

Come Follow Me — April 29 – May 5: John 7 – 10

I Am the Good Shepherd

Our Easter celebrations are behind us, and we are now going backward in our study of the scriptures — back to the autumn before Christ's crucifixion. We see Christ testifying of Himself bravely in Jerusalem while the Jews gathered for two important holidays: Sukkoth (the Feast of Tabernacles) and Hanukkah (the Feast of Lights). Sukkoth is a high holy pilgrimage holiday while Hanukkah is traditional but not commanded by God to celebrate or to make pilgrimage to the temple.

Jesus walked in Galilee (John 7:1):

After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

Jesus avoided Judea and especially Jerusalem because it was the seat of the Sanhedrin and the center of influence for both the Pharisees and the Sadducees. It was very dangerous for Him to go there.

The Feast of Tabernacles was at hand (John 7:2):

The Jews made 3 pilgrimages to the temple during the religious year to celebrate 7 high holy feasts ordained and commanded by God during the Exodus from Egypt. In the spring, there were 3 symbolic holy days within the 8-day pilgrimage — Passover, the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and the Honored Son first fruits offering. During the summer, there was one pilgrimage with one holy convocation, the Feast of Weeks.

During the fall, there were 3 holy convocations — the Feast of Trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and the Feast of Tabernacles, and pilgrimage was made during Tabernacles.

The symbolism of the spring holidays testifies of sacrifice and Christ's first coming, and the symbolism of the fall holidays testifies of final judgment and His Second Coming. There were symbols in the Feast of Tabernacles that Christ wanted to associate with Himself to help the Jews believe in Him.

Jesus does not go to the feast with His "brethren" (John 7:3 - 9):

Jesus' "brethren" were not His apostles. They were family members and/or associates in Galilee. They wanted Jesus to put Himself out there and show His power in Judea. Jesus urged them to go and said He would not go, but He went alone in secret.

The Jews seek Jesus at the feast (John 7: 10 - 13):

A huge polarization was occurring among the Jews. Some believed and some reviled. Note the palpable fear in these chapters of John, however. Jews who professed a belief in Christ were "cast out," excommunicated. That the Jews sought Jesus may mean that they had spotted His brethren or that they expected His attendance because He was devout. Note that many who made the pilgrimage were from outside the Holy Land. The news of Christ's miracles and teachings had surely spread, but they would be mostly rumor to pilgrims from other areas.

Jesus teaches in the temple (John 7:14 - 44):



When Jesus taught, His wisdom and knowledge were readily apparent, but He was not a scholar and had never been taught. The people wondered at this. Christ told them that God can teach them if they seek Him. The people accused Him of breaking the Sabbath by healing on the Sabbath day. Jesus reasoned with them: if, according to the Law of Moses you can circumcise on the Sabbath, what's wrong with making a person whole on the Sabbath?

Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? (John 7:25).

It was apparent to the pilgrims that the Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus. Several times during the feast people or officers of the Sanhedrin tried to take Jesus, but they were not able because His time to offer Himself up had not come.

And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done? (v 31).

Use the word "Messiah" instead of Christ in this verse. The Messiah the Jews expected was not (is not) anywhere near as powerful as Christ.

Christ uses the fall holidays to testify of Himself (John 7:32 - 53):

The chief priest was Caiaphas and he was a Sadducee, so both the Pharisees and Sadducees were interested in taking Christ and doing away with Him. They were even more desperate to do so when they heard the reasoning of the people that Christ was more powerful and wise than the Messiah they had been expecting.

Jesus told the wicked that they cannot go where He is going, and no one understood that He was speaking of His Heavenly Father's kingdom, which is just for the righteous. They wondered whether he was talking about Galilee. Their thoughts were bound to the mundanities of this earthly life. They couldn't think large enough to get the picture.

