

OUR KINGDOM MINISTRY

JANUARY 2011

WEEK STARTING JANUARY 10

Song 50 and Prayer

❑ **Congregation Bible Study:**

cf chap. 16 ¶1-6 (25 min)

❑ **Theocratic Ministry School:**

Bible reading: 2 Chronicles 33-36 (10 min)

No. 1: 2 Chronicles 34:12-21 (4 min or less)

No. 2: What Can We Learn From the Example of Jesus' Mother, Mary? (5 min)

No. 3: Was Jesus Just Another Religious Leader?—rs p. 210 ¶2 (5 min)

❑ **Service Meeting:**

Song 73

5 min: Announcements.

10 min: Express Warmth as You Preach. Discussion based on the *Ministry School* book, page 118, paragraph 1, to page 119, paragraph 5.

10 min: Could You Step Over Into Macedonia? (Acts 16:9, 10) Discussion based on the 2010 *Yearbook*, pages 163-164 and pages 238-239. After discussing each experience, invite audience to comment on the lessons learned.

10 min: "A Most Enjoyable Work." Questions and answers. Briefly interview a publisher regarding the joy and satisfaction he has received from conducting a progressive Bible study.

Song 75 and Prayer

more rewarding, however, is *participating* in this work by conducting a progressive Bible study.

² What is God's name? Why does he permit suffering? What will God's Kingdom do for mankind? We find pleasure not only in answering such questions but also in seeing the joy radiate from the student when he learns the truth. (Prov. 15:23; Luke 24:32) As a student progresses, he may begin to use Jehovah's name, make changes in his dress and grooming, shed harmful practices, and start witnessing to others. If he progresses to dedication and baptism, he will become our brother and fellow worker. Each of these positive steps is a reason to rejoice.—1 Thess. 2:19, 20.

³ **Can You Have a Share?** If you would like to participate in this most enjoyable work, ask Jehovah for the privilege of conducting a Bible study, and then work in harmony with your prayers. (1 John 5:14) Preach where and when people can be found. Offer a Bible study on every appropriate occasion. (Eccl. 11:6) When you find interest and plant a seed of truth, return to water it.—1 Cor. 3:6-9.

⁴ Countless people yet remain who are hungering and thirsting for righteousness. Who will help to fill their spiritual need by conducting a Bible study with them? (Matt. 5:3, 6) Let us offer ourselves willingly to help complete the preaching and disciple-making work before the harvest comes to an end.—Isa. 6:8.

A Most Enjoyable Work

¹ Great joy filled the hearts of those who witnessed physical healing in the first century. (Luke 5:24-26) In our day, we rejoice in the work of spiritual healing. (Rev. 22:1, 2, 17) How exciting it is to read experiences in which Jehovah's Word and holy spirit transform the lives of individuals! Even

1. What work of spiritual healing is occurring in our day?

2. What joy may we experience as we teach someone the truth?

3. What practical steps can we take to start a Bible study?

4. Why should we offer Bible studies with a sense of urgency?

WEEK STARTING JANUARY 17

Song 77 and Prayer

☐ **Congregation Bible Study:**

cf chap. 16 ¶7-14 (25 min)

☐ **Theocratic Ministry School:**

Bible reading: Ezra 1-5 (10 min)

No. 1: Ezra 3:1-9 (4 min or less)

No. 2: Why Did the Jews in General Not Accept Jesus as the Messiah?—*rs* p. 211 ¶1-2 (5 min)

No. 3: How Does the Spirit Return to God?—Eccl. 12:7 (5 min)

☐ **Service Meeting:**

Song 116

5 min: Announcements.

10 min: The Value of Repetition in the Ministry. Discussion based on the *Ministry School* book, pages 206-207. Briefly demonstrate one or two points from the material.

20 min: “Do You Know Your Options?” Questions and answers. Use the information in paragraph 1 for the introduction and paragraph 3 for the conclusion. To be handled by an elder.

Song 7 and Prayer

Do You Know Your Options?

Bloodless surgery is being performed at an increasing number of medical centers around the world. Are you fully informed of the options that are available in the field of bloodless medicine? You need to know so that you can make informed decisions involving medical treatment and surgery. Watch the video *No Blood—Medicine Meets the Challenge*. Afterward, prayerfully review what you learned with the help of the questions set out below.—Note: Because the video includes brief surgical scenes, parents should use discretion in viewing the video with young children.

