

- Song 25 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD**

- **“Jesus Cares for His Sheep”:** (10 min.)  
 Joh 10:1-3, 11, 14—Jesus, “the fine shepherd,” knows his sheep personally and cares for their needs abundantly (*nwtsty media; w11 5/15 7-8 ¶15*)  
 Joh 10:4, 5—The sheep know Jesus’ voice, not that of strangers (*cf 124-125 ¶17*)  
 Joh 10:16—Jesus’ sheep enjoy unity (*nwtsty study note*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)  
 Joh 9:38—In what sense did the formerly blind beggar do obeisance to Jesus? (*nwtsty study note*)

Joh 10:22—What was the Festival of Dedication? (*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 9:1-17

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Initial Call Video:** (4 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **First Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *fg* lesson 14 ¶1-2

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 62
- **Local Needs:** (15 min.)
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 37
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 3 and Prayer

JOHN 9-10 | Jesus Cares for His Sheep



**10:1-5, 11, 14, 16** ✎

The relationship between a shepherd and his sheep is based on knowledge and trust. Jesus, the Fine Shepherd, knows his sheep personally—their needs, their weaknesses, and their strengths. The sheep know the shepherd and trust his leadership.

**How is Jesus, the Fine Shepherd, . . .**

gathering his sheep?

guiding his sheep?

protecting his sheep?

feeding his sheep?

**FOR MEDITATION:** How can I show greater appreciation for Jesus’ care?

# *A Special Possession*

(1 Peter 2:9)

1. God has a new creation,  
His spirit-anointed sons.  
He has bought them from mankind;  
His approval they've won.

*(CHORUS)*

*A special possession,  
They're a people for your name.  
They love you. They praise you.  
As one they declare abroad your fame.*

2. They are a holy nation,  
Who handle the truth aright.  
God has called them from darkness  
To his wonderful light.

*(Chorus)*

3. Faithful to their commission,  
They gather the other sheep.  
To the Lamb they are loyal.  
His commandments they keep.

*(Chorus)*

## 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,<sup>a</sup> the one who you say is your God. **55** Yet you have not known him,<sup>b</sup> but I know him.<sup>c</sup> 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."<sup>d</sup> **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."<sup>e</sup> **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,<sup>f</sup> 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."<sup>g</sup> **4** We must do the works of the One who sent me while it is day;<sup>h</sup> the night is coming when no man can work. **5** As long as I am in the world, I am the world's light."<sup>i</sup> **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.<sup>j</sup> **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.<sup>k</sup>

**8** Then the neighbors and those who formerly used to see

## JOHN 9:9-37

that he was a beggar began to say: "This is the man who used to sit and beg, is it not?" **9** Some were saying: "This is he." Others were saying: "No, but he looks like him." The man kept saying: "I am he." **10** So they asked him: "How, then, were your eyes opened?" **11** He answered: "The man called Jesus made a paste and smeared it on my eyes and said to me, 'Go to Si-lo'am and wash.'<sup>a</sup> So I went and washed and gained sight." **12** At this they said to him: "Where is that man?" He said: "I do not know."

**13** They led the formerly blind man to the Pharisees. **14** Incidentally, the day that Jesus made the paste and opened his eyes<sup>b</sup> was the Sabbath.<sup>c</sup> **15** So this time the Pharisees also began asking the man how he gained sight. He said to them: "He put a paste on my eyes, and I washed, and I can see." **16** Some of the Pharisees then began to say: "This is not a man from God, for he does not observe the Sabbath."<sup>d</sup> Others said: "How can a man who is a sinner perform signs of that sort?"<sup>e</sup> So there was a division among them.<sup>f</sup> **17** And again they said to the blind man: "What do you say about him, since it was your eyes that he opened?" The man said: "He is a prophet."

**18** However, the Jews did not believe that he had been blind and had gained sight, until they called the parents of the man who could now see. **19** And they asked them: "Is this your son who you say was born blind? How, then, does he now see?" **20** His parents answered: "We know that this is our son and that he was born blind. **21** But how it is that he now sees, we do not know; or who opened his eyes, we do not know. Ask him. He is of age. He must speak for himself." **22** His parents said these things because they were

in fear of the Jews,<sup>a</sup> for the Jews had already come to an agreement that if anyone acknowledged him as Christ, that person should be expelled from the synagogue.<sup>b</sup> **23** This is why his parents said: "He is of age. Question him."

**24** So a second time they called the man who had been blind and said to him: "Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner." **25** He answered: "Whether he is a sinner, I do not know. One thing I do know, that I was blind, but now I can see." **26** Then they said to him: "What did he do to you? How did he open your eyes?" **27** He answered them: "I told you already, and yet you did not listen. Why do you want to hear it again? You do not want to become his disciples also, do you?" **28** At this they scornfully told him: "You are a disciple of that man, but we are disciples of Moses. **29** We know that God has spoken to Moses, but as for this man, we do not know where he is from." **30** The man answered them: "This is certainly amazing, that you do not know where he is from, and yet he opened my eyes. **31** We know that God does not listen to sinners,<sup>c</sup> but if anyone is God-fearing and does his will, he listens to this one.<sup>d</sup> **32** From of old it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of one born blind. **33** If this man were not from God, he could do nothing at all."<sup>e</sup> **34** In answer they said to him: "You were altogether born in sin, and yet are you teaching us?" And they threw him out!<sup>f</sup>

**35** Jesus heard that they had thrown him out, and on finding him, he said: "Are you putting faith in the Son of man?" **36** The man answered: "And who is he, sir, so that I may put faith in him?" **37** Jesus said to him: "You have seen him, and

in fact, he is the one speaking with you.” **38** He said: “I do put faith in him, Lord.” And he did obeisance\* to him. **39** Jesus then said: “For this judgment I came into this world, that those not seeing might see<sup>a</sup> and those seeing might become blind.”<sup>b</sup> **40** Those of the Pharisees who were with him heard these things, and they said to him: “We are not blind also, are we?” **41** Jesus said to them: “If you were blind, you would have no sin. But now you say, ‘We see.’ Your sin remains.”<sup>c</sup>

**10** “Most truly I say to you, the one who does not enter into the sheepfold through the door but climbs in by another way, that one is a thief and a plunderer.<sup>d</sup> **2** But the one who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep.<sup>e</sup> **3** The doorkeeper opens to this one,<sup>f</sup> and the sheep listen to his voice.<sup>g</sup> He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. **4** When he has brought all his own out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. **5** They will by no means follow a stranger but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.” **6** Jesus spoke this comparison to them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

**7** So Jesus said again: “Most truly I say to you, I am the door for the sheep.<sup>h</sup> **8** All those who have come in place of me are thieves and plunderers; but the sheep have not listened to them. **9** I am the door; whoever enters through me will be saved, and that one will go in and out and find pasturage.<sup>i</sup> **10** The thief does not come unless it is to steal and slay and destroy.<sup>j</sup> I have come that they may have life and have it in abundance. **11** I am

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9:38 \*Or “bowed down.”

## JOHN 9:38–10:25

the fine shepherd;<sup>a</sup> the fine shepherd surrenders his life\* in behalf of the sheep.<sup>b</sup> **12** The hired man, who is not a shepherd and to whom the sheep do not belong, sees the wolf coming and abandons the sheep and flees—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them— **13** because he is a hired man and does not care for the sheep. **14** I am the fine shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me,<sup>c</sup> **15** just as the Father knows me and I know the Father;<sup>d</sup> and I surrender my life\* in behalf of the sheep.<sup>e</sup>

**16** “And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold;<sup>f</sup> those too I must bring in, and they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock, one shepherd.<sup>g</sup> **17** This is why the Father loves me,<sup>h</sup> because I surrender my life,<sup>\*i</sup> so that I may receive it again. **18** No man takes it away from me, but I surrender it of my own initiative. I have authority to surrender it, and I have authority to receive it again.<sup>j</sup> This commandment I received from my Father.”

**19** A division again resulted among the Jews<sup>k</sup> because of these words. **20** Many of them were saying: “He has a demon and is out of his mind. Why do you listen to him?” **21** Others said: “These are not the sayings of a demonized man. A demon cannot open blind people’s eyes, can it?”

