. (1 John 4:9, 10) The ransom sacrifice provides the legal basis for redeeming mankind from sin and death. (Rom. 3:23, 24) Jesus' shed blood validated the new covenant, making it possible for imperfect humans to be adopted as God's sons with the prospect of ruling in the heavenly Kingdom. (Jer. 31:31-34; Mark 14:24) Most important, Jesus' course of perfect obedience sanctified Jehovah's name. (Deut. 32:4; Prov. 27:11) On Sunday, April 4, after sundown, the Memorial of Christ's death will be commemorated around the world.

¹² Observance of the Lord's Evening Meal magnifies Jehovah's wonderful works. The discourse builds appreciation for what Jehovah did in providing the ransom. Interested ones in attendance will be able to observe other wonderful works of God. They will be able to see the unity and warm love Jehovah has taught his people to display. (Eph. 4:16, 22-24; Jas. 3:17, 18) Attendance on this important occasion can have a real impact on a person's thinking, so we want as many as possible to be present.—2 Cor. 5:14, 15.

¹³ **Inviting Others to Attend:** Begin preparing right away by making a list of those to invite. Your list should include unbelieving fam-

10. How can families prepare to increase their activity?

11. (a) What wonderful things did Christ's sacrifice accomplish? (b) What is the time and location of the local Memorial observance?

12. How can attending the observance of the Lord's Evening Meal benefit interested ones?

13, 14. Whom should we invite to the Memorial, and how?

ily members, neighbors, acquaintances from work or school, past and present Bible students, and all your return visits. Book study overseers should include on their list any inactive publishers.

¹⁴ Use the printed Memorial invitations, and type or neatly write on them the time and location of the Memorial. Or you may wish to use the invitation that appears on the back cover of the March 15, 2004, *Watchtower* or the March 22, 2004, *Awake!* As April 4 draws closer, give those on your list a reminder, either in person or over the telephone.

¹⁵ **At the Memorial:** Try to arrive early on the night of the Memorial. Demonstrate hospitality by warmly greeting new ones. (Rom. 12:13) You have a special responsibility toward the guests you invite. Make them feel welcome, and introduce them to others from the congregation. Perhaps you can help them find a seat near you. And if any do not have a Bible or a songbook, arrange for them to look on with you or someone else. After the observance, be available to answer any questions they may have. If some are there for the first time, ask whether they would like to learn more about God's Word and purpose. Offer to conduct a home Bible study with them.

¹⁶ **Continue Assisting Those Who Attended:** In the weeks following the Memorial, those who attended may need further assistance. This includes those who once regularly attended meetings but who now have only limited association with the congregation. The elders will be alert to see that such ones are not overlooked, seeking to determine why they stopped making spiritual progress. Impress on them the urgency of the times. (1 Pet. 4:7) Help all to see the benefit of obeying the Scriptural exhortation to gather to-

15. How can we demonstrate hospitality on the night of the Memorial?

16. What can be done to help those who attended to make spiritual progress?

Can You Auxiliary Pioneer Using One of These Schedules?

March	Su	M*	Tu*	W*	Th	F	Sa	Month Total
Each Day	2	1	1	1	1	1	5	51
Two Days	0	5	0	5	0	0	0	50
Weekends Only	5	0	0	0	0	0	8	52
Weekends and Two Weekdays	2	0	0	2	0	2	6	50

April	Su	M	Tu	W	Th*	F*	Sa	Month Total
Each Day	2	1	1	1	1	1	5	50
Two Days	0	0	0	0	5	5	0	50
Weekends Only	5	0	0	0	0	0	8	52
Weekends and Two Weekdays	2	0	0	2	0	2	6	50

May	Su*	M*	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa*	Month Total
Each Day	2	1	1	1	1	1	4	51
Two Days	0	5	0	0	0	0	5	50
Weekends Only	3	0	0	0	0	0	7	50
Weekends and Two Weekdays	2	0	0	2	0	2	5	51

* Five in the month

gether regularly with God's people.—Heb. 10: 24, 25.

