

- Song 45 and Prayer
- Opening Comments (3 min. or less)

TREASURES FROM GOD'S WORD

- “Flee From Idolatry”: (10 min.)



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.

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



Ex 32:1—Difficult circumstances do not justify serving other gods (w09 5/15 11 ¶11)

(Exodus 32:1) 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.”

*** w09 5/15 p. 11 par. 11 Press On to Maturity—“The Great Day of Jehovah Is Near” ***

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. (Ex. 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. (Ex. 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? (Ex. 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.—Heb. 4:3, 11.

- Paragraph 11
- (Exodus 17:1-4) The entire assembly of the Israelites departed from the wilderness of Sin by stages according to

the order of Jehovah, and they camped at Reph'i-dim. But there was no water for the people to drink. 2 So the people began quarreling with Moses and saying: "Give us water to drink." But Moses said to them: "Why are you quarreling with me? Why do you keep putting Jehovah to the test?" 3 But the people were very thirsty for water there, and they kept murmuring against Moses and saying: "Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to kill us and our sons and our livestock with thirst?" 4 Finally Moses cried out to Jehovah: "What should I do with this people? A little longer and they will stone me!"

- (Exodus 24:3) Then Moses came and related to the people all the words of Jehovah and all the judicial decisions, and all the people answered with one voice: "All the words that Jehovah has spoken, we are willing to do."
- (Exodus 24:12-18) Jehovah now said to Moses: "Come up to me on the mountain and stay there. I will give you the stone tablets with the law and the commandment that I will write for their instruction." 13 So Moses got up with his attendant Joshua, and Moses went up the mountain of the true God. 14 But to the elders he had said: "Wait here for us until we return to you. You have Aaron and Hur with you. Whoever has a legal case may go to them." 15 Then Moses went up the mountain while the cloud was covering it. 16 Jehovah's glory remained on Mount Si'nai, and the cloud covered it for six days. On the seventh day he called to Moses from the midst of the cloud. 17 To the Israelites who were watching, the appearance of Jehovah's glory was like a consuming fire on the mountaintop. 18 Moses then entered into the cloud and went up the mountain. And Moses stayed on the mountain 40 days and 40 nights.

- (Exodus 32:1, 2) 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."
- (Exodus 32:7-9) 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."
- (Exodus 17:8-16) Then the A-mal'ek-ites came and fought against Israel in Reph'i-dim. 9 At this Moses said to Joshua: "Choose men for us and go out to fight against the A-mal'ek-ites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill, with the rod of the true God in my hand." 10 Then Joshua did just as Moses told him, and he fought against the A-mal'ek-ites. And Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. 11 As long as Moses kept his hands lifted up, the Israelites prevailed, but as soon as he would let down his hands, the A-mal'ek-ites prevailed. 12 When the hands of Moses were heavy, they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it. Then Aaron and Hur, one on each side, supported his hands, so that his hands remained steady until the sun set. 13 Thus Joshua defeated Am'a-lek and his people with the sword. 14 Jehovah

now said to Moses: "Write this as a memorial in the book and repeat it to Joshua, 'I will completely wipe out the memory of Am'a·lek from under the heavens.'" 15 Then Moses built an altar and named it Je·ho'vah-nis'si, 16 saying: "Because his hand is against the throne of Jah, Jehovah will have war with Am'a·lek from generation to generation."

- (Acts 7:39-41) Our forefathers refused to obey him, but they pushed him aside and in their hearts they turned back to Egypt, 40 saying to Aaron: 'Make gods for us to go ahead of us. For we do not know what has happened to this Moses, who led us out of the land of Egypt.' 41 So they made a calf in those days and brought a sacrifice to the idol and began to enjoy themselves in the works of their hands.
- (Hebrews 4:3) For we who have exercised faith do enter into the rest, just as he has said: "So I swore in my anger, 'They will not enter into my rest,'" although his works were finished from the founding of the world.
- (Hebrews 4:11) Let us therefore do our utmost to enter into that rest, so that no one may fall into the same pattern of disobedience.