(1) What is the main reason why Jehovah’s Witnesses refuse blood transfusions? (2) When it comes to medical care, what do Jehovah’s Witnesses desire? (3) What basic right do patients have? (4) Why is it rational and responsible to choose transfusion alternatives? (5) When severe blood loss occurs, what two urgent priorities do doctors have? (6) What are the four principles of transfusion-alternative strategies? (7) How may doctors (a) minimize blood loss, (b) conserve red blood cells, (c) stimulate blood production, and (d) recover lost blood? (8) Describe the procedures known as (a) hemodilution and (b) cell salvage. (9) What should you want to be informed about regarding any transfusion alternative? (10) Can serious and complicated surgeries be performed without the use of blood transfusions? (11) What positive development is taking place within the medical community?

Acceptance of some of the treatments featured in the video is a matter for private decision in accord with each one’s Bible-trained conscience. Have you taken a clear position on which medical treatments and procedures you are willing to accept for yourself and your children and then filled out a DPA card? For a complete discussion of these matters, carefully review “Questions From Readers” in the June 15, 2004, and October 15, 2000, issues of *The Watchtower*. Then use the work sheets in the November 2006 *Our Kingdom Ministry* insert, “How Do I View Blood Fractions and Medical Procedures Involving My Own Blood?,” to make your personal decisions about what options you would accept or refuse. Finally, be sure that you have accurately transferred your choices to your DPA card. Your selected health-care agents and any non-Witness family members should be fully informed of your decisions.

WEEK STARTING JANUARY 24

Song 53 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

cf chap. 16 ¶15-20, box on p. 171 (25 min)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Ezra 6-10 (10 min)

No. 1: Ezra 7:1-17 (4 min or less)

No. 2: How Jesus Demonstrated His Worthiness to Rule as King (5 min)

No. 3: Is Jesus Christ Actually God?—rs p. 212 ¶1-2 (5 min)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 30

5 min: Announcements. Mention the literature offer for February, and have one presentation demonstrated.

20 min: “Help for Families.”—Part 1. (Paragraphs 1-6 and the box on page 6.) Questions and answers. Encourage audience to try some of the suggestions from the box on page 6 during their next Family Worship evening. Next week, when the rest of the article is considered, they will have an opportunity to share their thoughts on how the family benefited.

10 min: Prepare to Offer the Magazines in February. Discussion. Take one or two minutes to review the contents of the magazines. Then choose two or three articles, and invite audience to suggest questions and scriptures that could be used in a presentation. Demonstrate how each issue may be offered.

Song 32 and Prayer

Help for Families

¹ The Sabbath observance was a loving provision from Jehovah that benefited families. Israelites rested from their regular labors and had time to reflect on Jehovah’s goodness and on their relationship with him. Parents

1. How did the weekly Sabbath benefit Israelite families?

could take advantage of this opportunity to inculcate the Law into the hearts of their children. (Deut. 6:6, 7) The Sabbath provided time each week for Jehovah’s people to focus attention on their spirituality.

² Of course, Jehovah no longer requires families to observe the Sabbath. However, that law teaches us something about our God. He has always been deeply interested in the spiritual welfare of his people. (Isa. 48:17, 18) Today, one way that Jehovah expresses this loving interest is by means of the Family Worship evening.

³ **What Is the Purpose of the Family Worship Evening?** In January 2009, the Congregation Book Study began to be held on the same evening as the Theocratic Ministry School and Service Meeting. One reason for this adjustment was to give families an opportunity to fortify their spirituality by scheduling a specific evening each week for family worship. Each family was encouraged to move its family study to the night formerly used for the book study, if practical, and to use this time for unhurried Bible discussion and study tailored to the needs of the family.

⁴ In order to attend the Congregation Book Study, we needed time to dress, travel, and so forth. For many of us, attending this one-hour meeting took the better part of the evening. With the adjustment to our meeting

2. What does the Sabbath teach us about Jehovah?

3. What is the purpose of the Family Worship evening?

4. Must the family limit their discussion to one hour? Explain.

schedule, we now have this evening to worship Jehovah as a family. Therefore, we need not limit our Family Worship evening to just one hour. Rather, we should think about the needs and limitations of our family and set the time period accordingly.