The symbolism of the fall holidays is as follows:

- Rosh HaShanah (Feast of Trumpets) — Awake, arise, and gather because the wicked are being separated from the righteous (may your name be written in the Book of Life)
- Ten days of repentance called the Days of Awe
- Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement) — the day the high priest enters the Holy of Holies; blood everywhere, including the veil of the temple; the sins of Israel are placed upon the scapegoat
- Sukkoth, the Feast of Tabernacles — final judgment, welcoming of the Messiah, booths that represent the booths in the wilderness, but also the pavilion of God, the waving of palm branches in seven circuits around the temple altar doing the Hosanna Shout

The final day of Sukkoth is called The Last Great Day. The Last Great Day exactly mirrors Passover in the Jewish Calendar and they divide the year in half (Christ came in the "meridian of time"). There was a formal water libation at the temple wherein there was a procession from the temple to the Pool of Siloam led by the high priest. The high priest would fetch water and carry it back to the temple altar, representing the water that sprung from the rock Moses struck with his staff in the wilderness. Three trumpet blasts were sounded and Isaiah 12:3 was recited: "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation!" Christ inserted Himself into that ceremony. He stood before the high priests and the pilgrims and announced that He is the living water!

In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink (v 37).

After the first day of the Feast of Trumpets (which was a High Sabbath), and from that day on, pilgrims would ascend the steps to the temple with music and celebration. In the temple courtyard were 4 huge *menorot* (7-branched candlesticks) which were set alight as part of the festivities. After calling Himself the living water, and having gone up and returned from the Mount of Olives, and after the experience with the woman taken in adultery, Christ stood in front of these giant, fiery lamps and stated to the Pharisees,

I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life (John 8:12)

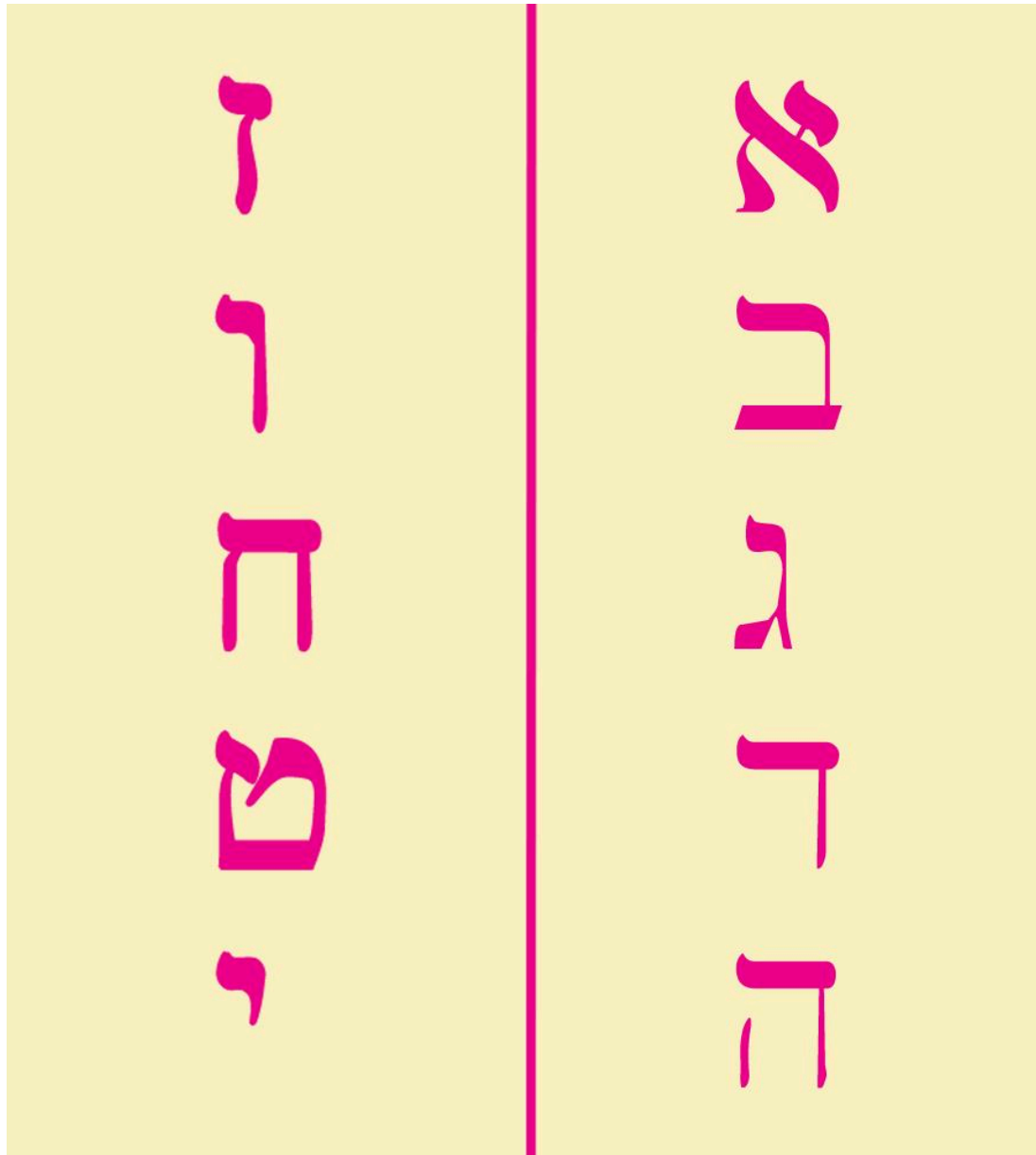
The Pharisees and chief priests send officers to take Jesus:

This act caused a huge stir among the people. Some wanted to believe that Christ was the Messiah, but He was a Galilean and the Messiah was supposed to be from Bethlehem.

The officers reported to the chiefest among the Sanhedrin empty-handed. They couldn't bring themselves to arrest Christ. Nicodemus happened to be there for this event (perhaps as one of Christ's "brethren" from Galilee) and defended Christ: "Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?" The priests proclaimed, "...out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."

The woman taken in adultery (John 8: 1 - 11):

Jesus went to the Mount of Olives (to the east of the temple) and then went down onto the temple grounds. When the woman taken in adultery was brought to Him He looked downward and wrote on the ground twice. Some have speculated as to what He may have been writing. Look at this image...



Hebrew has no numbers. Hebrew letters represent numbers and have numerical values alone or in combinations that make words. Any Jew seeing this list of Hebrew letters would know that they represent the 10 commandments and most would know what those commandments are. It's possible that Christ wrote these letters in the sand or on the stones and the men reviewed their own behavior in relation to each commandment. One by one, their guilt caused them to depart. (From the top right reading downward — aleph (1); bet (2); gimmel (3); dalet (4); heh (5); and the left column top to bottom — vav (6); zayin (7); het (8); tet (9); yod (10).) [There's actually an error in this image. The vav and zayin are switched.]

Jesus explains that He is the Son of God (John 8:12 - 59):

The Spirit witnessed to some who heard Him that He is the Son of God, but those without the Spirit were absolutely confused. Christ seemed to be speaking in riddles. They couldn't open their minds and hearts enough to admit Christ as God's Son and Messiah. Their tradition taught them that there is One God and that the Messiah would be a great king but not divine.

Jesus went farther to separate those with the Spirit from those without the Spirit when He began to talk about Abraham. It does us no good to be the seed of Abraham if we don't follow Christ. Abraham was a prophet who rejoiced that Christ's ministry and atonement would come. "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad." In this sentence, Christ showed His Divine Sonship by having seen Abraham and knowing that Abraham rejoiced in his visions of the future coming of Christ. This would only be possible if Christ were God, so this really confused the Jews who could not perceive by the Spirit.

The man who was blind from birth (John 9):

Jesus healed the man who was blind from birth and the Jewish leaders went to great lengths to get the whole story. First of all, Jesus healed him on the Sabbath. Secondly, people wondered whether the blind man or his parents had sinned, that the man was born blind. Jewish leaders interviewed the man, his associates, and his parents (vs 20 - 22).