**22** At that time the Festival of Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was wintertime, **23** and Jesus was walking in the temple in the colonnade of Sol’o·mon.<sup>l</sup> **24** Then the Jews surrounded him and began to say to him: “How long are you going to keep us\* in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly.” **25** Jesus answered them: “I told you, and

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10:11, 15, 17 \*Or “soul.” 10:24 \*Or “our souls.”

## JOHN 10:26–11:13

yet you do not believe. The works that I am doing in my Father's name, these bear witness about me.<sup>a</sup> **26** But you do not believe, because you are not my sheep.<sup>b</sup>

**27** My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.<sup>c</sup> **28** I give them everlasting life,<sup>d</sup> and they will by no means ever be destroyed, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.<sup>e</sup>

**29** What my Father has given me is something greater than all other things, and no one can snatch them out of the hand of the Father.<sup>f</sup> **30** I and the Father are one."<sup>\*g</sup>

**31** Once again the Jews picked up stones to stone him.

**32** Jesus replied to them: "I displayed to you many fine works from the Father. For which of those works are you stoning me?" **33** The Jews answered him: "We are stoning you, not for a fine work, but for blasphemy;<sup>h</sup>

for you, although being a man, make yourself a god." **34** Jesus answered them: "Is it not written in your Law, 'I said: "You are gods"?"<sup>\*i</sup> **35** If he called "gods"<sup>j</sup>

those against whom the word of God came—and yet the scripture cannot be nullified— **36** do you say to me whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, 'You blaspheme,' because I said, 'I am God's Son'?"<sup>k</sup> **37** If I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me. **38** But if I am doing them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works,<sup>l</sup> so that you may come to know and may continue knowing that the Father is in union with me and I am in union with the Father."<sup>m</sup> **39** So they tried again to seize him, but he escaped from their reach.

**40** And he went away again across the Jordan to the place where John was baptizing at

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**10:30** \*Or "at unity." **10:34** \*Or "god-like ones."



first,<sup>a</sup> and he stayed there. **41** And many people came to him and began saying: "John did not perform a single sign, but all the things John said about this man were true."<sup>b</sup> **42** And many put faith in him there.

**11** Now a man named Laz'a-rus was sick; he was from Beth'a-ny, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.<sup>c</sup> **2** This was the Mary who poured perfumed oil on the Lord and wiped his feet dry with her hair;<sup>d</sup> it was her brother Laz'a-rus who was sick. **3** So his sisters sent a message to him, saying: "Lord, see! the one you have affection for is sick." **4** But when Jesus heard it, he said: "This sickness is not meant to end in death, but is for the glory of God,<sup>e</sup> so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

**5** Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Laz'a-rus. **6** However, when he heard that Laz'a-rus was sick, he actually remained in the place where he was for two more days. **7** Then after this he said to the disciples: "Let us go into Ju-de'a again." **8** The disciples said to him: "Rabbi,<sup>f</sup> just lately the Ju-de'ans were seeking to stone you,<sup>g</sup> and are you going there again?" **9** Jesus answered: "There are 12 hours of daylight, are there not?<sup>h</sup> If anyone walks in daylight, he does not stumble into anything, because he sees the light of this world. **10** But if anyone walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him."

**11** After he said these things, he added: "Laz'a-rus our friend has fallen asleep,<sup>i</sup> but I am traveling there to awaken him." **12** The disciples then said to him: "Lord, if he is sleeping, he will get well." **13** Jesus, however, had spoken about his death. But they imagined he was speaking about taking rest

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JOHN 9-10 | Jesus Cares for His Sheep



**10:1-5, 11, 14, 16** ✎

The relationship between a shepherd and his sheep is based on knowledge and trust. Jesus, the Fine Shepherd, knows his sheep personally—their needs, their weaknesses, and their strengths. The sheep know the shepherd and trust his leadership.

**How is Jesus, the Fine Shepherd, . . .**

gathering his sheep?

guiding his sheep?

protecting his sheep?

feeding his sheep?

**FOR MEDITATION:** How can I show greater appreciation for Jesus’ care?

## October 1-7

### Treasures From God's Word

John 10:1-3, 11, 14—Jesus, “the fine shepherd,” knows his sheep personally and cares for their needs abundantly

**John 10:1-3:** “Most truly I say to you, the one who does not enter into the sheepfold through the door but climbs in by another way, that one is a thief and a plunderer. But the one who enters through the door is the shepherd of the sheep. The doorkeeper opens to this one, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

**John 10:11:** I am the fine shepherd; the fine shepherd surrenders his life in behalf of the sheep.

**John 10:14:** I am the fine shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me,

#### Media on John 10:1

**Sheepfold:** A sheepfold was an enclosure designed to protect sheep from thieves and predatory animals. Shepherds kept their flocks in the safety of a sheepfold during the night. In Bible times, sheepfolds were roofless structures of different shapes and sizes, often with stone walls and only one opening. (Numbers 32:16; 1 Samuel 24:3; Zephaniah 2:6) John speaks of entering a sheepfold “through the door,” which was guarded by a “doorkeeper.” (John 10:1, 3) In a community sheepfold, more than one flock might spend the night, and the doorkeeper would keep watch to protect the sheep. In the morning, the doorkeeper would open the door for the shepherds. Each shepherd would collect his flock by calling out to the sheep, and his sheep would recognize the voice of their shepherd and respond. (John 10:3-5) Jesus referred to this practice to illustrate the way he cared for his disciples.—John 10:7-14.

## w11 5/15 7-8 paragraph 5

Figuratively speaking, the relationship between a shepherd and his sheep is based on knowledge and trust. The shepherd knows all about his sheep, and the sheep know and trust the shepherd. They recognize and obey his voice. “I know my sheep and my sheep know me,” said Jesus. He does not have mere surface knowledge of the congregation. The Greek word here rendered “know” denotes “personal, intimate knowledge.” Yes, the Fine Shepherd knows his sheep personally. He knows their individual needs, their weaknesses, and their strengths. Nothing about his sheep escapes the notice of our Exemplar. And the sheep fully know the shepherd and trust his leadership.

John 10:4, 5—The sheep know Jesus’ voice, not that of strangers

**John 10:4, 5:** When he has brought all his own out, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice. They will by no means follow a stranger but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers.”

## cf 124-125 paragraph 17

From personal observation, George A. Smith wrote in his book *The Historical Geography of the Holy Land*: “Sometimes we enjoyed our noonday rest beside one of those Judaeian wells, to which three or four shepherds come down with their flocks. The flocks mixed with each other, and we wondered how each shepherd would get his own again. But after the watering and the playing were over, the shepherds one by one went up different sides of the valley, and each called out his peculiar call; and the sheep of each drew out of the crowd to their own shepherd, and the flocks passed away as orderly as they came.” Jesus could hardly have found a better illustration to make his point, namely, that if we recognize and obey

his teachings and if we follow his lead, then we can come under the care of “the fine shepherd.”

John 10:16—Jesus’ sheep enjoy unity

**John 10:16:** “And I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; those too I must bring in, and they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock, one shepherd.

### **study note**

**bring in: Or “lead.”** The Greek verb *a’go* used here can mean “to bring (in)” or “to lead,” depending on the context. One Greek manuscript dated to about 200 C.E. uses a related Greek word (*syna’go*) that is often rendered “to gather.” As the Fine Shepherd, Jesus gathers, guides, protects, and feeds the sheep that belong to this fold (also referred to as “little flock” at Luke 12:32) and his other sheep. These become one flock under one shepherd. This word picture emphasizes the unity that Jesus’ followers would enjoy.

## **Digging for Spiritual Gems**

John 9:38—In what sense did the formerly blind beggar do obeisance to Jesus?