¹⁷ Jehovah's works are too wonderful for us to grasp fully even if we live forever. (Job 42:2, 3; Eccl. 3:11) Therefore, we will never run out of things for which to praise him. This Memorial season we can demonstrate our appreciation for Jehovah's wonderful works by making a special effort to expand our ministry.

17. Why should we keep telling about Jehovah's wonderful works?

Benefit From Studying *Draw Close to Jehovah*

¹ At the “Zealous Kingdom Proclaimers” District Convention, we were thrilled to receive the book *Draw Close to Jehovah*. Many read the book immediately. Many more were no doubt moved to do so by the yeartext for 2003: “Draw close to God, and he will draw close to you.”—Jas. 4:8.

² In March we will begin our consideration of *Draw Close to Jehovah* at the Congregation Book Study. How may we get the most from our study? Preparation is essential. Two weeks will be devoted to each chapter, with a relatively small number of paragraphs scheduled for study each week. This will allow ample time for your heartfelt comments based on your study of and meditation on the material. Additionally, fewer paragraphs will be considered during the weeks in which the concluding portion of a chapter is reviewed, to allow time to use a special feature of the book.

³ Starting with chapter 2, a box entitled “Questions for Meditation” appears near the end of each chapter. After considering the last paragraph in the chapter, the book study overseer will have the group discuss the box. He will draw out the members of the group, seeking the fine fruitage of their meditation on the Scriptures. (Prov. 20:5) In addition to the questions provided in the box, he may at times pose questions such as the following: “What

does this information tell you about Jehovah? How does it affect your life? How can you use it to help others?” His goal will be to draw out heartfelt comments, not to quiz the group regarding relatively minor details.

⁴ *Draw Close to Jehovah* is unique. Although all the publications of “the faithful and discreet slave” glori-

fy Jehovah, this book is devoted entirely to a discussion of Jehovah’s qualities. (Matt. 24:45-47) What a thrilling opportunity lies before us! We will richly benefit from an in-depth study of Jehovah’s personality. May the study help us to draw closer to our heavenly Father, and may we become more effective in helping others to do the same.

Draw Close to Jehovah

Study Schedule for 2004

Mar.	15:	pp. 3, 7-11*
	22:	pp. 11*-15
	29:	pp. 16-21*
Apr.	5:	pp. 21*-5 and box
	12:	pp. 26-31*
	19:	pp. 31*-5 and box
	26:	pp. 37-43*
May	3:	pp. 43*-6 and box
	10:	pp. 47-52, par. 12
	17:	p. 53, par. 13-p. 56 and box
	24:	pp. 57-63*
	31:	pp. 63*-6 and box
June	7:	pp. 67-72*
	14:	pp. 72*-6 and box
	21:	pp. 77-81, par. 13
	28:	p. 82, par. 14-p. 86 and box
July	5:	pp. 87-93*
	12:	pp. 93*-6 and box
	19:	pp. 97-102*
	26:	pp. 102*-6 and box
Aug.	2:	pp. 108-13, par. 14
	9:	p. 114, par. 15-p. 117 and box
	16:	pp. 118-23*
	23:	pp. 123*-7 and box
	30:	pp. 128-33*
Sept.	6:	pp. 133*-7 and box
	13:	pp. 138-43*
	20:	pp. 143*-7 and box
	27:	pp. 148-53
Oct.	4:	pp. 154*-7 and box
	11:	pp. 158-62, par. 13
	18:	p. 162, par. 14-p. 167 and box
	25:	pp. 169-75*

Nov.	1:	pp. 175*-8 and box
	8:	pp. 179-85*
	15:	pp. 185*-8 and box
	22:	pp. 189-95*
	29:	pp. 195*-8 and box

Dec.	6:	pp. 199-203*
	13:	pp. 203*-8 and box
	20:	pp. 209-14, par. 11
	27:	p. 214, par. 12-p. 218 and box

Study Schedule for 2005

Jan.	3:	pp. 219-24
	10:	pp. 225*-8 and box
	17:	p. 231-6*
	24:	pp. 236*-9 and box
	31:	pp. 240-5, par. 13

Feb.	7:	p. 246, par. 14-p. 249 and box
	14:	pp. 250-5*
	21:	pp. 255*-9 and box
	28:	pp. 260-5*

Mar.	7:	pp. 265*-9 and box
	14:	pp. 270-5*
	21:	pp. 275*-9 and box
	28:	pp. 280-4

Apr.	4:	pp. 285*-9 and box
	11:	pp. 290-5, par. 12
	18:	p. 296, par. 13-p. 299 and box
	25:	pp. 300-5*

May	2:	pp. 305*-9 and box
	9:	pp. 310-14*
	16:	pp. 314*-19 and box

* To or from subheading.

