

- Song 12 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Jesus Glorified His Father”:** (10 min.)
 Joh 7:15-18—When Jesus was praised for his teaching, he gave credit to Jehovah (cf 100-101 ¶15-6)
 Joh 7:28, 29—Jesus said that he was sent as God’s representative, which indicated his subjection to Jehovah
 Joh 8:29—Jesus told his listeners that he always did the things pleasing to Jehovah (w11 3/15 11 ¶19)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Joh 7:8-10—Did Jesus lie to his unbelieving fleshly brothers? (w07 2/1 6 ¶4)

 Joh 8:58—What basis is there for rendering the last expression of this verse “I have been” instead of “I am,” and why is this important? (nwtsty study note)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Joh 8:31-47

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then invite the person to the meeting.
- **Third Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Choose your own scripture, and offer a study publication.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) lvs 9-10 ¶10-11

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS


- Song 103
- **“Demonstrate Christlike Humility and Modesty”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play each video.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 36
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 119 and Prayer

JOHN 7-8 | Jesus Glorified His Father



7:15-18, 28, 29; 8:29

In all that he said and did, Jesus glorified his heavenly Father. Jesus wanted people to know that his message came from God. So he made the Scriptures the basis for his teaching and frequently quoted from them. When praised, Jesus deflected the acclaim from himself and directed it to Jehovah. His primary concern was to accomplish the work Jehovah had given him to do.—Joh 17:4.

 **How can we imitate Jesus when . . .**

- teaching on a Bible study or from the platform?
- praised by others?
- deciding how to spend our time?

12

Great God, Jehovah

(Exodus 34:6, 7)

1. Great God, Jehovah, you are deserving,
Worthy of the highest praise,
Good and just in all your ways.
You have such power, deep love, and wisdom.
You are God to endless days.
2. Father, we feel your tender compassion.
We are dust, and still you care;
Graciously you hear our prayer.
How you sustain us, teach us, and guide us!
Help from you is always there.
3. Heaven and earth now sing of your glory.
Joyfully with voices raised,
We exalt you all our days.
Great God, Jehovah, you are deserving.
Please accept our heartfelt praise.

JOHN 6:69-7:26

whom shall we go away to?^a You have sayings of everlasting life.^b **69** We have believed and have come to know that you are the Holy One of God.”^c **70** Jesus answered them: “I chose you twelve, did I not?^d Yet one of you is a slanderer.”^{*e} **71** He was, in fact, speaking of Judas the son of Simon Is-car'i-ot, for this one was going to betray him, although he was one of the Twelve.^f

7 After this Jesus continued traveling* about in Gal'i-lee, for he did not want to do so in Ju-de'a because the Jews were seeking to kill him.^g **2** However, the Jewish Festival of Tabernacles^{*h} was near. **3** So his brothersⁱ said to him: “Leave here and go into Ju-de'a, so that your disciples may also see the works you are doing. **4** For no one does anything in secret when he seeks to be known publicly. If you are doing these things, show yourself to the world.” **5** His brothers were, in fact, not exercising faith in him.^j **6** So Jesus said to them: “My time has not yet arrived,^k but your time is always at hand. **7** The world has no reason to hate you, but it hates me, because I bear witness about it that its works are wicked.^l **8** You go up to the festival; I am not yet going up to this festival, because my time has not yet fully come.”^m **9** So after he told them these things, he remained in Gal'i-lee.

10 But when his brothers had gone up to the festival, then he also went up, not openly but in secret. **11** So the Jews began looking for him at the festival and saying: “Where is that man?” **12** And there was a lot of subdued talk about him among the crowds. Some would say: “He is a good man.” Others would say:

6:70 *Or “a devil.” 7:1 *Or “walking.”
7:2 *Or “Booths.”

“He is not. He misleads the crowd.”^a **13** Of course, no one would speak about him publicly because of fear of the Jews.^b

14 When the festival was half over, Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching. **15** And the Jews were astonished, saying: “How does this man have such a knowledge of the Scriptures^{*c} when he has not studied at the schools?”^{#d} **16** Jesus, in turn, answered them and said: “What I teach is not mine, but belongs to him who sent me.^e **17** If anyone desires to do His will, he will know whether the teaching is from God^f or I speak of my own originality. **18** Whoever speaks of his own originality is seeking his own glory; but whoever seeks the glory of the one who sent him,^g this one is true and there is no unrighteousness in him. **19** Moses gave you the Law,^h did he not? But not one of you obeys the Law. Why are you seeking to kill me?”ⁱ **20** The crowd answered: “You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill you?” **21** In answer Jesus said to them: “One deed I performed, and you are all surprised. **22** For this reason Moses has given you circumcision^j—not that it is from Moses, but it is from the forefathers^k—and you circumcise a man on a sabbath. **23** If a man receives circumcision on a sabbath so that the Law of Moses may not be broken, are you violently angry at me because I made a man completely well on a sabbath?^l **24** Stop judging by the outward appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”^m

25 Then some of the inhabitants of Jerusalem began to say: “This is the man they are seeking to kill, is it not?”ⁿ **26** And yet see! he is speaking in public, and they say nothing to him.

7:15 * Lit., “writings.” # That is, the rabbinic schools.

Have the rulers come to know for certain that this is the Christ?

27 On the contrary, we know where this man is from;^a yet when the Christ comes, no one is to know where he is from.”

28 Then as he was teaching in the temple, Jesus called out:

“You know me and you know where I am from. And I have not come of my own initiative,^b but the One who sent me is real, and you do not know him.^c **29** I know him,^d because I am a representative from him, and that One sent me.”

30 So they began seeking to get hold of him,^e but no one laid a hand on him, for his hour had not yet come.^f **31** Still, many of the crowd put faith in him,^g and they were saying: “When the Christ comes, he will not perform more signs than this man has done, will he?”

32 The Pharisees heard the crowd murmuring these things about him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to seize* him. **33** Jesus then said: “I will be with you a little while longer before I go to the One who sent me.^h **34** You will look for me, but you will not find me, and where I am you cannot come.”ⁱ **35** Therefore, the Jews said among themselves: “Where does this man intend to go, so that we will not find him? He does not intend to go to the Jews dispersed among the Greeks and teach the Greeks, does he?”

36 What does he mean when he says, ‘You will look for me, but you will not find me, and where I am you cannot come’?”

37 On the last day, the great day of the festival,^j Jesus stood up and he called out: “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.^k **38** Whoever puts faith in me, just as the scripture has said: ‘From deep with-

7:32, 44 *Or “arrest.”

JOHN 7:27-8:12

in him streams of living water will flow.”^a **39** However, he

said this concerning the spirit, which those who put faith in him were about to receive; for as yet there was no spirit,^b because Jesus had not yet been glorified.^c

40 Some in the crowd who heard these words began saying: “This really is the Prophet.”^d

41 Others were saying: “This is the Christ.”^e But some were saying: “The Christ is not coming out of Gal’i-lee, is he?”^f

42 Does the scripture not say that the Christ is coming from the offspring of David^g and from Beth’le-hem,^h the village where David was?”ⁱ

43 So a division over him arose among the crowd.

44 Some of them, though, wanted to seize* him, but no one laid his hands on him.

45 Then the officers went back to the chief priests and Pharisees, and the latter said to them: “Why did you not bring him in?”

46 The officers replied: “Never has any man spoken like this.”^j

47 In turn the Pharisees answered: “You have not been misled also, have you?”

48 Not one of the rulers or of the Pharisees has put faith in him, has he?”^k

49 But this crowd who do not know the Law are accursed people.”

50 Nic-o-de’mus, who had come to him previously and who was one of them, said to them:

51 “Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and learns what he is doing, does it?”^l

52 In answer they said to him: “You are not also out of Gal’i-lee, are you? Search and see that no prophet is to be raised up out of Gal’i-lee.”*

8 12 Then Jesus spoke again to them, saying: “I am the light of the world.^m Whoever

7:52 * A number of ancient and authoritative manuscripts omit from vs. 53 to chapter 8, vs. 11.