**John 9:38:** He said: “I do put faith in him, Lord.” And he did obeisance to him.

### **study note**

**did obeisance to him: Or “bowed down to him; prostrated himself to him; paid him homage.”** When the Greek verb *proskyne’o* is used to refer to the rendering of worship to a god or a deity, it is translated “to worship.” (Matthew 4:10; Luke 4:8) In this

context, however, the healed man, who was born blind, recognized Jesus as God's representative and did obeisance to him. He viewed him, not as God or a deity, but as the foretold "Son of man," the Messiah with divine authority. (John 9:35) When he bowed down to Jesus, he apparently did so in a way similar to that of people mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. They bowed down when meeting prophets, kings, or other representatives of God. (1 Samuel 25:23, 24; 2 Samuel 14:4-7; 1 Kings 1:16; 2 Kings 4:36, 37) On many occasions, the obeisance done to Jesus expressed a gratitude for divine revelation or evidence of divine favor.—See study notes on Matthew 2:2; 8:2; 14:33; 15:25.

John 10:22—What was the Festival of Dedication? ("the Festival of Dedication" study note on John 10:22, *nwtsty*)

**John 10:22:** At that time the Festival of Dedication took place in Jerusalem. It was wintertime,

### **study note**

**the Festival of Dedication:** The Hebrew name of this festival is Hanukkah (*chanukkah*), meaning "Inauguration; Dedication." It was held for eight days, beginning on the 25th day of the month of Chislev, close to the winter solstice, (see study note on wintertime in this verse and Appendix B15) to commemorate the rededication of Jerusalem's temple in 165 B.C.E. Syrian King Antiochus IV Epiphanes had shown his contempt for Jehovah, the God of the Jews, by desecrating His temple. For example, he built an altar on top of the great altar, where formerly the daily burnt offering had been presented. On Chislev 25, 168 B.C.E., to defile Jehovah's temple completely, Antiochus sacrificed swine on the altar and had the broth from its flesh sprinkled all over the temple. He burned the temple gates, pulled down the priests' chambers, and carried away

the golden altar, the table of showbread, and the golden lampstand. He then rededicated Jehovah's temple to the pagan god Zeus of Olympus. Two years later, Judas Maccabaeus recaptured the city and the temple. After the temple was cleansed, the rededication took place on Chislev 25, 165 B.C.E., exactly three years after Antiochus had made his disgusting sacrifice on the altar to Zeus. The daily burnt offerings to Jehovah were then resumed. There is no direct statement in the inspired Scriptures indicating that Jehovah gave Judas Maccabaeus victory and directed him to restore the temple. However, Jehovah had used men of foreign nations, such as Cyrus of Persia, to carry out certain purposes as regards His worship. (Isaiah 45:1) It is reasonable to conclude, then, that Jehovah might use a man of his dedicated people to accomplish His will. The Scriptures show that the temple had to be standing and operating in order for the prophecies regarding the Messiah, his ministry, and his sacrifice to be fulfilled. Also, the Levitical sacrifices were to be offered until the time when the Messiah would present the greater sacrifice, his life in behalf of mankind. (Daniel 9:27; John 2:17; Hebrews 9:11-14) Christ's followers were not commanded to observe the Festival of Dedication. (Colossians 2:16, 17) However, there is no record that Jesus or his disciples condemned the celebrating of this festival.

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 9:1-17

## JOHN

### Study Notes—Chapter 9

#### 9:4

**the night is coming:** In the Bible, the word “night” is sometimes used in a figurative sense. Jesus is here referring to the time of his trial, execution, and death when he would be unable to engage in the works of his Father.—Job 10:21, 22; Ec 9:10; compare study note on Lu 22:53.

#### 9:6

**the saliva:** On three occasions recorded in the Bible, Jesus used his saliva when miraculously healing someone. (Mr 7:31-37; 8:22-26; Joh 9:1-7) Saliva was commonly used in folk remedies, but Jesus’ miracles were performed under the power of God’s spirit. Therefore, it was not his saliva that healed people. The man born blind was told: “Go wash in the pool of Siloam” before he received his sight. (Joh 9:7) This was undoubtedly a test of his faith, just as bathing in the Jordan River was required of Naaman before he was freed from his leprosy.—2Ki 5:10-14.

#### 9:7

**pool of Siloam:** The remains of a first-century C.E. pool thought to be the pool of Siloam have been found S of the temple mount. It is at the base of the southern spur on which the ancient city was first built, near the junction of the Tyropoeon Valley with the Kidron Valley. (See App. B12.) Siloam is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name “Shiloah,” which may be related to the Hebrew verb *sha-lach’*, meaning “to send (out).” Thus, John translates the meaning of the name Siloam as **Sent Forth**. At Isa 8:6, where the Hebrew name Shiloah designates a water conduit or canal as part of Jerusalem’s water supply, the *Septuagint* uses the name Siloam. The pool of Siloam was supplied with water from the Gihon Spring, which intermittently gushes, or sends forth, water.



The name Siloam may be related to this. At Joh 9:7, a number of translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures into Hebrew (referred to as J<sup>7-14, 16-19, 22</sup> in App. C4) use the term “Shiloah.”

### 9:18

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

### 9:21

**He is of age:** Or “He is old enough.” The expression might refer to the age at which men qualified for military service under the Mosaic Law, which was 20. (Nu 1:3) This fits with the fact that he is called “a man” (Joh 9:1), not a child, and that he had been a beggar (Joh 9:8). Some consider the expression as referring to the age of legal maturity in Jewish society, which was 13.

### 9:22

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

**expelled from the synagogue:** Or “excommunicated; banned from the synagogue.” The Greek adjective *a·po·sy·na'go·gos* is used only here and at Joh 12:42 and 16:2. An expelled person would be shunned and scorned as a social outcast. Such cutting off of fellowship from other Jews would have severe economic consequences for the family. The synagogues, which were used primarily for education, to some extent were also used as places for local courts that had the power to inflict the penalties of scourging and excommunication.—See study note on Mt 10:17.

### 9:24

**Give glory to God:** An idiomatic expression used to put a person under obligation to tell the truth. The intended meaning of the idiom could be conveyed by saying: “Give glory to God by

speaking the truth” or “Speak the truth before God.”—Compare Jos 7:19.

## 9:38

**did obeisance to him:** Or “bowed down to him; prostrated himself to him; paid him homage.” When the Greek verb *pro-sky-ne'o* is used to refer to the rendering of worship to a god or a deity, it is translated “to worship.” (Mt 4:10; Lu 4:8) In this context, however, the healed man, who was born blind, recognized Jesus as God’s representative and did obeisance to him. He viewed him, not as God or a deity, but as the foretold “Son of man,” the Messiah with divine authority. (Joh 9:35) When he bowed down to Jesus, he apparently did so in a way similar to that of people mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures. They bowed down when meeting prophets, kings, or other representatives of God. (1Sa 25:23, 24; 2Sa 14:4-7; 1Ki 1:16; 2Ki 4:36, 37) On many occasions, the obeisance done to Jesus expressed a gratitude for divine revelation or evidence of divine favor.—See study notes on Mt 2:2; 8:2; 14:33; 15:25.

## JOHN

### Study Notes—Chapter 10

## 10:11

**life:** Or “soul.” The meaning of the Greek word *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered “soul,” has to be determined by the context. Here it refers to Jesus’ life, which he as **the fine shepherd surrenders**, or voluntarily gives up, for the benefit of his sheep.—See Glossary, “Soul.”

## 10:15

**life:** Or “soul.”—See study note on Joh 10:11.

## 10:16

**bring in:** Or “lead.” The Greek verb *a’go* used here can mean “to bring (in)” or “to lead,” depending on the context. One Greek manuscript dated to about 200 C.E. uses a related Greek word (*sy·na’go*) that is often rendered “to gather.” As the Fine Shepherd, Jesus gathers, guides, protects, and feeds the sheep that belong to **this fold** (also referred to as “little flock” at Lu 12:32) and his **other sheep**. These become **one flock** under **one shepherd**. This word picture emphasizes the unity that Jesus’ followers would enjoy.

**listen:** Here the Greek word for “listen” has the sense of “giving attention to, understanding, and acting upon.”

## 10:17

**life:** Or “soul.” The meaning of the Greek word *psy·khe’*, traditionally rendered “soul,” has to be determined by the context. Here it refers to Jesus’ life, which he was willing to **surrender**, or voluntarily give up, as a sacrifice.—See Glossary, “Soul.”