⁵ Must the Entire Time Be Spent in Group Discussion? When married couples and families with children discuss Scriptural topics together, they encourage one another. (Rom. 1:12) The family draws closer together. Therefore, Scriptural discussions should be the centerpiece of the Family Worship evening. However, each family member could also spend time in personal study. For example, after the group discussion, the family might remain together while each individual continues to study separately, perhaps finishing his preparation for the meetings or reading the magazines. Some families choose to keep the television off the entire evening.

⁶ How May the Discussion Be Conducted? The format need not always be a question-and-answer discussion. In order to make the Family Worship evening lively and interesting, many families have a program that is similar to our midweek meeting. They divide their discussion into several parts and handle them in a variety of ways. For example, they might read the Bible together, prepare for a portion of the meetings, and have practice sessions for the ministry. Page 6 provides some suggestions.

5. Must the entire time be spent in group discussion? Explain.

6. How may the discussion be conducted?

⁷ What Atmosphere Should Parents Strive For? Your family will learn best in a loving, relaxed atmosphere. You might sometimes study outdoors if the weather is favorable. Feel free to take breaks when needed. Some families include refreshments after the program. While parents will avoid using the Family Worship evening to scold or discipline, they may need to devote some of the time to address a specific trend or problem that has come to their attention. However, it may be best to discuss sensitive personal issues privately with a child at another time during the week so as to avoid embarrassing him in front of his siblings. The Family Worship evening should not be a dry, somber occasion but should reflect the happy God whom we worship. —1 Tim. 1:11.

⁸ How Can the Family Head Prepare? The family will benefit most if the family head prepares in advance for each Family Worship evening by determining what should be discussed and how best to consider it. (Prov. 21:5) A husband does well to consult with his wife regarding this. (Prov. 15:22) Family heads, why not also occasionally ask your children for their recommendations? If you do, you will gain valuable insight into their interests and concerns.

⁹ On most weeks the family head will not have to spend extensive time preparing. Likely, the family will enjoy having certain regular features each week, and the family head will not

7. What atmosphere should parents strive for?

8, 9. What preparation is required of family heads?

need to come up with an entirely new program every time. He may find it advantageous to prepare after each study while his family's spiritual needs are fresh in mind. Some family heads write out a brief agenda and post it where the family can easily see it, such as on the refrigerator. This creates excitement and anticipation and gives the family time to prepare if needed.

¹⁰ What If I Am the Only One in My Family? Those who live alone can use the Family Worship evening for personal study. A good basic personal study program should include reading the Bible, preparing for meetings, and reading *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* Some publishers supplement this with a personal study project. On occasion, they may wish to invite another publisher or family to join them for an upbuilding Scriptural discussion.

¹¹ What Are the Benefits of Having a Regular Family Worship Evening? Those who wholeheartedly engage in true worship draw closer to Jehovah. Additionally, families who worship together strengthen family bonds. One married couple wrote regarding the blessings they have enjoyed: "As a pioneer couple without children, we really look forward to our Family Worship night. We feel like we are drawing

10. How can those who live alone use their Family Worship evening?

11, 12. What are some of the benefits of having a regular Family Worship evening?

closer to each other and to our heavenly Father. Now when we wake up on the day that we have scheduled to study together, we say to each other: 'Guess what tonight is? Family Worship night!'"

¹² The arrangement of having an evening for family worship also helps busy families. One single mother who is raising two sons and regular pioneering wrote: "In the past, our family study suffered. It was sporadic and

inconsistent because I was tired. I just couldn't figure out how to fit it in. So I am writing you to thank you so very much for the Family Worship evening. We have been successfully having a regular family study and experiencing the benefits."

¹³ Like the Sabbath, the Family Worship evening is a gift from our heavenly Father that can help families. (Jas. 1:17) The way that Israelite families used the Sabbath determined how much they benefited spiritually. Similarly, how we use the evening that we have been given for family worship determines how much our family will benefit. (2 Cor. 9:6; Gal. 6:7, 8; Col. 3:23, 24) By making good use of this arrangement, your family can echo the sentiments of the psalmist: "But as for me, the drawing near to God is good for me. In the Sovereign Lord Jehovah I have placed my refuge." —Ps. 73:28.