JOHN 8:13-40

follows me will by no means walk in darkness, but will possess the light^a of life.” **13** So the Pharisees said to him: “You bear witness about yourself; your witness is not true.” **14** In answer Jesus said to them: “Even if I do bear witness about myself, my witness is true, because I know where I came from and where I am going.^b But you do not know where I came from and where I am going. **15** You judge according to the flesh;^{*c} I do not judge any man at all. **16** And yet even if I do judge, my judgment is truthful, because I am not alone, but the Father who sent me is with me.^d **17** Also, in your own Law it is written: ‘The witness of two men is true.’^e **18** I am one who bears witness about myself, and the Father who sent me bears witness about me.”^f **19** Then they said to him: “Where is your Father?” Jesus answered: “You know neither me nor my Father.^g If you did know me, you would know my Father also.”^h **20** He spoke these words in the treasuryⁱ as he was teaching in the temple. But no one seized him, for his hour had not yet come.^j

21 So he said to them again: “I am going away, and you will look for me, and yet you will die in your sin.^k Where I am going, you cannot come.”^l

22 The Jews then began to say: “He will not kill himself, will he? Because he says, ‘Where I am going, you cannot come.’”

23 He went on to say to them: “You are from the realms below; I am from the realms above.^m You are from this world; I am not from this world. **24** That is why I said to you: You will die in your sins. For if you do not believe that I am the one, you will die in your sins.” **25** So they began to say to him: “Who are you?” Je-

8:15 *Or “by human standards.”

sus replied to them: "Why am I even speaking to you at all? **26** I have many things to speak concerning you and to pass judgment on. As a matter of fact, the One who sent me is true, and the very things I heard from him I am speaking in the world."^a **27** They did not grasp that he was talking to them about the Father. **28** Jesus then said: "After you have lifted up the Son of man,^b then you will know that I am he^c and that I do nothing of my own initiative;^d but just as the Father taught me, I speak these things. **29** And the One who sent me is with me; he did not abandon me to myself, because I always do the things pleasing to him."^e **30** As he was saying these things, many put faith in him.

31 Then Jesus went on to say to the Jews who had believed him: "If you remain in my word, you are really my disciples, **32** and you will know the truth,^f and the truth will set you free."^g **33** They replied to him: "We are Abraham's offspring and never have been slaves to anyone. How is it you say, 'You will become free'?" **34** Jesus answered them: "Most truly I say to you, every doer of sin is a slave of sin.^h **35** Moreover, the slave does not remain in the household forever; the son remains forever. **36** So if the Son sets you free, you will be truly free. **37** I know that you are Abraham's offspring. But you are seeking to kill me, because my word makes no progress among you. **38** I speak the things I have seen while with my Father,ⁱ but you do the things you have heard from your father." **39** In answer they said to him: "Our father is Abraham." Jesus said to them: "If you were Abraham's children,^j you would be doing the works of Abraham. **40** But now

you are seeking to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God.^a Abraham did not do this. **41** You are doing the works of your father.” They said to him: “We were not born from immorality;* we have one Father, God.”

42 Jesus said to them: “If God were your Father, you would love me,^b for I came from God and I am here. I have not come of my own initiative, but that One sent me.^c **43** Why do you not understand what I am saying? Because you cannot listen to my word. **44** You are from your father the Devil, and you wish to do the desires of your father.^d That one was a murderer when he began,^{*e} and he did not stand fast in the truth, because truth is not in him. When he speaks the lie, he speaks according to his own disposition, because he is a liar and the father of the lie.^f **45** Because I, on the other hand, tell you the truth, you do not believe me. **46** Who of you convicts me of sin? If I speak truth, why is it that you do not believe me? **47** The one who is from God listens to the sayings of God.^g This is why you do not listen, because you are not from God.”^h

48 In answer the Jews said to him: “Are we not right in saying, ‘You are a Sa-mar’i-tanⁱ and have a demon?’”^j **49** Jesus answered: “I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. **50** But I am not seeking glory for myself;^k there is One who is seeking and judging. **51** Most truly I say to you, if anyone observes my word, he will never see death at all.”^l **52** The Jews said to him: “Now we do know that you have a demon. Abraham died, also the prophets, but

8:41 *Or “sexual immorality.” Greek, *por·nei’a*. See Glossary. **8:44** *Or “from the beginning.”

JOHN 8:41-9:8

you say, 'If anyone observes my word, he will never taste death at all.' **53** You are not greater than our father Abraham, who died, are you? The prophets also died. Who do you claim to be?" **54** Jesus answered: "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me,^a the one who you say is your God. **55** Yet you have not known him,^b but I know him.^c And if I said I do not know him, I would be like you, a liar. But I do know him and am observing his word. **56** Abraham your father rejoiced greatly at the prospect of seeing my day, and he saw it and rejoiced."^d **57** Then the Jews said to him: "You are not yet 50 years old, and still you have seen Abraham?" **58** Jesus said to them: "Most truly I say to you, before Abraham came into existence, I have been."^e **59** So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid and went out of the temple.

9 As he was passing along, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. **2** And his disciples asked him: "Rabbi,^f who sinned, this man or his parents, so that he was born blind?" **3** Jesus answered: "Neither this man sinned nor his parents, but it was so that the works of God might be made manifest in his case."^g **4** We must do the works of the One who sent me while it is day;^h the night is coming when no man can work. **5** As long as I am in the world, I am the world's light."ⁱ **6** After he said these things, he spat on the ground and made a paste with the saliva, and he smeared the paste on the man's eyes.^j **7** and said to him: "Go wash in the pool of Si-lo'am" (which is translated "Sent Forth"). And he went and washed, and came back seeing.^k **8** Then the neighbors and those who formerly used to see

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 Joh 8:58—What basis is there for rendering the last expression of this verse “I have been” instead of “I am,” and why is this important? (nwtsty study note)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS


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- **“Demonstrate Christlike Humility and Modesty”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play each video.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 36
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
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JOHN 7-8 | Jesus Glorified His Father



7:15-18, 28, 29; 8:29

In all that he said and did, Jesus glorified his heavenly Father. Jesus wanted people to know that his message came from God. So he made the Scriptures the basis for his teaching and frequently quoted from them. When praised, Jesus deflected the acclaim from himself and directed it to Jehovah. His primary concern was to accomplish the work Jehovah had given him to do.—Joh 17:4.

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- teaching on a Bible study or from the platform?
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September 24-30

Treasures From God's Word

John 7:15-18—When Jesus was praised for his teaching, he gave credit to Jehovah

John 7:15-18: And the Jews were astonished, saying: “How does this man have such a knowledge of the Scriptures when he has not studied at the schools?” Jesus, in turn, answered them and said: “What I teach is not mine, but belongs to him who sent me. If anyone desires to do His will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or I speak of my own originality. Whoever speaks of his own originality is seeking his own glory; but whoever seeks the glory of the one who sent him, this one is true and there is no unrighteousness in him.”

cf 100-101 paragraphs 5-6

5 Jesus wanted people to know where his message came from. He said: “What I teach is not mine, but belongs to him that sent me.” (John 7:16) On another occasion, he said: “I do nothing of my own initiative; but just as the Father taught me I speak these things.” (John 8:28) Further, he said: “The things I say to you men I do not speak of my own originality; but the Father who remains in union with me is doing his works.” (John 14:10) One way that Jesus proved the truth of such comments was by quoting God's written Word again and again.

6 A close study of Jesus' recorded words reveals that he quoted directly from or referred indirectly to over half of the books of the Hebrew Scripture canon. At first, that may not sound impressive. You may wonder why, in three and a half years of public teaching and preaching, he did not quote from all the inspired books

available. In truth, though, he may well have done so. Remember, only a fraction of Jesus' words and deeds are recorded. (John 21:25) In fact, you could probably read aloud all of Jesus' recorded words in just a few hours. Now, imagine talking about God and his Kingdom for just a few hours and managing to work in references to over half of the books of the Hebrew Scriptures! Furthermore, in most cases Jesus did not have written scrolls at hand. When he delivered his famous Sermon on the Mount, he included dozens of direct and indirect references to the Hebrew Scriptures—all from memory!

John 7:28, 29—Jesus said that he was sent as God's representative, which indicated his subjection to Jehovah

John 7:28, 29: Then as he was teaching in the temple, Jesus called out: "You know me and you know where I am from. And I have not come of my own initiative, but the One who sent me is real, and you do not know him. I know him, because I am a representative from him, and that One sent me."

