

- Song 45 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 min.)

TREASURES FROM GOD’S WORD

- **“Flee From Idolatry”:** (10 min.)
 Ex 32:1—Difficult circumstances do not justify serving other gods (w09 5/15 11 ¶11)
 Ex 32:4-6—The Israelites mixed true worship with false (w12 10/15 25 ¶12)
 Ex 32:9, 10—Jehovah’s anger blazed against the Israelites (w18.07 20 ¶14)
- **Digging for Spiritual Gems:** (10 min.)
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Ex 32:32, 33—How do we know that “once saved, always saved” is a false teaching? (w87 9/1 29)

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LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

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- **“Cherish Your Relationship With Jehovah”:** (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video *Guard Your Relationship With Jehovah* (Col 3:5) (video category PROGRAMS AND EVENTS).
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- Concluding Comments (3 min. or less)
- Song 90 and Prayer

EXODUS 31-32 | Flee From Idolatry

32:1, 4-6, 9, 10

The Israelites’ view of idol worship had apparently been influenced by Egyptian thinking. Today, idolatry can take many forms, some of which could be hard to recognize. Although we might not turn to outright idol worship, we could become idolaters by allowing selfish desires to distract us from worshipping Jehovah whole-souled.



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45 *The Meditation of My Heart*

(Psalm 19:14)

1. The meditation of my heart,
 The thoughts I ponder through the day—
 May they be pleasing to you, Lord,
 And keep me steadfast in your way.
When worries weigh upon my mind
 And make me restless in the night,
Then may I meditate on you
 And things I know to be upright.
2. Whatever things are chaste and true,
 Whatever virtue there may be,
Whatever things well-spoken-of—
 May thoughts of these bring peace to me.
How precious are your thoughts, O God!
 Beyond all counting is their sum.
So may I ponder your own words,
 Absorbed in them may I become.

Exodus 31-32

31 Jehovah continued to speak to Moses, saying: ² “See, I have chosen Bez'al-el the son of U'ri the son of Hur of the tribe of Judah. ³ I will fill him with the spirit of God, giving him wisdom, understanding, and knowledge of every kind of craftsmanship, ⁴ for making artistic designs, for working with gold, silver, and copper, ⁵ for cutting and setting stones, and for making every kind of wood product. ⁶ Moreover, to assist him I have appointed O-ho'li-ab the son of A-his'a-mach of the tribe of Dan, and I am putting wisdom into the heart of all those who are skillful, so that they may make everything I have commanded you: ⁷ the tent of meeting, the ark of the Testimony and the cover that is on it, all the equipment of the tent, ⁸ the table and its utensils, the lampstand of pure gold and all its utensils, the altar of incense, ⁹ the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, the basin and its stand, ¹⁰ the finely woven garments, the holy garments for Aaron the priest, the garments of his sons to serve as priests, ¹¹ the anointing oil, and the perfumed incense for the sanctuary. They will do everything I have commanded you.”

¹² Jehovah said further to Moses: ¹³ “Speak to the Israelites and tell them, ‘Especially, you are to keep my sabbaths, for it is a sign between me and you during your generations in order that you may know that I, Jehovah, am sanctifying you. ¹⁴ You must keep the Sabbath, for it is something holy to you. Whoever profanes it must be put to death. If anyone does any work on it, then that person must be cut off from among his people. ¹⁵ Six days work may be

done, but on the seventh day is a sabbath of complete rest. It is something holy to Jehovah. Anyone doing work on the Sabbath day must be put to death. ¹⁶ The Israelites must keep the Sabbath; they must observe the Sabbath during all their generations. It is a lasting covenant. ¹⁷ It is an enduring sign between me and the people of Israel, for in six days Jehovah made the heavens and the earth and on the seventh day he rested and refreshed himself.”

¹⁸ Now as soon as he had finished speaking with him on Mount Si'nai, he gave Moses two tablets of the Testimony, tablets of stone written on by God's finger.

32 Meanwhile, the people saw that Moses was taking a long time coming down from the mountain. So the people gathered around Aaron and said to him: “Get up, make for us a god who will go ahead of us, because we do not know what has happened to this Moses, the man who led us up out of the land of Egypt.” ² At this Aaron said to them: “Take the gold earrings from the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters and bring them to me.” ³ So all the people began taking off the gold earrings that were in their ears and bringing them to Aaron. ⁴ Then he took the gold from them, and he formed it with an engraving tool and made it into a statue of a calf. They began to say: “This is your God, O Israel, who led you up out of the land of Egypt.”

⁵ When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it. Then Aaron called out: “There is a festival to Jehovah tomorrow.” ⁶ So they got up early on the next day and began offering up burnt offerings and presenting communion sacrifices. After

that the people sat down to eat and drink. Then they got up to have a good time.

⁷ Jehovah now said to Moses: “Go, descend, because your people, whom you led up out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves. ⁸ They have quickly deviated from the way I commanded them to go. They have made for themselves a statue of a calf, and they keep bowing down to it and sacrificing to it and saying, ‘This is your God, O Israel, who led you up out of the land of Egypt.’” ⁹ Jehovah went on to say to Moses: “I have seen that this is an obstinate people. ¹⁰ So now let me be, and I will exterminate them in my burning anger, and let me make a great nation from you instead.”