## 10:22

**the Festival of Dedication:** The Hebrew name of this festival is Hanukkah (*chanuk·kah*), meaning “Inauguration; Dedication.” It was held for eight days, beginning on the 25th day of the month of Chislev, close to the winter solstice, (see study note on **wintertime** in this verse and App. B15) to commemorate the rededication of Jerusalem’s temple in 165 B.C.E. Syrian King Antiochus IV Epiphanes had shown his contempt for Jehovah, the God of the Jews, by desecrating His temple. For example, he built an altar on top of the great altar, where formerly the daily burnt offering had been presented. On Chislev 25, 168 B.C.E., to defile Jehovah’s temple completely, Antiochus sacrificed swine on the altar and had the broth from its flesh sprinkled all over the temple. He burned the temple gates, pulled down the priests’ chambers, and carried away the golden altar,

the table of showbread, and the golden lampstand. He then rededicated Jehovah's temple to the pagan god Zeus of Olympus. Two years later, Judas Maccabaeus recaptured the city and the temple. After the temple was cleansed, the rededication took place on Chislev 25, 165 B.C.E., exactly three years after Antiochus had made his disgusting sacrifice on the altar to Zeus. The daily burnt offerings to Jehovah were then resumed. There is no direct statement in the inspired Scriptures indicating that Jehovah gave Judas Maccabaeus victory and directed him to restore the temple. However, Jehovah had used men of foreign nations, such as Cyrus of Persia, to carry out certain purposes as regards His worship. (Isa 45:1) It is reasonable to conclude, then, that Jehovah might use a man of his dedicated people to accomplish His will. The Scriptures show that the temple had to be standing and operating in order for the prophecies regarding the Messiah, his ministry, and his sacrifice to be fulfilled. Also, the Levitical sacrifices were to be offered until the time when the Messiah would present the greater sacrifice, his life in behalf of mankind. (Da 9:27; Joh 2:17; Heb 9:11-14) Christ's followers were not commanded to observe the Festival of Dedication. (Col 2:16, 17) However, there is no record that Jesus or his disciples condemned the celebrating of this festival.

**wintertime:** Referring to the last winter of Jesus' ministry, in 32 C.E. The Festival of Dedication was in the month of Chislev, the ninth month, corresponding to November/December. In 32 C.E., the first day of the festival, Chislev 25, fell in the middle of December. (See App. B15.) It was common knowledge among the Jews that this festival occurred during wintertime. So the mention of wintertime may have been to emphasize the state of the weather as a reason for Jesus' choice of a sheltered place for his teaching, in "the colonnade of Solomon." (Joh 10:23) This location offered protection from the strong E wind in the winter.— See App. B11.

## 10:24

**keep us:** Or “keep our souls.” The meaning of the Greek word *psy-khe'*, traditionally rendered “soul,” has to be determined by the context. In some contexts, it can be used as the equivalent of a personal pronoun. Other examples of this usage in the Christian Greek Scriptures are Mt 12:18; 26:38; and Heb 10:38, where “my *psy-khe'* (soul)” can be rendered “I.”—See Glossary, “Soul.”

## 10:29

**What my Father has given me is something greater than all other things:** For this phrase, there are slightly different readings in Greek manuscripts and translations into other languages. Some manuscripts have a reading that can be rendered: “My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all others,” but many scholars consider that the main text rendering was likely the original reading.

## 10:30

**one:** Or “at unity.” Jesus’ comment here shows that he and his Father are unified in protecting sheeplike ones and leading them to everlasting life. Such shepherding is a joint task of the Father and the Son. They are equally concerned about the sheep, not allowing anyone to snatch them out of their hand. (Joh 10:27-29; compare Eze 34:23, 24.) In John’s Gospel, the unity in fellowship, will, and purpose between the Father and the Son is often mentioned. The Greek word here rendered “one” is, not in the masculine gender (denoting “one person”), but in the neuter gender (denoting “one thing”), supporting the thought that Jesus and his Father are “one” in action and cooperation, not in person. (Joh 5:19; 14:9, 23) That Jesus referred, not to an equality of godship, but to a oneness of purpose and action is confirmed by comparing the words recorded here with his prayer recorded in John chapter 17. (Joh 10:25-29; 17:2, 9-11) This is especially

evident when he prays that his followers “may be one just as we are one.” (Joh 17:11) So the kind of oneness referred to in chapter 10 as well as in chapter 17 would be the same.—See 1Co 3:8 and study notes on Joh 17:11, 21, where the Greek word for “one” is used in a similar way.

### 10:34

**in your Law:** Here referring to the entire Hebrew Scriptures, not just to the Law of Moses. The quote that follows is taken from Ps 82:6. “Law” is used in the same sense at Joh 12:34; 15:25.

**gods:** Or “godlike ones.” Jesus here quotes from Ps 82:6, where the Hebrew word *'elo-him'* (gods) is used of men, human judges in Israel. They were “gods” in their capacity as representatives of and spokesmen for God. Similarly, Moses was told that he was to “serve as God” to Aaron and to Pharaoh.—Ex 4:16, ftn; 7:1, ftn.

### 10:38

**in union with:** Lit., “in.” In this context, the Greek preposition *en* is used to show close association. This use of the preposition is especially noteworthy in the writings of John and Paul. (Ga 1:22; 3:28; Eph 2:13, 15; 6:1) At 1Jo 3:24 and 4:13, 15, it describes a Christian’s relationship to God. Further supporting the rendering “in union with” is the way the preposition is used at Joh 17:20-23, where it occurs five times.