Ex 32:4-6—The Israelites mixed true worship with false (w12 10/15 25 ¶12)

(Exodus 32:4-6) 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.

*** w12 10/15 p. 25 par. 12 Obey God and Benefit From His Sworn Promises ***

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." (Ps. 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." (Ex. 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." (Ex. 32:5, 6, 8) Sadly, from then on Israel had a history of making vows to God that they later broke.—Num. 30:2.

- Paragraph 12
- (Psalm 78:41) Again and again they put God to the test, And they grieved the Holy One of Israel.
- (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."
- (Exodus 32:4) 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."

- (Exodus 32:5, 6) 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.
- (Exodus 32:8) 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.'"
- (Numbers 30:2) If a man makes a vow to Jehovah or swears an oath to impose on himself a vow of abstinence, he must not violate his word. He should do everything he vowed he would do.

Ex 32:9, 10—Jehovah's anger blazed against the Israelites (w18.07 20 ¶14)

(Exodus 32:9, 10) 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."

*** w18 July p. 20 par. 14 "Who Is on Jehovah's Side?" ***

14 The people knew that idolatry was a serious offense against Jehovah. (Ex. 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.—Ex. 32:5-10.

- (Exodus 20:3-5) You must not have any other gods besides me. 4 "You must not make for yourself a carved image or a form like anything that is in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. 5 You must not bow down to them nor be enticed to serve them, for I, Jehovah your God, am a God who requires exclusive devotion, bringing punishment for the error of fathers upon sons, upon the third generation and upon the fourth generation of those who hate me,

- (Exodus 32:5-10) 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."

Digging for Spiritual Gems:

Ex 31:17—In what sense has Jehovah rested on the seventh creative day? (w19.12 3 ¶4)

(Exodus 31:17) 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 December p. 3 par. 4 “There Is an Appointed Time” for Work and for Rest ***

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.” (Ex. 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.—Matt. 14:13; Luke 7:34.

- (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.”
- (Matthew 14:13) At hearing this, Jesus departed from there by boat into an isolated place to be alone. But the crowds, getting to hear of it, followed him on foot from the cities.
- (Luke 7:34) The Son of man has come eating and drinking, but you say: ‘Look! A man who is a glutton and is given to drinking wine, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!’

Ex 32:32, 33—How do we know that “once saved, always saved” is a false teaching? (w87 9/1 29)

(Exodus 32:32, 33) 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.

*** w87 9/1 p. 29 Questions From Readers ***

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.

- (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.” 33 However, Jehovah said to Moses: “Whoever has sinned against me, I will wipe him out of my book.
- (Revelation 3:5) The one who conquers will thus be dressed in white garments, and I will by no means blot out his name from the book of life, but I will acknowledge his name before my Father and before his angels.

What spiritual gems from this week’s Bible reading would you like to share regarding Jehovah God, the field ministry, or something else?

**Bible Reading:) (4 min. or less) • Ex 32:15-35
(th study 10)**

(Exodus 32:15-35) 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.

**APPLY YOURSELF TO THE FIELD
MINISTRY**

• Initial Call Video: (4 min.) Discussion.
Play the video, and then ask the audience: How did Brandi make good use of questions? How did she lay the groundwork for a return visit?

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How did she lay the groundwork for a return visit?

• **Initial Call: (4 min. or less) Begin with the sample conversation. Then introduce and discuss (but do not play) the video Why Study the Bible? (th study 9)**

• ○ 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

(2 Timothy 3:16) 16 All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness,

• **Talk: (5 min. or less) w10 5/15 21—Theme: Why Did Jehovah Not Punish Aaron for Making the Golden Calf? (th study 7)**

*** w10 5/15 p. 21 Questions From Readers ***
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.

- (Exodus 32:1-35) 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.