¹¹ Then Moses appealed to Jehovah his God and said: “Why, O Jehovah, should you turn your burning anger against your people after bringing them out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? ¹² Why should the Egyptians say, ‘He had evil intentions when he led them out. He wanted to kill them in the mountains and exterminate them from the surface of the earth’? Turn from your burning anger and reconsider your decision to bring this calamity on your people. ¹³ Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, to whom you swore by yourself and said: ‘I will multiply your offspring like the stars of the heavens, and I will give all this land that I have designated to your offspring, so that they may take it as a permanent possession.’”

¹⁴ So Jehovah began to reconsider the calamity that he had spoken of bringing on his people.

¹⁵ Moses then turned and went down from the mountain with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hand. The tablets were inscribed on both sides; they were written on the front and on the back. ¹⁶ The tablets were the workmanship of God, and the writing was the writing of God engraved on the tablets. ¹⁷ When Joshua began to hear the noise of the people because of their shouting, he said to Moses: "There is the sound of battle in the camp." ¹⁸ But Moses said:

"It is not the sound of singing over a victory,
And it is not the sound of wailing over a defeat;
I hear the sound of another kind of singing."

¹⁹ As soon as Moses got near the camp and saw the calf and the dances, his anger began to blaze, and he threw the tablets from his hands and shattered them at the foot of the mountain. ²⁰ He took the calf that they had made and he burned it with fire and crushed it into powder; then he scattered it on the water and made the Israelites drink it.

²¹ And Moses said to Aaron: "What did this people do to you that you have brought a great sin upon them?" ²² Aaron replied: "Do not be enraged, my lord. You well know that the people are inclined to do evil. ²³ So they said to me, 'Make for us a god who will go ahead of us, for we do not know what has happened to this Moses, the man who led us up out of the land of Egypt.' ²⁴ So I said to them, 'Whoever has any gold must take it off and give it to me.' Then I threw it into the fire and out came this calf."

²⁵ Moses saw that the people were unrestrained, for Aaron had let them go unrestrained, so that they were a disgrace before their opposers. ²⁶ Then Moses took his position in the gate of the camp and said: "Who is on Jehovah's side? Come to me!" And all the Levites gathered around him. ²⁷ He now said to them: "This is what Jehovah the God of Israel has said, 'Each of you must fasten on his sword and pass through all the camp from gate to gate, killing his brother, his neighbor, and his close companion.'" ²⁸ The Levites did what Moses said. So about 3,000 men were killed on that day.

²⁹ Then Moses said: "Set yourselves apart for Jehovah today, for each of you has gone against his own son and his own brother; today he will give you a blessing."

³⁰ On the very next day, Moses said to the people: "You committed a very great sin, and now I will go up to Jehovah to see if I can make amends for your sin." ³¹ So Moses returned to Jehovah and said: "What a great sin this people has committed! They made themselves a god of gold! ³² But now if you are willing, pardon their sin; if not, please wipe me out from your book that you have written." ³³ However, Jehovah said to Moses: "Whoever has sinned against me, I will wipe him out of my book. ³⁴ Go now, lead the people to the place about which I have spoken to you. Look! My angel will go ahead of you, and on the day when I make an accounting, I will bring punishment on them for their sin."

³⁵ Then Jehovah began plaguing the people because they had made the calf, the one that Aaron had made.

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 **What aspects of daily life could distract me from worshipping Jehovah, and how can I keep them from controlling me?**



October 5-11 / Exodus 31-32

- Song 45 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (1 minute)

Treasures From God's Word

"Flee From Idolatry": (10 minutes)

Exodus 32:1, 4-6, 9, 10

The Israelites' view of idol worship had apparently been influenced by Egyptian thinking. Today, idolatry can take many forms, some of which could be hard to recognize. Although we might not turn to outright idol worship, we could become idolaters by allowing selfish desires to distract us from worshipping Jehovah whole-souled.

Picture: The Israelites dancing around the golden calf.

What aspects of daily life could distract me from worshipping Jehovah, and how can I keep them from controlling me?

Pictures: [Image:] Collage: Family members engaging in daily activities. 1. A father works overtime at a carpentry

shop. 2. A son plays video games. 3. A mother buys several items at a boutique.

Exodus 32:1—Difficult circumstances do not justify serving other gods

Exodus 32:1: Meanwhile, the people saw that Moses was taking a long time coming down from the mountain. So the people gathered around Aaron and said to him: "Get up, make for us a god who will go ahead of us, because we do not know what has happened to this Moses, the man who led us up out of the land of Egypt."

w09 5/15 11 paragraph 11

Applying what we have learned from the Scriptures can be a challenge, particularly when circumstances are difficult. For example, shortly after Jehovah liberated the sons of Israel from Egyptian bondage, they "fell to quarreling with Moses" and kept "putting Jehovah to the test." Why? Because of a lack of water to drink. (Exodus 17:1-4) Less than two months after entering into a divine covenant and agreeing to do "all the words that Jehovah

[had] spoken," they violated his law on idolatry. (Exodus 24:3, 12-18; 32:1, 2, 7-9) Was this because the prolonged absence of Moses while he was being instructed on Mount Horeb made them fearful? Did they perhaps think that the Amalekites would strike again and that the Israelites would be helpless without Moses, whose upheld hands had brought them victory earlier? (Exodus 17:8-16) That is possible, but whatever the case, the Israelites "refused to become obedient." (Acts 7:39-41) Paul urged Christians to 'do their utmost' to avoid 'falling into the same pattern of disobedience' that the Israelites showed when they were afraid to enter the Promised Land.—Hebrews 4:3, 11.