John 8:29—Jesus told his listeners that he always did the things pleasing to Jehovah

John 8:29: "And the One who sent me is with me; he did not abandon me to myself, because I always do the things pleasing to him."

w11 3/15 11 paragraph 19

Obey Jehovah completely. Jesus always did the things pleasing to his Father. On at least one occasion, Jesus' inclination on how to deal with a situation was different from what his Father wanted. Yet, with confidence he said to his Father: "Let, not my will, but yours take place." (Luke 22:42) Ask yourself, 'Do I obey God even when doing so is not easy?' Obedience to God is essential for life. We owe him implicit obedience as our Maker, the Source and Sustainer of our life. (Psalms 95:6, 7) There is no substitute for obedience. We cannot gain God's favor without it.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

John 7:8-10—Did Jesus lie to his unbelieving fleshly brothers?

John 7:8-10: "You go up to the festival; I am not yet going up to this festival, because my time has not yet fully come." So after he told them these things, he remained in Galilee. But when his brothers had gone up to the festival, then he also went up, not openly but in secret.

w07 2/1 6 paragraph 4

What example did Jesus Christ set in this regard? On one occasion, Jesus was conversing with some unbelievers who showed interest in his travel plans. "Pass on over from here and go into Judea," they advised him. What was Jesus' reply? "You go up to the festival [in Jerusalem]; I am not yet going up to this festival, because my due time has not yet fully come." Shortly thereafter, Jesus did travel to Jerusalem for the festival. Why did he answer

that way? They were not entitled to know the exact details of his whereabouts. So while Jesus did not utter an untruth, he gave them an incomplete answer in order to limit the possible harm they could do to him or to his followers. This was not a lie, for the apostle Peter wrote about Christ: “He committed no sin, nor was deception found in his mouth.”—John 7:1-13; 1 Peter 2:22.

John 8:58—What basis is there for rendering the last expression of this verse “I have been” instead of “I am,” and why is this important?

John 8:58: Jesus said to them: “Most truly I say to you, before Abraham came into existence, I have been.”

Study note

I have been: The opposing Jews wanted to stone Jesus for claiming that he had “seen Abraham,” although, as they said, Jesus was “not yet 50 years old.” (John 8:57) Jesus’ response was to tell them about his prehuman existence as a mighty spirit creature in heaven before Abraham was born. Some claim that this verse identifies Jesus with God. They argue that the Greek expression used here, *ego' eimi'* (rendered “I am” in some Bibles), is an allusion to the *Septuagint* rendering of Exodus 3:14 and that both verses should be rendered the same way. (See study note on John 4:26.) In this context, however, the action expressed by the Greek verb *eimi'* started “before Abraham came into existence” and was still in progress. It is therefore properly translated “I have been” rather than “I am,” and a number of ancient and modern translations use wording similar to “I have been.” In fact, at John

14:9, the same form of the Greek verb *eimi*' is used to render Jesus' words: "Even after *I have been* with you men for such a long time, Philip, have you not come to know me?" Most translations use a similar wording, showing that depending on context there is no valid grammatical objection to rendering *eimi*' as "have been." (Other examples of rendering a present tense Greek verb using a present perfect tense verb are found at Luke 2:48; 13:7; 15:29; John 1:9; 5:6; 15:27; Acts 15:21; 2 Corinthians 12:19; 1 John 3:8.) Also, Jesus' reasoning recorded at John 8:54, 55 shows that he was not trying to portray himself as being the same person as his Father.

What has this week's Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week's Bible reading?

Bible Reading: (4 minutes or less) John 8:31-47

JOHN

Study Notes—Chapter 7

7:1

the Jews: As used in the Gospel of John, this term conveys different meanings, depending on the context. In addition to referring to Jewish or Judean people in general or to those living in or near Jerusalem, the term may also refer more specifically to Jews who zealously adhered to human traditions connected with the Mosaic Law, which were often contrary to the spirit of that Law. (Mt 15:3-6) Foremost among these “Jews” were the Jewish authorities or religious leaders who were hostile to Jesus. In this passage and in some of the other occurrences of this term in John chapter 7, the context indicates that the Jewish authorities or religious leaders are referred to.—Joh 7:13, 15, 35a.

7:2

Festival of Tabernacles: Or “Festival of Booths.” This is the only mention of this festival in the Christian Greek Scriptures. This festival refers to the one observed in the fall of 32 C.E.—See Glossary, “Festival of Booths,” and App. B15.

7:11

the Jews: Here the term “the Jews” may refer to people in general who were gathering for the Festival of Tabernacles in Jerusalem, although it may also refer to the Jewish religious leaders.—See study note on Joh 7:1.

7:13

the Jews: Apparently referring to the Jewish authorities or religious leaders.—See study note on Joh 7:1.

7:15

the Jews: This expression seems to refer to the Jewish authorities or religious leaders, a conclusion that is indicated by Jesus' question to them in verse 19: "Why are you seeking to kill me?"—See study note on Joh 7:1.

the Scriptures: Or "writings." Lit., "letters," that is, units of an alphabet. The expression "know (have a knowledge of) letters" is an idiom meaning "have a knowledge of writings (books, literature)." In this context, it apparently refers to knowledge of the inspired Scriptures.

when he has not studied at the schools: Or "without having been taught." Lit., "not having learned." Jesus was not uneducated, but he had not studied at the rabbinic schools of higher learning.

7:17

of my own originality: Or "on my own." Lit., "from myself." As God's Chief Representative, Jesus always listens to Jehovah's voice and speaks what Jehovah directs.

7:23

circumcision on a sabbath: Circumcision was a mandatory requirement of the Mosaic Law. (Le 12:2, 3) It was considered so important that even if the eighth day fell on the highly regarded Sabbath, circumcision was to be performed.

7:26

the rulers: Here referring to Jewish rulers. In the days of Jesus' earthly ministry, Israel was under the dual rule of the Roman Empire and the Jewish rulers. The chief body of the Jewish rulers was the Sanhedrin, a council of 71 elders, including the high

priest, to which the Roman government granted limited authority over Jewish affairs.—See Glossary, “Sanhedrin.”

7:29

I am a representative from him: Lit., “beside him I am.” The use of the preposition *pa·ra'* (lit., “beside”) emphasizes not only that Jesus is “from” God but that he is very close, or near, to Jehovah. In this sense, Jesus is a “representative” from God.

7:32

officers: That is, guards of the temple in Jerusalem. Likely, they were agents of the Sanhedrin and under the authority of the chief priests. They functioned as religious police.

7:35

the Jews: In this context where the chief priests and Pharisees are mentioned (Joh 7:32, 45), the designation “the Jews” apparently refers to the Jewish authorities or religious leaders.—See study note on Joh 7:1.

the Jews dispersed: Lit., “the dispersion.” In this context, the Greek word *di·a·spo·ra'* refers to Jews living outside Israel. This dispersion, or Diaspora, took place because the Jews were exiled from their homeland when conquered by other nations—first the Assyrians, in 740 B.C.E., and then the Babylonians, prior to and in 607 B.C.E. (2Ki 17:22, 23; 24:12-17; Jer 52:28-30) Only a remnant of the exiles returned to Israel; the rest remained scattered. (Isa 10:21, 22) By the fifth century B.C.E., Jewish communities were apparently found in the 127 provinces of the Persian Empire. (Es 1:1; 3:8) The expression used here at Joh 7:35 refers specifically to those who had been scattered **among the Greeks**. In the first century, there were Jewish populations in many Greek-speaking communities outside of Israel, for example, in Syria, Asia Minor, and Egypt, as well as in the European part of the Roman Empire, including Greece and

Rome. Efforts to win converts to Judaism meant that, in time, a large number of people came to have some knowledge of Jehovah and of the Law that he gave to the Jews. (Mt 23:15) Jews and proselytes from many lands were present in Jerusalem for the Festival of Pentecost in 33 C.E., and they heard the good news about Jesus. Therefore, the dispersion of Jews throughout the Roman Empire contributed to the rapid spread of Christianity.

7:37

On the last day: That is, the seventh day of the Festival of Tabernacles, or Booths, Tishri 21. It was called “the great day of the festival.”—De 16:13; see study note on Joh 7:2 and Glossary, “Festival of Booths,” and App. B15.