His parents answered them and said, We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind:

But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself.

These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, **he should be put out of the synagogue.**

That last phrase "he should be put out of the synagogue" means that if a man confessed that Jesus is the Christ, he would be excommunicated. The parents were too fearful to confess, but the son freely did so and was indeed excommunicated (vs 30 - 34).

The man answered and said unto them, Why herein is a marvellous thing, that ye know not from whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes.

Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.

Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind.

If this man were not of God, he could do nothing.

They answered and said unto him, Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost thou teach us? And they cast him out.

Jesus heard that the man had been cast out, and He sought the man (vs 35 - 38):

Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when he had found him, he said unto him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God?

He answered and said, Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?

And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee.

And he said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

"And it was at Jerusalem the feast of the dedication, and it was winter" (John 10:22):

And now we have left behind the fall holidays. The scriptures don't tell us whether Jesus sojourned in Judea or returned to Galilee and went up to Jerusalem again for Hanukkah. He may have spent the months (September - December) in Bethany with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.

Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights or Feast of Dedication, celebrates the rededication of the temple after the Maccabees defeated a Greco-Syrian alliance under Antiochus around 160 B.C. The Greco-Syrians had murdered the Jews, forbid them to worship, and had desecrated the temple. When the Maccabees triumphed, they cleansed the temple and rededicated it. The oil for the sacred lamps (*menorot*) was depleted and there was only enough to keep the eternal light burning for 1 day, but the oil miraculously lasted for 8 days.

Jesus was walking on Solomon's porch of the great temple of Herod. The Jews said He should just tell them outright if He was the Messiah (vs 25 - 27):

Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me.

But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

The Jews tried to stone Him, but since it was not Jesus' time, He left Jerusalem and went down into the Judean desert where John had been baptizing. He performed miracles and taught there (vs 41, 42 following):

And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.

And many believed on him there.

Come, Follow Me

NEW TESTAMENT 2019

PARABLE OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John 10

Materials: Stick puppet patterns printed on cardstock, craft sticks, tape or glue

Instructions:

1. Print off the stick puppet patterns for the Parable of the Good Shepherd.
2. If you choose to have the children color the puppets, have them do so.
3. Cut out the puppets and attach them to the craft sticks.
4. Tell the Parable of the Good Shepherd from John 10: 1-18, with the children acting out using their puppets.
5. Follow-up with the following story from the *Ensign*
<https://www.lds.org/study/ensign/2009/04/the-voice-of-the-good-shepherd?lang=eng>

The Voice of the Good Shepherd **By Sherry Cartwright Zipperian**

As a Montana rancher for most of my 70 years, I treasure the parable of the good shepherd, found in John 10:1–18, for I have lived it. The following experiences were particularly powerful in bringing this parable to life.

In biblical times each shepherd vocally summoned his personal flock from the many herds pooled together into a nighttime sheepfold (see vv. 3–4). Likewise, whenever I move my sheep, I simply call, and they follow.

Years ago my spry 96-year-old neighbor, Alice, who also raised sheep, became ill during lambing season, so I offered to do her night lambing. When I entered her lambing shed my first night “on duty,” Alice’s nearly 100 ewes were peacefully bedded down for the night. Yet when I appeared, they immediately sensed a stranger in their midst. Terrified, they instantly sought safety by huddling together in a far corner (see v. 5).