Exodus 32:4-6—The Israelites mixed true worship with false

Exodus 32:4-6: Then he took the gold from them, and he formed it with an engraving tool and made it into a statue of a calf. They began to say: "This is your God, O Israel, who led you up out of the land of Egypt." When

Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it. Then Aaron called out: "There is a festival to Jehovah tomorrow." So they got up early on the next day and began offering up burnt offerings and presenting communion sacrifices. After that the people sat down to eat and drink. Then they got up to have a good time.

w12 10/15 25 paragraph 12

Jehovah immediately began to fulfill his side of the Law covenant by arranging for a tent of worship and a priesthood that made it possible for sinful humans to approach him. Israel, on the other hand, quickly forgot their dedication to God and "pained even the Holy One of Israel." (Psalm 78:41) For example, while Moses was busy receiving further instructions on Mount Sinai, the Israelites became impatient and began to lose faith in God, thinking that Moses had deserted them. So they made a golden image of a calf and said to the people: "This is your God, O Israel, who led you up out of the land of Egypt." (Exodus 32:1, 4) Then they held what they called "a festival to Jehovah" and bowed down and sacrificed to their man-made image. Upon seeing that,

Jehovah told Moses: "They have turned aside in a hurry from the way I have commanded them to go." (Exodus 32:5, 6, 8) Sadly, from then on Israel had a history of making vows to God that they later broke.—Numbers 30:2.

Exodus 32:9, 10—Jehovah's anger blazed against the Israelites

Exodus 32:9, 10: Jehovah went on to say to Moses: "I have seen that this is an obstinate people. So now let me be, and I will exterminate them in my burning anger, and let me make a great nation from you instead."

w18.07 20 paragraph 14

The people knew that idolatry was a serious offense against Jehovah. (Exodus 20:3-5) But soon they were worshipping a golden calf! Despite this obvious act of disobedience, the Israelites somehow fooled themselves into thinking that they were still on Jehovah's side. Why, Aaron even called their calf worship "a festival to Jehovah"! How did Jehovah react? He felt betrayed.

Jehovah told Moses that the people had “corrupted themselves” and had “deviated from the way [He] commanded them to go.” In his “burning anger,” Jehovah even considered wiping out the newly formed nation of Israel.—Exodus 32:5-10.

Digging for Spiritual Gems

Exodus 31:17—In what sense has Jehovah rested on the seventh creative day?

Exodus 31:17: It is an enduring sign between me and the people of Israel, for in six days Jehovah made the heavens and the earth and on the seventh day he rested and refreshed himself.’”

w19.12 3 paragraph 4

Do the examples set by Jehovah and Jesus in working hard imply that it is not necessary for us to rest? Not at all. Jehovah never gets tired, so he does not need physical rest. The Bible does say that after Jehovah created the heavens and the earth, “he rested and refreshed himself.” (Exodus 31:17) However, that evidently means that Jehovah paused and found

satisfaction in what he had made. And although Jesus worked hard while he lived on earth, he still made time to rest and to enjoy meals with his friends.—Matthew 14:13; Luke 7:34.

Exodus 32:32, 33—How do we know that “once saved, always saved” is a false teaching?

Exodus 32:32, 33: But now if you are willing, pardon their sin; if not, please wipe me out from your book that you have written.” However, Jehovah said to Moses: “Whoever has sinned against me, I will wipe him out of my book.

w87 9/1 29

A person’s being noted with remembrance and approval (having his name “in the book of life”) does not mean that he is guaranteed eternal life, as if this were predestined or unchangeable. Concerning the Israelites, Moses asked Jehovah: “Now if you will pardon their sin,—and if not, wipe me out, please, from your book that you have written.” God replied: “Whoever has

sinned against me, I shall wipe him out of my book.”
(Exodus 32:32, 33) Yes, even after God listed someone with approval in his “book,” the individual could become disobedient or abandon his faith. If that developed, God would “blot out his name from the book of life.”—
Revelation 3:5.

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Our Christian Life and Ministry

MEETING WORKBOOK

Sample Conversations

INITIAL CALL

Question: Is the Bible still relevant today?

Scripture: **2Ti 3:16**

Link: Is the Bible compatible with science?

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:

• *fg* lesson 11 ¶1



RETURN VISIT

Question: Is the Bible compatible with science?

Scripture: **Job 26:7**

Link: Is the Bible's advice practical?

FIND THIS SCRIPTURE IN THE TEACHING TOOLBOX:

• *bhs* 21 ¶8



w10 5/15 21

Questions From Readers

Since Jehovah forbids idolatry, why did he not punish Aaron for making the golden calf?

When Aaron made the golden calf, as recorded in Exodus chapter 32, he broke God's law regarding idolatry. (Ex. 20:3-5) As a result, "Jehovah got very incensed [at Aaron] to the point of annihilating him; but [Moses] made supplication also in behalf of Aaron at that particular time." (Deut. 9:19, 20) Did the supplication of the righteous man Moses have "much force" in Aaron's case? (Jas. 5:16) Yes. Because of such supplication and for at least two other reasons, it seems that Jehovah answered Moses' prayer and did not punish Aaron.

One reason apparently had to do with Aaron's record of faithfulness. When Moses was commissioned to appear before Pharaoh and to bring the Israelites out of Egypt, Jehovah appointed Aaron to accompany Moses and speak representatively for him. (Ex. 4:10-16) These two men obediently appeared before the king of Egypt many times, bearing the brunt of Pharaoh's hard-heartedness. While still in Egypt, therefore, Aaron built up a record of loyal, steadfast service to Jehovah.—Ex. 4:21.