7:38

just as the scripture has said: Jesus does not seem to be quoting a particular verse here but is alluding to such scriptures as Isa 44:3; 58:11; and Zec 14:8. Over two years earlier, when Jesus spoke with the Samaritan woman about **living water**, he focused on the benefits of receiving this water. (Joh 4:10, 14) But in this verse, Jesus indicates that this “living water” would **flow** from his followers who put **faith** in him as they shared it with others. (Joh 7:37-39) The Christian Greek Scriptures provide abundant evidence that Jesus’ followers, after receiving holy spirit beginning at Pentecost 33 C.E., were impelled to impart life-giving water to all who would listen.—Ac 5:28; Col 1:23.

streams of living water will flow: Jesus may here have alluded to a custom followed during the Festival of Tabernacles, or Booths. The custom involved the drawing of water from the pool of Siloam and pouring it from a golden vessel, along with wine, on the altar at the time of the morning sacrifice. (See study note on Joh 7:2; Glossary, “Festival of Booths,” and App. B15.) Though this feature of the festival was not mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures but was added later, most scholars say that

this occurred on seven days of the festival but not on the eighth. On the opening day of the festival, a sabbath, the water that a priest poured out had been brought to the temple from the pool of Siloam on the preceding day. On the subsequent days, the priest would go to the pool of Siloam to collect water in a golden pitcher. He would time his return to the temple so that he arrived just as the priests were ready to lay the pieces of the sacrifice on the altar. As he came through the Water Gate and into the Court of the Priests, his entry was announced by a threefold blast from the priests' trumpets. The water was then poured out into a basin leading to the base of the altar at the same time that wine was being poured into a different basin. Then the temple music accompanied the singing of the Hallel Psalms (Ps 113-118) while the worshippers waved their palm branches toward the altar. This ceremony may have reminded the joyful celebrants of Isaiah's prophetic words: "With rejoicing you will draw water from the springs of salvation."—Isa 12:3.

7:39

for as yet there was no spirit: The Greek word for "spirit," *pneu'ma*, occurs twice in this verse and refers to God's holy spirit, or active force. Jesus and those who listened to him knew that God had long used His holy spirit (Ge 1:2, ftn.; 2Sa 23:2; Ac 28:25) and that He had imparted that spirit to His faithful servants, such as Othniel, Jephthah, and Samson (Jg 3:9, 10; 11:29; 15:14). Therefore, John was clearly referring to a new way that the spirit would benefit imperfect humans. None of those earlier servants of God had been called to heavenly life by means of the spirit. At Pentecost 33 C.E., Jesus poured out on his followers the holy spirit that he, as a glorified spirit, had received from Jehovah. (Ac 2:4, 33) This was the first time that imperfect humans were given the hope of spirit life in heaven. Having this anointing, the Christians were able to understand the meaning of many things that they had not understood before.

7:49

accursed people: The proud and self-righteous Pharisees and Jewish leaders looked down on the common people who listened to Jesus, calling them “accursed people.” The Greek word used here, *e·pa'ra·tos*, is a term of contempt, which implies that those so described were under a curse from God. The Jewish religious leaders also used a Hebrew term, *'am ha-'a'rets*, or “people of the land,” to express their contempt for the common people. Originally, this was a term of respect for citizens of a specific territory, embracing not only the poor and lowly but also the prominent. (Ge 23:7; 2Ki 23:35; Eze 22:29) By Jesus' day, however, the term was used of those who were considered ignorant of the Mosaic Law or who failed to observe the smallest details of rabbinic traditions. Later rabbinic writings confirm that attitude. Many religious leaders viewed such people as contemptible, refusing to eat with them, buy from them, or associate with them.

7:52

You are not also out of Galilee, are you?: This question apparently reflects the contempt that these Judeans felt toward Galileans. When Nicodemus spoke up in defense of Jesus (Joh 7:51), the Pharisees were, in effect, asking: “Are you defending and supporting him, putting yourself on the level of a backward Galilean?” Since the Sanhedrin and the temple were in Jerusalem, no doubt a great concentration of teachers of the Law was to be found there, which likely gave rise to the Jewish proverb: “Go north [to Galilee] for riches, go south [to Judea] for wisdom.” But evidence indicates that the Galileans were not ignorant of God's Law. Throughout the cities and villages of Galilee, there were teachers of the Law as well as synagogues that served as educational centers. (Lu 5:17) This arrogant reply to Nicodemus indicates that the Pharisees did not make any effort to learn that Bethlehem was Jesus' actual birthplace. (Mic

5:2; Joh 7:42) They also failed to discern Isaiah's prophecy that likened the Messiah's preaching to "a great light" that would shine in Galilee.—Isa 9:1, 2; Mt 4:13-17.

7:53

The earliest authoritative manuscripts do not have the passage from Joh 7:53 to 8:11. These 12 verses were obviously added to the original text of John's Gospel. (See App. A3.) They are not found in the two earliest available papyri containing the Gospel of John, Papyrus Bodmer 2 (P66) and Papyrus Bodmer 14, 15 (P75), both from the second century C.E., nor are they found in the Codex Sinaiticus or Codex Vaticanus, both from the fourth century C.E. They first appear in a Greek manuscript from the fifth century (Codex Bezae) but are not found in any other Greek manuscripts until the ninth century C.E. They are omitted by most of the early translations into other languages. One group of Greek manuscripts places the added words at the end of John's Gospel; another group puts them after Lu 21:38. That this portion appears at different places in different manuscripts supports the conclusion that it is a spurious text. Scholars overwhelmingly agree that these verses were not part of the original text of John.

Greek manuscripts and translations into other languages that include these verses read (with some variations) as follows:

⁵³ So they went each one to his home.

8 But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. ² At daybreak, however, he again presented himself at the temple, and all the people began coming to him, and he sat down and began to teach them. ³ Now the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught at adultery, and, after standing her in their midst, ⁴ they said to him: "Teacher, this woman has been

caught in the act of committing adultery. ⁵ In the Law Moses prescribed for us to stone such sort of women. What, really, do you say?" ⁶ Of course, they were saying this to put him to the test, in order to have something with which to accuse him. But Jesus bent down and began to write with his finger in the ground. ⁷ When they persisted in asking him, he straightened up and said to them: "Let the one of you that is sinless be the first to throw a stone at her." ⁸ And bending over again he kept on writing in the ground. ⁹ But those who heard this began going out, one by one, starting with the older men, and he was left alone, and the woman that was in their midst. ¹⁰ Straightening up, Jesus said to her: "Woman, where are they? Did no one condemn you?" ¹¹ She said: "No one, sir." Jesus said: "Neither do I condemn you. Go your way; from now on practice sin no more."

JOHN Study Notes—Chapter 8

8:12

the light of the world: The metaphor Jesus used to describe himself may have reminded his listeners of the four giant lampstands in the Court of the Women, which were lit during the Festival of Booths, or Tabernacles. (Joh 7:2; see App. B11.) The light from them illuminated the surroundings to a great distance. In addition, the expression "light of the world" echoes passages from Isaiah foretelling that "a great light" would be seen by "those dwelling in the land of deep shadow" and that the one referred to as Jehovah's "servant" would be "a light of the nations." (Isa 9:1, 2; 42:1, 6; 49:6) In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus used the same metaphor when addressing his followers, saying: "You are the light of the world." (Mt 5:14) The expression "light of the world" (where the Greek word *ko'smos* refers to the entire world

of mankind) fits well with Isaiah's words about the Messiah being "a light of the nations." And at Ac 13:46, 47, Paul and Barnabas show that these prophetic words of Isa 49:6 constituted a command to all of Christ's followers to continue to serve as a light to the nations. Both Jesus' ministry and that of his followers would enlighten people spiritually and free them from enslavement to false religious teachings.

8:16

the Father: Some manuscripts read "he," but the main text reading has strong support in ancient manuscripts.

8:20

the treasury: Or "near the treasury (contribution) chests." The Greek word used here also occurs at Mr 12:41, 43 and Lu 21:1, where it is rendered "treasury chests." Apparently, the term here refers to the area of the temple located in the Court of the Women, where there were 13 treasury chests. (See App. B11.) It is believed that the temple also contained a major treasury and that the money from the treasury chests was taken there. But it is unlikely that this verse speaks about that area.—See study note on Mr 12:41.

8:41

immorality: Or "sexual immorality." Greek, *por·nei'a*.—See study note on Mt 5:32 and Glossary, "Sexual immorality."

We were not born from immorality: Or "We are not illegitimate children." The Jews were claiming to be legitimate children of God and of Abraham and, thus, heirs of the promises made to Abraham.

8:44

when he began: Or “from the beginning,” that is, from the beginning of the Devil’s course as a murderer, a liar, and a slanderer of God.—1Jo 3:8, ftn.