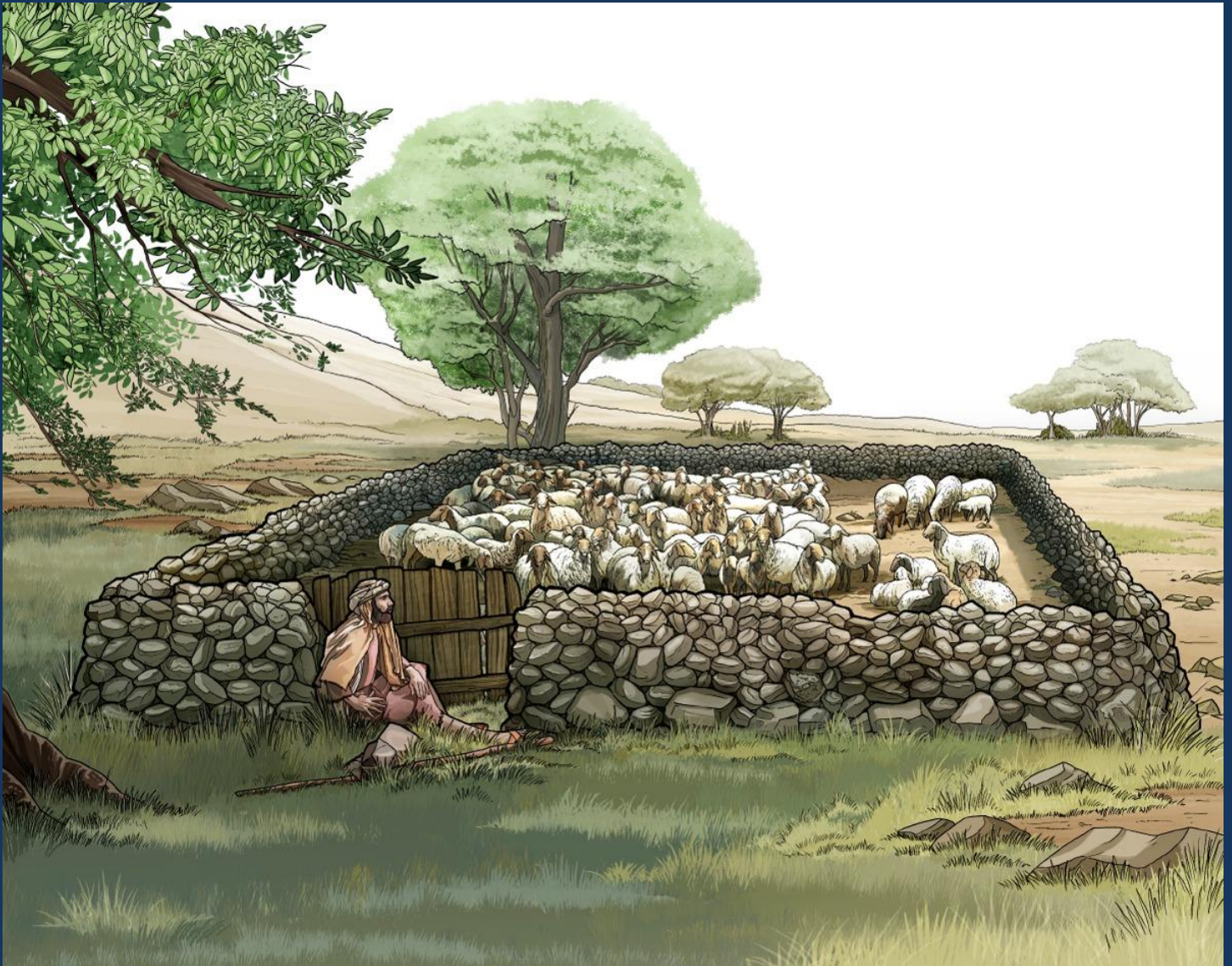


## Pool of Siloam

The name Siloam is mentioned only in the Bible book of John. For years, its location in Jerusalem was traditionally identified with a small pool called Birket Silwan. However, in 2004 the remains of a much larger pool were discovered less than 100 m (330 ft) southeast of the site of the smaller pool. Coins found during the excavation date back to the Jewish revolt against Rome (between 66 and 70 C.E.), giving evidence that the pool was in use until Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans. This larger pool is now generally recognized as the pool of Siloam referred to at Joh 9:7. As seen in the photograph, a series of steps and landings led to the bottom of the pool (now filled with dirt and vegetation), which made it possible for people to wade into the pool even when the water level varied.

1. Pool of Siloam
2. Temple Mount

**Related Scripture(s) Joh 9:7**



## Sheepfold

A sheepfold was an enclosure designed to protect sheep from thieves and predatory animals. Shepherds kept their flocks in the safety of a sheepfold during the night. In Bible times, sheepfolds were roofless structures of different shapes and sizes, often with stone walls and only one opening. (Nu 32:16; 1Sa 24:3; Zep 2:6) John speaks of entering a sheepfold “through the door,” which was guarded by a “doorkeeper.” (Joh 10:1, 3) In a community sheepfold, more than one flock might spend the night, and the doorkeeper would keep watch to protect the sheep. In the morning, the doorkeeper would open the door for the shepherds. Each shepherd would collect his flock by calling out to the sheep, and his sheep would recognize the voice of their shepherd and respond. (Joh 10:3-5) Jesus referred to this practice to illustrate the way he cared for his disciples.—Joh 10:7-14.

**Related Scripture(s) Joh 10:1**

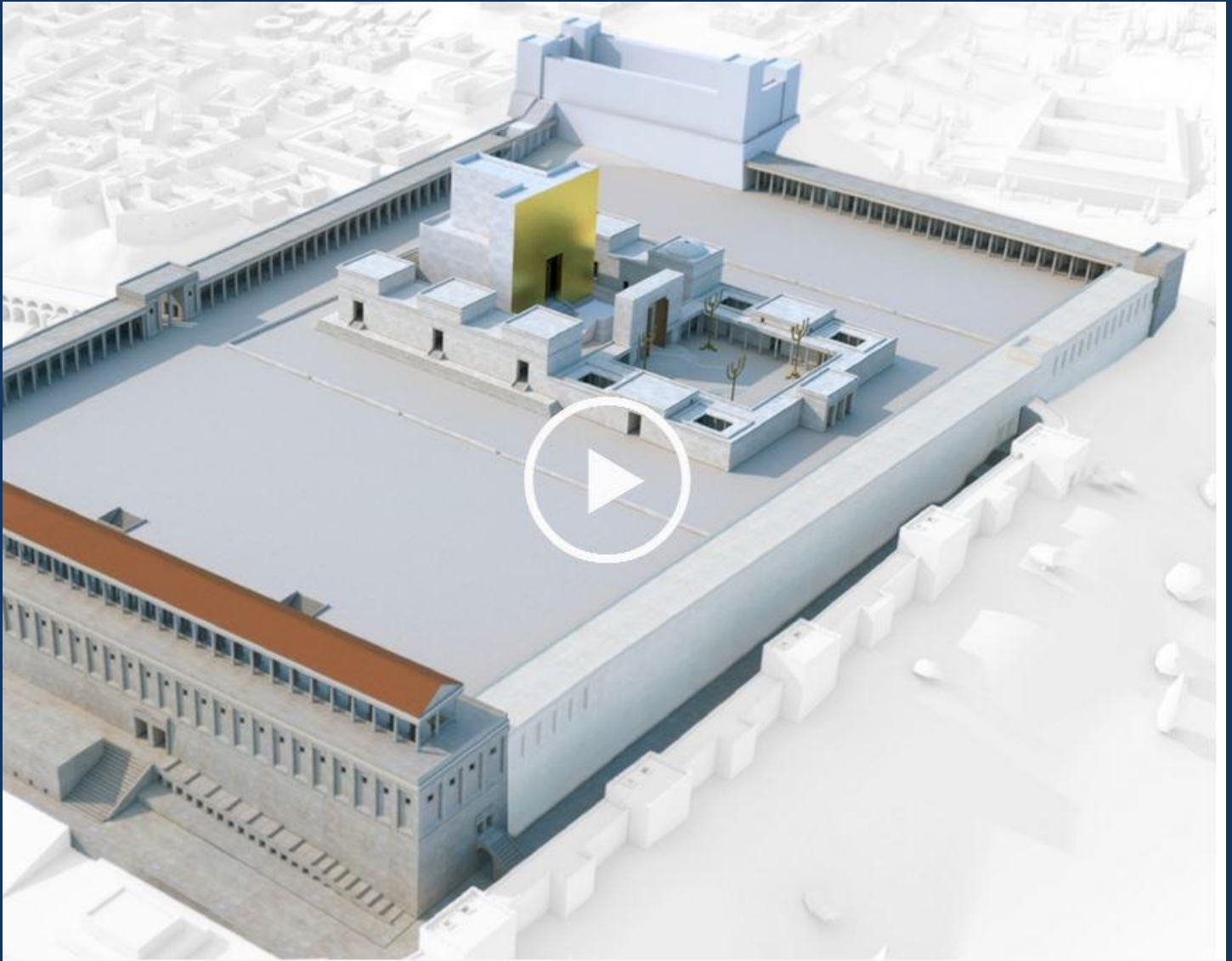




## Wolf

The wolves of Israel are primarily nighttime predators. (Hab 1:8) Wolves are fierce, voracious, bold, and greedy, frequently killing more sheep than they can eat or drag away. In the Bible, animals and their characteristics and habits are often applied in a figurative sense, picturing both desirable and undesirable traits. For example, in Jacob's deathbed prophecy, the tribe of Benjamin is described figuratively as a fighter like a wolf (*Canis lupus*). (Ge 49:27) But in most occurrences, the wolf is used to picture such undesirable qualities as ferocity, greed, viciousness, and craftiness. Those compared to wolves include false prophets (Mt 7:15), vicious opposers of the Christian ministry (Mt 10:16; Lu 10:3), and false teachers who would endanger the Christian congregation from within (Ac 20:29, 30). Shepherds were well-aware of the danger posed by wolves. Jesus spoke of "the hired man" who "sees the wolf coming and abandons the sheep and flees." Unlike the hired man, who "does not care for the sheep," Jesus is "the fine shepherd," who surrendered "his life in behalf of the sheep."—Joh 10:11-13.