Consider also what led up to Aaron's making the golden calf. Moses was on Mount Sinai for 40 days. When "the people got to see that Moses was taking a long time about coming down from the mountain," they persuaded Aaron to make an idol for them. Aaron cooperated and produced a golden statue of a calf. (Ex. 32:1-6) However, Aaron's subsequent actions indicate that his heart was not with this idolatrous movement. He evidently gave in to pressure. When Moses brought the issue of idolatry to a dramatic culmination, for example, all the sons of Levi—including Aaron—firmly took sides with Jehovah. Three thousand idolaters who bore the prime responsibility for the idolatrous conduct were slain.—Ex. 32:25-29.

Moses thereafter told the people: "You have sinned with a great sin." (Ex. 32:30) Thus, Aaron was not the only one who bore a measure of guilt for the wrongdoing. Both he and the people benefited from Jehovah's great mercy.

After the incident with the golden calf, Jehovah commanded that Aaron be installed as high priest. "You must clothe Aaron with the holy garments and anoint him and sanctify him," God told Moses, "and so he must act as priest to me." (Ex. 40:12, 13) Evidently, Jehovah forgave Aaron for his weakness. At heart, Aaron was a loyal upholder of true worship, not an idolatrous rebel.

1. We guard our hearts, it means our life;
 We shun the path of sin.
 God reads the heart, and there he finds
 The person deep within.
 Sometimes the heart deceives the mind,
 And we begin to stray.
 So may our mind direct our heart
 And keep Jehovah's way.
2. Prepared in heart, we search for God
 By means of earnest prayer.
 Each day we give him praise and thanks,
 Revealing ev'ry care.
 The things Jehovah teaches us,
 We gladly will obey.
 We cultivate a loyal heart,
 To please him ev'ry day.
3. Our hearts we shield from harmful thoughts,
 We dwell on what is true.
 We love God's Word to touch our hearts,
 To strengthen and renew.
 Jehovah loves his loyal ones;
 On this we can depend.
 We'll worship him wholeheartedly
 Forever as his friend.

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Cherish Your Relationship With Jehovah

Jehovah's Witnesses have a special privilege. As dedicated, baptized Christians, we continue to cultivate a deep, personal relationship with the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. He has drawn us to himself through his Son. (Joh 6:44) He listens to our prayers.—Ps 34:15.

How can we protect our precious relationship with God? For one thing, we must avoid the sinful course of the Israelites. Shortly after they entered into a covenant relationship with Jehovah, they made a golden calf and fell into idolatry. (Ex 32:7, 8; 1Co 10:7, 11, 14) We might ask ourselves: 'How do I respond when confronted with temptation? Do my actions show that I cherish my relationship with Jehovah?' Deep love for our heavenly Father will help us to flee from things that he hates.—Ps 97:10.



WATCH THE VIDEO *GUARD YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH JEHOVAH* (COL 3:5), AND THEN ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- What is covetousness?

- Why should we reject greediness and idolatry?

- How are adultery and idolatry related?

- Why must especially those with theocratic responsibilities be sure to care for the needs of their mate?

Harold Corkern:
Guard Your Relationship with Jehovah
Colossians 3:5

When Paul wrote the letter to the Colossians, it was in the year 60-61 C.E., just similar to the time that he wrote Ephesians, which we talked about yesterday.

And he wrote for similar reasons —to protect his brothers from the immoral environment that was around them and to encourage them to fight against the weaknesses of the flesh.

So let's open our Bibles to Colossians chapter 3, and we'll read verse 5 in its entirety.

Colossians 3:5: "Deaden, therefore, your body members "that are on the earth as respects sexual immorality, uncleanness, "uncontrolled sexual passion, hurtful desire, and greediness, which is idolatry." And we've been told that these expressions convey the idea of totally wiping out these desires.

When we sense them coming up in our heart and mind, we slay them; we wipe them out.

And it's very important because to fail to do that puts us into all sorts of difficulties with Jehovah and with others

and causes problems for ourselves.

Look at verse 6: “On account of those things the wrath of God is coming.” So it affects our everlasting future as well, doesn’t it? One thing that is highlighted here is how serious these desires can become.

They get bound up with greediness, covetousness, which is idolatry. And covetousness has been described as something that is insatiable.

It’s always after something that it should not have or it does not have the right to have. It’s ruthless and self-seeking; it has been defined as that.

And a covetous person, or a greedy person, makes the object of his desire so strong that in essence it can become his god.

And that reminds us of the inspired words at Philippians 3:18, 19, where Paul used a similar expression about those who used to be with him in the truth but no longer were, and he was very sad about that.

And what happened to them? Well, “their god [became] their belly,” and their desires overwhelmed even their love for Jehovah.

And it was back in 1978 that The Watchtower, in the April 1 issue, said this about this quality of greed — covetousness— and idolatry.

It said this: 'If we become aware of a wrong desire 'building up within ourselves, 'we do well to call to mind 'how precious our relationship with God is 'and how senseless it would be to forfeit this by making oneself an idolater.' So that's a very serious thought, isn't it? That a person could actually start worshipping something other than Jehovah.

And that was a very serious sin even in ancient Israel, wasn't it, this matter of idolatry? It carried the death penalty.

But, you know, another aspect of the Ten Commandments that carried the death penalty was adultery.