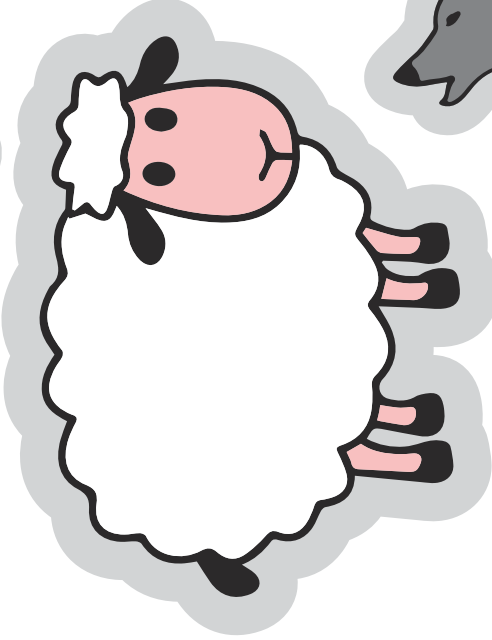
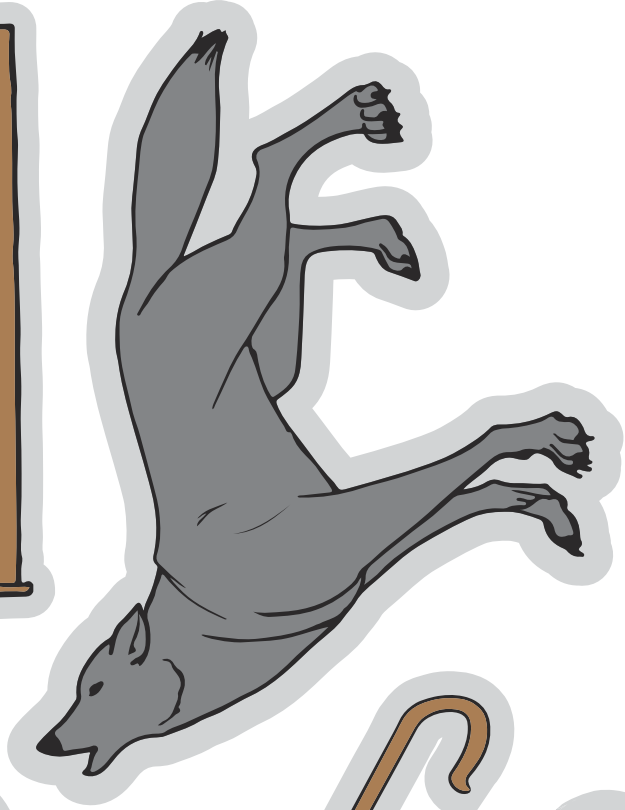
This continued for several nights. No matter how quietly I entered, the sheep panicked and fled. I spoke soothingly to the newborn lambs and ewes as I tended them. By the fifth night they no longer stirred as I worked among them. They had come to recognize my voice and trust me.

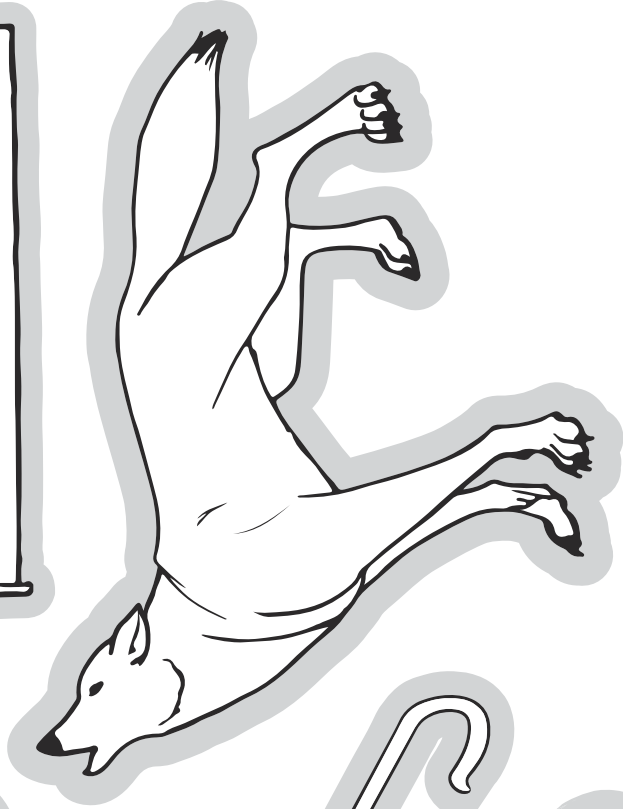
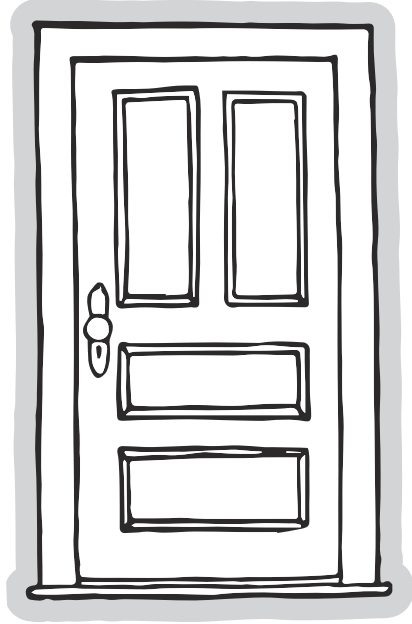
Sometime later I told Alice I would feed her dozen or so bum lambs their bottles. (A bum lamb is one whose mother has died or cannot produce enough milk.) Imitating Alice, I called to her lambs, “Come, BaBa! Come, BaBa!” I expected the lambs to hungrily stampede me as they did her. But not a single lamb even glanced up. Alice then stepped out her kitchen door and called. Hearing her voice, they eagerly rushed toward her, clamoring for their milk.