**Related Scripture(s) Mt 7:15; Mt 10:16; Lu 10:3; Joh 10:12; Ac 20:29**



## Solomon's Colonnade

This 3-D animation shows one possibility of what Solomon's Colonnade may have looked like. Located on the east side of the outer courtyard of the first-century temple in Jerusalem, Solomon's Colonnade was a spacious, covered passageway. The Bible mentions this location three times by name. John states that on one occasion when Jesus walked through this colonnade, a group of Jews surrounded him, demanding that he tell them if he was the Christ. (Joh 10:22-24) Later, an amazed crowd gathered at Solomon's Colonnade to hear Peter explain how he had cured a man who was crippled from birth. (Ac 3:1-7, 11) And early Christians met publicly in Solomon's Colonnade.—Ac 5:12, 13; see Glossary, "Solomon's Colonnade."

**Related Scripture(s)** Joh 10:23; Ac 3:11; Ac 5:12

- Song 25 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD**

- **“Jesus Cares for His Sheep”:** (10 min.)  
 Joh 10:1-3, 11, 14—Jesus, “the fine shepherd,” knows his sheep personally and cares for their needs abundantly (*nwtsty media; w11 5/15 7-8 ¶15*)  
 Joh 10:4, 5—The sheep know Jesus’ voice, not that of strangers (*cf 124-125 ¶17*)  
 Joh 10:16—Jesus’ sheep enjoy unity (*nwtsty study note*)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (8 min.)  
 Joh 9:38—In what sense did the formerly blind beggar do obeisance to Jesus? (*nwtsty study note*)

Joh 10:22—What was the Festival of Dedication? (*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 9:1-17

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD MINISTRY**

- **Initial Call Video:** (4 min.) Play and discuss the video.
- **First Return Visit:** (3 min. or less) Use the sample conversation.
- **Bible Study:** (6 min. or less) *fg* lesson 14 ¶1-2

**LIVING AS CHRISTIANS**

- Song 62
- **Local Needs:** (15 min.)
- **Congregation Bible Study:** (30 min.) *jy* chap. 37
- Review Followed by Preview of Next Week (3 min.)
- Song 3 and Prayer

JOHN 9-10 | Jesus Cares for His Sheep



**10:1-5, 11, 14, 16** ✎

The relationship between a shepherd and his sheep is based on knowledge and trust. Jesus, the Fine Shepherd, knows his sheep personally—their needs, their weaknesses, and their strengths. The sheep know the shepherd and trust his leadership.

**How is Jesus, the Fine Shepherd, . . .**

gathering his sheep?

guiding his sheep?

protecting his sheep?

feeding his sheep?

**FOR MEDITATION:** How can I show greater appreciation for Jesus’ care?



# Our Christian Life and Ministry

## MEETING WORKBOOK

### Sample Conversations

#### ●○○ INITIAL CALL

**Question:** How do we know that our suffering is not punishment from God?

**Scripture:** Jas 1:13

**Link:** Why do we suffer?



#### ○○● FIRST RETURN VISIT

**Question:** Why do we suffer?

**Scripture:** 1Jo 5:19

**Link:** How does God feel about our suffering?



#### ○○● SECOND RETURN VISIT

**Question:** How does God feel about our suffering?

**Scripture:** Isa 63:9

**Link:** What will God do to end our suffering?

# 14

## Why Does God Have an Organization?



### 1. Why did God organize ancient Israel?

God organized descendants of the patriarch Abraham into a nation and gave them a body of laws. He called the nation “Israel” and made it the custodian of true worship and of his word. (Psalm 147:19, 20) So people of all nations could benefit from Israel. 📖 *Read Genesis 22:18.*

God chose the Israelites to be his witnesses. Their ancient history provides a demonstration of how people benefit by obeying God’s laws. (Deuteronomy 4:6) Thus, through the Israelites, others could get to know the true God. 📖 *Read Isaiah 43:10, 12.*

### 2. Why are true Christians organized?

In time, Israel lost God’s favor, and Jehovah replaced that nation with the Christian congregation. (Matthew 21:43; 23:37, 38) Now, in place of the Israelites, true Christians serve as Jehovah’s witnesses. 📖 *Read Acts 15:14, 17.*

Jesus organized his followers to preach and make disciples in all nations. (Matthew 10:7, 11; 24:14; 28:19, 20) This work is reaching its climax now, in the conclusion of the present system of things. For the first time in history, Jehovah has united millions from all nations in true worship. (Revelation 7:9, 10) True Christians are organized to encourage and help one another. Worldwide, they enjoy the same program of Bible instruction at their meetings. 📖 *Read Hebrews 10:24, 25.*

# The New Song

(Psalm 98)

1. Sing to God a song, A song of praise that's bold and new.  
Tell of all the great things He's done and yet will do.  
Praise his mighty arm; He is the God of victory.  
In the cause of justice,  
He judges righteously.

*(CHORUS)*

*Sing, sing, sing!*

*The new song, let it ring!*

*Sing, sing, sing!*

*Jehovah is our King.*

2. Make a joyful shout, A joyful cry to God, our King!  
Laud his name, give honor; A joyful anthem sing.  
Join the mighty crowd, And sing aloud before the Lord.  
Harp and horn and trumpet  
Sound praise in full accord.

*(Chorus)*

3. Let the mighty sea And all that fills it give him praise.  
Join with earth's creation, And joyful voices raise.  
Let the land rejoice, And let the rivers clap their hands.  
Mountains, hills, and valleys  
Sing praise in all the lands.

*(Chorus)*

- Song 25 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

**TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD**

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gathering his sheep?

guiding his sheep?

protecting his sheep?

feeding his sheep?

**FOR MEDITATION:** How can I show greater appreciation for Jesus’ care?

# 37

## JESUS RESURRECTS A WIDOW'S SON

LUKE 7:11-17

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- A RESURRECTION AT NAIN

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Soon after healing the army officer's servant, Jesus leaves Capernaum for Nain, a city over 20 miles to the southwest. He is not alone. His disciples and a great crowd travel with him. It is likely toward evening when they approach the outskirts of Nain. There they encounter a considerable number of Jews in a funeral procession. The dead body of a young man is being carried out of the city for burial.

The most grief-stricken among them is the mother of the young man. She is a widow, and now her only child has died. When her husband died, at least she still had her beloved son with her. Imagine how close she must have felt to him, for her hopes and her security for the future were tied up with him. Now he too has died. Who is there left to provide her with company and support?



When Jesus sees this woman, his heart is touched by her extreme grief and the sadness of her situation. Tenderly and yet with assurance that imparts confidence, he tells her: “Stop weeping.” Yet, he does more. He approaches and touches the bier on which the body is being carried. (Luke 7:13, 14) His manner and actions are such that the mourning townspeople stop in their tracks. ‘What does he mean, and what is he going to do?’ many must wonder.

And what of those traveling with Jesus who have seen him perform powerful works, healing many diseases? They apparently have never seen Jesus resurrect anyone from the dead. Although resurrections did occur in the distant past, can Jesus do such a thing? (1 Kings 17:17-23; 2 Kings 4:32-37) Jesus gives the command: “Young man, I say to you, get up!” (Luke 7:14) And that happens. The man sits up and starts to speak! Jesus gives him to his shocked yet overjoyed mother. She is no longer alone.

When the people see that the young man truly is alive, they praise the Life-Giver, Jehovah, saying: “A

great prophet has been raised up among us.” Others grasp the significance of Jesus’ wonderful deed, saying: “God has turned his attention to his people.” (Luke 7:16) The news of this amazing thing quickly spreads into the surrounding country and likely to Jesus’ hometown, Nazareth, some six miles away. The report even spreads down south into Judea.

John the Baptist is still in prison, and he is very interested in the works that Jesus is able to perform. John’s disciples tell him about these miracles. How does he respond?



- ◇ What is happening as Jesus approaches Nain?
- ◇ How is Jesus affected by what he sees, and how does he respond?
- ◇ What is the reaction of the people to what Jesus does?

# 3

## *Our Strength, Our Hope, Our Confidence*

(Proverbs 14:26)

1. O Jehovah, you have given us  
a hope that we hold dear.  
It's a hope we find so thrilling  
we want the world to hear.  
But at times this life's anxieties  
are the cause of fears within,  
And the hope that burned so brightly  
has suddenly grown dim.