So, what is the similarity between idolatry and the death penalty and adultery and the death penalty? Well, worshipping an idol, a person would break his covenant with Jehovah.

And committing adultery, he would break his covenant with his spouse.

So why would Jehovah feel so strongly about that? Well, let's open our Bibles to Psalm 33, and we'll look at the kind of person Jehovah is when it comes to his word and what he says.

Psalm 33, let's read verse 4: "For the word of Jehovah is upright, and everything he does is trustworthy." And then

look at verse 9: “For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm.” So the psalmist is saying, “When Jehovah says something, he means it.” And so when a person says to Jehovah, “I’m going to worship you exclusively” and he doesn’t, it’s treachery.

It’s unlike God, Jehovah.

It’s like the Devil, who is a liar and untrustworthy.

So it adds weight, doesn’t it, to our desire never to fall victim to idolatry in any form? Now, our comments in The Watchtower (which we’ll read a little bit later today in the actual printed comment) do focus on this matter of marriage and adultery and avoiding that, of course.

And what we’d like to do now is just take a few moments and highlight some dangers that could come up for married people and see how that applies to deadening, or slaying, those desires right from the very beginning so that they do not flourish and cause a problem.

One of the principles that we can think about is Proverbs 22:3. We see “the danger,” and we turn aside.

So, what are some things that we could see as a danger, identify them, and slay them before they become a problem? Well, obviously, what we look at, listen to, and read fills our mind with either good or bad, so we avoid intake of bad things.

It only fuels bad desires.

But research has shown and our publications have often commented that when a person gets involved in adultery, it isn't always just a sexual greed, or the sexual desire, that motivates him to go down that path in the first place or her to go down that path the first time.

Well, what is it? Well, what is the fundamental function of marriage? It has often been said that the fundamental function of marriage is receiving and giving emotional support.

It's a relationship where a person feels loved, appreciated, wanted, and needed in a very special way.

And when a person begins to feel that that is missing, then they begin looking for someone who can give them that—not necessarily right away sexual gratification.

And that's why the *Awake!* of January 8, '86 *Awake!* said that being a good listener “has the capacity “for making the other person feel that he is especially valued and what he is saying is of concern and significance” to him.

So it's this relationship that needs to be guarded—the friendship.

And the 1994 *Watchtower* of July 15 added weight to this comment when it quoted a divorce attorney, of all people.

And he said what was the single biggest reason couples

break up.

And this is what he said, it was quoted in the magazine: “The inability to talk honestly with each other, bare their souls and treat each other as their best friend.” That’s the main reason.

That can often lead to other physical contact. But it often is not the one that gets it started.

So now, what can we do to avoid that? Well, we want to treasure our relationships.

And it reminds us of an experience that was given in the August 15, 2012, Watchtower, about an elder and pioneer named Daniel and his wife, also pioneering.

He was very involved in the congregation —always took on assignments.

He had three Bible students —men— who got baptized, but they needed a lot of help; they were newly baptized.

He was busy with other assignments.

His wife spent a lot of time with these newly baptized brothers. He was neglecting his wife.

She bonded emotionally with one of these brothers; adultery was committed. But Daniel said he bore a heavy responsibility in that respect.

In fact, at the end of the lessons learned, he said this:

“There is much more to life than struggling to care for privileges to the detriment of your own family.” So a need for balance.

Pursuing Kingdom interests, of course —and an understanding wife or husband can understand and support that— but there is a balance.

And if it oversteps itself, then real problems can result.

So we want to do all we can to slay desires when we sense them in ourselves.

And it’s going to take earnest effort; it’s going to take endurance because as long as we’re in this imperfect state, no one can say, “I am immune to any of those desires that could crop up at different times.” So our love for Jehovah, our love for our mates, our love for our brothers prevents us from going down the path of greediness and idolatry, which only results in harm.

How grateful we are to be with brothers and sisters like you who love Jehovah, love their marriage mates, love the brotherhood, and do all they can to stay morally clean! Keep it up with Jehovah’s help.

THE RESURRECTED JESUS APPEARS TO MANY

LUKE 24:13-49 JOHN 20:19-29

- JESUS APPEARS ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS
 - HE REPEATEDLY OPENS UP THE SCRIPTURES TO HIS DISCIPLES
 - THOMAS CEASES TO DOUBT
-

On Sunday, Nisan 16, the disciples are in low spirits. They do not grasp the meaning of the empty tomb. (Matthew 28:9, 10; Luke 24:11) Later in the day, Cleopas and another disciple leave Jerusalem for Emmaus, which is about seven miles away.

As they walk, they discuss what has occurred. Then a stranger joins them. He asks: “What are these matters that you are debating between yourselves as you walk along?” Cleopas replies: “Are you a stranger dwelling alone in Jerusalem and do not know the things that have occurred there during these days?” The stranger asks: “What things?” —Luke 24:17-19.

“The things concerning Jesus the Nazarene,” they say. “We were hoping that this man was the one who was going to deliver Israel.”—Luke 24:19-21.

Cleopas and his companion go on to relate things that happened that very day. They say that some women who went to the tomb where Jesus was buried found it empty and that these women were eyewitnesses to a supernatural event—the appearance of angels who said that Jesus is alive. They report that others also went to the tomb and “found it just as the women had said.”—Luke 24:24.

The two disciples are clearly bewildered as to the meaning of what has occurred. The stranger responds with authority to correct their wrong thinking, which is affecting their hearts: “O senseless ones and slow of heart to believe all the things the prophets have spoken! Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory?” (Luke 24:25, 26) He goes on to interpret for them many Scriptural passages pertaining to the Christ.