- (Exodus 20:3-5) You must not have any other gods besides me. 4 "You must not make for yourself a carved image or a form like anything that is in the heavens above or on the earth below or in the waters under the earth. 5 You must not bow down to them nor be enticed to serve them, for I, Jehovah your God, am a God who requires exclusive devotion, bringing punishment for the error of fathers upon sons, upon the third generation and upon the fourth generation of those who hate me,
- (Deuteronomy 9:19, 20) For I was terrified because of Jehovah's great anger against you, in that he was ready to annihilate you. However, Jehovah listened to me that time also. 20 "Jehovah was so angry with Aaron that he was ready to annihilate him, but I made supplication for Aaron at that time also.
- (James 5:16) Therefore, openly confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. A righteous man's supplication has a powerful effect.
- (Exodus 4:10-16) Moses now said to Jehovah: "Pardon me, Jehovah, but I have never been a fluent speaker, neither in the past nor since you have spoken to your servant, for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue." 11 Jehovah said to him: "Who made a mouth for man, or who makes them speechless, deaf, clear-sighted, or blind? Is it not I, Jehovah? 12 So go now, and I will be with you as you speak, and I will teach you what you should say." 13 But he said: "Pardon me, Jehovah, please send anyone whom you want to send." 14 Then Jehovah's anger blazed against Moses, and he said: "What about your

brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he can speak very well. And he is now on his way here to meet you. When he sees you, his heart will rejoice. 15 So you must speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with you and him as you speak, and I will teach you men what to do. 16 He will speak for you to the people, and he will be your spokesman, and you will serve as God to him.

- (Exodus 4:21) Then Jehovah said to Moses: "After you have returned to Egypt, see that you perform before Phar'aoth all the miracles that I have empowered you to do. But I will allow his heart to become obstinate, and he will not send the people away.
- (Exodus 32:1-6) 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.

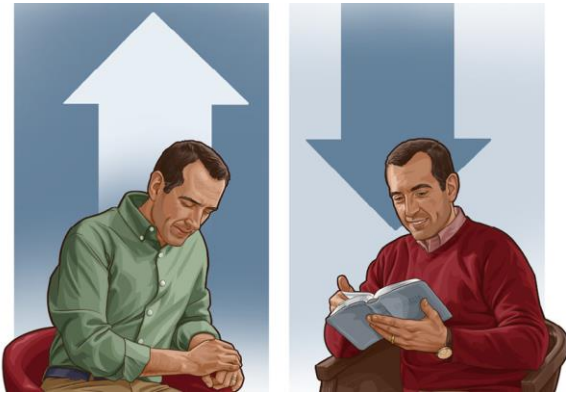
- (Exodus 32:25-29) Moses saw that the people were unrestrained, for Aaron had let them go unrestrained, so that they were a disgrace before their opposers. 26 Then Moses took his position in the gate of the camp and said: "Who is on Jehovah's side? Come to me!" And all the Levites gathered around him. 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."
- (Exodus 32:30) 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."
- (Exodus 40:12, 13) "Then bring Aaron and his sons near to the entrance of the tent of meeting, and wash them with water. 13 And you are to clothe Aaron with the holy garments and anoint him and sanctify him, and he will serve as priest to me."



LIVING AS CHRISTIANS

Song 36

- **“Cherish Your Relationship With Jehovah”: (15 min.) Discussion. Play the video Guard Your Relationship With Jehovah (Col 3:5).**



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?

- (John 6:44) No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him, and I will resurrect him on the last day.
- (Psalm 34:15) The eyes of Jehovah are on the righteous, And his ears listen to their cry for help.

- (Exodus 32:7, 8) 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.'"
- (1 Corinthians 10:7) Neither become idolaters, as some of them did; just as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink. Then they got up to have a good time."
- (1 Corinthians 10:11) Now these things happened to them as examples, and they were written for a warning to us upon whom the ends of the systems of things have come.
- (1 Corinthians 10:14) Therefore, my beloved ones, flee from idolatry.
- (Psalm 97:10) O you who love Jehovah, hate what is bad. He is guarding the lives of his loyal ones; He rescues them from the hand of the wicked.

Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)
Congregation Bible Study: (30 min.)