*(CHORUS)*

*You're our strength, you're our hope,  
you're our confidence.*

*Whatever we lack, you supply.*

*When we preach, when we teach,  
we have confidence*

*because it's on you we rely.*

2. So Jehovah, please instill in us  
a heart that won't forget,  
For you've always been our comfort  
when troubled times we've met.  
And these thoughts that lift and strengthen us  
can revive that dying flame,  
For they fill our hearts with courage  
to speak about your name.

*(Chorus)*

AUGUST 2018

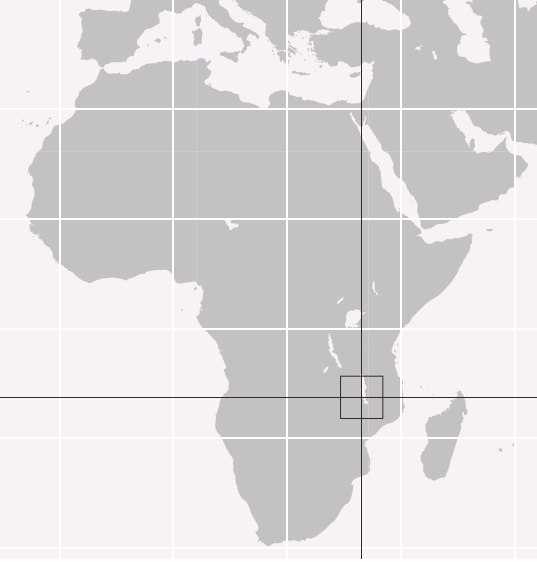
# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



STUDY ARTICLES FOR:  
OCTOBER 1-28, 2018

LARGE  
PRINT  
EDITION



COVER IMAGE:

## MALAWI

A circuit overseer and his wife are ready to travel to the next congregation that they will visit. Their bicycles carry Bible literature, a projector, a sound system, and most of their personal belongings

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

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#### **4 WEEK OF OCTOBER 1-7**

##### **Do You Have the Facts?**

#### **16 WEEK OF OCTOBER 8-14**

##### **Do Not Judge by the Outward Appearance**

The first article considers challenges that we may encounter in trying to obtain facts. It also discusses what Bible principles will help us to improve our ability to evaluate information accurately. The second article examines three areas in which people often judge others by what appears to the eyes. Further, it considers how we can progress in treating others impartially.

# 126 *Stay Awake, Stand Firm, Grow Mighty*

(1 Corinthians 16:13)

1. Stay awake, stand firm, grow mighty,  
Be determined to endure.  
Carry on with manly courage,  
For the victory is sure.  
We obey Christ Jesus' clear command;  
Under him we firmly take our stand.

*(CHORUS)*

*Stay awake, stand firm, and grow mighty!  
Carry on right to the end!*

2. Stay awake, and keep your senses,  
Always ready to obey.  
Stay alert to Christ's direction  
Through his faithful slave today.  
Heed the counsel of the older men,  
Who protect his sheep and truth defend.

*(Chorus)*

3. Stay awake, remain united  
As the good news we defend.  
Though our enemies will fight it,  
We will preach until the end.  
Join the shout of praise throughout the land.  
Look! Jehovah's day is soon at hand!

*(Chorus)*



**SONGS:**  
126, 95

### HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

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Why must we be selective about what we read and about what we share via e-mails or text messages?

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How can we imitate Jesus if others spread false reports about us?

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What three Bible principles will help us to evaluate information accurately?

## Do You Have the Facts?

*“When anyone replies to a matter before he hears the facts, it is foolish and humiliating.”—PROV. 18:13.*

**AS TRUE** Christians, we need to develop the ability to evaluate information and reach accurate conclusions. (Prov. 3:21-23; 8:4, 5) If we do not cultivate this ability, we will be far more vulnerable to the efforts of Satan and his world

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**1, 2.** (a) What important ability do we need to cultivate, and why? (b) What will we consider in this article?

to distort our thinking. (Eph. 5:6; Col. 2:8) Of course, only if we have the facts can we reach right conclusions. As Proverbs 18:13 says, “when anyone replies to a matter before he hears the facts, it is foolish and humiliating.”

<sup>2</sup> In this article, we will consider several challenges associated with obtaining the facts and reaching proper conclusions. In addition, we will consider practical Bible principles and examples that can help us improve our ability to evaluate information accurately.

## **DO NOT BELIEVE “EVERY WORD”**

<sup>3</sup> Today, people are bombarded with information. Internet websites, television, and other mass media present a seemingly unending array of ideas. Many people are also flooded with e-mails, text messages, and reports from well-meaning friends and acquaintances. Since the deliberate spreading of wrong information and the distorting of facts are common, we have good reason to be cautious and to evaluate carefully what we hear. What Bible principle can help us? Proverbs 14:15 says: “The naive person believes every word, but the shrewd one ponders each step.”

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3. Why do we need to apply the Bible principle found at Proverbs 14:15? (See opening picture.)



**<sup>4</sup> To make good decisions, we need solid facts. Therefore, we need to be highly selective and to choose carefully what information we will read. (Read Philippians 4:8, 9.) We should not waste our time viewing questionable Internet news sites or reading unsubstantiated reports circulated via e-mail. It is especially important to avoid websites promoted by apostates. Their whole purpose is to tear down God’s people and to distort the truth. Poor quality information will lead to poor decisions. Never underestimate the powerful effect that misleading information can have on your mind and heart.—1 Tim. 6:20, 21.**

**<sup>5</sup> Believing a false report can be disastrous. For example, consider what happened in Moses’ time when 10 of the 12 spies who were sent to explore the Promised Land brought back a bad report. (Num. 13:25-33) Their exaggerated and outrageous account completely disheartened Jehovah’s people. (Num. 14:1-4) Why did the people react this way? Perhaps they thought that since the majority of the spies brought a bad report, their account must be true. They refused**

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**4. How does Philippians 4:8, 9 help us in selecting what material we read, and why is it vital to have accurate information? (See also the box “A Few Provisions to Help Us Get the Facts.”)**

**5. What false report did the Israelites hear, and how were they affected?**



## A FEW PROVISIONS TO HELP US GET THE FACTS

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What provisions have been made to keep God's people up-to-date with accurate information?

**BREAKING NEWS:** The feature *Breaking News* on the [jw.org](http://jw.org) website provides quick, brief updates to Jehovah's people on major events happening worldwide.

**NEWSROOM:** This regular section on [jw.org](http://jw.org) contains more extensive reports on matters affecting our freedom of worship and on our response to natural disasters.

**JW BROADCASTING:** This Internet television station provides video updates on the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide.

to listen to the good report brought by the trustworthy men Joshua and Caleb. (Num. 14:6-10) Instead of getting the facts and showing confidence in Jehovah, they chose to believe the bad report. How foolish!

<sup>6</sup> We need to be especially cautious when we come across reports regarding Jehovah's people. Never forget that Satan is the accuser of God's faithful servants. (Rev. 12:10) Therefore, Jesus warned that opposers would "lyingly say every sort of wicked thing" against us. (Matt. 5:11) If we take that warning seriously, we will not be shocked when we hear outrageous statements about Jehovah's people.

<sup>7</sup> Are you the kind of person who enjoys sending e-mails and text messages to your friends and acquaintances? If so, when you see a newly published story in the news media or hear an experience, you might feel like a news reporter who wants to be the first to break an exciting story. However, before you send that text message or e-mail, ask yourself: 'Am I certain that the information I am about to spread is true? Do I really have the facts?' If you are not certain, you could unwittingly circulate false informa-

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6. Why should we not be shocked if we hear outrageous reports about Jehovah's people?

7. Before sending e-mails or text messages, what do we need to consider?

tion among our brotherhood. If in doubt, hit the delete key, not the send button.