Finally the three arrive near Emmaus. The two disciples want to hear more, so they urge the strang-

er: “Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is nearly over.” He agrees to stay, and they have a meal. As the stranger says a prayer, breaks bread, and hands it to them, they recognize him, but then he disappears. (Luke 24:29-31) Now they know for sure that Jesus is alive!

The two disciples excitedly comment on what they experienced: “Were not our hearts burning within us as he was speaking to us on the road, as he was fully opening up the Scriptures to us?” (Luke 24:32) They hurry back to Jerusalem, where they find the apostles and others with them. Before Cleopas and his companion can give a report, they hear others say: “For a fact the Lord was raised up, and he appeared to Simon!” (Luke 24:34) Then the two tell how Jesus appeared to them. Yes, they too are eyewitnesses.

Now all are shocked—Jesus appears in the room! This seems unbelievable because they locked the doors out of fear of the Jews. Still, Jesus is standing right in their midst. He calmly says: “May you have peace.” But they are frightened. As they did

once before, they are ‘imagining that they are seeing a spirit.’—Luke 24:36, 37; Matthew 14:25-27.

To prove that he is no apparition or something they merely imagine but, rather, that he does have a fleshly body, Jesus shows them his hands and feet and says: “Why are you troubled, and why have doubts come up in your hearts? See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; touch me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones just as you see that I have.” (Luke 24:36-39) They are overjoyed and amazed but still somewhat reluctant to believe.

Further attempting to help them to see that he is real, he asks: “Do you have something there to eat?” He accepts a piece of broiled fish and eats it. Then he says: “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was yet with you [before my death], that all the things written about me in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and Psalms must be fulfilled.”—Luke 24:41-44.

Jesus had helped Cleopas and his companion to understand the Scriptures, and he does so now for all those gathered there: “This is what is written:

that the Christ would suffer and rise from among the dead on the third day, and on the basis of his name, repentance for forgiveness of sins would be preached in all the nations—starting out from Jerusalem. You are to be witnesses of these things.” —Luke 24:46-48.

For some reason the apostle Thomas is not present. In the following days, others joyfully tell him: “We have seen the Lord!” Thomas responds: “Unless I see in his hands the print of the nails and stick my finger into the print of the nails and stick my hand into his side, I will never believe it.”—John 20:25.

Eight days later, the disciples are again meeting behind locked doors, but this time Thomas is present. Jesus appears in their midst in a materialized body and greets them: “May you have peace.” Turning to Thomas, Jesus says: “Put your finger here, and see my hands, and take your hand and stick it into my side, and stop doubting but believe.” Thomas exclaims: “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:26-28) Yes, he now has no doubts that Jesus is alive as a divine being who is Jehovah God’s representative.



“Because you have seen me, have you believed?” Jesus says. “Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.”—John 20:29.

- ◇ A stranger makes what inquiry of two disciples going to Emmaus?
- ◇ Why do the hearts of the disciples soon burn within them?
- ◇ When Cleopas and his companion return to Jerusalem, what exciting report do they hear, and what then happens?
- ◇ How is Thomas finally convinced that Jesus is alive?

Encourage One Another

(Hebrews 10:24, 25)

1. As we encourage one another
 To serve Jehovah faithfully,
We find the bonds of love are strengthened;
 Fine works bring peace and unity.
The love we find among God's people
 Gives each the courage to endure.
Our congregation is a refuge,
 A place where we can feel secure.
2. A word when spoken at the right time
 Is, oh, how comforting to hear!
We hear these words of consolation
 From friends so faithful and so dear.
How good it is to work together
 With those whose hopes and goals we share!
We seek to strengthen one another
 And help each one his burden bear.
3. As we with eyes of faith are seeing
 The nearness of Jehovah's day,
We need our gathering together
 To keep us walking in the way.
United with Jehovah's people,
 We hope to serve eternally.
So we encourage one another
 To hold to our integrity.

AUGUST 2020

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

LARGE PRINT EDITION



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COVER PICTURE:

Jesus is depicted in the heavens. Next to him stand some of his corulers. Together they look at a vast number of angels. Some angels are going toward the earth to carry out their assignments. Jehovah delegated authority to all shown in this picture (See study article 32, paragraph 5)

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Oh, Walk With God!

(Micah 6:8)

1. Oh, walk with God in modesty;
Show loyal love, and be true.
Stay close to Jehovah, leaning on him,
And let his strength sustain you.
Keep holding tight to his faithful Word;
You'll never drift away.
So let God lead you by the hand
As you listen and obey.
2. Oh, walk with God in holiness;
Consider things that are pure.
No matter how great temptations may be,
He'll help you to endure them.
Whatever praiseworthy things there are,
Whatever things are true,
Continue to consider them,
And our God will be with you.
3. Oh, walk with God in happiness;
Rejoice that he is your Friend.
Be thankful for all the gifts that he gives
And blessings that are endless.
Oh, walk with God, let your heart be glad;
Express your joy in song.
Your joy will show, and all will know,
To Jehovah you belong.

Walk Humbly and Modestly With Your God

“Walk in modesty with your God!”—MIC. 6:8.

SONG 31

Oh, Walk With God!

PREVIEW

A humble person is merciful and compassionate. Therefore, we can rightly say that Jehovah is humble. As this article will show, we can learn humility from Jehovah’s example. We will also examine what we can learn from King Saul, the prophet Daniel, and Jesus about the quality of modesty.