CHAPTER 135

The Resurrected Jesus Appears to Many

(Luke 24:13-49) But look! on that very day, two of them were traveling to a village named Em·ma'us, about seven miles from Jerusalem, 14 and they were conversing with each other about all these things that had happened. 15 Now as they were conversing and discussing these things, Jesus himself approached and began walking with them, 16 but their eyes were kept from recognizing him. 17 He said to them: "What are these matters that you are debating between yourselves as you walk along?" And they stood still, looking sad. 18 In answer the one named Cle'o·pas said to him: "Are you a stranger dwelling alone in Jerusalem and do not know the things that have occurred there during these days?" 19 He asked them: "What things?" They said to him: "The things concerning Jesus the Naz·a·rene', who proved to be a prophet powerful in deed and word before God and all the people; 20 and how our chief priests and rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they nailed him to the stake. 21 But we were hoping that this man was the one who was going to deliver Israel. Yes, and besides all these things, this is the third day since these things occurred. 22 Moreover, some women from among us also astonished us, for they went early to the tomb 23 and when they did not find his body, they came saying that they had also seen a supernatural sight of angels, who said he is alive. 24 Then some of those who were with us went off to the tomb, and they found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him." 25 So he said to them: "O senseless ones and slow of heart to believe all the things the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory?" 27 And starting with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them things

pertaining to himself in all the Scriptures. 28 Finally they got close to the village to which they were traveling, and he made as if to travel on farther. 29 But they urged him to remain, saying: "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is nearly over." With that he went in to stay with them. 30 And as he was dining with them, he took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and began handing it to them. 31 At that their eyes were fully opened and they recognized him; but he disappeared from them. 32 And they said to each other: "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?" 33 And they got up in that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and they found the Eleven and those assembled together with them, 34 who said: "For a fact the Lord was raised up, and he appeared to Simon!" 35 Then they related the events on the road and how he became known to them by the breaking of the bread. 36 While they were speaking of these things, he himself stood in their midst and said to them: "May you have peace." 37 But because they were terrified and frightened, they imagined that they were seeing a spirit. 38 So he said to them: "Why are you troubled, and why have doubts come up in your hearts? 39 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." 40 And as he said this, he showed them his hands and his feet. 41 But while they were still not believing for sheer joy and amazement, he said to them: "Do you have something there to eat?" 42 So they handed him a piece of broiled fish, 43 and he took it and ate it before their eyes. 44 He then said to them: "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was yet with you, that all the things written about me in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and Psalms must be fulfilled." 45 Then he opened up their minds fully to grasp the meaning of the Scriptures, 46 and he said to them, "This is what is written: that the Christ would suffer and rise from among the dead on the third day, 47 and on the basis of his name, repentance for forgiveness of sins

would be preached in all the nations—starting out from Jerusalem. 48 You are to be witnesses of these things. 49 And look! I am sending upon you what my Father promised. You, though, stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

(John 20:19-29) When it was late that day, the first day of the week, and the doors were locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them: "May you have peace." 20 After saying this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced at seeing the Lord. 21 Jesus said to them again: "May you have peace. Just as the Father has sent me, I also am sending you." 22 After saying this he blew on them and said to them: "Receive holy spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of anyone, they are forgiven; if you retain those of anyone, they are retained." 24 But Thomas, one of the Twelve, who was called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples were telling him: "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them: "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." 26 Well, eight days later his disciples were again indoors, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and he stood in their midst and said: "May you have peace." 27 Next he said to Thomas: "Put your finger here, and see my hands, and take your hand and stick it into my side, and stop doubting but believe." 28 In answer Thomas said to him: "My Lord and my God!" 29 Jesus said to him: "Because you have seen me, have you believed? Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe."

Paragraph 1 on Page 306

(Matthew 28:9, 10) And look! Jesus met them and said: "Good day!" They approached and took hold of his feet and did obeisance to him. 10 Then Jesus said to them: "Have no fear! Go, report to my brothers so that they may go to Gal'i-lee, and there they will see me."