<sup>8</sup> There is another danger in quickly forwarding e-mails and text messages. In some lands, our work is under restriction or outright ban. Our opposers in such lands may purposely circulate reports designed to instill fear or to cause us to distrust one another. Consider what happened in the former Soviet Union. The secret police, known as the KGB, spread rumors that various prominent brothers had betrayed Jehovah's people.\* Many put confidence in such false reports, and as a result, they separated themselves from Jehovah's organization. How sad! Thankfully, many later returned, but some never did. Their faith was shipwrecked. (1 Tim. 1:19) How can we avoid such a disastrous outcome? Refuse to circulate negative or unsubstantiated reports. Do not be naive, or gullible. Be sure you have the facts.

## INCOMPLETE INFORMATION

<sup>9</sup> Reports that contain half-truths or incomplete

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\* See the *2004 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*, pp. 111-112, and the *2008 Yearbook*, pp. 133-135.

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8. What have opposers in some lands done, and how could we inadvertently cooperate with them?

9. What is another challenge to obtaining accurate information?

information are another challenge to reaching accurate conclusions. A story that is only 10 percent true is 100 percent misleading. How can we avoid being misled by deceptive stories that may contain some elements of truth?—Eph. 4:14.

<sup>10</sup> Consider what happened to the Israelites dwelling on the western side of the Jordan River in the days of Joshua. (Josh. 22:9-34) They received a report that the Israelites living on the eastern side of the Jordan (the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh) had constructed a large, impressive altar near the Jordan. That portion of the report was true. Based on this incomplete information, those on the western side concluded that their brothers had rebelled against Jehovah, so the Israelites living on the western side assembled to wage war against those living on the eastern side. (Read Joshua 22:9-12.) Thankfully, before attacking, they sent a delegation of trustworthy men to get all the facts. What did the men learn? The Israelites from the tribes of Reuben and Gad and the half tribe of Manasseh had built the altar, not for sacrifices, but as a memorial. It was built so that in the future all would know that they too were faithful servants of Jeho-

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10. How did the Israelites nearly come to war against their brothers, and how was that avoided?

vah. How thankful those Israelites must have been that they did not massacre their brothers based on incomplete information but took the time to get the facts!

<sup>11</sup> As individuals, we may also become victims of injustice because half-truths or incomplete information is circulated about us. Consider the example of King David and Mephibosheth. David showed generosity and kindness to Mephibosheth, returning to him all the land of his grandfather Saul. (2 Sam. 9: 6, 7) Later, however, David received a negative report about Mephibosheth. Without verifying the information, David decided to strip Mephibosheth of all his property. (2 Sam. 16:1-4) When David finally spoke with him, David recognized his error and restored to Mephibosheth a share of the property. (2 Sam. 19:24-29) But this injustice could have been avoided had David taken the time to get the facts instead of rashly acting on incomplete information.

<sup>12</sup> What, though, if you are a victim of a slanderous accusation? Jesus and John the Baptizer experienced such a challenge. (Read Matthew 11:18, 19.) How did Jesus deal with false information? He

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11. (a) How did Mephibosheth become a victim of injustice? (b) How could David have avoided this injustice?

12, 13. (a) How did Jesus deal with slanderous reports? (b) What can we do if someone spreads a false report about us?

did not spend all his time and energy defending himself. Instead he encouraged people to look at the facts—what he did and what he taught. As Jesus said, “wisdom is vindicated by its works.”—Matt. 11:19; ftn.

<sup>13</sup> There is a valuable lesson here that we do well to learn. At times, people may say unfair or critical things about us. We may long for justice and wish that we could do something to undo the damage to our reputation. Yet, there is something we can do. If someone spreads a lie about us, we can live in such a way that no one will believe that lie. Indeed, as Jesus’ example shows, our personal record of upright Christian conduct can wipe out half-truths and false accusations.

## HOW DO YOU SEE YOURSELF?

<sup>14</sup> Obtaining reliable facts is only one challenge to reaching good conclusions. Our human imperfection poses another major challenge. What if we have been serving Jehovah faithfully for decades? We may have developed fine thinking ability and discernment. We may be highly respected for our sound judgment. Nonetheless, can this also be a snare?

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14, 15. How can leaning on our own understanding become a snare?

**15** Yes, leaning too heavily on our own understanding can become a snare. Our emotions and personal ideas could begin to govern our thinking. We may begin to feel that we can look at a situation and understand it even though we do not have all the facts. How dangerous! The Bible clearly warns us not to lean on our own understanding.—Prov. 3:5, 6; 28:26.

**16** Consider this imaginary scenario. While in a restaurant one evening, an experienced elder named Tom was shocked to see a fellow elder, John, sitting at another table with a woman who was not his wife. Tom observed the couple laughing, thoroughly enjoying each other's association, and sharing an affectionate embrace. Tom became more and more disturbed. Would this lead to divorce? What would happen to John's wife? What about John's children? Tom had seen such heartbreaking situations before. How would you have felt if you had witnessed this scene?

**17** But wait. Although Tom quickly concluded that John had been unfaithful to his wife, did he really have the facts? Later that evening, Tom telephoned John. Can you imagine how relieved Tom felt when

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**16.** In this imaginary scenario, what happened in a restaurant, and what conclusions did Tom quickly draw?

**17.** In this imaginary scenario, what did Tom later learn, and what lesson does this teach us?



he learned that the woman was John's fleshly sister, who was visiting from out of town. The two had not seen each other for many years. Because she was just passing through for a few hours, John was only able to meet her for a meal in the restaurant. His wife was unable to join them. Thankfully, Tom had not spread his wrong conclusions to others. The lesson for us? No matter how much experience we may have in Christian living, experience alone is never a substitute for the facts.

<sup>18</sup> Another challenge to evaluating matters accurately may be faced when we have a personality conflict with a brother in the congregation. If we constantly dwell on our differences, we may begin to look at our brother with a measure of suspicion. Thus, if we hear a negative report about this brother, we may be eager to believe it. What is the lesson? Harboring ill feelings toward our brothers can lead to distorted judgments that are not based on the facts. (1 Tim. 6:4, 5) We can prevent our judgment from becoming clouded by refusing to allow envy and jealousy to take root in our hearts. Instead of giving in to such bad feelings, may we recognize our obligation to love our brothers and freely forgive them from the heart.—Read Colossians 3:12-14.

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18. How might our judgment be clouded by personality conflicts?

## BIBLE PRINCIPLES WILL SAFEGUARD US

<sup>19</sup> Obtaining the facts and evaluating them accurately present a challenge today because of the abundance of low-quality information, reports filled with half-truths, and our own imperfection. What will help us with this challenging task? We must know and apply Bible principles. One such principle is that it is foolish and humiliating to reply to a matter before hearing the facts. (Prov. 18:13) Another Bible principle reminds us not to accept every word without question. (Prov. 14:15) And finally, no matter how much experience we have in Christian living, we must be careful not to lean on our own understanding. (Prov. 3:5, 6) Bible principles will safeguard us if we are certain to use facts from reliable sources to draw good conclusions and to make wise decisions.

<sup>20</sup> But an additional challenge remains. It is the tendency to judge matters based on the outward appearance. In the next article, we will examine some common pitfalls in this area and see what can help us to avoid them.

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19, 20. (a) What Bible principles will help us to evaluate information accurately? (b) What will we examine in the next article?

## *The Light Gets Brighter*

(Proverbs 4:18)

1. The prophets of old sought to learn of the Christ,  
The hope of all groaning creation.  
God's spirit revealed that Messiah would come,  
Providing the means of salvation.  
  
The time has arrived, the Messiah now reigns,  
The proof of his presence is clear.  
How great is the favor of learning such things;  
Into these even angels would peer!

*(CHORUS)*

*Our path now becomes ever brighter;  
We walk in the full light of day.  
Behold what our God is revealing;  
He guides us each step of the way.*

2. Our Lord has appointed a trustworthy slave,  
Through whom He gives food in due season.  
The light of the truth has grown brighter with time,  
Appealing to heart and to reason.  
  
Our path ever clearer, our steps ever firm,  
We walk in the brightness of day.  
All thanks to Jehovah, the Source of all truth,  
We most gratefully walk in his way.

*(Chorus)*