CAN we really say that Jehovah is humble? Yes, we can. David once said: “You give me your shield of salvation, and *your humility* makes me great.” (2 Sam. 22:36; Ps. 18:35) Perhaps David was thinking of the day when the prophet Samuel came to the house of David’s father to anoint the future king of Israel. David was the youngest of eight boys; yet, he was the one whom Jehovah chose to replace King Saul. —1 Sam. 16:1, 10-13.

² David would certainly agree with the sentiments expressed by a psalmist who said of Jehovah: “He stoops down to look on heaven and earth, raising the lowly from the dust. He lifts up the poor . . . to make him sit with nobles.” (Ps. 113:6-8) In this article, we will first consider some important lessons about humility by reviewing instances when Jehovah showed this quality. Then we will examine what we can learn from King Saul, the prophet Daniel, and Jesus about the quality of modesty.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM JEHOVAH’S EXAMPLE?

³ Jehovah proves that he is humble by how he deals

-
1. What did David say about Jehovah’s humility?
 2. What will we consider in this article?
 3. How does Jehovah deal with us, and what does this prove?

with imperfect human worshippers. Not only does he accept our worship but he also views us as his friends. (Ps. 25:14) In order to make friendship with him possible, Jehovah took the initiative by providing his Son as a sacrifice for our sins. What mercy—what compassion—he has shown us!

⁴ Consider another expression of Jehovah's humility. As the Creator, Jehovah could have made us without the ability to choose the course of our lives. But he did not do that. He made us in his image and gave us free will. He wants us lowly humans to serve him from our heart because we love him and we recognize the benefits of obeying him. (Deut. 10:12; Isa. 48:17, 18) How grateful we should be for this expression of Jehovah's humility!

⁵ Jehovah teaches us to be humble by the way he deals with us. Jehovah is the wisest Person in the universe. Even so, he is willing to accept suggestions from others. For example, Jehovah allowed his Son to assist him in creating all things. (Prov. 8:27-30; Col. 1:15, 16) And even though Jehovah is almighty, he delegates authority to others. For instance, he appointed Jesus to be King of the Kingdom, and He will give a measure of authority to the 144,000 hu-

4. What has Jehovah given us, and why?

5. How does Jehovah teach us to be humble? (See cover picture.)

mans who become corulers with Jesus. (Luke 12:32) Of course, Jehovah trained Jesus to be King and High Priest. (Heb. 5:8, 9) He also trains Jesus' corulers, but he does not give them this assignment and then step in to manage every detail of the work. Instead, he trusts that they will do his will.—Rev. 5:10.

⁶ If our heavenly Father—who does not need help from anyone—delegates authority to others, how much more so should we do the same! For instance, are you a family head or an elder in the congregation? Follow Jehovah's example by delegating tasks to others and then resisting the urge to micromanage them. When you imitate Jehovah, not only will you get the work done but you will also train others and boost their confidence. (Isa. 41:10) What else can those with a measure of authority learn from Jehovah?

⁷ The Bible indicates that Jehovah is interested in the opinions of his angelic sons. (1 Ki. 22:19-22) Parents, how can you imitate Jehovah's example? When appropriate, ask your children for their opinions on how a task should be done. And when fitting, follow their suggestions.

6-7. What can we learn from our heavenly Father about delegating authority to others?

⁸ Jehovah's humility is also expressed by his patience. For example, Jehovah is patient when those who serve him question his decisions respectfully. He listened as Abraham stated his concerns about the decision to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. (Gen. 18:22-33) And remember how Jehovah dealt with Abraham's wife, Sarah. He did not become offended or angry when she laughed at his promise that she would become pregnant in her old age. (Gen. 18:10-14) Instead, he treated Sarah with dignity.

⁹ Parents and elders, what can you learn from Jehovah's example? Consider how you respond when

8. How did Jehovah deal patiently with Abraham and Sarah?

9. What can parents and elders learn from Jehovah's example?

We imitate Jehovah when we train others and delegate work to them
(See paragraphs 6-7)



those under your authority question your decisions. Is your initial reaction to correct them? Or do you try to understand their point of view? Families and congregations surely benefit when those in authority imitate Jehovah. So far, we have discussed what we can learn about humility from Jehovah's example. Now let us see what we can learn about modesty from examples recorded in God's Word.

WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE EXAMPLE OF OTHERS?

¹⁰ As our "Grand Instructor," Jehovah provides examples in his Word in order to teach us. (Isa. 30:20, 21) We learn as we meditate on Bible accounts about those who showed godly qualities, including modesty. We also learn as we examine what happened to those who failed to show such fine qualities.—Ps. 37:37; 1 Cor. 10:11.

¹¹ Reflect on what happened to *King Saul*. He started out as a modest young man. He was aware of his limitations and even hesitated to take on more responsibility. (1 Sam. 9:21; 10:20-22) Yet, in time Saul became presumptuous. He revealed this bad trait soon after he became king. On one occasion, he

10. How does Jehovah use the example of others to teach us?

11. What can we learn from Saul's bad example?

lost patience while waiting for the prophet Samuel. Instead of modestly trusting in Jehovah to act in behalf of the people, Saul offered up a burnt sacrifice even though he was not authorized to do so. As a result, Saul lost Jehovah's favor and eventually the kingship. (1 Sam. 13:8-14) We are wise if we learn from this warning example and avoid acting presumptuously.