8:48

a Samaritan: Here the Jews used the term “Samaritan” as an expression of contempt and reproach.—See study note on Lu 10:33 and Glossary, “Samaritans.”

8:56

he saw it: That is, with eyes of faith.—Heb 11:13; 1Pe 1:11.

8:57

you have seen Abraham?: A few manuscripts read “has Abraham seen you?,” but the main text reading has strong support in early authoritative manuscripts.

8:58

I have been: The opposing Jews wanted to stone Jesus for claiming that he had “seen Abraham,” although, as they said, Jesus was “not yet 50 years old.” (Joh 8:57) Jesus’ response was to tell them about his prehuman existence as a mighty spirit creature in heaven before Abraham was born. Some claim that this verse identifies Jesus with God. They argue that the Greek expression used here, *e·go' ei·mi'* (rendered “I am” in some Bibles), is an allusion to the *Septuagint* rendering of Ex 3:14 and that both verses should be rendered the same way. (See study note on Joh 4:26.) In this context, however, the action expressed by the Greek verb *ei·mi'* started “before Abraham came into existence” and was still in progress. It is therefore properly translated “I have been” rather than “I am,” and a number of ancient and modern translations use wording similar to “I have been.” In fact, at Joh 14:9, the same form of the Greek verb *ei·mi'*

is used to render Jesus' words: "Even after *I have been* with you men for such a long time, Philip, have you not come to know me?" Most translations use a similar wording, showing that depending on context there is no valid grammatical objection to rendering *ei-mi'* as "have been." (Other examples of rendering a present tense Greek verb using a present perfect tense verb are found at Lu 2:48; 13:7; 15:29; Joh 1:9; 5:6; 15:27; Ac 15:21; 2Co 12:19; 1Jo 3:8.) Also, Jesus' reasoning recorded at Joh 8:54, 55 shows that he was not trying to portray himself as being the same person as his Father.

8:59

picked up stones to throw at him: About two months later, the Jews again tried to kill Jesus in the temple. (Joh 10:31) Since the temple was still being renovated, it has been suggested that the Jews gathered the stones from a construction site.

- Song 12 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- **“Jesus Glorified His Father”:** (10 min.)
 Joh 7:15-18—When Jesus was praised for his teaching, he gave credit to Jehovah (cf 100-101 ¶15-6)
 Joh 7:28, 29—Jesus said that he was sent as God’s representative, which indicated his subjection to Jehovah
 Joh 8:29—Jesus told his listeners that he always did the things pleasing to Jehovah (w11 3/15 11 ¶19)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)
 Joh 7:8-10—Did Jesus lie to his unbelieving fleshly brothers? (w07 2/1 6 ¶4)

 Joh 8:58—What basis is there for rendering the last expression of this verse “I have been” instead of “I am,” and why is this important? (nwtsty study note)

What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Joh 8:31-47

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then invite the person to the meeting.
- **Third Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Choose your own scripture, and offer a study publication.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) lvs 9-10 ¶10-11

LIVING AS CHRISTIANS


- Song 103
- **“Demonstrate Christlike Humility and Modesty”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play each video.
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) jy chap. 36
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 119 and Prayer

JOHN 7-8 | Jesus Glorified His Father



7:15-18, 28, 29; 8:29

In all that he said and did, Jesus glorified his heavenly Father. Jesus wanted people to know that his message came from God. So he made the Scriptures the basis for his teaching and frequently quoted from them. When praised, Jesus deflected the acclaim from himself and directed it to Jehovah. His primary concern was to accomplish the work Jehovah had given him to do.—Joh 17:4.

 **How can we imitate Jesus when . . .**

- teaching on a Bible study or from the platform?
- praised by others?
- deciding how to spend our time?



Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Conversations

●○○ INITIAL CALL

Question: How does God feel about those who sincerely seek him?

Scripture: 1Pe 5:6, 7

Link: To what extent does God pay attention to us as individuals?



○○● FIRST RETURN VISIT

Question: To what extent does God pay attention to us as individuals?

Scripture: Mt 10:29-31

Link: How do we know that God understands us?



○○● SECOND RETURN VISIT

Question: How do we know that God understands us?

Scripture: Ps 139:1, 2, 4

Link: How can God's care benefit us?

/vs 9-10 ¶10-11

¹⁰ Why do we obey Jehovah? It is not just to avoid punishment or the problems that come from making bad decisions. (Galatians 6:7) No, we obey Jehovah because we love him. Just as children want to make their father happy, we want to make our heavenly Father happy. Nothing could be better than knowing that Jehovah is pleased with us!—Psalm 5:12; Proverbs 12:2; see Endnote 2.

¹¹ We don't obey Jehovah only when it is easy or when we have no other choice. And we don't choose which of his laws and standards to follow and which ones not to follow. (Deuteronomy 12:32) Instead, we obey him completely, like the psalmist who said: "I am fond of your commandments, yes, I love them." (Psalm 119:47; Romans 6:17) We want to be like Noah, who showed his love for Jehovah by doing everything Jehovah commanded him to do. The Bible says that Noah "did just so." (Genesis 6:22) Do you want Jehovah to say that about you?

103 *Shepherds—Gifts in Men*

(Ephesians 4:8)

1. Help in our lives, Jehovah provides,
 Shepherds to tend his flock.
 By their example they serve as guides,
 Showing us how to walk.

(CHORUS)

*God gives us men who have earned our trust,
Men who are loyal and true.
They show concern for his precious sheep;
Love them for all that they do.*

2. Shepherds who love us care how we feel;
 Gently they guide the way.
 When we are hurt, they help us to heal,
 Kind in the words they say.

(Chorus)

3. Godly advice and counsel they give,
 That we may never stray.
 Thus they assist us, God's way to live,
 Serving him ev'ry day.

(Chorus)

- Song 12 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Jesus Glorified His Father”:** (10 min.)
 Joh 7:15-18—When Jesus was praised for his teaching, he gave credit to Jehovah (cf 100-101 ¶15-6)
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What has this week’s Bible reading taught you about Jehovah?

What other spiritual gems have you discovered in this week’s Bible reading?

- **Bible Reading:** (4 min. or less) Joh 8:31-47

APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY

- **Second Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then invite the person to the meeting.
- **Third Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Choose your own scripture, and offer a study publication.
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JOHN 7-8 | Jesus Glorified His Father



7:15-18, 28, 29; 8:29

In all that he said and did, Jesus glorified his heavenly Father. Jesus wanted people to know that his message came from God. So he made the Scriptures the basis for his teaching and frequently quoted from them. When praised, Jesus deflected the acclaim from himself and directed it to Jehovah. His primary concern was to accomplish the work Jehovah had given him to do.—Joh 17:4.

 **How can we imitate Jesus when . . .**

- teaching on a Bible study or from the platform?
- praised by others?
- deciding how to spend our time?

Demonstrate Christlike Humility and Modesty

Even though Jesus was the greatest man who ever lived, he showed humility and modesty by glorifying Jehovah. (Joh 7:16-18) On the other hand, Satan became the Devil, which means “Slanderer.” (Joh 8:44) Satan’s attitude was manifested by the Pharisees, whose pride caused them to belittle anyone who showed faith in the Messiah. (Joh 7:45-49) How can we imitate Jesus when we receive privileges or responsibilities in the congregation?



WATCH THE VIDEO “HAVE LOVE AMONG YOURSELVES”—AVOID JEALOUSY AND BRAGGING, PART 1, AND THEN DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING:

- How did Alex manifest pride?



WATCH THE VIDEO “HAVE LOVE AMONG YOURSELVES”—AVOID JEALOUSY AND BRAGGING, PART 2, AND THEN DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING:

- How did Alex manifest humility?

- How did Alex encourage Bill and Carl?



WATCH THE VIDEO “HAVE LOVE AMONG YOURSELVES”—REPUDIATE PRIDE AND INDECENCY, PART 1, AND THEN DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING:

- How did Brother Harris fail to demonstrate modesty?



WATCH THE VIDEO “HAVE LOVE AMONG YOURSELVES”—REPUDIATE PRIDE AND INDECENCY, PART 2, AND THEN DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING:

- How did Brother Harris demonstrate modesty?

- What did Brother Harris’ example teach Faye?