(Luke 24:11) However, these sayings seemed like nonsense to them, and they would not believe the women.

Paragraph 2 on Page 306

(Luke 24:17-19) He said to them: "What are these matters that you are debating between yourselves as you walk along?" And they stood still, looking sad. 18 In answer the one named Cle'o·pas said to him: "Are you a stranger dwelling alone in Jerusalem and do not know the things that have occurred there during these days?" 19 He asked them: "What things?" They said to him: "The things concerning Jesus the Naz·a·rene', who proved to be a prophet powerful in deed and word before God and all the people;

Paragraph 3 on Page 306

(Luke 24:19-21) He asked them: "What things?" They said to him: "The things concerning Jesus the Naz·a·rene', who proved to be a prophet powerful in deed and word before God and all the people; 20 and how our chief priests and rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death, and they nailed him to the stake. 21 But we were hoping that this man was the one who was going to deliver Israel. Yes, and besides all these things, this is the third day since these things occurred.

Paragraph 4 on Page 306

(Luke 24:24) Then some of those who were with us went off to the tomb, and they found it just as the women had said, but they did not see him."

Paragraph 5 on Page 306

(Luke 24:25, 26) So he said to them: "O senseless ones and slow of heart to believe all the things the prophets have spoken! 26 Was it not necessary for the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory?"

Paragraph 6 on Page 306

(Luke 24:29-31) But they urged him to remain, saying: "Stay with us, because it is almost evening and the day is nearly over." With that he went in to stay with them. 30 And as he was

dining with them, he took the bread, blessed it, broke it, and began handing it to them. 31 At that their eyes were fully opened and they recognized him; but he disappeared from them.

Paragraph 7 on Page 306

(Luke 24:32) And they said to each other: "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 24:34) who said: "For a fact the Lord was raised up, and he appeared to Simon!"

Paragraph 8 on Page 306

(Luke 24:36, 37) While they were speaking of these things, he himself stood in their midst and said to them: "May you have peace." 37 But because they were terrified and frightened, they imagined that they were seeing a spirit.

(Matthew 14:25-27) But in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. 26 When they caught sight of him walking on the sea, the disciples were troubled, saying: "It is an apparition!" And they cried out in their fear. 27 But at once Jesus spoke to them, saying: "Take courage! It is I; do not be afraid."

Paragraph 9 on Page 306

(Luke 24:36-39) While they were speaking of these things, he himself stood in their midst and said to them: "May you have peace." 37 But because they were terrified and frightened, they imagined that they were seeing a spirit. 38 So he said to them: "Why are you troubled, and why have doubts come up in your hearts? 39 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."

Paragraph 1 on Page 307

(Luke 24:41-44) But while they were still not believing for sheer joy and amazement, he said to them: "Do you have something there to eat?" 42 So they handed him a piece of broiled fish, 43 and he took it and ate it before their eyes. 44 He then said to them: "These are my words

that I spoke to you while I was yet with you, that all the things written about me in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and Psalms must be fulfilled.”

Paragraph 2 on Page 307

(Luke 24:46-48) and he said to them, “This is what is written: that the Christ would suffer and rise from among the dead on the third day, 47 and on the basis of his name, repentance for forgiveness of sins would be preached in all the nations—starting out from Jerusalem. 48 You are to be witnesses of these things.

Paragraph 3 on Page 307

(John 20:25) So the other disciples were telling him: “We have seen the Lord!” But he said to them: “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.”

Paragraph 4 on Page 307

(John 20:26-28) Well, eight days later his disciples were again indoors, and Thomas was with them. Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and he stood in their midst and said: “May you have peace.” 27 Next he said to Thomas: “Put your finger here, and see my hands, and take your hand and stick it into my side, and stop doubting but believe.” 28 In answer Thomas said to him: “My Lord and my God!”

Paragraph 5 on Page 307

(John 20:29) Jesus said to him: “Because you have seen me, have you believed? Happy are those who have not seen and yet believe.”

◇ 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?

• Concluding Comments (3 min. or less)

• Song 90 and Prayer