Discuss the box “Questions for Meditation” after considering the last paragraph in chapter.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

■ Literature offer for **February**: *Draw Close to Jehovah*. If this publication is not available, you may use the *Creation* book (large or small size) or the *Revelation Climax* book as an alternative offer. **March:** *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. A special effort will be made to start home Bible studies. If people already have this publication, *Pay Attention to Daniel's Prophecy!* may be offered. **April and May:** Feature individual copies of both *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* When making return visits

on interested people, which may include those who attend the Memorial and/or other theocratic events but who are not actively associated with the organization, concentrate on placing the *Worship God* book. Every effort should be made to start a home Bible study, especially if some individuals have already studied the *Knowledge* book and the *Require* brochure.

■ The presiding overseer or someone designated by him should audit the congregation's accounts on March 1 or as soon as possible thereafter. When this has been done, make an announcement to the congregation after the next ac-

counts report is read. Read any acknowledgment of contributions the congregation has made to the worldwide work and to any other fund sponsored by the organization. ■ The secretary and the service overseer should review the activity of all regular pioneers. If any are having difficulty meeting the hour requirement, the elders should arrange for assistance to be given. For suggestions, review the annual S-201 letters.

■ The special public talk for the 2004 Memorial season will be entitled "Be Courageous, and Trust in Jehovah." See the related announcement in the September 2003 *Our Kingdom Ministry*.

THEOCRATIC MINISTRY SCHOOL REVIEW

The following questions will be considered orally at the Theocratic Ministry School during the week beginning February 23, 2004. The school overseer will conduct a 30-minute review based on material covered in assignments for the weeks of January 5 through February 23, 2004. [Note: Where there are no references after the question, you will need to do your own research to find the answers.—See *Ministry School*, pp. 36-7.]

SPEECH QUALITIES

1. What can we do to ensure that the practical value of the material being presented stands out to our audience and truly benefits them? [be p. 158 pars. 2-4]
2. Why should we choose our words carefully? [be p. 160 par. 1 and second box]
3. What fundamental requirement of good speech is highlighted at 1 Corinthians 14:9, and how can we apply this principle in our teaching? [be p. 161 pars. 1-4]
4. As seen at Matthew 5:3-12 and Mark 10:17-21, what is one outstanding characteristic of Jesus' teaching that we can imitate? [be p. 162 par. 4]
5. In our ministry or when commenting at congregation meetings, why should we be interested in using words that convey vigor, feeling, and color? (Matt. 23:37, 38) [be p. 163 par. 3-p. 164 par. 1]

ASSIGNMENT NO. 1

6. What is the theme of a talk, and how can keeping it in mind be effective when selecting and organizing material for a talk? [be p. 39 par. 6-p. 40 par. 1]
7. (a) What does it mean to be spiritually clean, and why can spiritual cleanliness be

considered the most important cleanliness of all? (b) How can Christians avoid acceptance of moral uncleanness that is common in the world? [w02 2/1 pp. 5-6]

8. Among all the principles contained in the Bible, which are the weightier ones? [w02 2/15 p. 5 pars. 1, 4, 6]
9. What is empathy, and how has Jesus displayed this quality? [w02 4/15 p. 25 pars. 4-5]
10. How does Proverbs 11:11 apply to congregations of Jehovah's people? [w02 5/15 p. 27 pars. 1-3]