“Have Love Among Yourselves”- Avoid Jealousy & Bragging

AVOID JEALOUSY & BRAGGING – PART 1

Bill.

Carl, how are you?

Good. How are you feeling?

Good.

Awesome. Alex . . . Hey. I didn't get a chance to tell you last week, but that was a really nice job you did on your talk.

Yeah, good job.

Ah, thanks, guys! Believe me, I've been so busy it was hard to make time to prepare it.

Oh, tell me about it! I think the whole congregation has had a lot going on lately.

Yeah, it has.

That's true, but I think I've been extra busy.

Why? What's going on?

You're not sick, are you?

No, no, it's nothing like that. It's all this theocratic stuff —pioneering, congregation duties, and other things. Like this Saturday, I need to be at the Kingdom Hall all afternoon and . . .

Saturday? Here? Why?

Wait a second, I see where this is going. Isn't there a circuit assembly rehearsal here on Saturday?

Oh yeah, that's right. So you're on the program?

Well, I'm not sure if I'm supposed to say.

“Have Love Among Yourselves”- Avoid Jealousy & Bragging

Well, you just did. So, what is it? You're in a demonstration? An interview? You can't just leave us hanging!

OK. Well, it's not just an interview. It's an interview with a re-enactment, and then they are going to ask me questions at the end. I'm actually on stage for most of the part. Come to think of it, guys, I am the part!

You are the part? Are you sure you're not stretching that a little bit?

No, I don't think I am. OK. Brother Jones' part is ten minutes; I'm up there for six. That's more than half the part. Anyway, so let me tell you how it's supposed to go: They are going to ask me about the time I did this amazing job out in field service. I walk up to the door. Of course, I ring the bell. But what happens? It doesn't work. I knock louder than any man ever has.

“Have Love Among Yourselves”- Avoid Jealousy & Bragging
AVOID JEALOUSY & BRAGGING -PART 2

Bill.

Carl, how are you?

Good. How are you feeling?

Good.

Awesome.

Alex . . . Hey. I didn't get a chance to tell you last week, but that was a really nice job you did on your talk.

Yeah, good job.

Thanks, guys! With Jehovah's help, it came together. Believe me, I've been so busy. It was just . . . It was hard to make time to prepare it.

Oh, tell me about it! I think the whole congregation has had a lot going on lately.

Yeah, it has.

You both would know. Aren't you both auxiliary pioneering? How's that going?

It's going. Actually, yesterday I was able to show one of our jw.org videos to a man. He said that I can come back this Saturday. I think he might even agree to a study. You want to come with me, Alex?

You know, I'm sorry. I'm going to be tied up for most of this Saturday. But maybe Bill can go with you.

How about it, Bill?

Sure. I have a call to make too. Maybe we can do both calls together.

All right, deal.

So, Bill, you have a good call too? Tell us about it.

Oh, yes, well I met a man . . .

“Have Love Among Yourselves” -Repudiate Pride & Indecency

REPUDIATE PRIDE & INDECENCY – PART 1

Brother Harris, do you have a moment? Sure, Faye, how can we help you? Well, you probably heard by now, David and I got engaged this past weekend!

We heard. Congratulations! We're so happy for both of you.

Thanks so much! And since this is where I grew up, it would mean a lot to us if we could get married in this Kingdom Hall. So we were hoping that since you're the coordinator of the body of elders, you'd be able to let us know, *today*, if we can use the hall. Then David and I can start working on our wedding invitations. David asked me to give you this letter making our official request.

OK. OK. Let's take a look. Oh, yeah, this is a good letter. This gives me all the information I need. Faye, I can't imagine you getting married anywhere else. You can count on [using] the Kingdom Hall. I'll let the elders know that I have already given my approval. Let David know we're looking forward to your big day.

Thanks so much, Brother Harris! I knew you'd come through for me!

REPUDIATE PRIDE & INDECENCY – PART 2

Brother Harris, do you have a moment?

Sure, Faye, how can we help you?

Well, you probably heard by now, David and I got engaged this past weekend! We heard. Congratulations! We're so happy for both of you.

Thanks so much! And since this is where I grew up, it would mean a lot to us if we could get married in this Kingdom Hall. So we were hoping that since you're the coordinator of the body of elders, you'd be able to let us know, *today*, if we can use the hall. Then David and I can start working on our wedding invitations. David asked me to give you this letter making our official request.

OK. OK. Yes, this is a good letter. This has all the information that we need.

“Have Love Among Yourselves” -Repudiate Pride & Indecency

I'm going to check with the other elders and we're going to discuss it, then we'll get right back to you.

Oh, you mean you can't tell me right now? I thought that since you're the coordinator, you'd have the authority to—you know . . .

I understand. But, there is a theocratic arrangement that we all have to follow, even the elders. And the arrangement is for the entire service committee to discuss this and to consider the matter thoroughly before any approval can be given. So I don't have the authority to make a decision on my own.

Of course, that makes sense. I understand.

But don't worry, Faye, we're going to get on this as soon as possible. Then you can move forward with your wedding plans.

Thank you so much, Brother Harris. I really appreciate it.

You're welcome.

36

A CENTURION SHOWS GREAT FAITH

MATTHEW 8:5-13 LUKE 7:1-10

- AN ARMY OFFICER'S SLAVE IS HEALED
 - THOSE WITH FAITH WILL BE BLESSED
-

After giving his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus goes to the city of Capernaum. Here some elders of the Jews approach him. They have been sent by a man of a different background—a Roman army officer, a centurion.

The army officer's beloved servant is seriously ill and about to die. Though the centurion is a Gentile, he is seeking Jesus' help. The Jews tell Jesus that the man's servant "is laid up in the house with paralysis, and he is suffering terribly," perhaps being in great pain. (Matthew 8:6) The Jewish elders assure Jesus that this centurion is worthy of being granted this help, explaining: "He loves our nation and he himself built our synagogue."—Luke 7:4, 5.

Soon, Jesus leaves with the elders for the army officer's house. As they near it, the officer sends out



friends to say: “Sir, do not bother, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. That is why I did not consider myself worthy to come to you.” (Luke 7:6, 7) What a humble expression from someone used to giving orders! And it shows how different this man is from Romans who treat slaves harshly.—Matthew 8:9.

The centurion no doubt is aware that Jews avoid fellowshiping with non-Jews. (Acts 10:28) Perhaps with this in mind, the officer has his friends urge Jesus: “Say the word, and let my servant be healed.”—Luke 7:7.

Jesus is amazed to hear this and comments: “I tell you, not even in Israel have I found so great a faith.” (Luke 7:9) On returning to the centurion’s house, his friends discover that the slave who was so ill is now in good health.

Once Jesus has performed that healing, he uses the occasion to confirm that non-Jews of faith will be favored with blessings, saying: “Many from east and west will come and recline at the table with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the Kingdom of

the heavens.” What about faithless Jews? Jesus says that they “will be thrown into the darkness outside. There is where their weeping and the gnashing of their teeth will be.”—Matthew 8:11, 12.

Hence, natural Jews who do not accept the opportunity offered first to them to be part of the Kingdom with Christ will be rejected. But Gentiles will be welcomed to recline at his table, as it were, “in the Kingdom of the heavens.”



- ◇ Why do Jews plead on behalf of a Gentile army officer?
- ◇ What may explain why the centurion has not asked Jesus to enter his house?
- ◇ What prospect for Gentiles does Jesus highlight?

1. On many occasions God spoke to men
By means of his prophets of old.
Today he is saying, 'Let all repent,'
By God's own Son we are told.

(CHORUS)

*Do we have strong faith? Is it real?
We must build such faith to survive.
Is our faith proved true by our works?
By means of faith, we'll be preserved alive.*

2. We gladly obey Christ Jesus' command
To share Kingdom truth far and wide.
We boldly declare God's message of hope;
His promise we'll never hide.

(Chorus)

3. Our faith is an anchor firm and secure;
We never will shrink back in fear.
Our trust in Jehovah helps us endure;
We know salvation is near.