¹² In contrast with Saul's bad example, consider the good example of the *prophet Daniel*. Throughout his life, Daniel remained a humble and modest servant of God who always looked to Jehovah for guidance. For instance, when he was used by Jehovah to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream, Daniel did not take credit for the interpretation. Rather, he modestly gave all the glory and credit to Jehovah. (Dan. 2:26-28) What is the lesson for us? If brothers enjoy listening to our talks or if we have a measure of success in the ministry, we want to remember to give all the glory to Jehovah. We should modestly acknowledge that we could not do these things without Jehovah's help. (Phil. 4:13) When we have this attitude, we are also imitating Jesus' fine example. How so?

12. How did Daniel show modesty?



Jesus knew
and respected
the limits of his
authority

(See paragraph 14)

¹³ Although he was the perfect Son of God, *Jesus* depended on Jehovah. (Read John 5:19, 30.) He never tried to grab authority from his heavenly Father. Philippians 2:6 tells us that Jesus “gave no consideration to a seizure, namely, that he should be equal to God.” As a submissive Son, Jesus understood his limitations and respected his Father’s authority.

¹⁴ Consider how Jesus responded when the disciples James and John along with their mother

13. What do we learn about modesty from Jesus’ words found at John 5:19, 30?

14. When asked to do something that was beyond his authority, how did Jesus respond?



How can we imitate Jesus' example of modesty?
(See paragraphs 15-16)

approached him and asked for a privilege that was beyond Jesus' authority to give. Without hesitating, Jesus stated that only his heavenly Father could decide who would sit at Jesus' right hand and at his left in the Kingdom. (Matt. 20:20-23) Jesus showed that he respected his limitations. He was modest. He never went beyond what Jehovah commanded him to do. (John 12:49) How can we imitate Jesus' fine example?

¹⁵ We imitate Jesus' example of modesty by applying the Bible's counsel found at 1 Corinthians 4:6.

15-16. How can we apply the Bible's counsel found at 1 Corinthians 4:6?

There we are told: “Do not go beyond the things that are written.” So when asked for advice, we never want to promote our own opinion or simply say the first thing that comes to our mind. Rather, we should direct attention to the counsel found in the Bible and in our Bible-based publications. In this way, we acknowledge our limitations. With modesty, we give credit to the “righteous decrees” of the Almighty. —Rev. 15:3, 4.

¹⁶ Along with honoring Jehovah, we have other good reasons for displaying modesty. We will now look at how humility and modesty can bring us joy and help us get along with others.

HOW WE BENEFIT FROM BEING HUMBLE AND MODEST

¹⁷ When we are humble and modest, we are more likely to be joyful. Why so? When we are aware of our limitations, we will be grateful and happy for any help that we receive from others. For example, think of the occasion when Jesus healed ten lepers. Only one of them returned to thank Jesus for curing him of his dreadful disease—something the man could never have done on his own. This humble and

17. Why are humble and modest people joyful?

modest man was thankful for the help he received, and he glorified God for it.—Luke 17:11-19.

¹⁸ Humble, modest people tend to get along well with others and are more likely to have close friends. Why? They willingly acknowledge that other people have fine qualities and show confidence in them. Humble and modest ones are happy when others succeed in whatever assignment they receive and are quick to commend them and honor them.—Read Romans 12:10.

¹⁹ In contrast, proud people find it difficult to commend others, preferring that they themselves receive praise. They are more likely to compare themselves with others and to promote a spirit of competition. Rather than training others and giving them authority, they are likely to say, “If you want something done right”—the way that pleases them—“you have to do it yourself.” A proud person is often ambitious and jealous. (Gal. 5:26) Such people seldom have lasting friendships. If we detect that we have a problem with pride, we should earnestly pray for Jehovah’s help to ‘make our mind over’ so that this bad trait does not become deeply rooted within us.—Rom. 12:2.

18. How do humility and modesty help us to get along with others? (Romans 12:10)

19. What are some reasons why we should avoid pride?

20 How thankful we are for Jehovah's example! We see his humility in how he deals with his servants, and we want to imitate him. In addition, we want to imitate the fine examples found in the Bible of modest people who had the privilege of walking with God. May we always give Jehovah the honor and the glory that he deserves. (Rev. 4:11) Then we too will qualify to walk with our heavenly Father, who loves humble and modest people.

20. Why should we be humble and modest?

PICTURE DESCRIPTIONS Page 18: An elder takes time to train a younger brother to handle the congregation territories. Later, the elder does not micromanage the younger brother but allows him to carry out the assignment on his own. **Page 22:** A sister asks an elder if it would be appropriate to accept an invitation to attend a wedding that will be held in a church. The elder does not give his own opinion but reviews some Bible principles with her.

HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER?

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| ■ What can we learn from Jehovah about delegating authority to others? | ■ Why is Jesus' example an outstanding one to imitate? | ■ How do we benefit from being humble and modest? |
|--|--|---|

*Loyally Submitting
to Theocratic Order*
(1 Corinthians 14:33)

1. As Jehovah's people sound throughout the earth
Truths about the Kingdom and its priceless worth,
Theocratic order they must all obey
And remain united, loyalty display.

(CHORUS)

*Loyal submission in recognition,
This to our God we owe.
He gives protection, tender affection,
Loyalty to him we show.*

2. God provides his steward and his active force.
These will ever guide us in our Christian course.
So may we be steadfast, seeking God to please,
Loyally proclaiming all his wise decrees!

(Chorus)