WEEKLY BIBLE READING

11. What is represented by "the tree of life" mentioned at Genesis 2:9?
12. Why did Lot's wife lose her life? (Gen. 19: 26) [w90 4/15 p. 18 par. 10]
13. In the prophetic drama of Genesis chapter 24, who is pictured by (a) Abraham, (b) Isaac, (c) Abraham's servant Eliezer, (d) the ten camels, and (e) Rebekah?
14. Did God predestinate Jacob and Esau? (Gen. 25:23)
15. In what way was Rachel a good example of one who put forth earnest effort that was blessed by Jehovah? (Gen. 30:1-8) [w02 8/1 pp. 29-30]

We Can Do What Jehovah Asks

¹ Complying with Jehovah's laws and principles is the best way of life today, and it helps us to lay a fine foundation for an eternal future. (Ps. 19:7-11; 1 Tim. 6:19) However, Satan's world puts us under much stress. Our own imperfect flesh adds to the challenge. In trying to fulfill our Scriptural responsibilities, we may at times feel overwhelmed. (Ps. 40:12; 55:1-8) We may even wonder if we can do all that Jehovah asks of us. At such times, what can help us to maintain our spiritual balance?

² Jehovah's Commandments Not Burdensome: Jehovah never places unreasonable demands upon us. His commandments are not burdensome but are for our good. (Deut. 10:12, 13; 1 John 5:3) He takes into account our human frailties, "remembering that we are dust." (Ps. 103:13, 14) God mercifully accepts our best efforts to serve him, even if these are limited by our circumstances. (Lev. 5:7, 11; Mark 14:8) He invites us to throw our burdens on him, and he assures us that he will make it possible for us to remain faithful.—Ps. 55:22; 1 Cor. 10:13.

³ Need of Endurance: Bible accounts of integ-

1. What feelings may we have to contend with at times, and why?
2. How is Jehovah reasonable in what he expects of us?
3. How does Jehovah strengthen us to endure?

rity keepers such as Elijah, Jeremiah, and Paul show the need of endurance. (Heb. 10:36) Jehovah sustained them in times of adversity and discouragement. (1 Ki. 19:14-18; Jer. 20:7-11; 2 Cor. 1:8-11) And we are stirred by the loyalty of our brothers in modern times. (1 Pet. 5:9) Meditating on such examples can help us not to give out in our souls.

⁴ Hope in God's promises is "an anchor for the soul." (Heb. 6:19) It moved Abraham and Sarah to accept Jehovah's request to leave their home and 'reside as aliens in the land of promise.' It empowered Moses to take a fearless stand for true worship. It fortified Jesus to endure a torture stake. (Heb. 11:8-10, 13, 24-26; 12:2, 3) Keeping God's promise of a righteous new world burning brightly in our hearts will likewise help us to remain steadfast.—2 Pet. 3:11-13.

⁵ Recalling our own past acts of loyalty, self-sacrifice, and boldness can also energize us in our service. (Heb. 10:32-34) It reminds us of the joy we experience when we give Jehovah what he asks of us—our whole-souled devotion.—Matt. 22:37.

4. Why is it important to keep God's promises in focus?
5. Why can it be encouraging to reflect on our own past acts of loyalty?

What to Say About the Magazines

**THE WATCHTOWER Feb. 15
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM**

"Many people are troubled by the bad things that have been done in the name of religion. Some feel that religion is at the root of mankind's problems. Have you ever wondered about this? [Allow for response. Then read Revelation 18:24.] This magazine examines what the Bible says on this subject."

Awake! Feb. 22

"Many people delight in learning about animals, and some enjoy having them as pets. [Allow for comment.] This magazine discusses some of the challenges of owning a pet. It also explains God's promise of a time when all animals will be at peace with one another and with mankind." Read Isaiah 11:6-9.

**THE WATCHTOWER Mar. 1
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM**

"On one occasion, Jesus Christ was asked: 'Which commandment is first of all?' Notice his reply. [Read Mark 12:29, 30.] Have you ever wondered what Jesus meant? [Allow for response.] The article 'How We Show Our Love for God' examines the meaning of those famous words."

Awake! Mar. 8

"At one time, many people lived in fear of a nuclear war. Do you think nuclear war is likely today? [Allow for response.] This magazine examines current developments that concern all of us. It also explains the Bible's promise of a world where fear will be a thing of the past." Read Zephaniah 3:13.