(Chorus)

JULY 2018

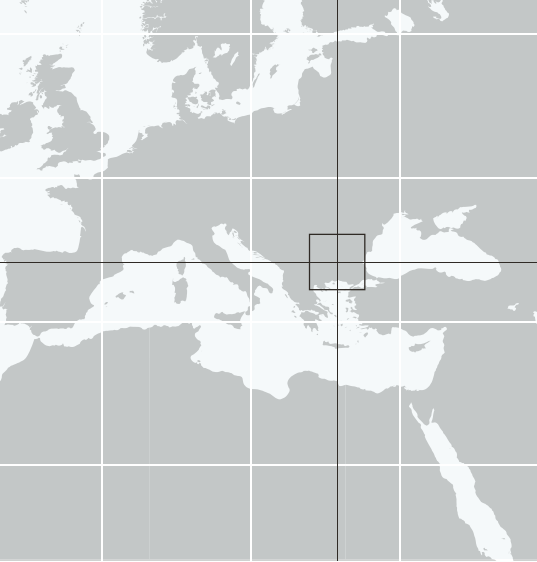
THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:
SEPTEMBER 3-30, 2018

LARGE
PRINT
EDITION



COVER IMAGE:

BULGARIA

This reenactment shows the circumstances under which a Bible study is conducted in Bulgarian prisons with interested inmates

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Whose Recognition Do You Seek?

Many today are concerned with seeking recognition from this wicked world. This article will discuss why we should maintain our focus on gaining the greatest form of recognition—the recognition granted by Jehovah to his faithful servants. We will also discuss how Jehovah shows this recognition, sometimes in very unexpected ways.

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Where Are Your Eyes Looking?

In this article, we will analyze why the faithful man Moses lost out on the privilege of entering the Promised Land. We will also be helped to see how we can avoid falling into the trap that ensnared Moses.

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from the modern-language
New World Translation
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Jehovah can rightfully claim ownership of all humans. Thus, he requires our exclusive devotion. Some individuals, though, pursue a course of disobedience while pretending to be faithful to God. In the first article, we will draw vital lessons from the Bible accounts of Cain, Solomon, Moses, and Aaron. In the second article, we will consider various ways that we can show appreciation for the privilege of belonging to Jehovah as his people.

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40 *To Whom Do We Belong?*

(Romans 14:8)

1. To whom do you belong?

Which god do you now obey?

Your master's the one to whom you bow.

He is your god; you serve him now.

You cannot serve two gods;

Devotion cannot be shared.

And so in the end your choice will depend

On how your heart is prepared.

2. To whom do you belong?

Which god will you now obey?

For one god is false and one is true,

So make your choice; it's up to you.

Will Caesar of this world

Possess your allegiance still?

Or will you obey the true God today

By always doing his will?

3. To whom do I belong?

Jehovah I will obey.

My Father in heaven I will serve;

I'll pay my vows without reserve.

He bought me at great cost;

Devoted to him I'll stay.

To him I will give each moment I live.

His name I'll honor each day.



SONGS:

40, 50

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

What are some of the things we accomplish through dedication and baptism?

Why should it be obvious to others that we are exclusively devoted to Jehovah?

Why is it important to be hospitable, generous, forgiving, and kind to fellow worshippers?

We Belong to Jehovah

“Happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah, the people he has chosen as his own possession.”—PS. 33:12.

EVERYTHING belongs to Jehovah! He owns “the heavens, even the heavens of the heavens, and the earth with all that is in it.” (Deut. 10:14; Rev. 4:11) Hence, by reason of their very existence, all humans belong to Je-

1. Why can Jehovah rightfully claim ownership of everything? (See opening picture.)

hovah. (Ps. 100:3) Yet, throughout human history, God has designated specific groups of people as belonging to him in a special way.

² For example, Psalm 135 refers to faithful worshippers of Jehovah in ancient Israel as “his special property.” (Ps. 135:4) Also, the book of Hosea foretold that some non-Israelites would become Jehovah’s people. (Hos. 2:23) Hosea’s prophecy was fulfilled when Jehovah included non-Jews in his selection of prospective corulers with Christ. (Acts 10:45; Rom. 9:23-26) This “holy nation” is Jehovah’s “special possession” in an outstanding way, its members having been anointed with holy spirit and chosen for life in heaven. (1 Pet. 2:9, 10) What about the majority of faithful Christians today who have an earthly hope? Jehovah also calls them his “people” and his “chosen ones.”—Isa. 65:22.

³ Today, the “little flock,” with a heavenly hope, and the “other sheep,” with an earthly hope, compose the “one flock” that Jehovah highly regards

2. Who have been identified in the Bible as belonging to Jehovah in a special way?

3. (a) Who enjoy a favored relationship with Jehovah today?
(b) What will be considered in this article?

as his people. (Luke 12:32; John 10:16) We surely want to show deep appreciation to Jehovah for granting us such a favored relationship with him. This article will consider various ways in which we can show our gratitude to Jehovah for giving us that special honor.

WE DEDICATE OUR LIVES TO JEHOVAH

⁴ We show appreciation to Jehovah by wholeheartedly dedicating ourselves to him. By water baptism, we formally and publicly acknowledge Jehovah's ownership of us and our willingness to subject ourselves to him. (Heb. 12:9) Jesus did something similar when at his baptism he, in effect, said to Jehovah: "To do your will, O my God, is my desire." (Ps. 40:7, 8, ftn.) Jesus presented himself to do Jehovah's will, even though since birth he had been part of a nation dedicated to God.

⁵ How did Jehovah respond to Jesus' baptism?

4. What is one way we can thank Jehovah for making it possible for us to have a relationship with him, and how did Jesus do something similar?

5, 6. (a) How did Jehovah respond when Jesus was baptized? (b) Illustrate why Jehovah appreciates our dedication, even though everything belongs to him.

The Bible account says: “After being baptized, Jesus immediately came up from the water; and look! the heavens were opened up, and he saw God’s spirit descending like a dove and coming upon him. Look! Also, a voice from the heavens said: ‘This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved.’” (Matt. 3:16, 17) Although Jesus already belonged to his heavenly Father, Jehovah was delighted to see his Son’s willingness to do His will exclusively. Jehovah is likewise pleased to accept our dedication, and he will honor us with his blessing.—Ps. 149:4.

⁶ To illustrate, imagine that a man has planted many beautiful flowers in his garden. One day his little girl picks one of those flowers and offers it to him as a gift. Did not the flower already belong to the man? How could she give him something that he already owned? A loving father would not even think of such questions. Rather, he would be delighted to accept the gift as a token of his daughter’s love for him. He would surely treasure that single flower from his daughter above all the other flowers in his garden. Jehovah is no less delighted when we willingly devote ourselves to him exclusively.—Ex. 34:14.

⁷ Read Malachi 3:16. If you are not yet dedicated and baptized, consider the significance of taking such a step. Granted, from the moment you came into existence, you belonged to Jehovah, along with the rest of mankind. Yet, think how greatly it would please Jehovah if in recognition of his sovereignty, you were to dedicate yourself to him and do his will. (Prov. 23:15) Jehovah, in turn, recognizes those who willingly serve him, and he writes their names in his “book of remembrance.”

⁸ Having our name inscribed in Jehovah’s “book of remembrance” as his people comes with certain obligations. Malachi specifically stated that we must ‘fear Jehovah and meditate on his name.’ Giving our worshipful devotion to anyone or anything else would result in our name being removed from Jehovah’s figurative book of life. —Ex. 32:33; Ps. 69:28.

⁹ Hence, our dedication to Jehovah involves

7. How did Malachi highlight Jehovah’s feelings toward those who willingly serve him?

8, 9. What does Jehovah require from those whose names are inscribed in his “book of remembrance”?

much more than a solemn promise to do his will and to submit to water baptism. These actions are brief, and they quickly become part of the past. Our stand on Jehovah's side as his people requires an ongoing demonstration of our obedience to him both in the present and in the future—for as long as we live.—1 Pet. 4:1, 2.

WE REJECT WORLDLY DESIRES

¹⁰ The preceding article considered the Bible accounts of Cain, Solomon, and the Israelites. All of them professed to worship Jehovah, but their devotion to him was far from exclusive. These examples clearly establish that those who truly belong to Jehovah must firmly take their stand for righteousness and against wickedness. (Rom. 12:9) Appropriately, after Malachi mentioned the “book of remembrance,” Jehovah spoke of “the distinction between a righteous person and a wicked person, between one serving God and one not serving him.”—Mal. 3:18.