13. What determines how much your family will benefit from this arrangement?

The Family Worship evening should not be a dry, somber occasion but should reflect the happy God whom we worship

Some Ideas for the Family Worship Evening

Bible:

- Read a portion of the weekly Bible reading together. If the material lends itself to doing so, one person can read the narration, and others can read the words of the different characters.
- Reenact a portion of the Bible reading.
- Assign each member of the family to read the designated Bible chapters in advance and to make note of one or two questions that he has on the material. Then research everyone's questions together.
- Each week prepare a flash card with a Bible verse on it and try to memorize and explain it. Build up a collection of cards, and review them weekly to see how many scriptures you remember.
- Listen to an audio recording of the Bible reading while following along in the Bible.

Meetings:

- Prepare together for a portion of the meetings.
- Practice the Kingdom songs scheduled for the coming week.
- If someone has a talk on the Theocratic Ministry School or a demonstration on the Service Meeting, discuss ideas for presenting it or rehearse it in front of the family.

Needs of the Family:

- Consider material from the *Young People Ask* or *Learn From the Great Teacher* books.
- Have a practice session on how to handle a situation that is likely to arise at school.
- Have a practice session where the parents and children reverse roles. The

children research a subject and then reason with the parents.

Ministry:

- Have practice sessions to prepare presentations for the weekend.
- Discuss realistic goals the family can set to expand their share in the ministry during the Memorial season or vacation time.
- Allow each family member a few minutes to research how to answer different questions that may arise in the ministry, and then have practice sessions.

Additional Suggestions:

- Read together an article from the current magazines.
- Have each family member read in advance an article that intrigues him from the current magazines, and then have him give a report on it.
- Occasionally invite a publisher or couple to join you for your Family Worship evening, and perhaps interview them.
- Watch and discuss one of our videos.
- Discuss together "Young People Ask" or "For Family Review" from *Awake!*
- Discuss together "Teach Your Children" or "For Young People" from *The Watchtower*.
- Read and discuss a portion of the current *Yearbook* or a release from the last district convention.
- After attending a convention or assembly, review the highlights.
- Observe Jehovah's creation firsthand, and discuss what it teaches us about Jehovah.
- Work on a project together, such as a model, a map, or a chart.

WEEK STARTING JANUARY 31

Song 99 and Prayer

❑ Congregation Bible Study:

cf chap. 17 ¶1-9 (25 min)

❑ Theocratic Ministry School:

Bible reading: Nehemiah 1-4 (10 min)

No. 1: Nehemiah 2:11-20 (4 min or less)

No. 2: Does John 1:1 Prove That Jesus Is God?—rs p. 212 ¶4-6 (5 min)

No. 3: Ways in Which We Heed Jesus' Words at Matthew 22:21 (5 min)

❑ Service Meeting:

Song 52

5 min: Announcements.

20 min: "Help for Families."—Part 2. (Paragraphs 7-13) Questions and answers. Invite audience to comment on how their family benefited from applying some of the suggestions on page 6.

10 min: "Train Your Children to Be Ministers." Questions and answers. Invite audience to comment on specific ways their parents helped them to set and reach progressive goals in the ministry.

Song 88 and Prayer

Train Your Children to Be Ministers

¹ Jehovah invites young ones to praise him. (Ps. 148:12, 13) Christian parents, therefore, do more than teach their children Bible truths and God's moral laws. They also train them to be ministers of the good news. How can this be done progressively?

² **Good Example:** Judge Gideon told his 300 men: "Learn from watching me." (Judg. 7:17) Children naturally watch and

1. What does Psalm 148:12, 13 compel Christian parents to do?

2. How can a parent's good example affect his children?

imitate their parents. One father works at night, but instead of going to sleep when he comes home Saturday morning, he takes his children in the ministry even though he is very tired. Without saying a word, he is teaching them that the ministry is a priority. (Matt. 6:33) Do your children observe you joyfully engaging in various forms of worship, such as praying, reading the Bible, commenting, and preaching? Of course, you will not be a *perfect* example. But your children will be more inclined to respond to your efforts to teach them to worship Jehovah if they see your diligence in serving him.—Deut. 6:6, 7; Rom. 2:21, 22.