Intrigued, Alice and I conducted an experiment. Standing in my corral, Alice mimicked my call: “Here, lamby, lamby! Here, lamby, lamby!” and received no response whatsoever. But when I called with the exact same words, my sheep quickly surrounded me. Even though the words we used to summon the sheep were identical, our unfamiliar voices went unheeded. The sheep loyally heard only their true shepherd (see v. 4).

John 10 distinguishes a shepherd from a shepherder. A shepherd, whose sheep are his own, has loving concern for their safety. In contrast, a shepherder is merely the “hireling” and “careth not” (v. 13). The parable also teaches that while the hireling flees and deserts his sheep (see v. 12), the shepherd willingly lays down his life for his sheep (see v. 11). This is certainly true of our Good Shepherd—our Savior, Jesus Christ—who lovingly gave His life for us (see vv. 15, 17–18).

















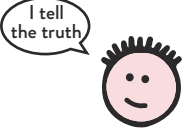



To me these experiences confirmed one of the critical messages of the parable: striving to personally know our Good Shepherd and to readily recognize His voice will prevent our mistakenly following the hireling. By faithfully heeding the voice of our Good Shepherd—and none other—we will be guided to eternal safety.





















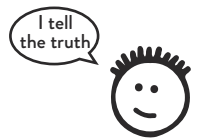

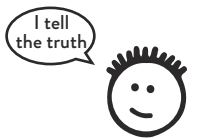

TEN COMMANDMENTS MATCHING GAME

Cut out the cards below and use to play a matching game.

 <p>Love God more than you love anything else.</p>	 <p>Don't make anything in your life more important than God.</p>	 <p>Love God more than you love anything else.</p>	 <p>Don't make anything in your life more important than God.</p>
 <p>Always say God's name with Love and Respect.</p>	 <p>Honor the Lord by resting on the seventh day of the week.</p>	 <p>Always say God's name with Love and Respect.</p>	 <p>Honor the Lord by resting on the seventh day of the week.</p>
 <p>Love and Respect your Mom and Dad</p>	 <p>Never hurt anyone.</p>	 <p>Love and Respect your Mom and Dad</p>	 <p>Never hurt anyone.</p>
 <p>Always be faithful to your husband or wife.</p>	 <p>Don't take anything that is not yours.</p>	 <p>Always be faithful to your husband or wife.</p>	 <p>Don't take anything that is not yours.</p>
 <p>Always tell the truth.</p>	 <p>Be happy with what you have. Do not wish for other people's things.</p>	 <p>Always tell the truth.</p>	 <p>Be happy with what you have. Do not wish for other people's things.</p>

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