10. What clear distinction must exist between those who serve Jehovah and those who do not?

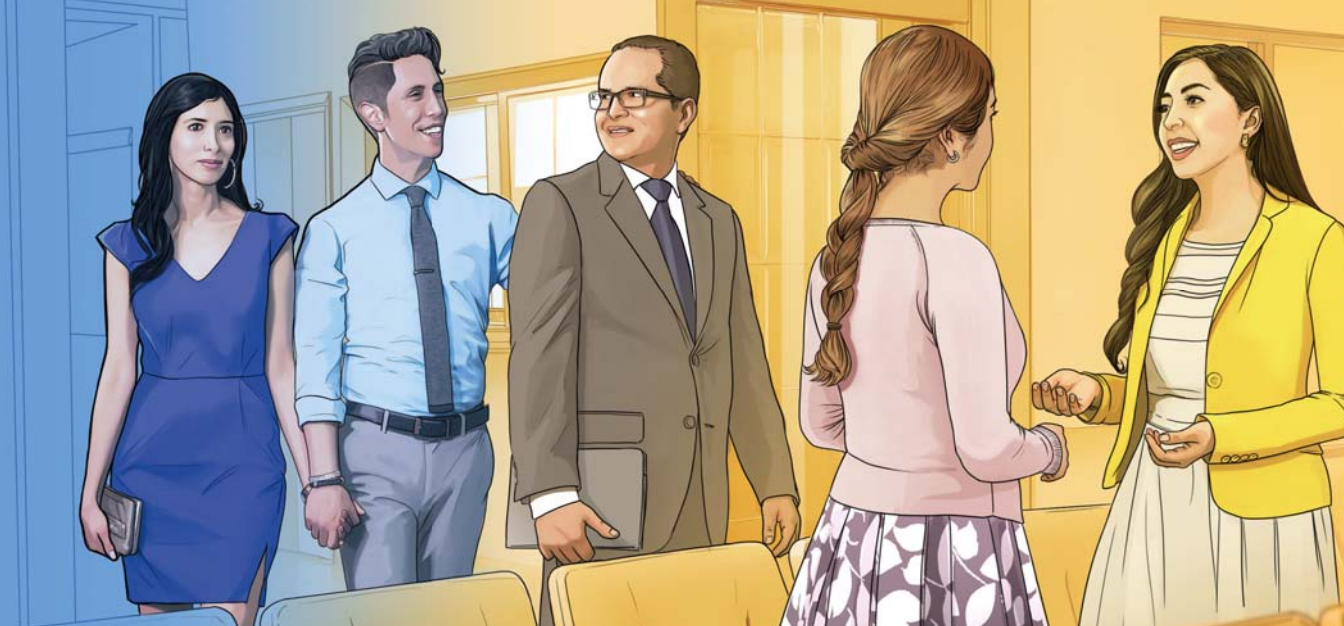


Does your lifestyle clearly identify you
as one of Jehovah's Witnesses?

(See paragraphs 12, 13)

¹¹ Here, then, is another way we can show appreciation to Jehovah for choosing us as his people. Our spiritual progress must be “plainly seen by all.” (1 Tim. 4:15; Matt. 5:16) Ask yourself: ‘Is my complete allegiance to Jehovah evident to others? Do I look for opportunities to identify myself as one of Jehovah’s Witnesses?’ Jehovah would be deeply saddened if after he has selected us as his people, we were to hesitate to

11. Why should it be obvious to others that we are devoted to Jehovah exclusively?



Do not let yourself be affected by those who are not taking a firm stand on Jehovah's side

let others know that we belong to him.—Ps. 119: 46; read Mark 8:38.

¹² Sad to say, some individuals have blurred ‘the distinction between their serving God and their not serving him’ by imitating “the spirit of the world.” (1 Cor. 2:12) That is a spirit that caters to ‘the desires of one’s flesh.’ (Eph. 2:3) For example, despite all the counsel that has been given on the subject, some still prefer styles of dress and

12, 13. How have some obscured their identity as Jehovah’s Witnesses?

grooming that are immodest. They wear tight-fitting and revealing clothing, even to Christian gatherings. Or they have adopted extreme haircuts and hairdos. (1 Tim. 2:9, 10) As a result, when they are in a crowd, it may be difficult to tell who belongs to Jehovah and who is “a friend of the world.”—Jas. 4:4.

¹³ In other ways, some Witnesses have not firmly rejected worldly conduct. Their dancing and actions at parties go beyond what is acceptable for Christians. They post on social media photos of themselves and comments that are unbecoming to spiritual people. They may not have been disciplined in the Christian congregation for a serious sin, but they can be a negative influence on their peers who are striving to maintain fine conduct among Jehovah’s people.—Read 1 Peter 2:11, 12.

¹⁴ The world aggressively promotes “the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one’s means of life.” (1 John 2:16) Yet, because we belong to Jehovah, we are admonished to “reject ungodliness and worldly desires and to live with soundness of mind and righ-

14. What course of action is vital if we are to protect our special friendship with Jehovah?

teousness and godly devotion amid this present system of things.” (Titus 2:12) Our speech, our eating and drinking habits, our dress and grooming, our work ethic—everything we do—should tell onlookers that we are exclusively devoted to Jehovah.—Read 1 Corinthians 10:31, 32.

WE “HAVE INTENSE LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER”

¹⁵ Our appreciation for Jehovah’s special friendship is shown in how we treat fellow worshippers. They too belong to Jehovah. If we never lose sight of that fact, we will always treat our brothers and sisters with kindness and love. (1 Thess. 5:15) Jesus said to his followers: “By this all will know that you are my disciples—if you have love among yourselves.”—John 13:35.

¹⁶ To illustrate how we should treat one another in the congregation, consider the following. The utensils in Jehovah’s temple were dedicated, or set aside, exclusively for pure worship. The Mosaic Law outlined in detail how to care for these utensils, and violators were subject to

15. Why should we treat fellow worshippers with kindness and love?

16. What example from the Mosaic Law illustrates Jehovah’s feelings toward his people?

death. (Num. 1:50, 51) If Jehovah so jealously protected lifeless implements used in his worship, how much more would he protect his dedicated loyal worshippers whom he has chosen as his people! Speaking to his people, Jehovah once declared: “Whoever touches you touches the pupil of my eye.”—Zech. 2:8.

¹⁷ Interestingly, Malachi depicted Jehovah as “paying attention and listening” as His people interact with one another. (Mal. 3:16) Jehovah indeed “knows those who belong to him.” (2 Tim. 2:19) He is keenly aware of every single thing we do and say. (Heb. 4:13) When we are less than kind to our fellow worshippers, Jehovah is “paying attention and listening.” When we are hospitable, generous, forgiving, and kind to one another, we can be sure that Jehovah takes notice of that as well.—Heb. 13:16; 1 Pet. 4:8, 9.

“JEHOVAH WILL NOT FORSAKE HIS PEOPLE”

¹⁸ Surely we are eager to show our appreciation

17. Jehovah is “paying attention and listening” to what?

18. How can we show appreciation for the honor of being Jehovah’s people?

to Jehovah for the honor of being his people. We see the wisdom in acknowledging his ownership of us by voluntarily dedicating ourselves to him. Even while living “in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation,” we want people to see that we are “blameless and innocent, . . . shining as illuminators in the world.” (Phil. 2:15) We take a firm stand against badness. (Jas. 4:7) And we love and respect our fellow worshippers, recognizing that they too belong to Jehovah.—Rom. 12:10.

¹⁹ The Bible promises: “Jehovah will not forsake his people.” (Ps. 94:14) This ironclad guarantee is binding despite any calamity that might befall us. Even death cannot stand in the way of Jehovah’s love for us. (Rom. 8:38, 39) “If we live, we live to Jehovah, and if we die, we die to Jehovah. So both if we live and if we die, we belong to Jehovah.” (Rom. 14:8) We eagerly look forward to the day when Jehovah will bring to life all his loyal friends who have died. (Matt. 22:32) Even now we enjoy many blessings. As the Bible says, “happy is the nation whose God is Jehovah, the people he has chosen as his own possession.”—Ps. 33:12.

19. How does Jehovah reward those who belong to him?

My Prayer of Dedication

(Matthew 22:37)

1. Take my heart and may it love
Truth and wisdom from above.
Take my voice and let it sing
Praises always to my King.
2. Take my feet and take my hands;
Let them serve your wise commands.
Take my silver and my gold.
Nothing, Lord, would I withhold.
3. Take my life and bring it, Lord,
With your will, in full accord.
Take myself, may all I do
Be well-pleasing, Jah, to you.