³ **Progressive Goals:** Parents tirelessly train their children to walk, to talk, to dress themselves, and so forth. As children reach milestones in their growth, new goals are put before them. If the parents are Christians, they also help their children set and reach *spiritual* goals in accord with their age and abilities. (1 Cor. 9:26) Are you teaching your children to give comments in their own words and to prepare their own talks in the Theocratic Ministry School? (Ps. 35:18) Are you training them to engage in various aspects of the ministry? Are you setting before them the goal of baptism and full-time service? Are you actively bringing them into contact with joyful, enthusiastic evangelizers who will encourage them? —Prov. 13:20.

⁴ The psalmist said: "O God, you have taught me from my youth on, and until now I keep telling about your wonderful works." (Ps. 71:17) Begin training your children at an early age to become ministers. The spiritual foundation that you help them lay is sure to benefit them into adulthood!—Prov. 22:6.

3. What progressive spiritual goals should parents help their children to set and reach?

4. How do children benefit from having parents who begin training them in the ministry at an early age?

WEEK STARTING FEBRUARY 7

Song 25 and Prayer

❑ **Congregation Bible Study:**

cf chap. 17 ¶10-15 (25 min)

❑ **Theocratic Ministry School:**

Bible reading: Nehemiah 5-8 (10 min)

No. 1: Nehemiah 6:1-13 (4 min or less)

No. 2: What Can We Learn About Hospitality From Lydia, Gaius, and Philemon? (5 min)

No. 3: Does Thomas' Exclamation at John 20:28 Prove That Jesus Is Truly God?—rs p. 213 ¶1-3 (5 min)

❑ **Service Meeting:**

Song 92

5 min: Announcements.

10 min: Are You Using Your Gift in the Ministry? Talk based on the *Ministry School* book, page 75, paragraph 4, to page 76, paragraph 2.

10 min: Local needs.

10 min: Be Accurate in Your Preaching and Teaching. Discussion based on the *Ministry School* book, page 223, paragraphs 1-5.

Song 13 and Prayer

Announcements

■ Literature offer for **January:** *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* If householders already have the book, congregations that have a stock of *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life* and *Worship the Only True God* may offer either of these books. Otherwise, publishers may offer any older field publications on hand in the congregation. **February:** *Is There a Creator Who Cares About You?* Publishers may also offer *The Bible—God's Word or Man's?* or *The Secret of Family Happiness*. **March:** *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* Make a diligent effort to start Bible studies. **April:** The *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. When making return visits on interested people, including those who attended the Memorial or other theocratic events but who are not actively associating with the congregation, concentrate on starting studies using the *Bible Teach* book.

■ Starting in February, the new public talk for the circuit overseers will be “How Does the Truth Affect Your Life?”

■ The branch facilities in Brooklyn, Patterson, and Wallkill, New York, will be closed for spring cleaning on Friday, May 13, 2011. There will be no arrangements for tours or for congregations to pick up literature on this day.

Field Service Highlights

We are pleased to report two new all-time peaks for the United States in September—135,825 regular pioneers and 705,794 Bible studies. Additionally, the Turks and Caicos Islands had a new peak of 7,505 hours spent in the ministry. Indeed, Jehovah's people are busy in this life-saving teaching work! —1 Tim. 4:16.

What to Say About the Magazines

THE WATCHTOWER® January 1 ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

Read Genesis 2:16, 17. Then say: “Some say that God knew in advance that Adam would sin. Others feel that God's warning would've been hypocritical if he already knew the outcome. What do you think? [Allow for response.] This article that begins on page 13 explains how God uses his ability to know the future.”

Awake!® January

“Some believe that religious faith is based more on emotion than on sound reason. What do you think? [Allow for response.] According to the Bible, religious faith should not be blind. [Read 1 John 4:1.] The article that begins on page 28 explains how to make sure that our faith is based firmly on reason.”

THE WATCHTOWER® February 1 ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

“Divorce is very common today. What do you think is the main cause of this? [Allow for response.] Notice this advice that many couples have found helpful. [Read 1 Corinthians 10:24.] This magazine considers six common complaints made by husbands and wives and shows how applying Bible principles can help.”

Awake!® February

“There seems to be a growing interest in vampires, witches, and sorcerers. Do you think that involvement in the occult is harmless? [Allow for response.] Notice this warning God gave to ancient Israel. [Read Deuteronomy 18:10-12.] This magazine shows what the Bible says about the occult.”